

Welcome to our Weekly News Letter



A reading to carry us through 2025
For we are what he has made us, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which
God prepared beforehand to be our way of life. *Ephesians 2:10 NRSV*

Services this week and readings

Sunday 31st August 2025

11th Sunday after Trinity

8.30am Holy Communion Service BCP
10am 5th Sunday of the month, Parish
Communion

MORNING PRAYER is said @ 8am Monday,
Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday Mornings in the Lady
Chapel All Welcome

Dates ahead:

- Monday 1st September 7-8.30pm **Music Jam**
- Tuesday 2nd September funeral in church for **Jean Cowling** 11am
 - Friday 5th September funeral Medway Crem for **Maureen Smith** 11.30am
 - Monday 8th September **PCC** 7pm start
- Saturday 6th September **Monthly prayer and praise** 9am -10am in Church
 - Saturday 20th 3-5pm **Messy Church**
- Sunday 28th September 10am **Harvest Service** followed by **bring and shared lunch @ 12noon.**
 - Saturday 4th October 10am-12noon **Autumn Clean** of the Church all volunteers welcome as many hands make light work.
- Sunday 19th October 12.30pm after coffee **How to do CPR** with KSS Air ambulance free event please stay and learn a life saving skill.

Readings for Sunday:

Hebrews 13: 1-8,15-16
&
Luke 14: 1, 7-14

The **Legends** *and* **Laughter Show**

Featuring the Award Winning Talents of...

NEIL J. DUNCAN



DEAN MARTIN

TOMMY COOPER

NEIL DIAMOND

FRIDAY 5TH SEPTEMBER
7.30PM (DOORS OPEN 7PM)

TICKETS £15 (ADULTS), £5 (UNDER 16s)

USE THE QR CODE OR CALL/TEXT

07778 959003

BAR (OWN DRINK NOT PERMITTED)

RAFFLE



**ST. HELEN'S CHURCH, BUTTWAY LANE,
CLIFFE ME3 7QP**

Harvest at St.Helen's Cliffe

10am

Sunday 28th September 2025

Followed by a

Bring and Shared Lunch

at

12noon

All welcome

Come, ye thankful people come
and raise a song of harvest time,
come to God's temple, come.
Raise that song of harvest home.



Saturday 11th October 2025
from 12 noon

St. Helen's Church

Entry £3 adults & 50p Children

Categories are:

Sweet, Savoury and Children's
'So get baking'



BARN DANCE



SATURDAY 25TH OCTOBER - 7PM
CLIFFE MEMORIAL HALL



LIVE MUSIC
AND CALLER



BRING YOUR OWN DRINK



TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED IN ADVANCE:

£17.50 (INCLUDES PLOUGHMAN'S)

CALL OR TEXT 07778 959003

OR BOOK ONLINE WITH QR CODE



Monday Afternoon

Board Games

Here at St. Helen's

House in the

front room

1pm -3.30pm



Free and open to all

why not challenge the Vicar

to a game of chess or maybe it was

**Reverend Green in the study with the candlestick, or just
a trivial pursuit!**



Our hot drinks are still just
£1 a mug
and it is the best Honduras fresh
Coffee and fairtrade, because
we care about those who grow
the beans

St. Helen's Church Cliffe

The Coffee Stop

A community hub for all

'Tea, coffee and cake as cheap as chips'

St. Helen's House just before you get
to the church opposite parish carpark

Opening Times

10.30am -4pm

Monday – Friday

(subject to volunteers)

Free WIFI available

QR Code: Review us on Tripadvisor

Collect reviews with customised QR codes that prompt diners to write a review when they scan the code with a phone camera.



**If you would like to give to the work at
St. Helen's it couldn't be easier.**

**Just Scan the QR code follow the link to our
page on SUMUP and donate.**

All gifts are gratefully welcome and received.



**Help us to keep our church open
for another thousand years**



**If you would like to give to foodbank there is a shopping trolley found at the back of St. Helen's Church just drop your donations in the trolley.
We will be collecting @ Harvest gifts for Foodbank see below**

**For more info about St.Helen's go to
'A Church Near You' or our 'Webpage'**

click one of the buttons below

www.achurchnearyou.com/church/9932

cliffechurch.co.uk

**Messy Church
New dates below for 2025/2026**



Messy Church Dates for 2025/26

3-5pm.

Dates are:

20th September 2025 'Messy Idols' Moses and the law

18th October 2025 'Messy Coats' the story of Joseph

15th November 2025 'Messy Music' Gideon's army

17th January 2026 'Messy Hair' Samson

14th February 2026 'Messy Love' a new commandment

14th March 2026 'Messy Mothers' a look at biblical mums

3rd April 'Messy Good Friday' 10.30am-12 noon

16th May 2026 'Messy Gold' King Solomon

20th June 2026 'Messy messengers' Looking at prophets

*There is no charge for Messy Church, but donations are
always welcome to help with the running costs.*

Weekly activities

*If you would like something advertised here please email
cliffatcliffe@gmail.com*



**QR for this Newsletter
share it with others**

Reverend Clifford's Weekly Blog 'Bat out of Hell'

30th August 2025

'Bat out of hell'

I guess I must start with an apology about my miss spelling last week, did you get it in the end; I was actually talking about my stool and not the stall, the photo should have given you a clue. It's a lesson on the multimedia age we live in, because as soon as I had pressed the send button I realised what I had done, but at that point there was no way of retracting the thing I had sent out. Recently in another context nothing to do with our community or church but in Cathy's work, someone sent something out to the wrong person on WhatsApp for all to read, damning words nearly costing them their much-needed job and income, but fortunately even outside of the church forgiveness can rescue those who speak first and think later, those who can easily hurt people deeply with casual remarks. Have you ever spoke to soon and just wanted the earth to swallow you up. I find emailing a painful time-consuming business, I carefully construct my words and then read them through several times to make sure that nothing I might say will cause offence or be misunderstood and then thrown back at me. It was far quicker in many ways when we communicated face to face or in direct conversation. The laugh is that all this technology is designed to free us up and give us time for other things and yet it often causes us more problems. It also gives us a false sense of bravery, we can say things almost anonymously that we would not say to someone's face, and recently the feeds and conversations I read on social media are vile and hostile. I guess I can handle wrong spelling any day against the free speech of others that actually destroy other people's freedoms. Personally, I'm cutting back from social media because I think we are freer without it.

Communication is good at its core as it helps us to learn and share so much and

enjoy the good things of life, it teaches us and informs us, our scriptures tell us that it should be used to encourage each other. If we can't encourage each other then it is not from God, for God is about building people up not tearing them down. Ephesians 4: 29-32 29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. 32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Right, now for the second instalment of ideas I came up with from my summer break and this is spelt right 'Bat out of hell.' Someone said, they couldn't wait for this one, hope it doesn't disappoint as the Vicar talks all things bat. As it happens Cathy and me are great Meatloaf fans and love the album 'Bat out of hell.' So let me start with some lyrics from that song, verse two:

'I'm gonna hit the highway like a battering ram
On a silver black phantom bike
When the metal is hot and the engine is hungry
And we're all about to see the light
Nothing ever grows in this rotting old hole
Everything is stunted and lost.'

Well not sure Cathy and I were on a silver black phantom bike, we weren't even on my black and white triumph Bonneville which was tucked away in the garage back at home. But we were on bikes, pushbikes as we rode around the streets and lanes of Lincolnshire taking in the local sights. With an average speed of 11mph we probably didn't hit the highway like a battering ram either, but maybe we did find a rotting old hole, where clearly what was, was now stunted and lost, and as the chorus goes we found what we might have only described as something 'Like a bat out of hell.'

We had just visited the National Trust property Tattershall Castle a fine example of 15th Century brickwork built by the treasurer of England at the time Lord Ralph Cromwell. Next door is the parish church of Holy Trinity a huge 15th Century grade 1 listed building also designed and built by Lord Cromwell. Its claim to fame is that Tom Thumb is buried there who died at 101 having only ever grown to the grand height of 18 inches tall back in 1620, see photo of his memorial stone.

It seems though that this church which only has a service once a month as in a benefice of ten churches has another fame which left Cathy and me wanting to get out of there as soon as possible after having a quick look round. I'll give you a clue as this is from their parish newsletter. '40 people from around our churches met on Friday 22 August in Holy Trinity Church Tattershall and enjoyed a talk given by Ian Nixon of the Lincs Bat Group. The highlight of the evening was watching the bats emerge from their roosts to leave the church and go foraging for their prey. More than 1000 bats took flight and could be seen in the dusk and on infrared cameras, flying around people's heads as they headed for the doors.'

The church advertises a Café and we had thought that we might have a cuppa and a slice of cake from the tea room set up at the back of the church, well not a chance unless we wanted to risk dying of some bat related disease. Why do I say that, well because there wasn't a surface or an object that wasn't covered in bat excrement, they have a problem, big time over a thousand bats have made the place hell. The stench alone was overwhelming and yet there were people seemingly enjoying tea

and cake sat around the café area. I've done some research since getting home and with three other churches back in 2017 they were given 3.8 million pounds to tackle the problem, clearly they have not.

Bats in churches cannot be disturbed by law, we have a few bat friends in St. Helen's which leave a few droppings around the place in the summer months, but this was on another level and I question as much as I understand why we protect bats because we have stolen most of their natural habitats why the church is allowed to be open to the public without serious health warnings, and how it is allowed to serve drinks and food. A quote from Bats in Churches states that 'the church community makes an asset of its bats.' Contributing £400 towards the tea bar. Then I took this from Trip advisor Jul 2025 • 'Why not bring in the Badgers & Foxes which would add to the smell along with a pigeon loft. Whoever thought it would work must be away with the fairies the Church should now be locked until the bats can be relocated. Honestly would you sit inside to eat a cake the place is a health hazard, if this was a cafe on the high street I am sure it would be closed down.'

We as I said, had a quick look around what should be a wonderful church with a lot of history, we saw where they try to worship now in a huge chancel which is covered in plastic sheeting separating it from the main church yet still everything was also covered in droppings as well. These bats seemed to us to have created a kind of living hell, a place that once boasted in its day seven priests now only open for worship once a month and given over to the creatures of the night. With our protective laws and despite what seems a lot of money it is no longer Christ who is worship in that place but the bats. They are the untouchable and so now people come to see them, or see what might seem untrue but ankle deep in poo is very true.

Bats can be a huge problem for churches and in this place the words of Meatloaf ring out 'Nothing ever grows in this rotting hole.'

But let me finish with a biblical quote or two, firstly do not eat the bats (not shore the late Ozzy Osborn got that) or possibly have tea and cake with them, Leviticus 11: 13 -19 13 "These are the birds you are to regard as unclean and not eat because they are unclean: the eagle, the vulture, the black vulture, 14 the red kite, any kind of black kite, 15 any kind of raven, 16 the horned owl, the screech owl, the gull, any kind of hawk, 17 the little owl, the cormorant, the great owl, 18 the white owl, the desert owl, the osprey, 19 the stork, any kind of heron, the hoopoe and the bat.

Then Isaiah says this about Bats: 2: 19 'People will flee to caves in the rocks and to holes in the ground from the fearful presence of the Lord and the splendour of his majesty, when he rises to shake the earth. 20 In that day people will throw away to the moles and bats their idols of silver and idols of gold, which they made to worship.'

In theology bats are associated with darkness as they have an aversion to light, personally I love bats and watching these delicate small mammals take to the air around my garden at dusk. But in Lincolnshire I guess we found our bats out of hell. I pray the church there can find a solution as many of our churches need to once again become places of worship and not just historical buildings where the creatures of the night have more rights than those who worship there.

Next week 'The Imp perfection'

God bless,

Clifford

Please feel free to share this with others



The phantom bikes



18" tall was Tom Thumb



Holy Trinity, note the covered chancel end, plastic sheet top to bottom behind organ pipes



The Chancel now the only safe place for worship but still covered in Bat poo



Seen this somewhere else?



The black stuff on the floor is Bat droppings an inch thick in places, it is all over the walls and just everywhere!



As with many churches in the fens (*including my old church of St. Wendreda's March which had 150 angels, one of the best roofs in Europe*) they had a few Angles carved in the roof space looking down, better than bats.

St. Helen's



We are open every Sunday

Free worship

Free Tea and Coffee

Free just as it has always
been

You are always welcome
services begin

At 8.30am and at 10am

Contact Details

If you would like to be contacted by the church at anytime or the Vicar

then please download and return the contact sheet below by clicking on box, in compliance with GDPR

[PDF Contact Sheet](#)

Opening times for Church visits

We are pleased to say that we are continuing to make every effort to keep our church doors open during the week.

If you would like to visit the church then please sign and pick up a key from the Coffee Stop in St. Helen's House. Where possible volunteers might be able to show you around.

When you have finished your visit then simply return the key.

Opening Times

Monday - Friday 10.30am - close at 4pm

we make every effort to keep to these times but as you might appreciate this is reliant on our wonderful volunteers.

Who's who page

Priest in Charge of St.Helen's:

Reverend Clifford Stocking

145 St. Helen's Rectory

Cliffe

Rochester

Kent ME3 7PY

clifford2567@googlemail.com

01634 610752 or 07941056237

Day Off usually a Thursday

Curate

Reverend Graeme Copestake

curategraeme@gmail.com

07424035267

Church Wardens:

Robin Thompson

kentstamps@outlook.com

01634 221497

Paul Sutton

paulsubtle@gmail.com

07740867238

Licensed Lay Minister

Dave Green

pewsey54@btinternet.com

01634 220430

For any safeguarding concerns @ St. Helen's please contact our safeguarding officers:

Children's Safeguarding officer:

Julie Allen - 01634 221763

Adult Safeguarding officer:

Heather Weston -07762 401424



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cliffatcliffe@gmail.com

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