



February 2026

Thanks to Saint Valentine (who actually met a really nasty end) the next few weeks will see the shops full of chocolates and roses and greetings cards which are liberally scattered with love hearts!

Tradition has it that St Valentine's mission involved marrying Christian couples according to the rites of the church. Making possible these marriages is part of the reason he is patron of lovers and happy marriages. Of course, St Valentine's own great love was Christ and it was evangelising that got him arrested. Legend says he was released the first time he was arrested because he cured the judge's daughter of blindness. The judge and all his household – forty-four people in all – were baptised. St Valentine continued to evangelise and the second time he was arrested he was martyred.

Several centuries later Hallmark greetings cards brought love hearts and roses into fashion. Now there are a million and one worldly ways to show someone you care/ love them, especially if you watch the adverts in between TV programmes.

Stating the obvious there are quite a few verses in the Bible about love— none of which mention chocolates and flowers. Love in the Bible is something else again.

Most of all in our walk with Christ, we need to think about how can we draw others into the Love of Christ and how can we practice it on a daily basis?

There was also a phase with Valentine Cards that they should be unsigned or secret. We don't need to keep the love of God secret we need to let everyone know!

⁷ Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. ⁸ Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. ⁹ This is how God showed his love among us: he sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his

one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. ¹⁰ This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. ¹¹ Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ¹² No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

1 John 4 v 7-12



St Valentine ended up being martyred even after turning most of his village to Christ. He would not stop speaking of the Love of God and testifying to the way God loved him. If we think that we lack 'a testimony' perhaps we can look at what we have been saved from. What would we be without God in our lives and what changes has He brought about?

1 Peter 3 v 15

"But in your hearts revere Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect,"

A good way to practice this would be to come to the 2nd Sunday evening service where Testimonies are shared and we encourage one another to see the goodness of God and to share His love with everyone.



Minister

REV
NATHAN GORDON

Also find Sittingbourne Baptist Church on Facebook and Instagram for updates and information about our activities and our live streamed worship.



CHURCH LEADERSHIP TEAM



RICKY GROSVENOR -
YOUTH PASTOR



FLAVIE BALLIET



PAUL BLAKE



DAVID CASSE



ADRIAN
CHEESMAN



CRESTA DUROJAIYE
CHURCH
ADMINISTRATOR



LISA
PENNINGTON



BEX RATCHFORD



RICHARD
SILLS
Responsible for
Safeguarding



HYLIK
ZINGSTRA
TREASURER

Services for the month of February Soul Detox continues

	Morning Service 10.30am	Evening Service 6.30pm
1st	"Is Comparison affecting your joy?" Rev Nathan Gordon	"Often Avoided Topics" Rev Nathan Gordon
8th 	"Is it Christian –like to block and delete?" Rev Nathan Gordon	Stories of Faith Testimony Service Baptistry covers off at the end please.
15th 	" Are you rich in your soul?" Rev Nathan Gordon	Praise and Worship led by Terri
22nd	Children's Church Led with Bex and the team	The Encounter—Music and Prayer

Stationery not stationary! Notes from the Office.....



As far as office work goes January has been quite exciting– for those of you who have ever spotted any lines and patches in the print quality– we have had a new printer installed!! Despite looking very similar there are one or two tweaks and differences to learn. Hopefully 'normal service' will not be interrupted and the clarity and quality of the print will be better for everyone to read.

Can I remind everyone to have a think about how you would like to celebrate 160 years of SBC.

So far we have booked in a special outreach presentation called "Jesus the Evidence" Which will be on Saturday 12th September. Ideas on how to encourage people to attend are always welcome. Also pray for your neighbours and who you can ask to come along.

Having narrowly missed out on hosting the UK paper Mill Silver Band at the end of 2025 it would be lovely to have a visit from them during the year!

Any other ideas you may have can be sent to the office, or to Cresta Durojaiye our administrator.

I would also like to appeal for contributions to this Magazine– if you have a chat to someone, could it turn into an encouraging interview? Are you a part of the creative writing group? Do you write a Bible journal we could have a few notes from? Please get in touch on paper or online

office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk

With Love and Prayers, **Bev**



Just a couple of items to mention for the Youth:-

Youth Alpha continues on a Wednesday evening starting at 6pm for food and then video clip discussion from around 7pm onwards. Anyone of secondary school age is welcome and you can catch up if you have a missed a few!

Limitless Camp is happening again this year . 5-10th August including travel. The cost per person is £214 Please speak to Ricky if you need to start paying in on a monthly basis. £30 ish per month seems more achievable than all at once.

If you missed the last Youth Service you may not know that the lovely Dani has been called to "Go!" (mentioned elsewhere in this magazine.) She will not be worshipping with us on a regular basis, although she is welcome to pop back whenever she wants! As her sending family let's pray God will guide her and bless her wherever she goes. May she discern His Will for her life going forward and bless her lovely skills and spiritual gifts wherever she puts them to use.

Our Church magazine is published once a month usually just before the beginning of the month – if you have poems, articles, testimony stories or topics you wish to include please do send them into **Office.manger@sbc-church.org.uk**

As part of our safeguarding policy we have to maintain DBS checks on everyone who works with the youth or children– if you get an e-mail reminder please can you make an appointment with Bev to verify your documents as soon as possible. Times available are 9am-3pm Mon., Tues., Thurs., 5-9pm Wednesdays and 9-2 Fridays. (Bev) 01795-420990 Office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk Thank you so much to everyone who responds to the reminder e-mails. It is all for free too!

Testimony time

January 8th Bright Hour had its first meeting of the new year with a good fair few braving the windy weather to gather again at church. Nathan Gordon joined the group to share Communion and to encourage the ladies with a few words. He shared ideas on God's plan for the year ahead and how God can use us to witness to our friends and neighbours. This year at SBC there is a real focus on discipleship and changing our lives for the better no matter what age we are.



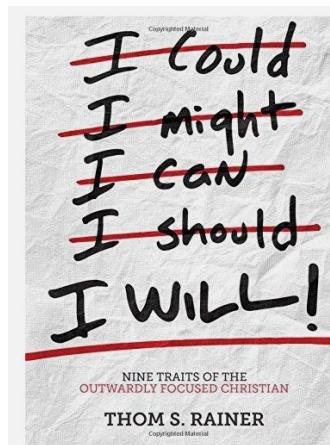
Bright hour has a wider age range than you might think— ladies of any age are welcome— just a lot more ladies of younger age ranges are at work in the afternoon. Kuda drops in depending on her shift pattern !! Dianne explains that- "we come and praise and worship the Lord. We have different speakers, sometimes Christian missions, other times some one from the church and have lots of fellowship with each other."

Some of the ladies have been attending church for over 7 decades and there is such a wealth of wisdom to draw on if you can make one of the meetings at 2pm on a Thursday. They always have nice teas and coffees and plenty of biscuits!!

Focus on Books

Coming soon to our small group meetings and to our Sunday sermon series is this challenging book by Thom Rainer. "I Will" nine traits of the outwardly focused Christian.

Some of you may remember "I am a Church member" which we studied a few years ago as a whole church. This could be classed as the follow on. Rainer challenges our commitment to our local church as we use the gifts God has given us, and our attitude to what happens there on a daily basis. Do we treat church like a club we have joined and see what we can get out of each service or are we more like an active limb?! Do we take responsibility to contribute to our local body of Christ? Do we give Time and Love to our church and express those to the other members? Do we contribute financially and physically? The thought process, can be as easy as, do we eat all the biscuits or do we bring them?



Sometimes, "I Will" is an uncomfortable read. Has our attitude lapsed? Have we according to Revelation; lost our first love? Do we hold grudges or like Nathan spoke about last week—do we use lethal language against our siblings in Christ?

Read it and be challenged, study it and be changed.

Don't forget "Soul Detox" by Craig Groeschel which is featuring in our January— February Sermon series.

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
					1 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am Morning service- "Is comparison affecting your joy?" Nathan Gordon 	
2	3 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting 10-12 noon A.B.C. 10-12 Choir 7:30pm Deacons' meeting 7:15-8:30pm A.A. Recovery	4 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting 1:30 & 7:15pm Church based housegroup 6pm Youth Alpha & Video	5 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting 2pm Bright Hour 6:30pm Youth Band	6 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting 9:30am Pastoral/ team meeting 9:30-11:30am Café 3:16 12-2pm Glory girls 5-6:30pm JAM CLUB 7-9pm Underground	7 10am-12noon Contact Centre 1-2-30pm Outreach Feedback & prayer in Hub 2-4pm Crochet Group- Lounge	8 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am - "Is it Christian to block and delete?" Nathan Gordon and Communion—rescheduled from 15th 6:30pm- Stories of faith- lids to be lifted and laid out in sanctuary! 
9	10 10-12 noon A.B.C. 10am-12pm Choir 7:15-8:30pm A.A.Recovery	11 6pm Youth Alpha -Food Video 7pm	12 10.45am Woodstock Faith talks 2pm Bright Hour 6:30pm Youth Band	13 9:30-11:30am Café 3:16 12-2pm Glory girls 5-6:30pm JAM CLUB 7-9pm Underground	14 10am-12 noon Contact Centre 11-1 Outreach on High St. 1-2:30pm Feedback & Prayer	15 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am Morning service- "Are you rich in your soul?" Nathan Gordon and Baptisms 6:30pm Praise & Worship
16	17 7:15-8:30pm A.A. Recovery	18 1:30 & 7:15pm Church based housegroup 6pm Youth Alpha &Video???	19 9am CTIS Prayer time 10:45am Woodstock service	20 9:30am Pastoral team meeting 9:30-11:30am Café 3:16 12-2pm Glory Girls	21 10am-12 noon Contact Centre 10:30am - Youth led CHURCH MEETING AFTER AM SERVICE 6:30pm Encounter	22 10 am Prayer in Hub 10:30am - Youth led CHURCH MEETING AFTER AM SERVICE
23	24 10-12 noon A.B.C. 10-12am Choir 7:15-8:30pm A.A. Recovery	25 2:30pm Pine Lodge 6pm Youth Alpha & Video 7.30pm Church Prayer Meeting	26 10:45am Woodstock service 2pm Bright Hour 6:30pm Youth Band 7.30pm SBC Choir	27 9:30-11:30am Café 3:16 12-2pm Glory Girls 5-6:30pm JAM CLUB 7-9pm Underground	28 10-12 noon Contact Centre 2pm Women in Prayer	

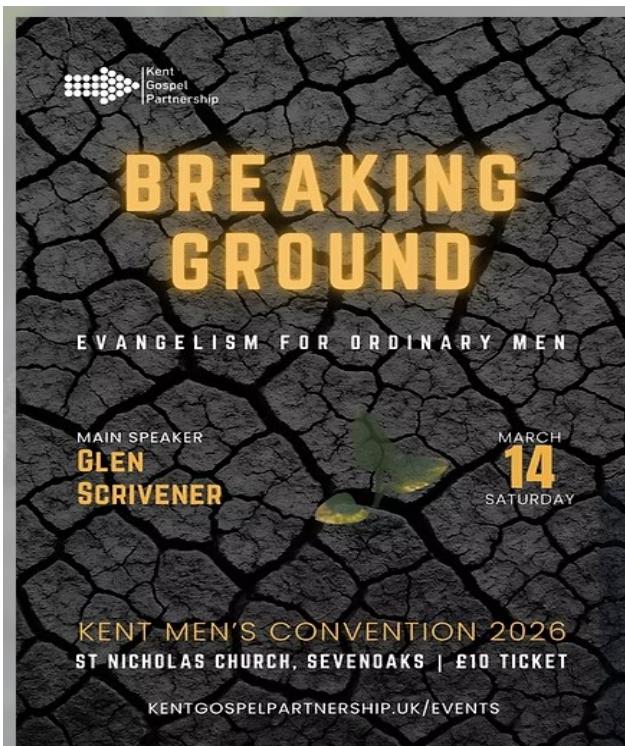


12-14th February Platform flooring going down.
15th February morning service includes 4 baptisms (Rejoice!)
Sunday February 22nd– Church Members Meeting- held after the morning service.
1st March 3-4 more baptisms

Saturday 14th March.

Church members should be aware that our regional minister Joth Hunt is hosting a Bible Study at 2pm reviewing the teaching about Women in Ministry in the Bible. This is part of a process for Church members of Learning, Discussing and Deciding. Those who are not church members are very welcome to join the Bible Study, but will not ultimately be a part of the decision making process.

160th Celebrations:- Don't forget to get in touch with Cresta and suggest how we can celebrate 160 years of SBC. We can eat, pray and worship together in so many ways! The leadership team would like to rededicate the whole building and look around at how we can be a bigger part of the Sittingbourne Community. What ideas do you have about Outreach, and links which could be made? Contact Bev in the office or Cresta our administrator and let's make a big Splash (as Baptists!) Some items will take a bit of planning so do get your ideas in soon.



Just in case this isn't in your diary yet! Churches Together do this every year and we are partly responsible for the procession up from St. Michael's church and the outdoor service.

What is happening and Why?

A strange title you may think, but just look at the world at the start of this year 2026.

I must admit that it is a “frightening” start, with world leaders that have started wars, over the past few years, and now another world leader wanting to do the same, so where does that leave us as Christians, and are we frightened about the future? Actually, I am not frightened about what is happening, but I am worried! What about you? If you take a look at Matthew 24, you will see that the disciples of Jesus had the same concerns. You might like to read that before you read the rest of this article.

Jesus tells the disciples about wars, disasters and things about “The End Times”.

There are lots of references to the “End Times” in both the Old Testament and the New Testament, you might like to look them up too.

What about the Commandments? Not just the ten, but others too. Jesus brought the 10 Commandments down to just 2. “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and, Love your neighbour as yourself.”

“What do the commandments have to do with the “End Times”? I hear you say. I’ll be quite honest, I don’t know **but**, If you read Micah 6 verse 8, I believe that it is another commandment. To save you looking, here it is in the NIV....

....”He has shown you, O mortal, what *is* good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God”

I believe that this is a good “command” to keep, and quite fitting for now, 2026, and for the rest of our lives with Jesus.

So, are you “frightened”, or worried about the future? I would just like to leave you with another verse from the New Testament, Romans 8 verse 31...”What then will we say of these things? If God is for us, who can be against us?”

Yours, in the love of Christ,

Grahame.

Church Office details **01795 420990**

Office hours: Mon, Tue & Thurs
9am-3pm Wed 5-9pm, Fri 9-2pm.

Office Manager: Bev Sills
office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk

Email: office@sbc-church.org.uk
Web: www.sbc-church.org.uk

Here we go with Birthday and Wedding Anniversary mentions!



Birthdays pop up on Face book but do let me know the Anniversaries as I need a little reminder! It is better by e-mail than on a Sunday!

February

2nd Ricky
15th Savannah
19th Jane P and Lisa E
22nd Hylko
25th Doris

Don’t forget to send in your special mentions for the February Magazine— The deadline will have to be 26th February ready for the weekend publication. Then we can all pray for you too.

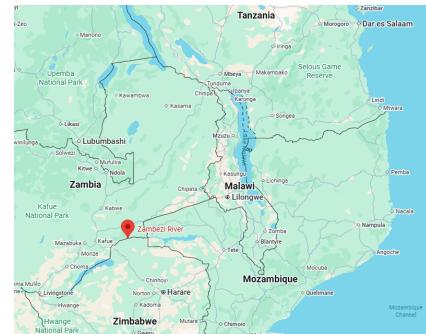
SBC Church had a visit!

This week the Bright Hour had Mike from Zambezi Mission.

Zambezi mission is 130 years old! Right from the start the premise was that Africa was for Africans! ZM built schools, they built Churches, they built classrooms but to be peopled by the local people. They also now cover some of Malawi and northern Mozambique.

Their desire is to build churches, to preach the gospel, to create sustainable prayer

Partners! Sign up on <https://zambesimission.org/get-involved/pray/>



If you wish to sign up for email prayer diaries, they can be large print if you put LP next to your request. ZM have offices in York in the UK and in Blantyre in Malawi. Mike added that there are so many mission organisations globally that you just need to find the one which suits you best that you can support in prayer and possibly financially, but even if you go on their email list, you will not be pestered for finances.

He spoke to the biblical mandate of "Go!"

Mike read from Acts 1 vs 1 to 9; Matthew 28 vs 16 to 20 and Genesis 12 vs 1 to 3.

Some people are told to stay; some people are told to wait, and some people are told to go! Mike settled into his role two years ago and also travelled to Malawi to see what the mission was all about. He made three points about Mission work.

1. When we are told to go it is always at a cost .

You leave your security behind you and you feel the loss, especially if you leave behind family and friends. God will support you and we can offer hope by our prayer support and we should not be anxious. The Lord will be with you- the folk around you may question your decision but you have to 'deny the world and take up your cross' Luke 9 verse 16.

2. You will not be alone.

John 14 verse 16 God provides 'another helper'. The Holy Spirit helps us when we witness to those around us, he makes us aware of special needs, equips us and makes us able to cross cultural boundaries. He's already preparing the heart of those around us, convicting us of what we must do.

3. When you go it will be worth it.

We get glimpses of heaven when we work for God in this life. God will provide for our needs. We will gain new family in Christ.

There are five main points for Zambesi mission gospel preaching which they fulfilled by teaching, and Bible colleges to raise up pastors and leaders; disciple making they work with students: Everything has to be sustainable so that they can empower future generations. In their economy, some farming and food production is required. There are also different feeding programmes and pastors are encouraged to have goats and chickens and some arable land, everything that they can to sustain themselves. Their wage may only be £10 a week in an economy where a jar of Nescafe coffee costs £16.



Those who are based in this country learn from those who are living in the Zambia and Zambezi and Malawi and Mozambique. For example when was the last 24 hour prayer meeting that we attended?! Yet they are very

common-place in Africa. Prayer for healing is the first resort because there's no medicine. Not the last resort after you've tried the Doctors, the pharmacy and 111.

ZM have Bible saving schemes so currently they can provide a Bible for £11 so they encourage the person in Malawi etc. to save up a pound, which is an awful lot of saving and then they are sponsored for £10 from the UK. Anything that they do has got to be sustainable, to lead to more disciples, more preachers and more gospel based leaders. ZM support 'School' based training. Church leaders need to be good administrators, good financial managers of the Church that they have, and of course Bible based teachers.