

# April Magazine and Noticeboard 2021

## Sittingbourne Baptist Church

### A spring walk.

Traditional orchards are becoming rarer these days, but this walk takes you through some of them around Borden and Tunstall. The walk can begin from either village, but parking is much easier at the Borden end. Those relying on public transport will need Chalkwell Service 9 from the Station to Cranbrook Drive - a five minute walk from Tunstall church. This walk can be muddy after rain, so please wear appropriate footwear. The walk is 3 miles, flat, and should take about an hour.



Walk towards Borden church and follow the churchyard wall round to the left. The church dates from 12th century and has an interesting interior - if you can get in. Where the road bends to the right, take a bridleway between 2 half timbered cottages. After 30 yards, at the end of the fences, take the path that forks off half left through a field of peas. Follow this through open country for about three-quarters of a mile until you come to the Borden-Bredgar road. Cross this and go up the road opposite named Hearts Delight. After about 300 yards look for a fenced path on the left signposted "Public Footpath to Sittingbourne". This brings you out into the old orchards. Where the fences end turn right onto another fenced path. This brings you out to Tunstall, near the old primary school.

Turn left along the pavement and enter Tunstall Churchyard. Although parts of the church date from the 13th century, it was heavily modernised in the 19th. Just before you leave the churchyard, note a group of tombs on the left. Here rest many of the founding fathers of our church - look for names such as Dean, Doubleday, Boulding, Wills and Greensted - reading almost like the names of a late 19th century deacons' meeting!

Having paid respects to our forebears, continue along the road for about 10 yards - then fork left onto a wide track and then left again. This brings you onto a wide and shady path back into the orchards - the old trees on the left and a new orchard on the right. The track narrows to become a footpath, and at the end of this turn right. A left turn by the phone mast will bring you back into Borden, turning first right into Hearts Delight Road and then left into the Street. Obviously this walk is best done in April in blossom time, but it makes a pleasant stroll at any time of the year.

(Thanks to Alan for writing up this walk for us—especially as we can officially walk as small groups very soon, sharing the fresh air together)



# CHURCH LEADERSHIP TEAM UPDATES

## Administrator's notes.

By the time that you read this our morning services will have restarted - first of all on Good Friday and then on Easter Sunday and each Sunday thereafter. It will be good for us to meet together in person again and I hope that as many as possible will book to attend. Please notify the church office of your intention to come so that we can operate "track and trace" and remember to bring your masks.

The deacons have appointed Rev. John Western as our moderator during our pastoral vacancy. A moderator is a minister who will assist and advise the church - attending deacons and church meetings, advising on ministerial candidates, sitting in on interview, preaching once a month and being available for weddings and funerals if needed. Mr. Western works for the South East Baptist Association and is involved in establishing a new ministry in Strood. He has kindly written an article about his work elsewhere in this magazine.

Please continue to pray for those who are recovering from Covid - for some this is a long process, and also those who are feeling lonely and isolated. At least we will soon be able to meet in gardens. Please pray too for Val, who is back in hospital, and Sally who has her 2nd knee operation next week.

Work on making the manse garage roof watertight should begin in April. We are also looking to replace the fencing and gates, which are broken down. Once the manse is weatherproof and secure we will turn to the works that need to be done to the interior. One of our young people has agreed to look after the garden for us - **but if anyone has a spare electric lawn mower and some basic tools going spare, please could they notify the office?**

There is no further progress on the new minister, but the first and second round of interviews have been held for the youth worker and we are now looking to make an appointment. Please pray for Richard and his team in this important task, and also for the final two candidates that the Lord may guide them too at this time.

Finally may I please remind you all to send the form concerning your church membership back to the office by the end of March. It is important that we keep our prayer diary and our church records up to date. A prompt return also means that we don't have to spend time chasing you up. If you have lost the form please contact the office for another one.

Wishing every blessing as we celebrate our Lord's sacrifice and resurrection this Easter time.

Alan.  
Church Administrator.

## **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](mailto:office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk)



BEV SILLS

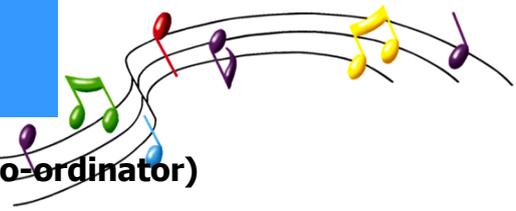
## **Preachers for the month of April**

Sermon themes - "People Jesus met " Our services will be held in church each week at 10.30am

Apr	2nd	Open service for Good Friday– Alan Cole "Why did Jesus have to die?" Isaiah 53
Apr	4th	Nathan Gordon-"Resurrection." Mark 16
	11th	Rev John Western- "Post Resurrection meeting" John 20
	18th	Alan Cole-"How can a grown man be born again?" John 3
	25th	Gareth Cheesman- "Temptation." Matt 4



# Worship Corner



By Brian Dickson (Worship Co-ordinator)

## Scripture Reading

**Luke 24:5-7- [NKJV]**

<sup>5</sup> .....“Why do you seek the living among the dead? <sup>6</sup> He is not here, but is risen! Remember how He spoke to you when He was still in Galilee, <sup>7</sup> saying, ‘The Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again.’”

## From Heavenly majesty

The ancient curse of sin and death, from the very first sin in the garden of Eden, all the way through to us today, mankind has not been able to escape it, no one has conquered it, except one.

The only way for mankind to be redeemed, was for God himself to lay down his majesty, and give up everything for you and me. He suffered at the hands of those he created. The son of God gave himself as a living sacrifice, and his blood paid the price for our redemption. How is this not the most profound act of love ever witnessed? That whilst we were yet sinners and hostile towards God, Christ gave up his life and died for us (Romans 5:8).

## So, what's so Good about Friday?

Good Friday is the day we remember the crucifixion of our Lord Jesus, but you might be wondering what is so good about it? Frustratingly there are differences of opinion. I rather like the version that holds the word 'good' not being understood in the sense of good or bad, but rather, good as in 'holy'. Whatever the truth behind the naming of the day, the fact is, it is the day we remember the Lord's death. A day and event of such significance, Jesus has called upon us to remember it every time we share communion together, until the day he returns for his church.

What else can compare to the love shown on that cross on which the prince of glory died? What do we hold dear, what is our richest gain that is worth more than the sacrifice of the sinless Son? It is love so amazing, so divine; does it not demand my soul, my life, my all?

## The first day of the week

Jesus said “Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up” (John 2:19). It was on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene (see also Mat. 28) went to the tomb where Jesus' body was placed, but on arrival it was not there, the tomb was empty save for two angels. Then we see Mary weeping and asking, "where is he laid"? The angel responding, " Why do you seek the living among the dead"? Mary was the first to see and be told, Jesus is not dead but is alive. Neither the might of the Roman army nor all of Satan's demons, had the power to keep Jesus in the grave. Christ has risen from the dead and is alive forevermore. Hallelujah!!

## The resurrection and the new creature

His sacrifice and the blood that was shed was the only price that was enough to redeem us from our sins and from death. Jesus Christ rose from the dead and in doing so, has provided a way of salvation that, whosoever believes on him and accepts him as their Lord and Saviour shall not perish but have eternal life.

We then are the redeemed and when we repented and turned to God, we were made a new creature and our names written in the Lamb's book of life. Our sins now forgiven, no more in condemnation, and it is here in the grace of God we stand.

This is why Easter weekend is the most important celebration in the Christian calendar, because it is nothing less than the most pivotal event in all of human history. No other event in the history of mankind is as significant, with its effects so necessary and essential to the lives of everyone who has ever lived. That is why God deserves nothing less, than ALL the honour and ALL the glory and why we lay our worship before him. Our lives are truly in his hands. Praise his holy name.

## Focus Songs for April

**Song:** You Laid Aside Your Majesty - Noel Richards

**YouTube:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KFICAbIxiv\\_M](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KFICAbIxiv_M)

**Song:** When I survey the wondrous cross - Isaac Watts

**YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dPdmmzRHIMA>

**Song:** See what a morning - Stuart Townend & Keith Getty

**YouTube:** [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LgE\\_E7yaz4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LgE_E7yaz4)

# 'Tech Talk!'

Who would have thought this time last year that we would still be in the grip of a Covid pandemic?

September last year, things seemed to be gradually getting back to normal, then in came the Kent variant of the virus which eventually affected all the U.K.

But the phrase "social distancing" which has become common place over the last year has got me confused (easy to do at my age).

"Physical distancing" may have been a better phrase to use, because socially many of us have been closer to family and friends and had more contact with each other after learning to face time, zoom, whats app etc. Social media has come into its own and some of us have had to learn more about it than we ever thought we would, certainly more than we ever knew before.



I never thought I would say this, but I thank God for the internet, face book, websites etc. (and people in our Church that understand how to use them) because 30 or 40 years ago, if we had the pandemic then, we would not have had the contact opportunities that we have now. I for one have been very thankful for the pre recorded services and special thanks to Chris, Nathan, Alan and others who have recorded sermons for us, as well as the Worship teams for all they have done. It has helped keep us in touch with each other socially, even though not being able to physically be together. I am sure I am not the only one who has benefited by being encouraged into a new week by worshipping together virtually on a Sunday.

With the roll out of the vaccine and all that means (again which we thank God for) there appear to be brighter days ahead. I am sure we all look forward to the time when physical distancing is over and we can worship and fellowship together in the Church building as well as meet together outside without the restrictions that are placed upon us at the moment. God bless you all. (David Casse)

***A suitable addition to this article would be the contents of a letter from Doreen M. As someone who is not on the internet Doreen writes:- I want to say a Big Thank you to Peter and Marion and everyone who faithfully write, record or deliver CD's sermon notes and the monthly magazine to the members of SBC. (Doreen)***

**Editor's note– Peter and Marion have done 25+ deliveries to our members who do not have internet access with some 50+ sermons recorded and passed on and of course Chris, Nathan and Alan have prepared the majority of those sermons week by week with only a few guest speakers so far. At the end of our recorded services David has been lifting our spirits by playing the church organ too.**

**As we give thanks at this time for lifting the lockdown gradually we should give thanks to those who have continued to serve so faithfully throughout the past year or so of restrictions.**

**A BIG THANK YOU TO YOU ALL!**

Easter greetings!  
Happy Easter to you  
all,  
With love and  
best wishes,  
Carol B.



*A little Easter poem for you  
all, with love from Jean H.*



*Easter is the springtime of a Christian's  
heart, so let's take part in the  
blossoming of a new start, and praise  
His holy name!*

Please e-mail the church office on [office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk](mailto:office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk) if you have changed your e-mail address– we are getting round to the data forms but you will miss bits in between– also if anyone passes on a new address to you remind them to let the church know! (Bev)

# First Contact



What is your first contact with Sittingbourne Baptist Church?

I came to this Church because my Auntie came here, her name was Miss Mable Clout. She always sat upstairs, first little seat just inside the door. I was very young, those days we would go to church morning, afternoon, and evening. Sundays then had a different feel about them, we looked forward to going to church, we only had Sunday clothes to wear on that day, it was like dressing up for something special. ( No casual clothes)  
Rev John Barker was our minister. I was baptised 13th Dec 1954 with six other members.

What things have kept you grounded in the Lord through the challenges of life?

After a few years I lost my way attracted by the opposite sex, left the church got married. I was away for a few years (not my best time in life).

How great is our God. He never let me go. I found it hard to come back, I had to forgive myself knowing my wrong, feeling guilty, but God led me to Women Aglow, a Christian organisation, going away to meeting for weekends, meeting round people's houses for prayer, so I needed a base.

Sittingbourne Baptist church was my home, I came back, what a difference, but a good one. I was cooking the lunches on a Thursday, I was serving in the Bible shop with others. I was going to Bright Hour, plus Contact Club and also Foodbank, now I am still involved when I can doing birthday cards. Sending out God's love and blessings to you all.

Looking forward to meeting up in His house, for His glory for ever more.

*First Contact is back with Kuda seeking out willing folk to give us a bit of their background and how they come to be at SBC— it really helps us to get to know one another.*

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 April:-

Marion S— 10th April

Abbie and Marek—17th for their Anniversary

David C— 21st April

Maggie M—24th April (according to Facebook!)

Debbie E—26th April

Mary H -30th April

Early warning Mary C 6th May

There are quite a few this month so pray for these lovely folk!

Don't forget to send in your special mentions for the May Magazine whether or not it is online or on paper! The deadline will have to be 26th of April

## From our new moderator Rev. John Western

It is a privilege to serve Sittingbourne Baptist Church as moderator. But this is a temporary and part time role. So what will I be doing for the rest of my time, whilst I'm not taking part in a meeting at SBC? My official title is "pioneering minister" of **Bread of Life** in Strood, but that may not give you much of an idea!

Let me go back a couple of years. In March 2019, a dwindling congregation took the difficult decision to stop meeting. The premises they had been using – in the middle of a parade of shops – became the responsibility of SEBA (the South Eastern Baptist Association).



One option was to replant a congregation in the building along a traditional church model. However, there was nothing to suggest that this would fare any better than the church that had closed. Selling the building and investing the money elsewhere was considered. However, as we got to know the area better, we realised that the surrounding community would benefit hugely from some commitment and that this was an ideal location for mission. So, the question became how to utilise the resource of the premises in a way that would connect with the predominantly unchurched community around?



Through prayer and God's leading, a clear vision emerged to transform the premises into a micro-bakery and coffee shop through which a church can be planted. I am an experienced Baptist minister and a baker and had previously written "the Bread of Life Course" – a 6 session breadmaking course through which I open up discussion about Jesus, the Bread of Life. I was appointed to head up the project.

Over the last year I have been involved in preparatory activity – some remedial building work such as fixing a leaky roof and removing asbestos, gaining planning permission, applying for grants and so on. Inevitably there have been delays, but it is hoped that the main building contract will be placed soon.

Once the transformation is complete, my wife and I will be able to move into a 3 bedroom flat above the shop – a "manse" – and I will be busy operating the micro-bakery and coffee shop. The aim is not to attract disaffected believers from existing congregations, but to see a brand new worshipping community emerge from local residents who might be very unlikely to walk into one of our traditional churches.

The idea is not that the trading will cover my stipend and allow me to "do church" in my spare time, but rather than this will be integral mission – that I will share the love and grace of God as I serve customers with a loaf of bread, or listen to someone as they sit with a cappuccino. There will be intentional opportunities to speak of faith, through Bread of Life courses and more besides. Bread of Life will be more than an evangelistic project through which people come to faith. It will also be church, where people are discipled and grow in their faith.

The lives of individuals, and indeed the community of Strood, will not be transformed without a move of the Holy Spirit. I would really appreciate you partnering with me in prayer. You can sign up to my news and prayer emails by contacting me at [BreadOfLife@seba-baptist.org.uk](mailto:BreadOfLife@seba-baptist.org.uk) I won't be able to do everything single-handedly and will need volunteers once we open. Do chat to me if you would like to find out more of what that could involve - [07969 391393](tel:07969391393). Thank you for your interest.

**John Western**

# 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 activities for all.

**Our church services are opening up from 2nd April** onwards— the children and young people are welcome to join with their families— or unaccompanied if they are 16+ Please book in with the church office. The services are limited at the moment but we will gradually return to our usual activities.



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!**

**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**

Topics for the **Way**— young people can access the teaching via the church website [sbc-church.org.uk](http://sbc-church.org.uk)

Contact Kuda on [youth@sbc-church.org.uk](mailto: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.



Matthew 19 v 14

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

.....A quick up date about the Youth Pastor recruitment— there have been several rounds of interviews on Zoom and one of the candidates visited the church when they were passing close by for family reasons.

Two candidates made the final selection—both with training, experience and gifts and skills. Please continue to pray that the final appointment will be the right person for our church young people and our local community and schools, as they develop outreach and ministry as the community steps out of lockdown.

Watch out for the Easter Bunny calling round with a little something for you all— we do miss you and continue to pray for you all in the current times and for your futures.

God Bless



# April 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](mailto:office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk)



## Prayer Points

All in our congregation who are unwell at the moment, or becoming very frail.

Deacon's Meeting on 6th April

Food bank, CAP, Contact Centre and those who have gone so long without contact. Those awaiting 'routine' medical care

**Our church as we look ahead to and 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](mailto:Office.manager@sbc-church.org.uk) know your e-mail if you are not already receiving these. Also birthdays and Anniversaries for May-Big or little we can pray for the person/couple.  
Monthly prayer meeting—April 14th the link will be e-mailed out to join us on Zoom!

## **Prayer for our Nation- Suggestions for April**

As we see God's hand and blessings on our great nation, we must first give Him our thanks and praise for answering our prayers, and all He is doing.

Here are some suggestions for prayers this month.

- 1) Ask for forgiveness of our nation's past sins.
- 2) Pray that we regain our Christian heritage.
- 3) Continue to raise up strong Christian Ministers, leaders and evangelists, and that those Ministers, leaders and evangelists have His grace and authority.
- 4) That God will touch the hearts and minds of the Prime Minister, and the First Ministers of the Union, to keep us together **as one Great Nation.**
- 5) To bind us together in His love, and His cords that cannot be broken.

And as always, I ask you, to pray as the Holy Spirit leads you. (Grahame P.F.O.N)

## Thinking about Christmas already?

Jackie writes:-No quite that, yet, but I have been thinking about Shoe Boxes, prompted by Blythswood who have been thanking us for our donations of cash to support transport and delivery, and also for the number of boxes we sent, despite the challenges of doing our packing during the restrictions of the pandemic.



While we are stuck at home, and possibly will still have to be careful how we manage our restrictions, it is an opportunity to start to prepare for shoe boxes. We are all hoping we can meet up gradually with small groups, and even go into shops, but I rather suspect we will be staying in our locality for a while yet, and there may still be restrictions on activities.

For those who knit we really do need to look at our oddments of wool and get knitting stripey scarves, hats, gloves and mittens for all ages. This has always been a request that comes high on the list provided by the organisation. Every year we seem to need more scarves especially, and this year we may well be asked to consider shoe boxes for families in the UK.

Once again I'd like to thank you all on behalf of Blythswood and those people whom we reached out to, unknown to us but known to God. (75,218 boxes in 2020 overall– see website for further information)