

**Welcome to our
Weekly News Letter**



St. Helen's 2026

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 8th February 2026

2nd Sunday before Lent

8.30am Holy Communion (*BCP traditional*)
10am Family Service including the renewal of
wedding vows for Dave & Kay.

**Please note our New 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

**Please Note: Reverend Clifford Stocking will be
licensed as the New Area Dean of Strood on the
17th Feb 2026. This will be a private one to one
licensing with the Archdeacon of Rochester at the
archdeanery. Please pray for our Deanery of
Strood as we move forward and plan to meet for
the first time in a long while.**

Dates ahead:

- 7th Feb **monthly prayers** in church 9-10am
- 8th Feb Dave & Kay are having a blessing
during the main service to celebrate their **50th
Wedding Anniversary**. After the service
there will be some nibbles all are welcome to
stay.
- 9th **PCC meeting 7pm St Helen's House**
- 14th **Messy Church 3-5pm**

**Readings for
Sunday:**

**Romans 8: 18-25
& Matthew 6: 25-
end**

- 18th Feb **Ash Wednesday** Service @ 7pm
(time correction)
- 20th Feb **Elvis** is in the building
- 24th Feb **Youth Club** 7-9pm
- 25th Feb 1st **Lent Course This Cup** 'The Kiddush Cup' 7-9pm in church.

New Youth Club

Starting

Tuesday 24th February 2026

Back of St. Helen's Church

7-9pm every Tuesday

For ages 11-16

Table tennis

Snooker/Pool

Darts

Air Hockey

Loads of other games

Music

A time and space just to chat & chill

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 Love'

A New Commandment

14th February 2026

3-5pm



ELVIS

Tribute Night
with Scott Elvis



F R I D A Y
20th FEBRUARY

TICKETS:
£15 ADULTS
£5 UNDER 16s
07778 959003

DOORS OPEN 7PM
PERFORMANCE 7.30PM

BAR (OWN DRINK NOT PERMITTED)
RAFFLE

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

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

An hourglass with blue sand and a blue Bible with gold lettering are positioned above the main title.

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

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 'Trees'

7th February 2026

As I began this week I started with the Radio Two breakfast show as we do each day in our house and on Monday morning the thought for the day was given by Rabbi Miriam Lorie, she was explaining how in the life of Judaism it was the birthday of trees. Is that not wonderful, happy birthday trees.

The Jewish festival is called Tu Bishvat, a Jewish holiday occurring on the 15th day of the Hebrew month of Shevat (falling on February 1st -2nd 2026 all Jewish festivals start on the evening before the day). It serves as an ecological awareness day, emphasizing the duty to care for nature, with traditions including planting trees, eating fruits and holding a specialized seder. As we look at having a Passover Seder during Holy week this year just a reminder that the word Seder simply means order, to have an ordered meal.

I don't know about you but I love trees, I was walking out of the Hundred of Hoo school on Wednesday afternoon having just picked up my oldest Grandson on the school run and as we walked he said to me, Grandpa we must not cut down trees, not sure why he randomly came out with this other than on Wednesday is his forest day at

school, so I guess they had been learning the value of trees. We continued talking and explaining to each other that we need trees to give us the oxygen that we breathe, I love these conversations.

On Thursday morning having dropped my youngest granddaughter off at nursery at one end of the Hundred of Hoo campus myself and my grandson then walked through the grounds past the secondary school up to the other end where the primary school is. As we do we pass a huge Cedar tree and he always climbs the grass bank to look for pine cones, we were in luck we found one. As they fall they are tightly closed, they are quite heavy so just glad they do not fall on our heads, would knock someone out. Having dropped him off I placed it in the side compartment in my car door. There was already one there from the last time we collected one, but due to the warmth of the car it had burst open, and was now quite difficult to remove, but I managed to get it out, and between the individual woody cone leaf's was now revealed its treasure, seeds ready to be planted and germinated thus creating a new life, so tiny yet from a mighty big tree, the miracle of life in my hand.

I love trees for all sorts of reasons, mainly for their varied beauty and as someone who trained at the London College of Furniture straight after school I love wood, exotic woods, the texture, the grain and as I was a musical instrument technician the sound that can come from what is essentially just a wooden box. When you hold a piece of wood in your hands it has a story to tell. I found back in Margate a huge piece of driftwood that was once part of the old pier, it had been buried in the deep sandy depths for years and in a storm was released once again. I dried it out and some of it now sits in my front room as a large frame for my glasswork. It shows the signs of marine worm damage, yet when I cut it, there in the centre the fine grain of teak was still there. When the seed that formed this tree first fell I wasn't born, nor were many of my ancestors and yet today it still tells its story as they are long forgotten.

The influence of trees in our daily lives should never be underestimated, we wouldn't be where we are today without them, they have provided us with food, shelter, construction materials, warmth and power. They form our art and are simply there for our pleasure, yet alone how they provide the same for millions of other creatures, both mammals and birds, reptiles and insects, microorganisms and plenty more chemicals including oxygen. Even the vehicles we drive around in are powered for now by fossil fuels provided by once great forests, from a time when our climate was very different from now.

Without trees we simply wouldn't be here, yet you would be forgiven for thinking otherwise given the rate in which we have decimated them across the globe. Thankfully there are projects both home and abroad to replant the forests we have torn down. Maybe you watched country file last week and how they are planting oaks at Blenheim Palace. What they have realised is that many of their ancient oaks, the oldest about a thousand years old have not had successive replanting and if the woods are to be present for future generations they need to plant thousands of them which they are. Then there is the Great Green Wall project to plant a forest across the sub-Saharan belt of Africa 100 million hectares of life-giving trees.

Humans have destroyed so much but we also have the power to undo all that we have decimated, and nature has and even greater resilience to restore itself if we give it chance. These projects come from human respect and love for the things of this planet that are not us.

The very first commandment God gave the human race was to care for His creation,

it's the opening law of Genesis, the one true Genesis project, thankfully before its to late we are beginning to see evidence of the healing of the planet, we still have a long way to go and we need to educate ourselves of the importance of this restoration but bit by bit hopefully the trees will return.

We then as Christians I believe have lost something very special about these creational celebrations, each day in our morning prayers we are called to remember dead saints, people I have no connection with but as for nature its surrounds me, so I love the idea that trees get a birthday.

I then have done my little bit this week, on a visit to the Homeleigh garden centre I purchased a small tree which I shall plant. If we all did this this week here in the UK we would plant another 60 million plus trees, doesn't take long to undo the damage we have done for so long. Our bricks and mortar obsession will not sustain us, but every tree planted will.

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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Day Off usually a Thursday

Church Wardens:

Robin Thompson

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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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