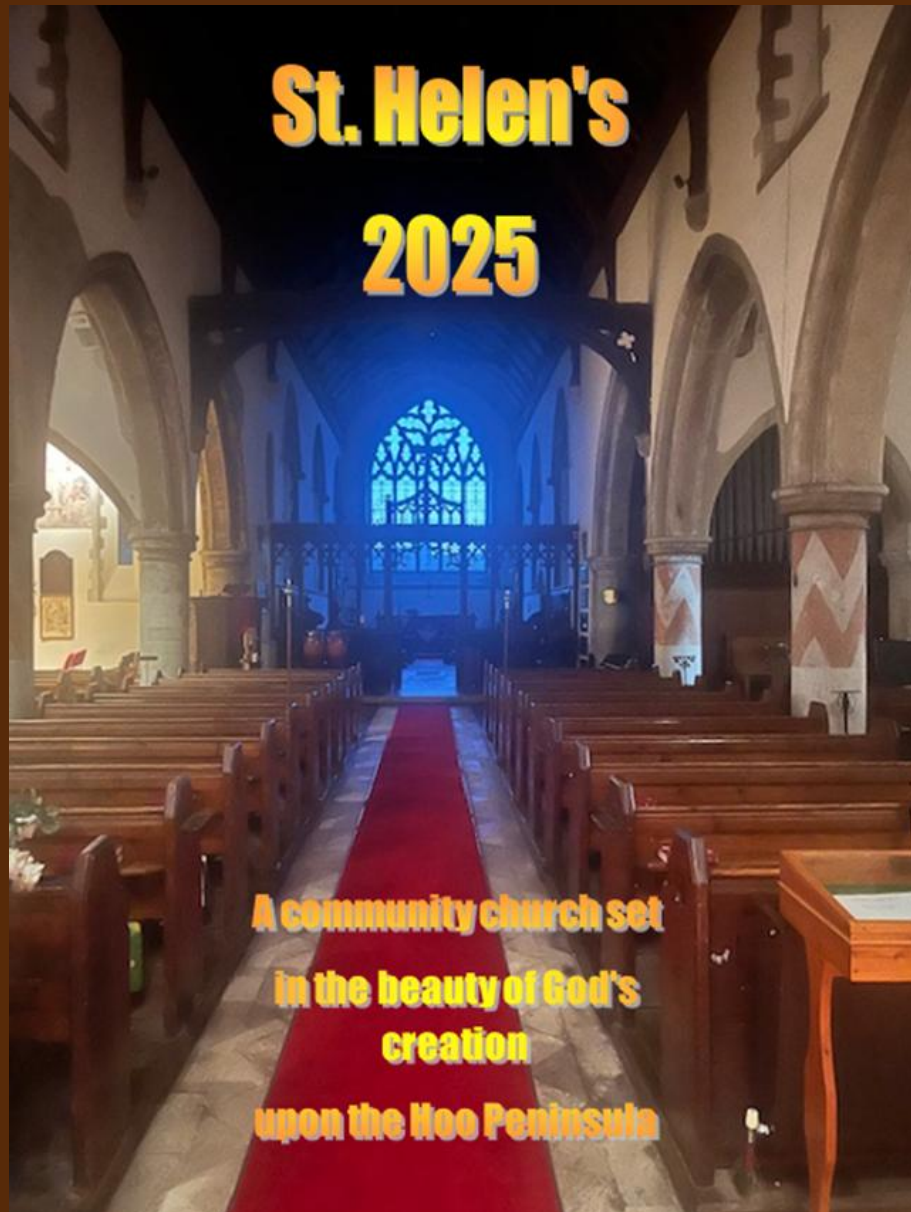


Welcome to our Weekly News Letter



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 21st September 2025

14th Sunday after Trinity

8.30am Holy Communion

10am Parish Communion

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

Dates ahead:

- 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 5th October 12 noon **Baptism** of **Chloe Hawkins**
- Wednesday 8th October 1pm In Church funeral for **Peter Knight**
- Saturday 11th October **Cake Bake** from 12 noon
- Friday 17th October **Funeral** 10am @ Thameview Crem for the late **Jenifer Scarfe**
- Sunday 19th October 12 noon interment of ashes for **Brian Cripps**
 - 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.
- Friday 31st October **Light party** 5-6.30pm

Readings for Sunday:

1 Timothy 2: 1-7

&

Luke 16: 1-13

Have you noticed the time?

A big thankyou to Robert Filmer for sorting out the restoration of the clock face, it looks fab, even at 7.45 in the morning!



Arts and Crafts this Wednesday
10-12noon
in St. Helen's House
All Welcome
Go on give it a go!





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 'The Swan'

20th September 2025

The Swan

Well did you pick up that two Saturdays ago I made the mistake of sending out two newsletters at the same time; if you didn't you might have thought I didn't send anything out last Saturday, check your emails and if you are following my little collection of blogs from my time in Lincolnshire over the summer it is there somewhere.

Meanwhile this is the last title in that series, The Swan.

Before I start Cathy and myself have just enjoyed the last of our holidays this year, this time camping at Norman's Bay just down from the bay from Eastbourne. There might be some blog ideas coming soon from that week as well but not a series like I now finish from that other camping holiday. All holidays close together to make the most of the weather before the colder and darker evenings creep in, it can get cold under canvas.

Back in Lincolnshire our tent was pitched on an open site surrounded by woodland areas where we watched many various birds and other wildlife. A woodpecker that tapped away in the early hours right above our heads, consuming all the bugs it could from under the bark of a pine tree. Different finches singing so brightly and then the ducks. Just to our left in the woods was a large pond/lake and each day the ducks with two ducklings strolled across the pitch seeking anything the other campers could provide them with. I guess this is just one reason we love camping so much and have enjoyed years of it in so many various locations, it allows you to get closer to nature, and given the strange noises of a night sleeping right beside it, there have been times

when you just lay there thinking what on earth is scraping at the canvas, truth just nature, all harmless certainly in the UK unless you have seen the beast of Cliffe/Medway. I joke because the house we rent out which will be our retirement home had an incident a couple of weeks ago.

My lovely tenants texted me to inform me that a fence panel had been pushed down and one of my small fruit trees had incurred some damage and that they thought a large animal had done this. Are there bears in Hoo, what kind of beast roams the suburban back gardens? Truth, age and rot combined with a little wind took down the fence panel, and the one small branch broken on my pear tree was probably the result of a football hanging around the garden, I did chuckle and simply dropped in another new panel, see if the beasts get that one.

Yet there are some large creatures that we live beside, and it certainly isn't a duck, but one of our biggest waterfowl the splendid swan. As I came out of the toilet block on site and was returning to our tent I was met by a beautiful swan. He or she stood in front of me displaying its full majestic qualities, it wasn't there before I went for my wash but here it was now. I slowly and respectfully walked past it and returned to my tent and told Cathy. The swan remained there hanging around for a while as we got ready to go out for the day. Then suddenly there was a huge slow flapping noise as the swan tried to take to skies, it ran the length of the pitch between the tents and caravans, it was trying desperately to gain the lift and updraft it requires to allow a bird so big to take off. Despite its best efforts there simply wasn't enough room and if it had managed to gain lift it would have crashed into the wooded area before it. Dejected it gave up for now and started to way up its options. A bit later in the day on our return the swan had worked out that the pitch was longer to the left of our tent and so it gave it another go. This time it ran hard flapping its wings, gaining speed running between the trees beside us into the next open pitch area beyond. A little uplift was gained, and we kept our fingers crossed it would have enough energy and room to take off. It suddenly left the ground and just managed to pass over a hedge at the other end but clearly the energy required was too much as it landed in a sheep field beside the campsite. After that we didn't see it again, but I am sure on the third attempt it must have found the airspace it needed to go back to wherever its family and other swans were.

It made me think, what do we need in our lives to find the perfect uplift, so that we might soar above the things that hold us down. The psalmist writes: Ps 103: 5 He 'who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's'. then Ps 139: 9 'I rise on the wings of the dawn', because verse 8, 'if I go up to the heavens you are there.' And Isaiah 40:31 who writes, 'Those who trust in the Lord will renew their strength; they will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not become weary, they will walk and not faint.'

I wonder have you ever felt like that swan, for all your best efforts you just don't seem to have enough room to find the updraft you need to rise above the things that hold us down. Like the swan we can look for alternative paths that might give us the space and freedom we need. Are the trees too tall and the hedges too oppressive.

I thought as I watched the swan, about the times in my own life when the effort to rise up has seemed overwhelming and remembered how in each case God has quietly been there as it were blowing under my wings so that I can find the power to rise above those things that hold us down and back. I give thanks for a life in Christ Jesus reflecting on the words Paul uses in Colossians 3: 1 'Therefore, since you have been raised with Christ, strive for the things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God'.

Jesus gives me the focus to find a new path, to set aside the trees from the woods so that there is room to conquer and rise above the gravitational powers of this world that pull us down, that ruffle our feathers.

Somewhere that swan is enjoying the freedom of the Lincolnshire fens, because it knew if it kept trying, if it put its faith in the wings that gave it uplift it would find a way out of our campsite.

Jesus offers us something similar, sometimes we need simply to come back to him again and again for he will raise us up in the end.

I didn't get a photo of our swan, but I give you a heron from our bike trail, wonderful sculpture along the path of the old Woodhall Spa railway.

God bless,

Clifford

Please feel free to share this with others



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

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Cliffe

Rochester

Kent ME3 7PY

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Day Off usually a Thursday

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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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Our mailing address is:
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