

January Magazine Sittingbourne Baptist Church and Noticeboard 2021

“It’s a real shame that your ministry has to end like this!”

These were the words of innumerable people as our active ministry at SBC came to a rather unsatisfactory conclusion in the new COVID-19 world of stringent restrictions and virtual church, which even denied us the opportunity to say a proper and meaningful farewell to one another.

Hopefully as the vaccine begins to take effect, and the virus beats a reluctant retreat, we will be able to return later in the year to express our thanks to you all and to articulate our appropriate goodbyes!

Although having said all that, I must admit, that despite it not being the most auspicious way to conclude a 12-and-a-half-year ministry at SBC, my greater concern is for those who have to continue to minister in the current circumstances, and especially for those future ministers, who (like Nathan) are training for a ministry that will look very different to the one they envisaged when they first entered college.

I, like King David of old, have served the Lord in “my generation;” how to serve the Lord in the next generation will require some radical re-imagining!

Moving to the domestic front, we are settling well in Andover (see contact details in the next column.)

We are delighted with the house, and all the boxes are now unpacked! The town and surrounding area, which we are slowly beginning to explore, all seem very pleasant. The greatest difficulty that we are facing, having moved to an area where all are total strangers, is not being able to make any new relationships or get involved in a local church. Hopefully, this will change when the restrictions are relaxed or even lifted!



And finally, (I sound like I’m preaching!) can we take this opportunity to wish you God’s richest blessing for the New Year, and to thank you for all that you have done for us, and for all that you still mean to us. We are praying that God will soon lead you to the minister of his choosing who will take you on a spiritual journey into an exciting future. And although you do not know what the future holds, you do know the one who holds the future.

Much love in Jesus – Chris & Ann.

Chris and Ann have given permission for their address to be shared

6 Blossom Close ,
Burghclere Down,
Andover,
Hampshire
SP10 3RR



All the usual phone and e-mail addresses still apply until the end of March during which time Chris is officially on sabbatical.

As it's the end of a very difficult year for everyone it would be good to thank the **leadership team**. They have had many things that they didn't expect to come along and have kept us regularly informed. Let us continue to pray for them especially as they seek to find a new Minister. Please also pray for Chris & Ann as they settle in to their new home in Andover.

Many thanks, Marion S

Marion asked for this to go in and it seemed at home right here! Bev

CHURCH LEADERSHIP TEAM

Minister



REV CHRIS HUGHES

Minister in Training



NATHAN GORDON

Deacons

ADMINISTRATOR

Alan Cole

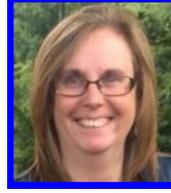
Post to be filled and ratified by Deacons and church meeting

TREASURER

Richard Sills



GRAHAME ATKINSON



FIONA COWAN



DAVID CASSE



ADRIAN CHEESMAN



KUDA OSOBA



DORIS THOMSON



JACKIE KEMP



GARY HEARN

Church Office details 01795 420990

New Home-Office hours: Mon, Tue & Thurs 9-3, Wed 9-1, Fri 9-2.

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

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



BEV SILLS

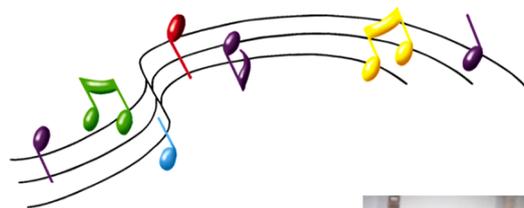
Preachers for the month of January

For our new sermon theme - "Faulty Heroes from the Old Testament"

Jan	3rd	Alan Cole	"Where is God when the going gets tough?"
	10th	Nathan Gordon	"Ever had a family crisis?"
	17th	Brian Dickson	"How do you cope under pressure?" (online Communion)
	24th	Moises Mendoza	"How can I end well?"
	31st	Nathan Gordon	"Should I always obey God?"

Still put Alan on although we have had that one but it is a good way to remember if you are using the notes 'after the time'.

Worship Corner



By Brian Dickson (Worship Co-ordinator) **January 2021**

Scripture Reading

Matthew 5:14-16 - [KJV]

14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.
15 Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.
16 Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

A bleak and hopeless world needs a guiding light

With 2020 now behind us, the church and the world are in much need of renewal. The world struggles to find answers to its immediate concerns and it can all get overwhelming very quickly. It is at these times we need but lift our gaze heavenward and consider all the works his hands have made. We see the stars, we hear the mighty thunder, his power is clearly seen throughout the universe, it is clearly displayed. In the woods and forest glades, we hear the birds singing softly in the trees. The part of his creation we call nature, is a wonder to behold and lifts the spirits of the inward man. With such ponderings surely your spirit will be stirred, surely your ponderings would say, "then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to thee". Our Saviour is indeed a good and mighty God.

Because he laid down his life for us

Jesus calls the church to be light in the world, and we can only be so because of what he has already done for us. It was said last month but it is no less true or less appropriate this month, that we were once broken and bound in sin, we were once wretched and lost, but we found amazing grace, grace that broke the chains, chains that bound us to darkness and resulted in separation from God, but now our chains are gone and we have been set free. It is because we have heard the gospel message of salvation and believed, we can be a light to the world, and for that, we should glorify our Father in heaven. Praise his holy name.

We will sing his praises because he is our loving God

What better way to enter 2021 than to remember continually, the goodness of God towards us. His goodness is not just towards us only, but his grace and forgiveness is towards all mankind. The world is hurting, and that is why we should sing of the wondrous story, sing of the Christ who died for the lost, for the whole world, that they might believe and be saved. We the redeemed have light within, and though days of darkness may still lie ahead and sorrow's path we still often tread, our Saviour remains with us, and by his hand we are safely led.

Focus Songs for January

Song: O Lord my God (How great thou art) - Stuart K. Hine

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/fp7ZJwqtsPU>

Song: Amazing Grace – my chains fell off - Chris Tomlin

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/KKo3T0j9qqo>

Song: I will sing the wondrous story – Robin Mark

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/-8LA-yNCyYE>

Disability versus indignity— we are a little late for Disability Awareness Month but a valuable reminder to us all— sometimes it only takes a little thoughtfulness to be so much more inclusive

Sally D writes..... 

Back in November I was asked at work whether I would be prepared to write an article on my experience as someone with mobility issues marking the beginning of "Disability Awareness month" and I said that I would. This is a shortened version.

It was back in 2012 when we were all as a nation looking forward to the Olympics taking place in London that I had an accident whilst commuting that changed my life forever, although I had no notion that this was going to happen.

It was a busy Friday night, I was commuting through London St Pancras Station and making my way to the platforms 11-13, which are the ones for Kent and I made my way up the escalator to catch the train. There was a guy ahead of me with a massive industrial sized wheelie case with massive bolts on the 4-corners and when he reached the top he lost his footing and the case launched towards me, I moved to the right (probably twisted) and the case quickly followed and banged into me. It was extremely painful, but as I was in shock, I continued to a bench to sit down first before making my way to the platform to catch my train home. The guy did come up to me to check I was okay, but then was gone as quick as he had arrived! In terms of the impact of this accident, I had no idea of the damage that had been caused by this accident.

To cut this story short, otherwise we will be here for years!! It was a few years later in 2015/2016 that I had key-hole surgery on the left knee and that helped and sorted out a few issues. However, I had no idea of the extent to the damage and I have ended up battling osteo-arthritis in my knees and rheumatoid arthritis everywhere else. My mobility has been poor in that my knees ended up becoming permanently bent, so I lost a few inches in height.

My husband, Brian, started to talk to me about using a walking stick, and I resisted for ages due to the fact I thought it would advance my years and dismissed it! Anyway, I eventually came round to the idea and was encouraged by some of our doctors at work (I work at the British Medical Association) who mentioned that I was walking straighter with a stick than without.



Now, I will talk about "indignity" because the height of public loo seats varies and I quickly found myself in some rather unfortunate situations one of them was at work. So, I came into the office nice and early one morning, back in 2016 and thankfully went to the ladies with my stick. I worked then on the 4th floor SW wing; when I finished, I realised that I could not get up, the seat was too low for me. I did start to panic as I was due to attend a meeting at 9am, and this was now 8:55am! I managed to stretch my leg to get my stick, that I had placed by the door and managed to eventually get myself up and out and off to the meeting. I was only a minute or two late and did not say what the delay was as I was far too embarrassed. Shortly after, I was able to liaise with Estates and there is now a rail in that Ladies toilet.

Now, it is a few years later and I have had one of my knees replaced and am waiting to receive a date to get the other one replaced. I also want to say a massive thank-you to SBC, so many of you have encouraged and prayed with me and I feel I am nearly there – Isaiah 40:31 – I look forward to the day when I will run and not be weary and walk and not faint.

Editor's Note– Having our lovely front doors, rather than the wooden, crushing vestibule ones before, has made such a difference to access to the church entrance. We still have the steps but we can always open the side fire door to let someone in. The rest of the building was all built before accessibility was part of design but if ever there is anything we can do; like the little rail to the side of the platform or the toilet alteration completed some time ago; please do let the church office know– we can always try!!

Comm-unity Contact

Matthew 25v31– 46 The Parable of the Sheep and the Goats has been quite a dire warning to me the whole of my life– what if I missed Jesus in need?



In the days of lockdown so many of our church activities are not taking place– who is missing out on a chat and a cup of tea? Who is missing a phone call? Who will need encouragement and prayer and our Christian friendship today? As you may know the deacons have been ringing round to catch up with people but maybe we all need to take responsibility for keeping in touch– which I know many of you do! We are going to put a few ideas out over the next weeks to try and spur one another on to acts of kindness– also happy to receive your ideas on this too!! As we continue to miss our Sunday fellowship times then we can see how we can create unity and hopefully not lose anyone along the way.

We praise God for those who have joined us over the course of last year. We hope they enjoyed the services we were allowed to hold. Obviously we have had no baptisms or new members welcomed in over this pandemic.

This definitely doesn't mean that new faces aren't welcome!

I did have an idea that we could hold a massive adding members service and would have a long line before we finally celebrated communion together again!

Also what if the community around the church levelled the same accusation against us? Where were we when Sittingbourne needed us?

So thinking caps on– what can we continue doing or start afresh in a new way? How can we be Christ's hands on earth? Whether it be essential and key workers, food bank, or as in the parable of the great banquet Luke 14v 21, the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame, what can we be doing?

Also we must not fail to feed our spiritual lives– church on the sofa could become all too easy! Do we read the Bible for ourselves every day? Have we got a plan on what we are reading or a set of notes? There are so many back copies of booklets in The Hub at church– ignore the dates or the year (?) let me know and I can send some out! If we don't add wood or coal to a fire it goes out– feed your faith. Obviously with the online services and sermons but with anything else too! Bev

First Contact was rested this month but I don't think you get off lightly!!

Here we go with Birthday and Wedding Anniversary special mentions! Thank you to those who responded by e-mail this past month—if you are willing to be mentioned by first name only in this section, as we go forward please let me know by e-mail or phone, and then we can remember you in prayer. Let's use the familiar words from



Ecclesiastes 4v12 to pray for the marriages within our church and the lovely blessing from Numbers 6v24-26 for those with a birthday.

For January:-

Cresta and Dan have their 10th wedding anniversary on Jan 29th

Vi– who looks after all of our BMS birthdays is 31st Jan

Don't forget to pray creatively for these folk as they celebrate and to send in your special mentions for the February Magazine whether or not it is online or on paper!!! The deadline will have to be 28th of January!!!

**Vi has asked me to say a big thankyou.

This past year we have sent £ 615.50 to the BMS through the birthday scheme and Vi says

"Thank you all for standing hand in hand with brothers and sisters around the world, please accept my heartfelt gratitude for your generosity. Our God knows each and every one of us. May we feel His peace going on into the New Year– GOD BLESS

ANGEL TREE UPDATE

Thank you for all the support that you gave to the Angel Tree Project at Swaleside Prison. You were all very generous and we raised an amazing £295 which has allowed us to buy presents for many of the children of prisoners at Swaleside. Their ages ranged from 2 to 16 and I have included some of the presents we bought for them. The children are asked what they would like the most beforehand, so we can make sure they always get something they really want. Here is an example of some of the presents we bought:

Football; **Stormzy CD;** **Doll with accessories;**
Bear holding a heart; **Make up brushes;**
A big bag of cars; **Make up suitable for children;**
Compact make up mirror;
Off road Trucks; **Me to you Teddy Bear**

Please pray for the dozen or so children Swaleside Angel Tree were able to help, as you can imagine, they and their families often have many problems to cope with.

Sittingbourne Baptist Church have excelled again, thank you so much.

Kay Cheesman and the Swaleside Prison Fellowship



We also had a thank you letter from Blythwood for all of the shoeboxes and boxes of knitting and goodies that were sent to them at the end of October— please pray for those who must be really struggling to deliver them— imagine if they were caught in the closed border just at Christmas! What a blessing that they started their journey so early. Please carry on knitting and collecting bits as we will surely want to do this again this year— A big thank you to Jackie, Rynn, Vicky, Krystal and Isabel and any others who assisted with the packaging and checking procedure.

Remember the office is only at the end of the phone on 01795 420990 and the Foodbank is offering delivery only service on 07486370709— please pass this on if you are in contact with anyone who is in need of their services.

Activities and Events

For Children and Youth

Listen via the website for the teaching and weekly sessions for each age group— there will be additional paper based activities and craft ideas to download and print off for your children.

Kuda will have an ongoing memory verse which is emphasized each time!

Check out the action songs which are regularly thrown in there—use them for a morning work out !!!



Kuda, and the children's work team, have been running Zoom calls and phone calls to keep in touch with as many of our children and youth as we can over the lockdown and isolation periods but this has proven really difficult to keep 'In Deep' going for the older youth.

Please contact Kuda if you think that you could help with this- preparation includes Bible study and socially distant socializing!

Topics for the **Way**— young people can access the teaching via the church website sbc-church.org.uk

Contact Kuda on youth@sbc-church.org.uk or her phone number from the directory if you are able to help— it was running fortnightly so even one night a month would be a real support as we await a new Youth Pastor to be appointed.

The latest update from Limitless, where we have a reservation to take a group in 2021, is that they are planning as best they can in these strange times and there will be plenty of events online in the new year— check out their website

"To be a Christian is not simply to believe in Jesus, it is to follow *The Way of Jesus*. That's why, in 2021, Limitless One is dedicated to helping us to do the things that Jesus did, in order that we might be more like him and know him more deeply.

We kick off on Friday 12th February at 8pm with FAITHCHILD and LIMITLESS WORSHIP.

Check out the details on

<https://www.elim.org.uk/Groups/310950/LIMITLESS.aspx>

and grab a friend to watch together online!

Matthew 19v14

¹⁴ Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."

As we look forward to the New Year we are to spend time looking for a Youth Worker and hopefully when we fling wide the doors in the coming year and no longer need families to sit in one place we will welcome you back to your groups with arms open wide— we miss your smiles and the massive exit in the middle of the service and your voices in the rooms upstairs and downstairs at church.

Please Keep in touch— feel free to send pictures and letters to the magazine at any time. I love the photos of you all studying, playing music, celebrating your birthdays so do please share them with us



January 2021

Until the SBC fellowship diary is up and running again I thought I would use this page to bring you little snippets which may well have appeared in the Sermon Notes– but now they will appear here as an encouragement to pray for the person mentioned– if you have testimony or brief entries for next month please e-mail them to me on office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk



Prayer Points

Grace, Val, Shirley, Joe, Doug.
Deacon's Meeting on 5th January
Food bank, CAP, Contact Centre and
the parents who have gone so long
without contact.

Those still shielding.

Those awaiting 'routine' medical care

**Our church as we look ahead to
the New Year and the search for
the right Pastor and Youth
Pastor.**

Pray for Nathan and the Deacons

Weekly Sermons on
[Www.- sbc-church.org.uk](http://www.sbc-church.org.uk)

Face book– search
[@sittingbournebaptistchurch](https://www.facebook.com/sittingbournebaptistchurch) and like or
follow the page to get the link easily

Weekly sermon notes by e-mail- please let
Office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk

know your e-mail if you are not already
receiving these. Also birthdays and
Anniversaries for February. Big or little we
can pray for the person.

Monthly prayer meeting—February 10th
will be e-mailed out and streamed on
Facebook

Church is not opening up at the moment
The Baptist Union of Great Britain state on
their COVID-19 advice:

“In light of the Government’s
announcement on 4 January
regarding the national lockdown
in England, we strongly
encourage churches not to open
their buildings for in-person
meeting if at all possible.

We recognise that the
Government guidelines allow
churches to remain open in
England during this period;
however, given the significant
increase in numbers of Covid-19
infections and pressure on the
NHS, we advise churches to
stand with the wider community
in making every effort to limit the
spread of the virus. “

The leadership team want to
keep everyone safe and to stay
within the safest guidelines.
God Bless you for your patience.

Contact Centre remains closed for the
month of January– due to the main request
not to travel– this will be reviewed on a
monthly basis.

Don't forget to find and use 'Good news
Sittingbourne' on YouTube and contact
Phil for further information and support to
use the resources there.

philiptown2@gmail.com or on
07758453388.