

ST HILDA'S ASHFORD



THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10AM 14TH DECEMBER 2025

The Sunday service is livestreamed and can be viewed later our Facebook page

https://www.facebook.com/StHildaAshford/live_videos

or see: <https://www.youtube.com/@sthildachurch8263>

Welcome to St Hilda's. We are delighted that you are able to share in our morning worship today,

If you are new to the church please do take time to introduce yourself to the people at the back of the church and to the ministry team at the end of the service. We would be delighted to meet you.

If you are able please join us for tea or coffee after the service so we can get to know one another.

Should you need any help during the service please do not hesitate to ask those around you and we are sure they will be able to support you.

There is a toddlers' corner in the north aisle which young children are very welcome to use, and there activity sheets are available to occupy them.

Please indicate to the priest if you want a gluten free wafer during communion

We encourage parishioners to donate via PARISH GIVING:

<https://www.parishgiving.org.uk/donors/find-your-parish/ashford-st-hilda-ashford/>



St Hilda's is a Registered Charity No. 1134119

CCLI License no. 708985

One License no. A-739460

Copyright Archbishops' Council of the Church of England

THE GATHERING

Introit Hymn

Hark the glad sound! the Saviour comes,
The Saviour promised long!
Let every heart prepare a throne,
And every voice a song.

He comes the prisoners to release,
In Satan's bondage held;
The gates of brass before him burst,
The iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind,
The bleeding soul to cure;
And with the treasures of his grace
Enrich the humble poor.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of peace,
Thy welcome shall proclaim,
And heaven's eternal arches ring
With thy beloved name.

[Philip Doddridge]

The Greeting

In the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

All Amen

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

All and also with you.

Words of welcome are said. We pray with Junior Church.

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Third Candle

The third candle is pink and symbolizes joy. It is called the “Shepherd’s Candle,” and is pink because rose is a liturgical colour for joy. The third Sunday of Advent is Gaudete Sunday and is meant to remind us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, as well as the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent.

We light the first three candles

Prayer of Preparation

All Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayers of Penitence

Let us hear our Lord’s blessing on those who follow him.

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
All for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
All for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
All for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst after righteousness,
All for they shall be satisfied.

Blessed are the merciful,
All for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
All for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
All for they shall be called children of God.

Blessed are those who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake,
All for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

When the Lord comes,
he will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness,
and will disclose the purposes of the heart.

(Silent reflection)

In the light of Christ let us confess our sins.

**All O King enthroned on high,
filling the earth with your glory:
holy is your name,
Lord God almighty.
In our sinfulness we cry to you
to take our guilt away,
and to cleanse our lips to speak your word,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
who in his great mercy
has promised forgiveness of sins
to all those who with heartfelt repentance and true faith
turn to him: have mercy on you,
pardon and deliver you from all your sins,
confirm and strengthen you in all goodness,
and bring you to everlasting life,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The Collect -

The Collect for the Week is said after a moment of silence

God for whom we watch and wait,
you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son:
give us courage to speak the truth,
to hunger for justice,
and to suffer for the cause of right,
with Jesus Christ our Lord.

All Amen.

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

First Reading -Isaiah ch 35 vv 1 - 10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
'Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.'

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;

then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveller, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the Lord shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

At the end the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

New Testament Reading - James ch 5 vv 7 - 10

Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord.
The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth,
being patient with it until it receives the early and the late
rains. You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for

the coming of the Lord is near. Beloved, do not grumble against one another, so that you may not be judged. See, the Judge is standing at the doors! As an example of suffering and patience, beloved, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.

At the end the reader may say

This is the word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

Gradual Hymn

Thy kingdom come, O God,
Thy rule, O Christ, begin;
Break with thine iron rod
The tyrannies of sin.

Where is thy reign of peace
And purity and love?
When shall all hatred cease,
As in the realms above?

When comes the promised time
That war shall be no more,
When lust, oppression, crime,
Shall flee thy face before?

We pray thee Lord, arise,
And come in thy great might;
Revive our longing eyes,
Which languish for thy sight.

O'er lands both near and far
Thick darkness broodeth yet:
Arise, O morning Star,
Arise, and never set.

[Lewis Hensley]

Gospel Reading - Matthew ch 11 vv 2 - 11

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

All Glory to you, O Lord.

When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offence at me.'

As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: 'What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you."

Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

After the reading:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

All Praise to you, O Christ.

Taizé chant: **Laudate omnes gentes laudate dominum**
 Laudate omnes gentes laudate dominum

The Sermon – *All sit*

The Creed

Let us declare our faith in God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

**All I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Prayers of Intercession

In joyful expectation of his coming to our aid we pray to Jesus.

The prayers end with the following:

Merciful Father,
**All accept these prayers
for the sake of your Son
our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.**

THE LITURGY OF THE SACRAMENT

The Peace – All stand

In the tender mercy of our God,
the dayspring from on high shall break upon us,
to give light to those who dwell in darkness
and in the shadow of death
and to guide our feet into the way of peace.

All The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.

All may exchange a sign of peace.

Offertory Hymn

During this hymn a collection will be taken. You can use the QR code on page 2, and on the back of the chairs, for online donations.

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord:
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of his word;
In God my Saviour shall my heart rejoice.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name:
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
His mercy sure, from age to age the same;
His holy name, the Lord, the mighty One.**

**Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might:
Powers and dominions lay their glory by;
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.**

**Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word:
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
Tell out my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and for evermore.**

[Timothy Dudley-smith © 1961 Dudley-Smith, Timothy]

The table is prepared, and bread and wine are placed upon it.

As this bread was scattered
and then gathered and made one,
so may your Church be gathered into your Kingdom.

All Glory to you, O God, for ever.

Wisdom has built her a house;
she has mixed her wine; she has set her table.

All Glory to you, O God, for ever. Amen.

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you

All and also with you

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give thanks and praise.

You are worthy of our thanks and praise,
Lord God of truth,
for by the breath of your mouth
you have spoken your word,
and all things have come into being.

You fashioned us in your image
and placed us in the garden of your delight.
Though we chose the path of rebellion
you would not abandon your own.

Again and again you drew us into your covenant of grace.
You gave your people the law and taught us by your prophets
to look for your reign of justice, mercy and peace.

As we watch for the signs of your kingdom on earth,
we echo the song of the angels in heaven,
evermore praising you and singing:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
All God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Lord God, you are the most holy one,
enthroned in splendour and light,
yet in the coming of your Son Jesus Christ
you reveal the power of your love
made perfect in our human weakness.

Embracing our humanity,
Jesus showed us the way of salvation;
loving us to the end,
he gave himself to death for us;
dying for his own,
he set us free from the bonds of sin,
that we might rise and reign with him in glory.

On the night he gave up himself for us all
he took bread and gave you thanks;
he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying:
*Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you;
do this in remembrance of me.*

In the same way, after supper
he took the cup and gave you thanks;
he gave it to them, saying:
*Drink this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant
which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins.
Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.*

Therefore we proclaim the death
that he suffered on the cross,
we celebrate his resurrection, his bursting from the tomb,
we rejoice that he reigns at your right hand on high
and we long for his coming in glory.

As we recall the one, perfect sacrifice of our redemption,
Father, by your Holy Spirit let these gifts of your creation
be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ;
form us into the likeness of Christ
and make us a perfect offering in your sight.

Look with favour on your people
and in your mercy hear the cry of our hearts.
Bless the earth, heal the sick,
let the oppressed go free
and fill your Church with power from on high.

Gather your people from the ends of the earth
to feast with Hilda and all your saints
at the table in your kingdom,
where the new creation is brought to perfection
in Jesus Christ our Lord;

by whom, and with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be yours, almighty Father,
for ever and ever.

All **Amen.**

(Silent reflection)

The Lord's Prayer

Awaiting his coming in glory, in the language of your heart
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

We say the Lord's Prayer

Breaking of the Bread

The president breaks the consecrated bread.

We break this bread
to share in the body of Christ.

All **Though we are many, we are one body,
because we all share in one bread.**

Agnus Dei

Jesus, Lamb of God
All **have mercy upon us.**

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy upon us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us peace

Giving of Communion

The president says the invitation to communion

Draw near with faith.

Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ
which he gave for you,
and his blood which he shed for you.

Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you,
and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving.

All **Most merciful Lord,
your love compels us to come in.
Our hands were unclean, our hearts were unprepared;
we were not fit even
to eat the crumbs from under your table.
But you, Lord, are the God of our salvation,
and share your bread with sinners.**

**So cleanse and feed us
with the precious body and blood of your Son,
that he may live in us and we in him;
and that we, with the whole company of Christ,
may sit and eat in your kingdom. Amen.**

The president and people receive communion.

All confirmed Anglicans, as well as all baptized Christians who truly believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and are in a state of grace, are welcome to receive communion, provided they would normally do so in their own church. If you are not receiving communion today, you are warmly invited to come forward for a blessing; please indicate this by bringing your order of service with you.

Communion Hymns

**O thou, who at thy Eucharist didst pray
That all thy Church might be for ever one,
Grant us at every Eucharist to say
With longing heart and soul, "Thy will be done."
Oh, may we all one Bread, one Body be,
One through this Sacrament of unity.**

**For all thy Church, O Lord, we intercede;
Make thou our sad divisions soon to cease;
Draw us the nearer each to each, we plead,
By drawing all to thee, O Prince of Peace:
Thus may we all one Bread, one Body be,
One through this Sacrament of unity.**

**We pray thee too for wanderers from thy fold;
O bring them back, good Shepherd of the sheep,
Back to the faith which saints believed of old,
Back to the Church which still that faith doth keep:
Soon may we all one Bread, one Body be,
One through this Sacrament of unity.**

**So, Lord, at length when sacraments shall cease,
May we be one with all thy Church above,
One with thy saints in one unbroken peace,
One with thy saints in one unbounded love;
More blessèd still, in peace and love to be
One with the Trinity in Unity.**

[William Turton]

**Bread of the world in mercy broken,
Wine of the soul in mercy shed,
By whom the words of life were spoken,
And in whose death our sins are dead:
Look on the heart by sorrow broken,
Look on the tears by sinners shed,
And be thy feast to us the token
That by thy grace our souls are fed!**

[Reginal Heber]

**Strengthen for service, Lord, the hands
That holy things have taken;
Let ears that now have heard thy songs
To clamour never waken.**

**Lord, may the tongues which 'Holy' sang
Keep free from all deceiving;
The eyes which saw thy love be bright,
Thy blessèd hope perceiving.**

**The feet that tread thy holy courts
From light do thou not banish;
The bodies by thy body fed
With thy new life replenish.**

[Syrian, C4th tr. C. W. Humphreys and Percy Dearmer]

Taizé chant: **Confitemini Domino quoniam bonus,
Confitemini Domino Alleluia**

Prayers after Communion

Silence is kept after which the post-Communion collect is said.

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts;
kindle in us the fire of your Spirit
that when your Christ comes again
we may shine as lights before his face;
who is alive and reigns now and for ever.

All Amen.

**All Almighty God,
we thank you for feeding us
with the body and blood of your Son Jesus Christ.
Through him we offer you our souls and bodies
to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out in the power of your Spirit
to live and work to your praise and glory.
Amen.**

<i>Banns of Marriage and Notices - see pages 22-23</i>

THE DISMISSAL

St. Hilda's prayer

**All May I be equal to your hope of me.
If I am weak, I ask that you send only what I can bear.
If I am strong, may I shrink from no testing
that shall yield increase of strength
or win security for my spirit.
I trust in thee, O Lord. I say, 'Thou art my God.'
My times are in thy hand.
Amen**

Blessing

May God the Father, judge all-merciful,
make us worthy of a place in his kingdom.

All Amen.

May God the Son, coming among us in power,
reveal in our midst the promise of his glory.

All Amen.

May God the Holy Spirit make us steadfast in faith,
joyful in hope and constant in love.

All Amen.

and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

Our Lord says, 'I am coming soon.'

All Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

May the Lord, when he comes,

All find us watching and waiting. Amen

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All In the name of Christ. Amen.

Recessional Hymn

**Will you come and follow me
if I but call your name?
Will you go where you don't know,
and never be the same?
Will you let my love be shown,
will you let my name be known,
Will you let my life be grown
in you, and you in me?**

Will you leave yourself behind
if I but call your name?
Will you care for cruel and kind,
and never be the same?
Will you risk the hostile stare
should your life attract or scare,
Will you let me answer prayer
in you, and you in me?

Will you let the blinded see
if I but call your name?
Will you set the pris'ners free,
and never be the same?
Will you kiss the leper clean
and do such as this unseen,
And admit to what I mean
in you, and you in me?

Will you love the 'you' you hide
if I but call your name?
Will you quell the fear inside,
and never be the same?
Will you use the faith you've found
to reshape the world around,
Through my sight and touch and sound
in you, and you in me?

Lord, your summons echoes true
when you but call my name.
Let me turn and follow you,
and never be the same.
In your company I'll go
where your love and footsteps show.
Thus I'll move and live and grow
in you, and you in me.

[©: 1987 WGRG, c/o Iona Community, Glasgow, Scotland]

Please join us for tea or coffee after the service

Please remember in your prayers this week:

THOSE FOR WHOM OUR PRAYERS HAVE BEEN ASKED:

Ben Bishop, Stan Bishop, AnneMarie Bough, Wendy Butt, Tony Diggins, Sheila Freeman, Gemma Hart, John Hunt, Pat Kyle, Ray Nation, John Parish, Massimo Pellizzari, Dorothy Reid, Elsie Stone, Claire West, Jeremy Weston, Delia Woodley, Abby, Ben, Darren, Fiona, Mandy, Pauline, Peter, Ramin, Scarlett

THE RECENTLY DEPARTED:

June Hands, Julie Carr

THOSE IN OUR MEMORIAL BOOK THIS WEEK:

Herbert Jack Cole, Kathleen Ivy Benge, Violet Varley Pradey, Florence May Oldfield, William Arthur Hearn, Barry Bedford, Paula Scotchford, Gordon Firth, Sydney Albert William Byne, Tom Pradey, Ronald Francis, Lionel Eldred Fulton, Thomas John Taverner, Nan Purvey, Yerolemos G Pouffou, Cyril Holliday, Verna Rose Bembridge, Norman Alfred Why, Flo Dobbie, Florence Louisa Fox, Frederick Bleckwen, Lucy Danielle Rose Rouse

**Pray for our ALMA twin Parish, Holy Cross Murrupula,
and for Fr. Domingos and his family**

also for Christians facing persecution in countries such as North Korea, Somalia, Libya, Eritrea, Yemen, Iran and Nigeria.

for more details see <https://www.opendoorsuk.org/>

Pray for the areas of the world where there is conflict, including:
the Middle East including Gaza, the West Bank, Israel and Iran;
India and Pakistan; Ukraine and Russia; Sudan; Myanmar.

Advent and Christmas Services in December

Sunday 14 th	16:00	Contemporary Carol Service with the schools
Sunday 21 st	10:00	Crib Service
	18:00	Traditional Carol Service
Wednesday 24 th	23:00	Midnight Mass
Thursday 25 th	10:00	Christmas Day service

NOTICES

The deadline for items for the Service Sheet is noon on Thursday.

Send to **communication@sthilda.org**

***** Banns of Marriage *****

Esther Sopuluchi Oloko and Onyekachi Julius Anozie

3rd January 2026 - Second time of asking

Bible Study Group - Monday 15th December at 7.30pm

We continue our Advent study in the Hawley Room in the church hall.
All are welcome to join us.

Wednesday Eucharist at 11 am followed by **Community Lunch** (noon)

Yaldā at Yuletide – Saturday 20th December at 7pm

Our 2025 Christmas fundraising event. An evening of Persian food followed by carol singing - all in church.

Tickets £12 per adult, children under 12 go free and Nick's Bar will be open.

Crib Service – Sunday 21st December at 10am

If you are feeling brave enough please could you wear a headdress which represents a character from the Nativity Story. Listen carefully to our story and join us at the altar when your character is mentioned.
Thank you.

Young Adults Group Christmas Party – Sunday 21st December at 7.30pm

In the church hall.

A Party for the wedding of Esther and Julius

Saturday 3rd January: 10.45am arrival

for live streaming of the service from Nigeria at 11am GMT
followed by a finger buffet and cake.

Wedding clothes and fabulous hats and fascinators essential!

RSVP to **warden@sthilda.org** or sign the sheet at the back of church
by 25th December 2024

Confirmation Service – Sunday 17th May 2026

Season 1

Classes for the **Youth Group** (in person) will be held on Wednesdays
28th January, 11th February, 4th March, 18th March.

Classes for the **Senior Group** (on-line) will be held on Wednesdays
4th February, 25th February, 11th March. 25th March.

The Parish Office : Office hours are

Mon: by appointment only,

Tue: 9am-6pm, Wed: 12 noon-4:00pm, Thur: 9am-6pm

Contact Information

Vicar

Fr. Julius Anozie

vicar@sthilda.org

+447359 876498

Lay Minister

Rosalyn Young

rosalyn@sthilda.org

Churchwardens

Alison Garner

Stuart Young

Email: warden@sthilda.org

PCC Secretary

Tyler Pannone

Email: secretary@sthilda.org

PCC Treasurer

Khadijeh

treasurer@sthilda.org

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Nick Gething

safeguarding@sthilda.org

Church Hall Bookings

Chris Davenport

01784 252170

The Parish Office:

St Hilda's Church, Stanwell Road, Ashford, Middlesex
TW15 3QL

Telephone: 01784 253525 Email: office@sthilda.org

Notices etc. Email: communcation@sthilda.org

Website: www.sthilda.org

Charity Number: 1134119

CCLI: 708985

Follow us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/StHildaAshford/>

Follow us on X <https://twitter.com/StHildaAshford>