



October 2025

As a church family, we registered a couple of years ago as a "Welcome Church" with the national network that connects refugees and asylum seekers to local congregations.

This step is not just an administrative action; it is an expression of our faith in Christ and a commitment to live out the biblical call to love the stranger.



As Nathan has recently reminded us, in every generation, God's people have been reminded that hospitality and compassion toward outsiders are not optional extras, but central to our obedience to Him.

From the earliest pages of Scripture, God calls His people to remember that they too were once foreigners.

To Israel, the Lord said: "Do not oppress a foreigner; you yourselves know how it feels to be foreigners, because you were foreigners in Egypt" (Exodus 23:9).

Again, in Leviticus, He commanded: "The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt" (Leviticus 19:34).

God ties His people's compassion for strangers to their own story of rescue and redemption. Having been welcomed by His grace, they were to extend welcome to others.

The New Testament continues this theme and deepens it in Christ. Jesus Himself was a refugee as an infant, taken to Egypt by Joseph and Mary to escape Herod's violence (Matthew 2:13–15). Throughout His ministry, Jesus crossed cultural and ethnic barriers, engaging with Samaritans, Gentiles, and those on the margins of society. His parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37) challenges us to see "the neighbour" not as someone who looks like us, but as anyone in need whom God places in our path.

The writer to the Hebrews urges the church: "Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it" (Hebrews 13:2).

The apostle Paul reminds the Ephesian believers that they were once "foreigners to the covenants of the promise" but now have been "brought near by the blood of Christ" (Ephesians 2:12–13).

In Christ, the dividing walls between peoples are broken down, and we are called to model that reconciliation in our own fellowship.

Becoming a Welcome Church is therefore not just about offering practical help—though that is vital. It is about bearing witness to the Gospel. When we greet newcomers, when we help someone learn English, when we sit with a family navigating a new culture, or when we share a meal with those far from home, we embody the love of Christ.

As English flags go up around Sittingbourne, we can show, in tangible ways, that the church is a foretaste of God's kingdom—a kingdom where people from "every tribe and language and people and nation" will worship the Lamb (Revelation 5:9).

Let us be mindful that welcoming refugees and asylum seekers will not always be convenient. It may stretch our patience, our resources, and even our comfort zones. Yet this is the very soil in which discipleship grows. As Jesus said, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40).

So let us continue with joy and faithfulness in this calling. May we be known in our community as a people who open our doors and our hearts, who see Christ in the stranger, and who live out the welcome we ourselves have received in Him.



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

Great new photos thanks to Charles O!



RICKY GROSVENOR -
YOUTH PASTOR



JOSHUA
AJIBOYE



GRAHAME
ATKINSON



PAUL BLAKE



DAVID CASSE



ADRIAN
CHEESMAN



CRESTA DUROJAIYE
CHURCH
ADMINISTRATOR



NICOLA HASAN
Responsible for
Safeguarding



LISA
PENNINGTON



BEX RATCHFORD



RICHARD
SILLS
Responsible for
Safeguarding



HYLKO
ZINGSTRA
TREASURER

Services for the month of October Nathan is on paternity leave so our sermons are individual ones

	Morning Service 10.30am	Evening Service 6.30pm
5th	"Forsaking our Fears" Rev 1 v 12-18 Rev Chris Hughes	The Letter to Sardis Ricky Grosvenor 
12th	"Kingdom DNA" Acts 1v1-9 Rev Andrew Twilley	Stories of Faith Testimony Evening
19th 	HARVEST SUNDAY Stand Alone Sermon David Casse	Praise and Worship Service
28th	4th Sunday Service all together— Ricky and team	The Encounter—Music and Prayer

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



As we head into October the thought crosses my mind that it is time to start planning the March of Witness for next April– the Public liability insurance renews this month and the Risk Assessment and other documents will soon need to be uploaded onto the Council website.

Weird to be thinking clearly about Easter when we are only just approaching Christmas!

That is all part of the circle of Church Life (To misquote the Lion King!)

So many things seem to blindside us and yet they are things which happen every year. For example, the SBC choir have already held their first practice for Christmas. Don't miss out though, there is still time to join and boost the numbers! Soon the sound of the Christmas presentation practices will filter through the wall from the rooms where Ignite hang out! In case you are heading towards your first SBC Christmas let me help you out with a few dates.

Actually November 30th is the first Sunday in Advent this year; that will be the last sermon in our Jesus Life series!

Then the 7th will be a stand alone sermon from Nathan God willing.

14th will be the Children and youth Christmas presentation. On the evening of that day we go around the local area carol singing and handing out invitations to the Carols by Candle light service.

Sunday 21st is a big day! (Apart from being Pat and Miles wedding anniversary!)

We hold communion indoors at 10.40 ish then we decamp and stand outside (Yes) singing Carols and handing out more invitations to the 6.30pm service, which will be Carols and Bible readings by candlelight.

Then on 25th at 10.30am we all get together and spend a little time of worship and celebration on Christmas Day. Children try to bring one unopened parcel!

On December the 28th will be our youth led service as per the usual pattern and we will take time to look forward to 2026.

If you have family staying they are very welcome to all of those services and if you are away staying with family our prayers go with you.

Coming back to October, SBC are reclaiming 31st October with an all– age praise evening so watch the Sermon notes for further information. It's a Friday so no school the next day and plenty of time to praise God for all his goodness.

We will also praise God for his Goodness to us specifically for Harvest on Sunday 19th October and there will be an opportunity to give to the Baptist Missionary Society via Envelopes or information leaflets. Watch out for these a week or so in advance and pray about your gifts.

Letter to the Churches...or You!

On the 21st of last month (September) the sermon was taken from the book of the "Revelation of Jesus Christ to John the Divine" to give it its proper title. The preacher David Casse at the beginning mentioned that the "letters" to the churches then, should be taken today as more to the Christians of today, these are my sentiments as well.

So which church are you?

You will need to read the letters from Christ to each of the churches to understand whether He, Jesus Christ, is referring to you or not. But one of those letters could be you once, but now you could be a different church. Please note, I accept the fact that Christ is writing to me as well, so where do I stand? So are we "corrupt", or are we "lukewarm", or worst of all, have we "lost our FIRST LOVE". As you read all the letters from Christ, ask Him for wisdom and discernment to understand.

Yours, in His love and grace, *Grahame*.

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

BMS Harvest Appeal 2025

On 19th October it will be our Harvest Sunday and the monetary gifts collected at SBC will go to the Baptist Missionary Society.

The News in the UK has focused on the small boat crossings in the channel but BMS are doing something very practical in Cyprus working with refugees who have crossed to the Greek Islands. They are running a support centre to help those who find themselves running from their homeland nations for so many reasons.

One of the many stories is featured below. There are several in the resources on the BMS website:- <https://bmsworldmission.org/welcome-resources>



Name: Boran

Age: [redacted]

From: Palestine, Gaza strip

Background: When war broke out between Israel and Hamas in October 2023, Boran lost loved ones and saw her family scattered across the globe. Boran had already fled the region's instability and violence, ending up in Cyprus. From there, she could only look on in despair and mourn the future, now seemingly gone forever, of her beloved Palestine. Boran's sister and brother-in-law were killed in an explosion that hit a six-storey building they'd been sheltering in during an air strike. Her niece's legs were also crushed in the explosion. With her daughters scattered across the Middle East by the conflict, Boran has lost everything. She now calls the BMS-supported refugee welcome centre 'home'.

Volunteer role: Organises the clothing distribution.

In Boran's words: *"I have never found another country like my home but I think I will be in Cyprus forever. The centre is now my home and I love it here. We are family. I think I would die if I did not have it."*

Individuals reach European shores in very desperate states. The support centre on Cyprus helps with medical support— some of those who have arrived as refugees have become support workers in the centre. Estelle, their receptionist, arrived from Cameroon after her life was endangered. Her soldier fiancé was a witness to unlawful killings carried out by soldiers within the country. She had to flee on pain of death as her fiancé was blackmailed. Estelle's feet and legs were so badly injured she was taken straight to a medical centre but now recovered she serves as one of the reception staff at the BMS centre.

The names might not mean a lot to us but we can pray for those who have lost everything and everyone due to war or oppression or disasters. Our gifts go to support packages for those who arrive with only the clothes they stand up in and the food they have managed to find along the way.

Every £30 the church raises will provide rice and pasta for a year to two refugees and £816 covers health and sanitary supplies or baby goods for those who have had to leave everything behind.

When we think of people fleeing for their lives we can remember the Bible verses in Matthew 2v 13-14 where the Angel of the Lord speaks to Joseph telling him to take 'the Child' Jesus and flee to Egypt away from the murderous King Herod who sought to find Jesus and kill him. Our Lord and Saviour had to be a refugee until it was safe to return to Nazareth. He was born to die for our sins but not at the hand of Herod— that would happen in God's time.

October 31st

falls on a Friday this year and for those schools who have extended their half term in October to be two weeks this will still be 'school holidays'

Ricky has been in touch with Nick and Sal, who have joined us several times to boost the Youth led services, and they are willing to lead a praise evening for the whole church.

Don't sit at home waiting for someone to drag you out of your armchair to answer the door— Let us drag you out of your armchair to share light and fellowship with one another!

Downstairs there will be a prayer and praise evening and upstairs in the Ignite rooms there will be something specifically for primary school age children.

Let's push back against the darkness and mischief which has become the pattern of this world and make sure we are shining a light for Christ in our local community.

Romans 12 v2 "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will."



A little advert/explanation!

There are lots of copies of the current Daily Bread notes still to be collected from the pigeonholes in the church lounge— if you attend Bright Hour Dianne will have popped your copy in your 'surname' pigeonhole. There are usually one or two spare copies or you can speak to Dianne Cole if you wish to be added to the list. What are daily Bread notes I hear you cry!! They are a devotional aid— as such they will give a theme or select a book of the Bible and work through each day with a few thoughts from well recognized Bible scholars/pastors/ theologians and suggest a prayer topic for each day too. If you struggle to find direction to read your Bible each day they are a really good help. They are produced quarterly and do have dates on them, but are fine if you wish to use an older copy, just write your own date in the corner of each page. There are some older copies in the information stand and they are free to take away with you and give them a go.

Our Daily Bread ministries also have a website where sample copies and themed booklets can be requested for only a few pounds. They also have a book for a year which gives 365 readings and thoughts and prayers for each one or they have some support booklets— Which bits of the Bible help me when I am sad? Or bereaved? Or lonely etc.

If you need a little direction to your daily dips into the Bible then these are an excellent starting point. There are also lots of devotional books in the Hub which are free to take— if you use them and bring them back that's fab— if you use them and pass them on to someone else that's even better! If you don't know where the Hub is turn sharp right as you come in the main glass doors and push hard on the dark wood door— it's a bit tight! There you are in the Hub!

Tell me the old, old story.....

Midway through September David Casse was preaching and Ian was leading. At some stage in the service the story of 'When the Music Fades' was mentioned. Exactly why and how Matt Redman came to write it. Some will know the background of slavery and trading human flesh which caused John Newton to write the words of Amazing Grace. Others know the tragic circumstances which are the back ground of Horatio Spafford's hymn "It is well with my soul". Somewhere on the edge of my memory I knew that Fanny Crosby who wrote hundreds of hymns in America was blind. Somehow the lack of distraction from the outside world allowed her to see the face of God so clearly and exclaim 'Blessed Assurance Jesus is mine!'

I vaguely knew that my parents favourite hymn "How Great thou art!" was written somewhere Scandinavian— hence the forest glades and mountain splendour!

A bit more research was necessary to see how the fairly modern song evolved!

Although it has only become popular in the last sixty years, the origins of this hymn go back to the majestic hills and valleys of Sweden. It was there, around 1885, that the Reverend Carl Boberg, a well-known Lutheran minister, wrote the original, stirring words. In

writing "*How Great Thou Art*," he was inspired, some would say, by the natural beauty of his homeland—especially after a summer thunderstorm. Arriving home, he penned three verses on the same theme and entitled this new song "*O Great God*." Over the years, translations were made into German, Russian, and English, but the hymn never enjoyed the immense popularity which it does today. However,

in 1927, the Russian translation came into the hands of an English missionary couple, Mr. and Mrs. Stuart K. Hine, who were serving in the western Ukraine. Mr. Hine sang it in Russian for a number of years and then translated three verses into English. When the Second World War broke out, the Hines' returned to England bringing "*How Great Thou Art*" with them. A fourth verse was added in 1948, and the next year the entire hymn appeared in a gospel magazine which

Mr. Hine published. It was immediately

popular and soon reprints were being requested by missionaries all over the world. The final thrust which was to give "*How Great Thou Art*" the worldwide popularity it deserved came a few years later, in 1954 to be exact. Through the offices of Scottish publisher, Mr. Andrew Gray, a copy of Mr. Hines' leaflet made its way into the hands of the famous gospel singer George Beverly Shea. It would appear that Bev. Shea fell in love with the piece immediately for he introduced it to the people of Toronto, Canada, at a crusade the next year; and then began to sing it regularly. In the 1957 New York Crusade, for example, it was sung a staggering 99 times. George Beverley Shea used to open the meetings and crusades where Billy Graham would be the speaker and joined so many in worship at the start of each meeting. According to the Graham campaign website Billy Graham preached live to an approximate 215 million people over the course of his long life and many more via radio and

eventually television. No wonder the hymn became Popular, if it was sung nearly a hundred times in one crusade.

Sports Stadia holding thousands of people will have heard this hymn and then heard the Gospel preached plain and simple. So from Northern Europe to Northern America to the UK the message rings true "My God how great thou art"

Peter keeps a track of the songs and hymns that we sing for our Licensing fee and it is interesting to discover the background story to many of the SBC top one hundred! Watch out for more stories of songs— especially as we approach Christmas!



New Arrivals

Just in case anyone has missed the big event– Nathan and Anna are celebrating the safe arrival of Alessia Antoinette Rosalind Gordon arriving at 12.20pm Friday 19th September weighing in at 7lb 2 oz!

Also those of you who remember Savannah and Kieran– Jacob Galea arrived safely on Tuesday 16th September weighing in at 6lb 4oz.

We continue to pray for Sula now safely in Portugal for the delivery of a baby sister for Olivia; and for Grahame's daughter, due in the next month or so.



Some very advance warning so that everyone can put it in their diary and sign up in good time– We will need to know any special dietary requirements as we definitely don't want anyone to be poorly afterwards.

There will be some light entertainment as Linda tinkles the ivories and some of the worship team will sing. Come and enjoy fellowship over lunch and get to know some of the younger members of church who will be doing the hosting and waiting on table!

There is a sign up list in the Lounge on the noticeboard near the keyboard.

Saturday November 8th 1pm– it's the day before Remembrance Sunday so don't forget!

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!



October

8th Chris Hughes Birthday
17th Margaret and Michael celebrate 66 years of marriage
26th Sheena and Dominic's Wedding Anniversary
27th Roger

Don't forget to send in your special mentions for the October Magazine– I have some already. The deadline will have to be 29th October ready for the weekend publication Then we can all pray for you too.

Church Office details **01795 420990**

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

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**Women in
prayer
October**

25th 2pm this month!

OCTOBER 2025

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
		1 1.30 & 7.15pm church based house groups	2 2pm <i>Bright Hour</i> 6:30pm <i>Youth Band</i>	3 9:30am <i>Pastoral team</i> 9:30-11:30am <i>Café 3:16</i> 12-2pm <i>Glory girls</i> 5-6:30pm <i>JAM CLUB</i> 7-9pm <i>Underground</i>	4 10am-12 noon <i>Contact Centre</i> 1-2:30pm <i>Out-reach prayer time & planning</i>	5 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am Morning service- Chris Hughes-Revelation 1 v12+18 "Forsaking our fears" 6:30pm-Ricky Grosvenor-Sardis Evening Communion
6 10-12 noon A.B.C.	7 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting 10am-noon <i>Private event in Lounge</i> 7:30pm <i>Deacons' meeting</i>	8 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting	9 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting 10:45am <i>Woodstock Faith talks</i> 2pm <i>Bright Hour</i> 6:30pm <i>Youth Band</i>	10 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting 9:30-11:30am <i>Café 3:16</i> 12-2pm <i>Glory girls</i> 5-6:30pm <i>JAM CLUB</i> 7-9pm <i>Underground</i>	11 10am- 12noon <i>Contact Centre</i> 11am-1pm <i>Out-reach on High St.</i> 1-2:30pm <i>Feed-back in Hub</i>	12 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am -Morning service- Rev Andrew Twilley, SEBA "Kingdom DNA" Acts 1 v1-9 6:30pm Stories of faith
13 10-12 noon A.B.C.	14 10am-noon <i>Private event in Lounge</i>	15 1.30 & 7.15pm church based house groups	16 2pm <i>Bright Hour</i> 6:30pm <i>Youth Band</i>	17 9:30am <i>Pastoral team</i> 9:30-11:30am <i>Café 3:16</i> 12-2pm <i>Glory girls</i> 5-6:30pm <i>JAM CLUB</i> 7-9pm <i>Underground</i>	18 10am-12 noon <i>Contact Centre</i>	19 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am-Harvest Morning service and Communion-David Casse 6:30pm -Praise & Worship
20 No A.B.C. HALF TERM	21 10am-noon <i>Private event in Lounge</i> 7:30pm <i>Deacons' prayer meeting</i>	22 2:30pm <i>Pine Lodge</i> 7:30pm <i>Church Prayer Meeting</i>	23 10:45am <i>Woodstock service</i> 7:30-9pm <i>SBC CHOIR</i>	24 9:30am-11:30am <i>Café 3:16</i> 12-2pm <i>Glory girls</i>	25 10am-12 noon <i>Contact Centre</i> 2pm <i>Women in Prayer</i>	26 10 am Prayer in Hub 10:30am -All age— 6:30pm-The Encounter
27 10-12 noon A.B.C.	28 10am-noon <i>Private event in Lounge</i>	29	30 2pm <i>Bright Hour</i> 6:30pm <i>Youth Band practice with Sal</i>	31 9:30am-Pastoral <i>Team Meeting</i> 9:30-11:30am <i>Café 3:16</i> 12-2pm <i>Glory girls</i> 7-8:30pm <i>Worship evening "Let your light shine"</i>		