

**Welcome to our
Weekly News Letter**



A community church set in the beauty of God's creation upon the
Hoo Peninsula

A reading to carry us through 2026

'I will give you a new heart and put a new

**spirit in you; I will remove from you your
heart of stone and give you a heart of
flesh.'** *Ezekiel 36:26 NIV*

Services this week and readings

Sunday 1st March 2026 **2nd Sunday of Lent**

8.30am Holy Communion (*BCP traditional*)
10am Family Agape Service sharing of bread and
wine

Services for 2026 will be as follows:

1st and 3rd Sundays of the month Family Agape
services (*simple sharing of bread and wine*)
2nd & 4th Sundays family service of the word
5th Sundays as advised at time

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

Dates ahead:

- 2nd March **Music Jam** 7-8.30pm
- 4th March **Lent course** 7pm in church 'The Haggadah cup'
- 6th March **World day of prayer** Grain 10 for 10.30am *Barry an Linda have spare seats in their car if you require a lift.*
- 6th March 6.30pm & 7th March 10am -12 noon **Church Spring Cleaning**
- 6th March **Wedding** @ St. James Cooling 1pm for *Conor and Daisy*
- 7th March **Parish Monthly Prayers** in church all welcome 9-10am
- 9th-10th March Clifford on Area Deans residential meeting.
- 16th March **PCC** 7pm

**Readings for
Sunday: Romans
4: 1-5, 13-17 &
John 3: 1-17**

Holy Week & Easter @ St. Helen's 2026 This Cup

Palm Sunday

8.30am Holy Communion BCP

10am Family Service Theme: He rides on in Triumph

6pm **Palm Praise** service led by the Music Jam

7pm **Holy Monday** 30th March Taizé: Theme wine

7pm **Holy Tuesday** 31st March Celtic: Theme 'I am the vine'

9pm **Holy Wednesday** 1st April Compline: Theme 'Take this cup from me'

7pm start **Maundy Thursday** 2nd April Seder Meal:

You need to sign up for this by emailing Clifford or sign-up sheet at back of church, all welcome to come and experience the Last Supper in a way that Jesus delivered it 2000 years ago as a Passover meal.

Good Friday 3rd April Theme: 'With this cup'

Messy Church 10.30-12noon

12noon -2pm the church is open for prayer and reflective readings then from 2pm-3pm we move to a full-service remembering Jesus in his final hour.

Easter Sunday 5th April

6am Dawn Service A communion gathered around the fire in silence then we enter the church in celebration that he is risen.

10am Family Easter Agape service Theme: 'Finally he is risen to share a new cup'

Lent Course 2026

This Cup

Here @ St. Helen's

Written and presented by Reverend Clifford Stocking

Five Wednesday Evenings

7-9pm

Week one 25th February **the Kiddush cup**

Week two 4th March **the Haggadah cup**

Week three 11th March **the Berakah cup**

Week four 18th March **the Hallel cup**

Week five 25th March **the Elijah cup**

During these five weeks in Lent, we will start to look at the origins of the Passover Meal and how Jesus might have shared this with his disciples on Maundy Thursday at what we call The Last Supper.



- Next time @ Messy Church
- **Messy Mothers**
 - (a look at biblical mums)
 - 14th March
 - 3—5pm



GOD, THE BIBLE, AND EVERYTHING (IN 60 MINUTES)



FRIDAY 20TH MARCH

St. Helen's Church

Buttway Lane, Cliffe

7.30pm (doors open 7pm)

BBC sitcom writer and stand-up theologian James Cary hilariously unpacks the entire Bible in one hour - jokes, props, and maybe even a song!

Unforgettable laughs for all ages, faiths, and none!



Adults £10, Under 16s £5

Scan the QR Code or call 07778 959003



WORLD DAY OF PRAYER
A service for everyone!

Friday 6 March

I will give you rest, come

Nigeria 2026

**St James's Church
Grain ME3 0BS**

**10.00am for refreshments
10.30am for the service**

All Welcome



INFORMED PRAYER PRAYERFUL ACTION
24-7 365 Days a year Prayer movement Ecumenical International Women-led
wwdp.org.uk
Registered Charity Number 233242



THE GREAT TOMMY SLEEP OUT

sponsored by

BAE SYSTEMS



Barratt
Redrow

SLEEP OUTSIDE IN MARCH

TO HELP SUPPORT

HOMELESS VETERANS

www.rbve.org.uk/sleepout



✉ fundraising@rbve.org.uk 🌐 rbve.org.uk 📱 @RoyalBritishVeteransEnterprise 📷 @royalbritishveteransenterprise



Partnership with
The Royal British Veterans Enterprise

Royal British Veterans Enterprise (RBVE) Hall Road, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NL

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

**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.**

**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

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
'you know you want to!'**



28th February 2026

Did you see the purple crocuses on the edge of the church path this week, especially on Wednesday as we got a full blast of Lenten colour, sadly they are now dying as quick as they came a short season. Purple is the colour for Lent, it is the colour of remembrance and commemoration which is used at funerals as well, and during Advent. For that one day this week we enjoyed temperatures above those in Spain, a glimpse of more days like this as spring slowly creeps in. Many of my trees in the Rectory garden are now in blossom or showing signs of that moment when they will blast out of their wintery buds. The almond tree in the front garden is the first now in full bloom and close behind in our back garden an apricot tree is poised to explode. Each of these reminds me that each flower will be tomorrows harvest if we tend and care for them over the summer, hopefully long hot summer days as the northern hemisphere steps out of winter and the southern sinks back to shorter days and nights.

We live on this amazing planet that just keeps giving of itself, in season and out of season, filled with abundant breath-taking life which follows an un-endless pattern that we have learned to predict. It might only be our interference with nature that causes an unbalance that destroys without reason apart from greed.

Lent reminds us to look at the hand of the star maker, the God of creation, to see what He has given us and cherish it and give thanks for it, we call that worship. This same God gave us Jesus as an example of how things can be different if we start to live our lives looking out for others rather than just our own desires. Lent reminds us that as good as Jesus was, a man without blame humanity even took him and tried in vain to destroy him, to silence him. Fortunately, God knew we would do this and so at Easter after the long Lenten journey God raised him to life conquering death itself.

Lent reminds us of our short comings as human beings, it focuses us back on the life of Jesus and his teachings, is there really anyone on earth who in their right mind could argue with them. What on earth is wrong with love, what is wrong with a world that can seek and offers forgiveness, what is wrong with sharing the resources of this world so that all might be fed and receive healing, what is wrong in believing that there is a higher being than ourselves, after all if we really are the best that nature has to offer then we have little hope at all.

Last week in church we looked briefly at Jesus's temptation in the wilderness, and I took that into my school assembly this week. Jesus had two choices when he came out of the wilderness, do it God's way or humanities way. God's way, give of yourself to others so that they will have a path back to God, submit to love and humility or take all you like for yourself, conquer and divide the nations make them submit to your authority and die a momentary hero, another dictator in humanities trash bin. Jesus did not submit to the temptations, he instead started a three-year journey that led to a cross, the irony was he did in a strange way become life's hero but not destined to a trash bin but to the righthand of God.

Was it easy, of course not, so in assembly I asked the children to remain silent for just one whole minute. They were so good at it just under 200 silent students and staff, not a peep. I then asked them if they did hear anything, the dinner ladies bagging and crashing around in the kitchen, a plane flying over, some squeaking shoe movement as some shuffled, their own breath and that of others around them, but other than that nothing. I then told them the story of Jesus in the wilderness having had nothing to eat for 40 days, as at that point of human weakness the voice of Satan tempted him. After that I asked the children to see if they could repeat that wonderful minutes silence again, they agreed.

After about ten seconds I revealed a box of assorted biscuits and started pointing at the pictures on the front of the box, chocolate and custard creams biscuits, one reception class young girl whispered, chocolate, she fell for the temptation. Another ten seconds or so and I broke the silence and asked did anyone want a biscuit, nearly the entire hall erupted with yes please. The staff and I laughed as I reminded the children the minute wasn't up yet, 40 seconds they managed, 20 short of success, the temptation of something good had them succumb to the weakness of our human condition to hang it out in the face of many a temptation. It was in some way a beautiful moment, it highlighted that we are indeed weak, and that Jesus is strong. He was offered the world and he choose the cross, he was offered power and he choose the cross, he was offered bread and he choose the stones, yet no stone would keep him from life not even death, the stone of a grave was rolled away as he overcame

that which we cannot and he offers it to us now if we choose him rather than the world. If you are still observing Lent in some way may God give you the strength to carry on and see Jesus more clearly.

Other news this week we had a wonderful first youth club, 12 youngsters enjoying the equipment and company of each other. We now pray for sustainability and greater numbers.

Also we gathered for our first Lent course, the first cup has been filled now we come to the second. If you missed this I have notes just ask and why not come to this week's gathering, there are plenty more cups to come.

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 & Area Dean of Strood

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

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



Copyright (C) 2023 St. Helen's Cliffe. All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

cliffatcliffe@gmail.com

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe](#)

