



March 2026

What is Lent all about?

After Pancake Day– or Shrove Tuesday many of you will recognize that we are in a period of Lent. This has traditionally been a time of fasting or giving things up. People still give up chocolate or a greasy foodstuff they are fond of and then indulge in it as part of their Easter celebration!

The forty days (roughly) of Lent represents the period Jesus spent in the wilderness fasting before he began his Ministry time. In Luke 4v 1 we see Jesus after his baptism "Full of the Holy Spirit" being led into the desert where he prayed and fasted for a long period of time and then faced being tempted by Satan. Satan's attempt to persuade him to leave to one side God's Mission for Salvation does not work.

Jesus rebukes him, quotes scriptures at him and he is forced to depart and wait until he thinks he can have another opportunity- "an opportune time"

Asking the ever present search engines about Lent they come up with

- **Significance:** It serves as a period to turn away from sin and focus on God's love, preparing hearts for the celebration of Jesus' resurrection.
- **Duration:** The 40-day, or six-week, period (excluding Sundays) mirrors the 40 days Jesus spent in the desert, as well as other biblical 40-day periods
- **Observation:** Participants often engage in fasting, giving up luxuries or vices (like specific foods or social media), and increasing charitable actions.
- **Ash Wednesday:** The season begins with the imposition of ashes, a symbol of mortality or repentance.

Purpose: It is a time for solemnity, self examination and spiritual renewal. In many countries the palm crosses from the previous year are burnt to create the ash required and there will be special services where people have the sign of the cross made on their forehead with the ash. A visual sign of their repentance and need to be forgiven.



Many of the more evangelical organisations and Mission organisations in the UK are asking us to look outwards during Lent. 40 Acts of Kindness; Acts 435, these charities and organisations try and turn the giving up something into a more positive, active expression of our faith.

There are lists and suggestions galore. We are prompted to look out for opportunities to help in our community, in our friendships and relationships– all the more if our friends and family are not yet Christians. We can give, pray, make a phone call, write a letter or a card, gift something, invite someone round for a meal or in some cases be ready to give



someone a kind word or a compliment. All of these things would have a positive impact on the other person.

Although we don't do it in order to receive, the Bible says:

Luke 6v38 "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."

Speaking kind and positive words to someone can make such a difference– the World shouts but in Proverbs 15 v 1 we are told "A gentle answer turns away wrath".

So in the period before Easter let's not tire of being kind– pay for someone, ring them, send a message or a silly meme. Why not bake a cake or buy a coffee? Some cafes allow you to leave a payment standing– notably at the Bread of Life Project in Strood they have a whole board set up for folk to pay for those who can't afford a coffee!

"Do not conform to the patterns of this world" instead be Lenten, be kind.



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



HYLKO
ZINGSTRA
TREASURER

Services for the month of March "God Centred relationships"

| | Morning Service 10.30am | Evening Service 6.30pm |
|--|---|--|
| 1st  | Rev Nathan Gordon Baptismal Service | "Often Avoided Topics" Once Saved always saved Pt 2 Rev Nathan Gordon  |
| 8th | "Are you flying solo and thriving?" Rev Nathan Gordon | Stories of Faith Testimony Service |
| 15th  | "What happens when the men are nowhere to be found?" Rev Nathan Gordon | Praise and Worship led by Ian Stride |
| 22nd | Youth Led service Ricky and the Team | The Encounter—Music and Prayer |
| 29th | "Who's your Jonathon?" Rev Nathan Gordon | Mission Service led by the Outreach Team |

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



Please see the very important message below about Baptisms– the pool does not magically fill itself– there is a tap lever down in the basement which needs to be left on– it usually takes about four-five hours with a little top up. This happens on the Thursday of the week before the Baptism. On Friday the heater goes in and stays in until Sunday. The Tap is in an overhead position– hence the need for someone reasonably tall to do it and it is in the basement which has quite steep stairs to go up and down. We have Sandy on the team already so I am going to be non PC and say—come on chaps, step up!!!

If you are 5 foot 8 or above you won't have to stand on anything to turn the tap!!

Also as we are now in the countdown to Easter—Please if anyone is willing to wear a Hi- Vis Jacket at the Walk of Witness on April 3rd please contact Bev! All the stewards have to do is check that no-one diverts off from the High Street and keep an eye out for any stumbles or trips. There will be St. John's Ambulance members in attendance too. Please speak to Bev by 25th March and you can be added to the stewards WhatsApp group– our chosen method of quick communication!!

With Love and Prayers, *Bev*

Baptisms



For the last, I don't know how many years, I have been responsible for getting the Baptistry filled and heated for our Baptismal Services. For the last almost three years I have had some valuable assistance from Sandy who joined the Baptistry Team. Well, now approaching my 83rd birthday I have decided to relinquish that responsibility shortly. As I don't think it's fair for all this to fall on Sandy it is **imperative**

that someone steps up to provide assistance and back-up for Sandy. The main requirements are to be able to manage the Basement Stairs and not be too short. Full training will be given when we have our next Baptism.

Peter Statham

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!

Focus on Bright Hour



We give thanks for the ladies of Bright Hour— they have so many visiting speakers in the course of the year and manage to give to many organisations. Last month saw the visit of Mike from the Zambesi Mission. The ladies presented blankets and warm clothes for the babies and children who are helped by the Mission. This was followed up by a cash donation. Bright Hour support Leprosy Mission, Daily Bread Bible notes and so many others throughout the year. **If you are free on a Thursday afternoon at 2pm come along and be blessed by the fellowship.**

WORLD DAY OF PRAYER
A service for everyone!
Friday 6 March
I will give you rest, come
Join us for the Sittingbourne

Nigeria 2026

World Day of Prayer Service
11am

Salvation Army
64 Shortlands Road
ME10 3JT

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

Day of Prayer 2026

On the first Friday in March the Day of Prayer begins on the international dateline, in Samoa. Early in the morning, Christian women begin praying for our world. As the earth rotates, a great wave of prayer begins to build. It sweeps across the Pacific, touching Fiji and New Zealand, rolling on through Asia: Japan, the Philippines, Korea, and Bangladesh. The countries of Africa, and the Middle East are next. The wave reaches the shores of Europe as the day dawns there. Across the Atlantic, it moves onwards, the Caribbean, the Americas, and on to the Pacific again until the sun finally sets over American Samoa where the final service takes place. A worldwide circle of prayer is complete.

I will give you rest, come

Nigeria 2026 - I will give you rest, come

Please join in with the World Day of Prayer on the 6th March 2026. Salvation Army, Shortlands Road ME10 3JT.

There will be services around the globe taking place throughout the 24 hours of 6th March.

The service for this year was prepared by women from Nigeria and focuses on the Bible verses Matthew 11v 28— Come to me all who are weary.....

Testimony time

Margaret Pellatt shares with us a copy of her Bible journal for January 7th 2026.....

"I've overlaid this morning Lord and am very slow. Sorry Lord.

Today Sam drove me into town for House group at 1.30pm. Alan led us through the Bible study from Exodus. I was blessed by the scripture from Romans 6v4

⁴ We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

Walked home from church (Very cold day) Thank you Lord for a lovely day!

Please send in your testimonies however big or small and we can bless one another especially if a particular Bible verse makes a difference. We can give thanks to God in all circumstances.

'Reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated', (Mark Twain')

Perhaps someone is asking, where's Roy? Is he still with us? The answer is, 'yes, very much so'.

I have been very touched and encouraged by visits from 11 different brothers and sisters from the church, some more than once, while I was recently eight weeks in hospital. while

others sent get well cards and lovely Christmas cards which I got round to reading in February. Thank you.



One of the really horrible things about Parkinsons is that you fall over. Out of the blue, you just fall over. And if it happens in the street, it can hurt. I've discovered first hand that paving stones are hard and unrelenting. I don't really want to see another one. Since being home I have not even ventured once outside the front door. My latest 'trip' began on December 13th, when I fractured my right leg Femur, and a pelvic bone for good measure. The first can be very serious, look it up on the internet. I don't want to go through that again. At

present I'm learning to walk for the second time in my life. If I were out and about I would be in fear of my next fall.

I hope you'll soon see me again in SBC. But the days of heroics and taking risks are over. So far it's cost me 3 broken bones, another one would be almost too big a price to pay.

Why not come and see me at home? Entry is free, God bless you all and THANK YOU.

Love from Roy



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.

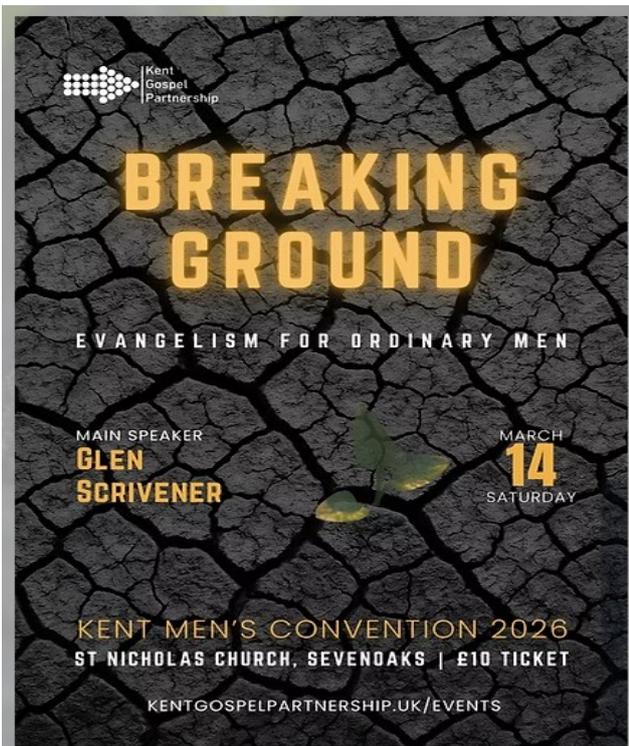
This is part of a process for Church members of Learning, Discussing and Deciding. Those who are not church members are very welcome to join the Bible Study, but will not ultimately be a part of the decision making process.

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.

We already have the idea of a picnic in the park fellowship day. This was suggested at the Church Meeting last week so watch this space for details and timings!



Nathan and Anna invite everyone to celebrate and give thanks for Alessia at 2pm on April 11th. There will be tea and cake in the lounge afterwards. Everyone is welcome!



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.

A Good Yarn!



Knitting and Crochet are back in vogue!! Only this week on the BBC news there was an article about a sewing, knitting and crochet group called "Sew Positive" They had been given £200,000 to support their work. With a couple of paid tutors they were running a group which welcomed folk in to knit, sew and crochet together for the benefit of their mental health.

Here in Sittingbourne Baptist church we have a Crochet group but in the desire to be inclusive we let knitters in too! Patterns, yarn and chat are shared together in the church lounge every couple of months. It is good for the spirit and cheers

everyone up who comes along. It doesn't matter what your skill level is, or how far along with a project you are; we can take it one stitch at a time!

Last time we met Cresta was working on waffle stitch, Margaret was knitting and we all went home with the pattern to create a small blanket for the Sands baby loss charity. We will send these off later in the year. There are champion knitters in the fellowship and there are some very clever young and older folk who are always ready to help out. If you see hobby craft bags being passed around the sanctuary it is because sharing is caring!! Some have been known to 'over-purchase' when it comes to the shopping side of knitting and crochet but are happy to pass some along for others to use! There is still a hamper basket with some wool in the church lounge although some of it could be quite tricky!

It does get difficult to find a date which we can all make but watch out for the next one in the Sermon notes diary page– possibly toward the end of April– depending on other events which are taking place or it may sneak into the beginning of May!

It doesn't matter whether you bring one needle or two you will be made welcome!!

If you are able to knit or crochet for the Sands Baby loss charity the pattern links for both knitting and crochet are on this page <https://www.sands.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer-sands/knit-sands> (Or ask Bev for a paper copy)

They are to be done in white acrylic wool but are just a small item to be placed in a memory box. Even if you start really small you will be helping someone and improving your own well-being at the same time.

Church Office details

01795 420990

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

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office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk

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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!

March

17th Bev

21st Paul W

23rd Yemi

28th Bev's Mum– 95!!!

Don't forget to send in your special mentions for the February Magazine– The deadline will have to be 26th February ready for the week-end publication. Then we can all pray for you

MARCH 2026

| Mon | Tues | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat | Sun |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| 30 10-12 noon A.B.C. 7pm Writers group in Hub 7:15-8:30pm A.A.Recovery | 31 10-12 Choir | 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 mtg. 11am World Day of Prayer 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 P & P 7-9pm Christian Singles fellowship | 1 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am Morning service-Nathan Gordon Baptisms 6:30pm Communion |
| 2 10-12 noon A.B.C. 7pm Writers group in Hub 7:15-8:30pm A.A. Recovery | 3 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting 10-12 Choir 7:30pm Deacons' meeting | 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 mtg. 11am World Day of Prayer 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 P & P 7-9pm Christian Singles fellowship | 8 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am -God-centred relation- ships "Are you flying solo and thriving?" 1 Cor 7:1-9 Nathan Gordon 6:30pm-Stories of faith- |
| 9 10-12 noon A.B.C. 7:15-8:30pm A.A.Recovery | 10 10am-12pm Choir | 11 6pm Youth Alpha- final session | 12 10.45am Wood- stock 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 2pm Bible Study | 15 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am Morning service-"What happens when the men are no- where to be found?" Nathan Gordon Mothering Sunday 6:30pm Praise and worship led by Ian |
| 16 10-12 noon A.B.C. 7:15-8:30pm A.A. Recovery | 17 10-12am Choir 7:30pm Deacons' prayer meeting | 18 1:30 & 7:15pm Church based housegroup | 19 9am C.T.I.S. prayer-March of Witness Plan-Hub 2pm Bright Hour 6:30pm Youth Band | 20 9:30am Pastoral team meeting 9:30-11:30am Café 3:16 12-2pm Glory Girls 5-6:30pm JAM CLUB 7-9pm Underground | 21 10am-12 noon Contact Centre 2pm Afternoon tea 7pm Quiz | 22 10 am Prayer in Hub 10:30am -Youth led-Dami 6:30pm-The Encounter |
| 23 10-12 noon A.B.C. 7:15-8:30pm A.A. Recovery | 24 10-12am Choir | 25 2:30pm Pine Lodge 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 1pm Mens Fellow- ship Lunch 2pm Women in Prayer | 29 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am-"Who's your Jonathan?" 1 Sam 18 v.1-4 Nathan Gordon 6:30pm Mission Evening- Outreach & Worship teams |