

**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*

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## Services this week and readings

### **Sunday 8th March 2026** **3rd Sunday of Lent**

**8.30am Holy Communion** (*BCP traditional*)  
**10am Family Service**

**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:**

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- 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.
- 11th Lent course 'The Berakah Cup' 7-9pm
- 14th Messy Church 'Messy Mum's' 3-5pm
- 15th Mothering Sunday
- 16th March **PCC** 7pm

**Readings for  
Sunday: Romans  
5: 1-11 & John 4:  
5-42**

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**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 25<sup>th</sup> February **the Kiddush cup**

Week two 4<sup>th</sup> March **the Haggadah cup**

Week three 11<sup>th</sup> March **the Berakah cup**

Week four 18<sup>th</sup> March **the Hallel cup**

Week five 25<sup>th</sup> 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)
  - 14<sup>th</sup> March
  - 3—5pm



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



**FRIDAY 20<sup>TH</sup> 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





# THE GREAT TOMMY SLEEP OUT

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# **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

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**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.**

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**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](http://www.achurchnearyou.com/church/9932)

## Messy Church New dates below for 2025/2026



### Messy Church Dates for 2025/26

**3-5pm.**

*Dates are:*

- 20<sup>th</sup> September 2025 'Messy Idols' Moses and the law*
- 18<sup>th</sup> October 2025 'Messy Coats' the story of Joseph*
- 15<sup>th</sup> November 2025 'Messy Music' Gideon's army*
- 17<sup>th</sup> January 2026 'Messy Hair' Samson*
- 14<sup>th</sup> February 2026 'Messy Love' a new commandment*
- 14<sup>th</sup> March 2026 'Messy Mothers' a look at biblical mums*
- 3<sup>rd</sup> April 'Messy Good Friday' 10.30am-12 noon*
- 16<sup>th</sup> May 2026 'Messy Gold' King Solomon*
- 20<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:cliffatcliffe@gmail.com)*

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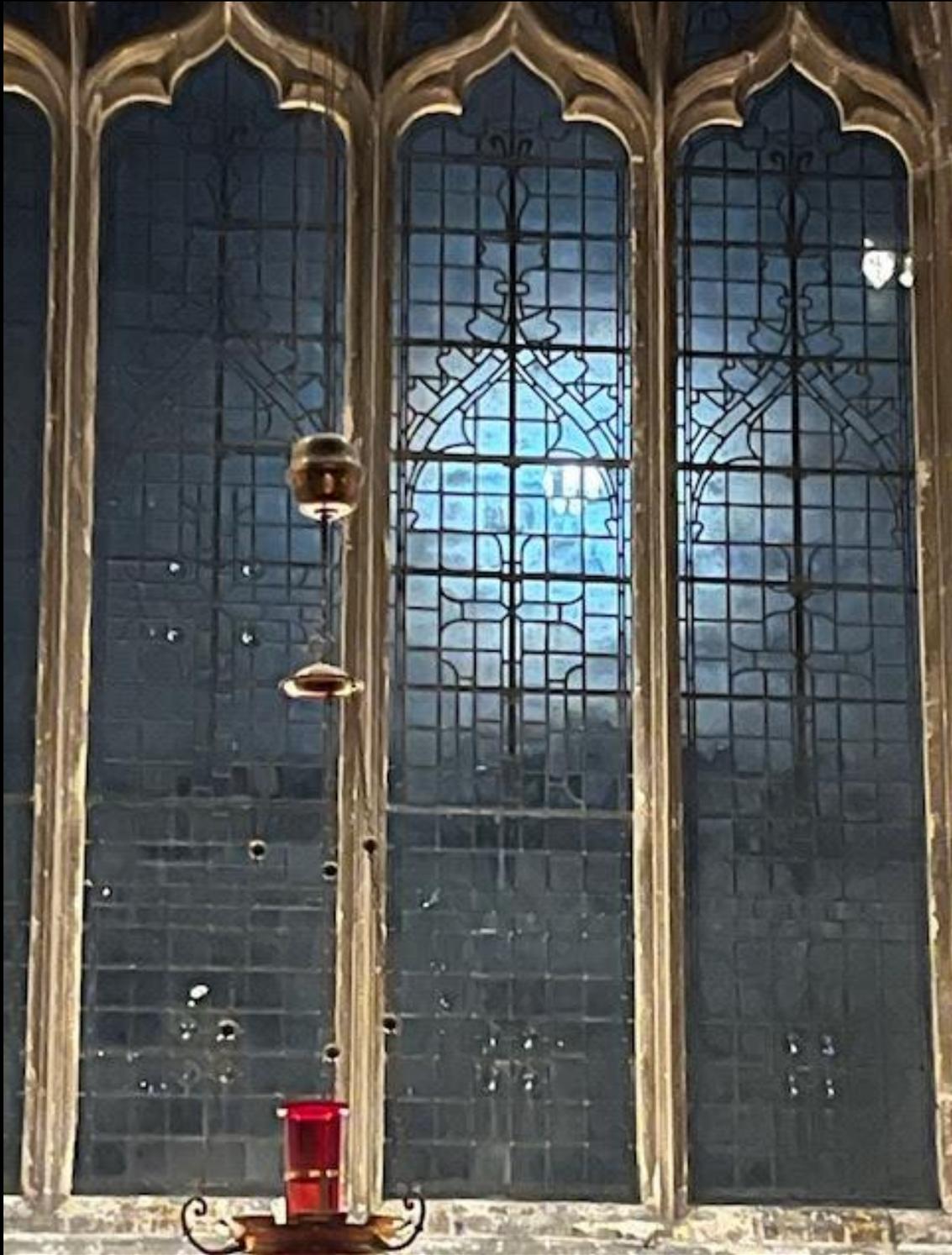


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**Reverend Clifford's Weekly Blog  
The Moon**





**7th March 2026**

'Cathy, take a look at this morning's moon,' I suggested as I had already woken at 5.55 to let the dog out, with the sun rising to the front of the Rectory, so the moon was settling down on the horizon at the back of the house, seemingly floating in an amber glow above the manor house opposite across the fields. It was beautiful, but as I said it was settling, as Cathy got up and peaked out of the curtains looking left then right, 'where' she said. It had gone no longer displaying its stunning reflection of a red sky. This was Tuesday morning and that night the moon would be a New Moon, a full moon, yet on Monday evening not quite full it had displayed for me its wonderful reflective glow. The amazing thing about St. Helen's is that it does not have a stained-glass East window as nearly every other church in England does.

Why is this amazing because rather than the impressions and stories told by stained glass artists, our window tells God's story, it simply reflects creation in all its beauty and in all seasons. The picture is ever changing; there is always something different to see. The East window captures each morning the rising sun which streams misty light down through the nave of the church illuminating the chancel in various natural colours. Most worshippers and visitors never get to see this because our services for the main part of the year start after sunrise. It's a shame really because when you see this you understand why the window is left clear. It is similar but not as stunning the other end, the West end which captures the setting sun at the end of each day, the red and oranges sometimes streaming through. I have with others then felt the need to leave the building and watch the sun setting through the trees and across Old Father Thames.

Monday night though as I came in to prepare for music jam, as the sun had already set it was the moon that shared its light through the East window, I tried to capture its beauty in the photo I have attached but, only a real presence and experience of this captures the true moment of God's handywork. As I sometimes do, I stood in the chancel for a minute, literally in what we call the sanctuary engulfed in nature's light. This light is but a small reminder of God's eternal light that can illuminate every area of the darkness we often find in life's long journey. Alone in the very presence of God, I'm lucky, I have the keys to the church which sadly we have to keep locked. I then can enter in at times that others no longer can. Yet we do not have to have a building and a sanctuary to meet with God and enjoy the wonder of His hand. God is what we call omnipresent, He is everywhere.

When we had finished music jam on Monday evening whilst locking the church up the moon had moved around to the South door on its nightly journey. It was as I said not quite full but almost, and in the warm spring air it shone brightly, surrounded by visible stars and planets. We commented on its wonder, we joked about the moon landings (I'm of the belief that questions them, the only conspiracy theory I buy into) but whatever our part in trying to reach the moon, the vastness of the universe is certainly far beyond our grasp or understanding; it simply belongs to God, it is the heavens, a mystery and a wonder beyond human comprehension.

Whatever you do in this season of Lent may I encourage you to find time to simply pause from the world and its hustle and bustle and just find a few minutes; that's all it takes to marvel at something in creation. Pause and thank God for these small moments of light that dig deep into our darkness. There is much that is dark at this time in humanity's world, a creation of pain and violence, leaving the innocent to bear the burden of its desires to conquer and divide. We all just need moments in our lives to step into God's natural light and remember what is important and how we can share His love with each other so that we all enjoy every sunrise and every sunset. That each full moon still draws us into the mystery and wonder of what we have been given in life itself, a precious gift, cherish then each moment, live it to the full as Jesus offers it to us through himself John 10:10 do not allow the thief, the world to steal from you.

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

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**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](mailto:clifford2567@googlemail.com)

01634 610752 or 07941056237

*Day Off usually a Thursday*

### **Church Wardens:**

#### **Robin Thompson**

[kentstamps@outlook.com](mailto:kentstamps@outlook.com)

01634 221497

#### **Paul Sutton**

[paulsubtle@gmail.com](mailto:paulsubtle@gmail.com)

07740867238

**Licensed Lay Minister**

**Dave Green**

[pewsey54@btinternet.com](mailto: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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