



December 2025

Mince Pie Appeal!

One of the favourite sweet treats at Christmas is the mince pie. This crumbly pastry is filled with fruit, often soaked in alcohol, as in many of the supermarkets, and flavoured with citrus and mild spice. However, the mince pie was originally a savoury pie – and not even round! In the [Tudor period](#) they were rectangular, shaped like a manger and often had a pastry baby Jesus on the lid. They were made from 13 ingredients to represent Jesus and his disciples and were all symbolic to the Christmas story. As well as dried fruit such as raisins, prunes and figs, they included lamb or mutton to represent the shepherds and spices (cinnamon, cloves and nutmeg) for the Wise Men. It was only later, post Reformation, that the mince pie adopted a round shape. It has been rumoured that Oliver Cromwell banned mince pies– I don't think he approved of anything rich or festive at all!



Why are we asking for mince pies at SBC you might ask yourself!
We have two appeals for them going on at the moment– some for Christians Against Poverty and some for the 21st of December here at SBC. Both lots must be alcohol free despite any traditions or whims of bakers!

Each year CAP give hampers of food to all of their clients who have been helped during the year. These hampers acknowledge the fact that having a few festive items can really perk someone up over the Christmas period . This definitely applies if someone has been micro-managing their finances through the year to keep themselves out of debt. This is the whole purpose of the CAP organization. If you read the CAP report in the AGM booklet you will see that they have helped clients reduce £600.000 of debt within Swale. The reduction in anxiety and stress that these measures alleviates must be monumental. We don't host the CAP office here but we do have a CAP trained representative in the church– Bex , one of our deacons, is fully trained in the CAP Money Course and particularly in the one for Young people and Children. For some years now SBC have been responsible for chocolates and mince pies to add to these hampers. They will be collected on December 8th and will go out to the clients before Christmas. Please check that the BBE dates are after Christmas day.

We are also appealing for some to follow our Carol services on December 21st– inevitably as we sing outdoors someone will accept an invitation to come in and have tea or coffee in the morning. It is lovely if we can offer them a mince pie and some warmth and conversation.

Then, as our evening attendance hits it's highest mark all year, we like to offer everyone a mince pie in the evening. The demand for hot drinks and space is usually high on the evening of the 21st. If you are not on the tea and coffee rota that day please consider lending a hand as we may well have 200 or so to serve and encourage in the Church lounge. Please help where you can, and spread back into the sanctuary if needed and please don't stand in the doorway!!!



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



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 December. The JOY of Christmas theme.

	Morning Service 10.30am	Evening Service 6.30pm
7th	"Where does your Joy come from" Rev Nathan Gordon	"Laodicea" Rev Nathan Gordon 
14th	"Knock, Knock" The Nativity Children and Youth Presentation	Carol Singing in the Local Area— meet at church at 6.15pm to pray and go out
21st 	The Joy of Salvation Communion service before Singing outside on the steps	Carols by Candle light- "All I want for Christmas is?"
25th	Christmas Morning Service 10.30am	
28th	Youth Led- "Looking Back; Looking Forward" tbc	The Encounter—Music and Prayer

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



No sooner had we started 2025 than we are hurtling towards the end of the Year! So many things have happened in the course of the year and so many new faces have joined us. As we enter the time of festive traditions it is worth repeating some of the things that are 'written in stone' here at SBC!

The White wooden pigeonholes at the end of the lounge become the post-box for any Christmas cards you would like to send within the fellowship— not any which require a stamp!!

Please do check them regularly through the month as the popular surname letters do tend to fill up.

The Sundays run as follows

7th Nathan brings Joy! 14th Knock, Knock the Nativity brings great joy—and stress to all the Ignite leaders and assistants! Followed by the Youth participating in the service too.

21st We share Communion indoors at 10.30am and then step outside to sing to those on the High Street—this is an opportunity to give out more of our Christmas Invitations

(These will be readily available for Café, Outreach and anyone who wants to pass them on to friends and family.)

Any questions about the diary or the services, please do ask me—hopefully not on a Sunday!!

God Bless Everyone, and a very Merry Christmas and great New Year!

Bev

Mary & Joseph

announce the birth of a baby boy.

They are to name him **Jesus**, because
He will save His people from their
sins.

Happy Birthday Jesus

Happy Christmas everybody.

Christian love, from *Grahame*.

Jesus is the name above all
names...

„,But

Sara, Terry & Grahame announce
the birth of **TWO** baby boys,
Their names are...Lucian and
Louis, and were born on the 21st
November.

Carols by Candle light Service 21st December 6.30pm

In order to keep everyone safe at the Carols by Candlelight Service we do have a lot of battery operated candles which do not drip or burn or even get hot. If you prefer not to have to think about holding a candle straight and keeping it away from hair/clothes or have small children please ask the stewards on the day for one of these.

If anyone would be willing to help hand out candles or would be willing to be a fire warden on the evening please do get in touch with Bev in the office before the 21st.

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 • eating together!



This is the lovely afternoon house group out and about for their Christmas meal together– so good to spend time together outside of church

Thank you

The lovely Mary H. wants to express her heartfelt gratitude to all who helped at the Appreciation Meal for seniors held in November.

She says... It was lovely to be appreciated, great to all be together in fellowship and the meal was truly scrumptious!!

A big thank you to Nicola and Hus who had the idea and brought it all to fruition. Thank you to the kitchen team and the Entertainment team who created such a lovely atmosphere. Hopefully there will be more to come in 2026!!



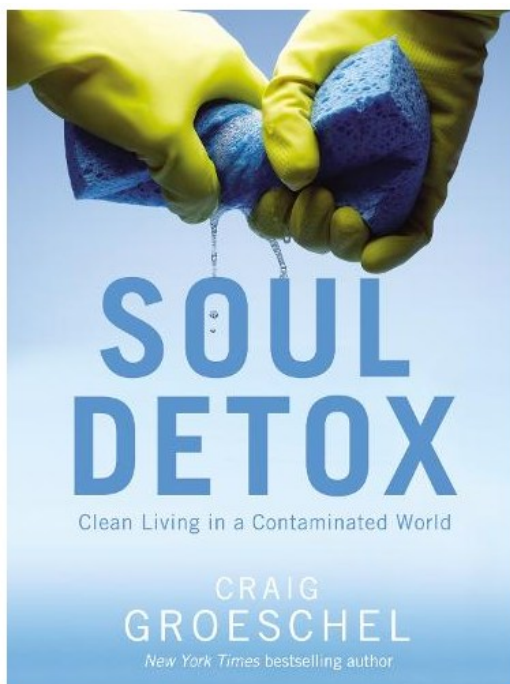
Also a note of Thanks !! To Ian Stride our Worship Co-ordinator who planned a worship team meal on 20th November– all manner of takeaways were consumed and much chat went on! This year has stretched everyone particularly the Tech crew so we are always grateful to have them! If anyone has sound desk skills they are hiding under a bushel, please speak to Ian Stride as we head into another busy year at SBC. Remember all the skills you have at work or home, can transfer to our lovely fellowship!

Book Recommendation for 2026!

In the first few sermons of the New Year Nathan is going to be looking at Soul Detox– a popular topic for January with all of the 'Dry', 'No sugar' no this, no that! These are the recommendations which the colour supplements will hit us with as soon as the Christmas festivities are over!

With some sermon titles such as, Is comparison affecting your Joy? And What do you see in the mirror? This will be the New Year Challenge at SBC!

No major pressure to purchase the book for yourself but if you would like to follow up on the sermons it is readily available from all major booksellers– online and paper copies. It is available as new or used ranging from £3.50 to £11.99ish!



A Christmas Poem by Helen Steiner Rice



I have a list of folks I know, all written in a book...

And every year when Christmas comes, I go and take a look...

And that is when I realise that these names are a part...

Not of the book they're written in, but of my very heart...

For each name stands for someone who has crossed my path sometime...

And in that meeting they've become the rhythm in each rhyme...

And while it sounds fantastic for me to make this claim...

I really feel that I'm composed of each remembered name...

And while you may not be aware of any special link...

Just meeting you has shaped my life a lot more than you think...

For once I have met somebody, the years cannot erase...

The memory of a pleasant word or of a friendly face...

So never think my Christmas cards are just a mere routine...

Of names upon a Christmas list, forgotten in between...

For when I send a Christmas card that is addressed to you...

It's because you're on the list of folks whom I'm indebted to...

For I am but the total of the many folks I've met...

And you happen to be one of those I prefer not to forget...

For if I've known you many years or only just a few...

In some way, be it large or small, I owe myself to you...

And every year when Christmas comes, I realise anew...

The best gift life can offer is meeting folks like you...

And may the spirit of Christmas that forever and ever endures,
Leave its richest blessings, in the heart of you and yours.

(Thanks to Adrian for remembering to send this in!)



Pigeonholes

Mail is exchanged via the "pigeonholes" at the rear of the church lounge, filed under alphabetical surname order. Post mail here to other church members and check your own box each Sunday.

Especially if you are part of a team that needs Rotas. You can also put articles for the magazine etc. in the church office pigeonhole!

As the cost of postage has gone 'through the roof' please do use the pigeonholes for Christmas Cards but remember to check them regularly over the course of this month.

You need to know the initial of the persons surname so do ask around!

Remember by Wadzanai

Pain and darkness this world holds in abundance.
Yet where there are shadows so too there is light.
In spite of the sorrows there is hope to be found
in the way, the truth and the life.
When darkness beckons
I remember You have a plan.
I remember.
I remember.

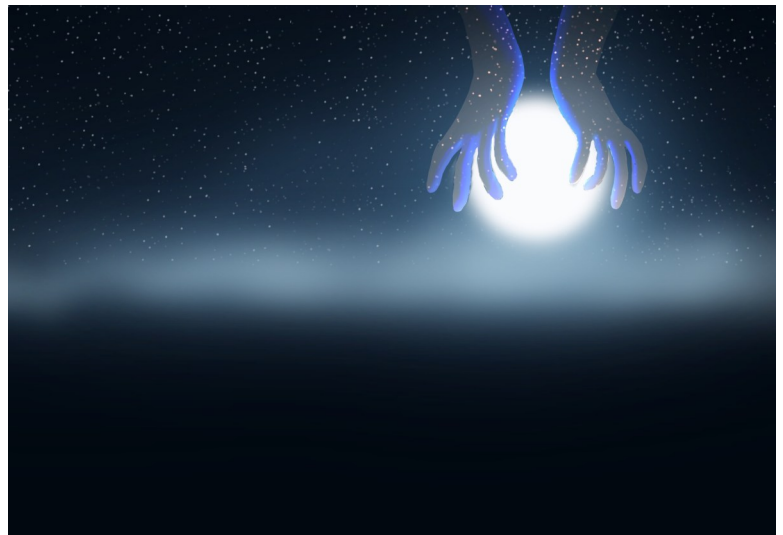
Your ways are not always mine, but You will never lead me astray.
I cannot believe this world is random.
I cannot believe the stars You hung up in the night sky
are a series of chemicals created by chance.
So when darkness beckons
I remember You have a plan.
I remember.
I remember.

If I can look to the moon and smile,
enjoying the luminous beauty it casts every night,
how can I look at myself,
how can I look at others
and not remember that I, you,
we are beautiful,
created in God's image?

I am not a mistake and neither are you.
The pain we endure, the hopes we hold are not for nothing.
And if the light of the moon is beautiful,
how much greater is the one who created it?
So when darkness beckons, I will praise Him.
So when darkness beckons, I will call on His name.
I'll remember He has a plan.
I'll remember
I'll remember
Our Lord will never lead us astray.

I really love the moon. Like, it's just so beautiful to me. I was praying with my family in October when I felt the Holy Spirit impress this image on my mind and heart. It was a beautiful starry night with God placing the full moon in the sky. It reminded me of the importance of not just the creation, but also our beloved creator. Then he told me to draw it, which was hilarious because I am terrible at drawing hands, but here we are. I also hope the illustration and poem remind you that if God took such great effort in creating the moon, remember he took so much more care in creating you. You are not a mistake.

(I am very grateful to Wadzanai for sending in this poem and illustration – David Hockney uses his I-pad now so drawing on there is definitely not cheating!)



CHILDREN'S PRESENTATION 14TH DECEMBER

The Practical details are here:-

Saturday 13th December – A full dress rehearsal will be held on Saturday 13th December at 2pm. Please drop your children at the church via the side door (press button 1 on the wall). This will enable the children to practice in the church and with the microphones. Please collect your children at 4pm.

Sunday 14th December – Ignite children need to be in the church lounge at 10am

Friday 19th December – Children's Christmas Party 5pm in the lounge. It is for all the children who attend JAM club, Ignite 1 and 2, so includes children who are in Year R. We will need to know if your child is coming so we can make sure there is enough food for everyone. Also let us know if your child has any special dietary needs so we can cater for them.

Please let Sally 07729657398 or Lisa 07704859915 know by Monday 15th December. Please collect your children at 7pm.

(We give thanks to all of those who lead and assist with Ignite and JAM on a weekly basis. Lisa P heads up a really big team to cover tow sessions of Ignite and one of JAM Club every week. Please keep them all in your prayers and encourage them whenever you get the opportunity.)

Church Office details **01795 420990**

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

Office Manager: Bev Sills

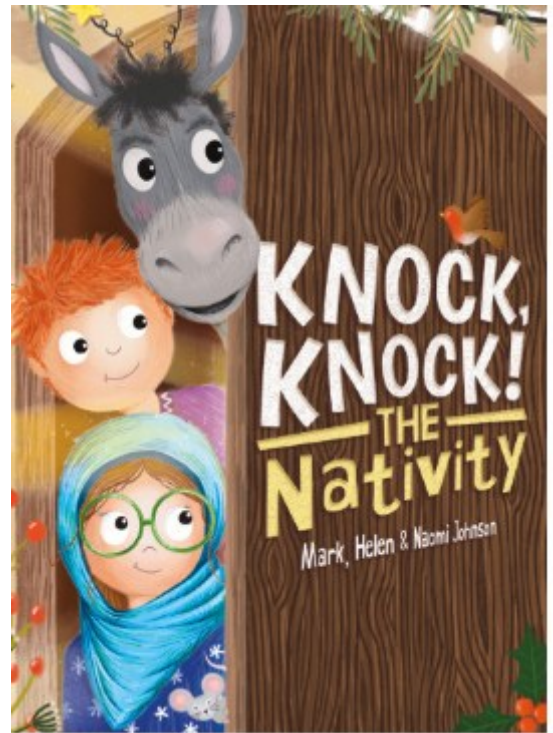
office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk

Email: office@sbc-church.org.uk

Web: www.sbc-church.org.uk

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



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!

December

6th Eddy Lardner

11th Sandy

15th Julie K

21st Miles and Pat 62nd

Anniversary

23rd Royan

28th Cindy

31st JJ

Don't forget to send in your special mentions for the December Magazine–

The deadline will have to be 23rd December ready for the weekend publication Then we can all pray for you too.



DECEMBER 2025

Mon	Tues	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1 10-12 noon A.B.C. 7:15-8:30pm A.A. Recovery	2 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting 10am-noon Private event in Lounge 7:30pm Deacons' business meeting	3 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting 1:30 pm church based house group 6-7:30pm Scouts District Carol service	4 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting 2pm Bright Hour 6:30pm Youth Band 7:15pm Phil's house group 7:30-9pm (possible SBC Choir Practice)	5 8-9am Early Prayer Meeting Am Tree & Decs 9:30-11:30am Café 3:16 12-3pm Glory girls Carol Service 5-6:30pm JAM CLUB 7-9pm Underground	6 10am-12 noon Contact Centre 1-2:30pm Outreach prayer time & planning 7pm Quiz in Church Lounge Festive fizz and Quiz!!	7 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am Morning service- "Where does your Joy come from?" Rev Nathan Gordon 6:30pm-Nathan-Laodicea followed by Communion
8 10-12 noon A.B.C. 7:15-8:30pm A.A. Recovery	9 10am-noon Private event in Lounge Afternoon visit from Yr. 4 Westlands Primary School	10 9:30am Practise for South Avenue Office open in the morning	11 Morning South Ave KS3 Christmas service 2pm Bright Hour 6:30pm Youth Band 7:30-9pm SBC Choir	12 9:30am Pastoral team meeting 9:30-11:30am Café 3:16 12-4pm Glory girls & Christmas party 5-6:30pm JAM CLUB 7-9pm Underground	13 10am-12noon Contact Centre 11-1pm Outreach 1-2:30pm Feedback & prayer in Hub 2-4pm Junior Church Christmas practice	14 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am -Children and Youth presentation 6:30pm Carols in the Community
15 10-12 noon A.B.C. Christmas Party 7:15-8:30pm A.A.Recovery	16 10am-1pm Private event in Lounge 2pm 55+ Carol service 7:30pm Deacons' Prayer meeting	17 2:30pm Pine Lodge service 1:30 & 7:15pm Church based house group Office Closed	18 10:45 am Woodstock service 2pm Bright Hour 6:30pm Youth Band 7:30pm SBC Choir	19 5-7pm JAM and Ig-nite Christmas Party 7-9pm Underground end of term	20 10am-12 noon Contact Centre	21 10am Prayer in Hub 10:30am Carol singing outside the Church 6:30pm -Carols by Candlelight- "All I want for Christmas is?"
22 7:15-8:30pm A.A. Recovery Office Closed	23 Last day for the office before Christmas!	24	25 10:30am CHRISTMAS MORNING SERVICE "Presence vs Presence"	26	27 10am-12 noon Contact Centre	28 10 am Prayer in Hub 10:30am -Youth led service 6:30pm-The Encounter
29 7:15-8:30pm A.A. Recovery	30 Office Closed	31	1st Jan	2nd Jan		

