



**St Johns Hill
Sevenoaks
United Reformed
Church**



**June – July 2025
Magazine**

St Johns Hill United Reformed Church
St Johns Road,
Sevenoaks,
TN13 3LW

Telephone No **07502132896**

Email address sjhsevenoaksurc@gmail.com

Web address www.sjhsevenoaksurc.org.uk

Minister: Rev. Angela Rigby

Email address sjhminister@gmail.com

Church Secretary sjhsecretarysevenoaks@gmail.com

Bookings Clive Avery

Sunday Club for children aged 0 – 16

Our Core Mission is:

To worship God in a mutually supportive fellowship and, in the power of the spirit to develop our faith and to bring others to know and love Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour.

Our services are held at St Johns Hill URC every Sunday at 10.00 am unless advertised differently.

Services can also be viewed on the St Johns Hill URC YouTube channel.

For full details of forthcoming services please refer to emails from the Church Secretary

‘Coffee and Chat’ discussion group every fourth Thursday of the month – 7:30pm on Zoom - Meeting ID: 660 593 603

Contact an Elder for details on how to be involved.



CHURCH SERVICES

June

1st	10.00		Lionel Farraway
8th	10.00	Pentecost	Albert and Elizabeth Wood
15th	10.00	Trinity Sunday Communion	Rev. Angela Rigby
22nd	10.00	Sunday Club Celebration	Sunday Club
29th	10.00		Mark Rigby

July

6th	10.00		Rev. Angela Rigby
13th	10.00		Albert & Elizabeth Wood
20th	10.00	Communion	Rev. Angela Rigby
27th	10.00		G & J Browitt

August

3rd	10.00		Rev. Angela Rigby
-----	-------	--	-------------------

Dear friends,

At our elders' away day, I shared about my recent week at the Southern Synod Ministers' Spring School. We had Rev Dr Susan Durber lead sessions around the theme of "Who is Jesus?" We looked at the historical case for Jesus, focussing on the Council of Nicaea which celebrates its 1700th anniversary this year. We look at Jesus through the parables he told, as well as through modern art, modern film and poetry.

One of the parables we looked at was the parable of the mustard seed, which appears in three of the gospels. Two of the stories are similar, with one having a slightly different emphasis. I wanted to share that with you.

In Mark 4 verses 30-32 in the NIV, we read Jesus said: **"What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of all seeds on earth. Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants [shrub], with such big branches that the birds can perch in its shade."**

Seeds are small. Even large seeds are small in comparison to the flowers and fruits they come from. And the fruits are small in comparison to the plants, shrubs and trees they come from. Seeds could be easily overlooked and seen as unimportant. A speck of dirt to be wiped away. A blot of ink on a page to be discarded. Yet Jesus compares such a small, seemingly insignificant thing to something as important and strong as the kingdom of God.

God's kingdom. Not the Roman Empire's. Not M&S's or Amazon's. God's Kingdom.

God's kingdom is like the tiniest seed.

Yet we are told even the tiniest seed grows into a large shrub, capable of providing protection for birds. It's in the very nature of the seed to grow in this way. The seed may have been carried by the wind or an animal. We aren't told how the seed is planted. We are only reminded that it is in the very nature of the seed to grow.

The kingdom of God is like a mustard seed. Looks tiny and insignificant. We can trust God that the kingdom of God will grow, as it is its very nature to grow. To protect. To invite all to come and find rest.

That is the parable as we find it in Mark, but what about in Luke 13 verses 18-19 NIV?

“What is the kingdom of God like? What shall I compare it to? It is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden. It grew and became a tree, and the birds perched in its branches.”

A mustard seed growing into a tree?! And who would plant a weed in their garden? Jesus must have been joking!

What did He mean when He said that the kingdom of God was like the seed of a weed that someone planted in their garden ON PURPOSE and that seed then grew into something completely different? What was Jesus saying here?

The man did something. He meant to plant the seed. Was it an act of faith? Did he plant the seed for his benefit? Or was he wanting to provide shelter for the birds in his garden?

But the seed did something unexpected. Surprising. The result far surpassed the original intention. The man may have wanted a nice controllable shrub in his perfectly domesticated garden, but God exceeded his expectations.

What does it mean to say that the kingdom of God is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his garden? In this story, we see that God's kingdom may look unimportant, something to pull up and root out because it doesn't fit our landscaping plans. But in reality, God's kingdom is strong and sturdy. It has roots, and it grows in unexpected spaces. God's kingdom cannot be domesticated. After all, it is not our kingdom; it's God's.

But we can plant seeds in faith and see what God grows.

We are in a season of planting in faith, as we try new ways of getting to know the people in our community. The people who hire spaces in our building, as well as the people who pass by our building, live nearby, and work across the streets – all of these are people we have the joy of getting to know better.

As we plant in faith, what will God grow? Something greater than our expectations, no doubt!

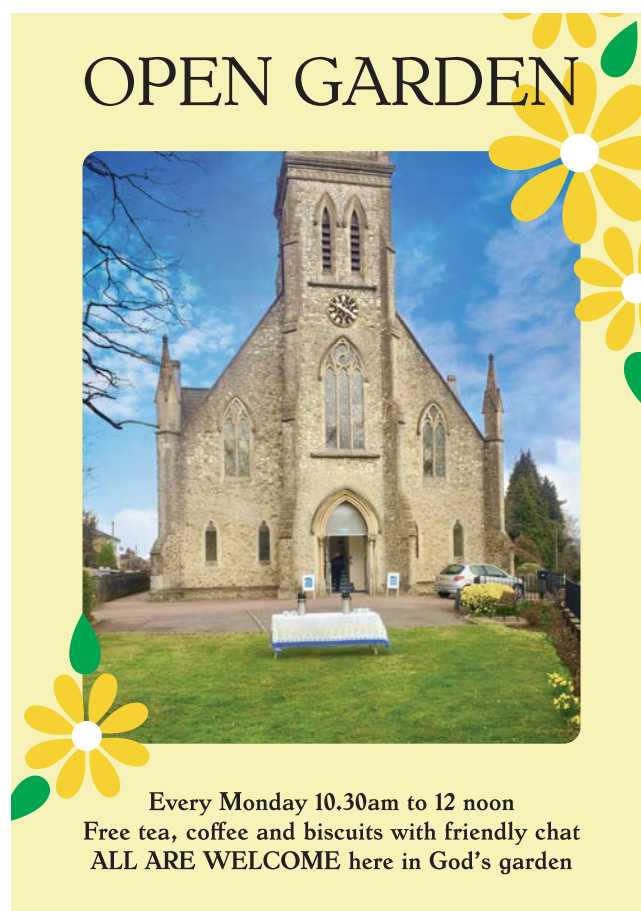
Blessings,

Rev Angela

Bible Studies:

25th June – Ezekiel 36 – led by Albert and Elizabeth on Zoom

23rd July – Philemon: *a small letter with a big message* – led by Rev Angela at St Johns Hill URC, starting at 7:30pm



As part of our worship at Spring School, our chaplain shared Luke 24 verses 13-35, the story of two disciples walking to Emmaus. During our reflection time, I was inspired to write a poem.

Things

They knew the things.

They had heard the gossip.

They had seen the news.

They had read the posts in their social media newsfeeds.

They knew the things.

They had heard the people laugh at him.

They had seen him marched handcuffed through the streets.

They had read the mocking sign hammered into his cross –
“king”

What kind of king suffers crucifixion?

*What kind of king dies the death of a slave, of a criminal, of
someone from the lowest class?*

The whole Jesus thing had been fun,
promising,
dangerous even,
but it was over.
They had heard, seen and read all the things.

However...

They knew of the things without remembering the other things.

Ah! The other things!

The things they had heard read in synagogue.

The things they had seen the rabbis and scribes
passionately discuss.

The things they had read in the rituals passed down by their
ancestors.

Those things!

Those things that pointed to

A deeper purpose

A greater reality

An unimagined potential

The tiniest seed growing to shelter us all.

The Christ whose coming spoke of new life,
of new things.

Written by Rev Angela Rigby

OUTDOOR CHESS

For 4 to 11 year olds



LEARN HOW TO PLAY CHESS

WHEN: EVERY SATURDAY, starting on Saturday 17th May

TIME: 11.15 - 12noon

PLACE: ST JOHNS HILL URC GARDEN

CONTACT: DIANA on 07502132896 to register.

St John's Hill Sing-along

Saturday, 7th June at 7 p.m.
in the Sanctuary



Songs from the charts (not too modern), tradition
& musicals - with Albert & Elizabeth Wood.

Faith

When your prayers at times appear to go unanswered,
And the words of your worse doubters seem so true,
When it seems the whole wide world is all against you,
Just put your faith in God and you'll pull through.

When your life is like a maze with no known exit,
And your future appears to be as black as night,
When it seems that all your efforts end in failure,
Just put your faith in God, he'll see you right.

For those who put their faith in God have reason,
For confidence to face each trial and test,
and know better times are just around the corner,
For faith is the soft pillow that gives rest.

By Colin Hammacott



*Sunday Club & Cradle
Roll
Celebration Service
Sunday 22nd June 2025
10.00
Everyone is welcome!*

Come celebrate with us!

*Our service will include stories, songs and
surprises for everyone to enjoy!*

Afterwards, we will enjoy a picnic lunch together.

*Bring your favourite food and drinks will be
provided.*

Food Bank Support

During July, August and September we will be supporting our local Food Bank charities – Sevenoaks Food Bank (Loaves & Fishes) and Sevenoaks Larder.

We have provided a box in the sanctuary for donations which will be delivered to them. Any monetary donations can also be placed in the box, and this will be forwarded to both charities.

Here are more details of both Food Banks:

	
<p>We really need:</p> <p>TINNED FOOD Corned beef Carrots stewed steak beef ravioli chicken in white sauce rice pudding spaghetti loops fruits vegetarian dishes</p>	<p>OTHER ITEMS toothbrushes men's grooming shampoo deodorant shower gel soap bars</p>
<p>OTHER FOOD Biscuits CEREALS !! chocolate spread marmite coffee Mayonnaise rice sauce</p>	<p><i>Currently we do not need:</i></p> <p><i>Tins of Ham</i> <i>Jam</i></p>

Sevenoaks Larder

Helping residents of Sevenoaks, Chevening, Chipstead, Dunton Green, Halstead, Kemsing, Otford, Riverhead, Seal, and Weald.

Sevenoaks Larder is a food support service that helps residents of Sevenoaks who are struggling to pay for their weekly food shop.

Our principles are simple:

Fresh Food, Choice, given with Kindness & Compassion.

We believe that a single action can make a difference in the community, and collective actions can make the world a better place.

Here is our current Wish List

<u>Tins</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fish (tuna & other)• Meat (corned beef, hot dogs, meatballs, chicken curry, chilli con carne)• Vegetables• Fruit• Baked Beans <u>Jars</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pasta sauce• Curry sauce• Peanut butter• Jam• Instant coffee	<u>Other</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cooking oil• Plain flour• Cereals (Weetabix, Cheerios, Rice Krispies)• Rice• Nappies <p><u>Thank you</u>, at the moment we have plenty of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dried pasta (shapes, & spaghetti)• Teabags• Other cereals
--	--

Below is a copy of a Newsletter from the 'Hi Kent, Sevenoaks Group' who have been using our Small Hall once a month since June 2024

Hi Kent / Sevenoaks Social Group / June 2025

JP – My Hearing Loss Journey

Making the most of life with hearing loss

Sevenoaks Social Group First Year Anniversary



Dear All

I hope this letter finds you well. As we celebrate our group's first-year anniversary, I want to thank all of you for your support. Over the past 12 months, we've formed new friendships and gained valuable insights into managing our hearing loss more effectively. This is indeed a cause for celebration as we regain confidence by sharing personal experiences and seeking solutions together. Focusing on the positive aspects, we like the fact that society is becoming more accepting of individuals with hearing loss and that technology is continually improving.

Attached, you will find an excellent article from Vox (or click [here](#) to read it). As the author highlights, we are not alone; two-thirds of individuals aged 70 and above will eventually experience some form of mild to severe hearing loss. Also, as he says, confronting the realities of

aging and health is challenging, especially when we have enjoyed perfect hearing in our youth. However, it's important to keep things in perspective—worse things can happen in life.

The cost of hearing aids is a concern, but the sound quality is ten times better and should continue to improve. Using my own example, without them, it would be very difficult to understand my wife or anyone else for that matter. It is hard to imagine the impact a lack, or simply a set of poor hearing aids would have had on my life.

In the Vox article, the author describes his experience using the new “Nuance Glasses,” which double as hearing aids. This is truly innovative for those with mild to moderate hearing loss, and more innovations are coming. Apple AirPods Pro and other major brands are targeting individuals who are hard of hearing. Sadly, more young people are now experiencing hearing loss.

Looking ahead, the introduction of Auracast as a replacement for Bluetooth should make our lives easier. It will allow high-quality audio to be broadcast from one device to many compatible devices, such as hearing aids and earbuds, without individual pairings. This will make accessing audio in public spaces and at home much easier.

All these advancements are encouraging and give us hope for a better future for those with hearing loss. The second most crucial issue, in my opinion, is how we manage this challenge mentally. This is a complex issue with no straightforward technological or medical solutions. So, how do we address it?

I would suggest that meditation, mindfulness, gardening, reading, or simply taking a long walk are the best remedies when we feel upset or frustrated by our hearing loss. Of course, meeting friends in suitable environments and avoiding noisy places are also beneficial. Our social gatherings provide an opportunity for meaningful conversations about our hearing issues and concerns, offering support and new insights.

Making new friends with hearing loss can be challenging, but our group has shown that it is achievable.



Meeting August 2024.



Meeting December 2024

Our Year One Recap

Some of you will recall that our group's journey began at a U3A meeting in April 2024. The topic was hearing loss; we had an amazing 100 plus participants. Maxine and Vicky from Hi Kent spoke about the support their charity can offer and that included the setting up of social groups across Kent. It is then that we decided to set one up in Sevenoaks.

As the Chair of [SDSAF](#), Eileen was at the meeting and she has ever since provided the support our group needed, several SDSAF members are now in our group. In January of this year, I started a monthly newsletter to share information and create a mental boost to those experiencing hearing loss. This newsletter seems to be well received by an ever-expanding list of friends. However, one can never be sure and I welcome your feedback.

We try to have a different theme for each meeting with a guest speaker when possible. Our initial discussion was about Bluetooth and various apps. Since that we have had an audiologist speaking to us about private versus NHS hearing aids and another addressing mental health issues related to hearing loss. We also explored the NHS's 10-year reform plan in relation to the provision of audiology care in the community (please do not hold your breath – we are not NHS's top priority!).

As it is always difficult for us to understand and be understood by our GP and NHS staff, a friend who volunteers with the NHS made a most helpful demonstration on how to use the NHS app. Back in Oct 2024, Julia, a qualified lip-reading teacher, gave us a lip-reading session. Our most recent session was led by two Red Cross volunteers on First Aid. Again, that was tailored for us and a great success. We were also

fortunate to have Maxine, the CEO of Hi Kent, present the latest hearing assistive technology to us.

So overall it has indeed been a busy year, all made even more stimulating with some coffee. The cost being only one hour and half of your time and a small donation to Hi Kent. I strongly believe that these are resources well spent.



Meeting November 2024 with Sam, audiologist.

On the topic of First Aid

Last time we met, we had a very helpful workshop on First Aid. It was delivered by Chris and Netty, who volunteer for the Red Cross. Here are tools they recommended to us:



1. **The British Red Cross App**, which you can download by clicking [here](#). It provides information on how to prepare for and handle

first aid emergencies such as heavy bleeding, burns, broken bones, strains and sprains, and breathing difficulties.

Their presentation was relevant to all of us, their demonstration of the defibrillator most helpful. As a keen cyclist, I was particularly keen to hear what they had to say, but hoping never to have to use those skills.

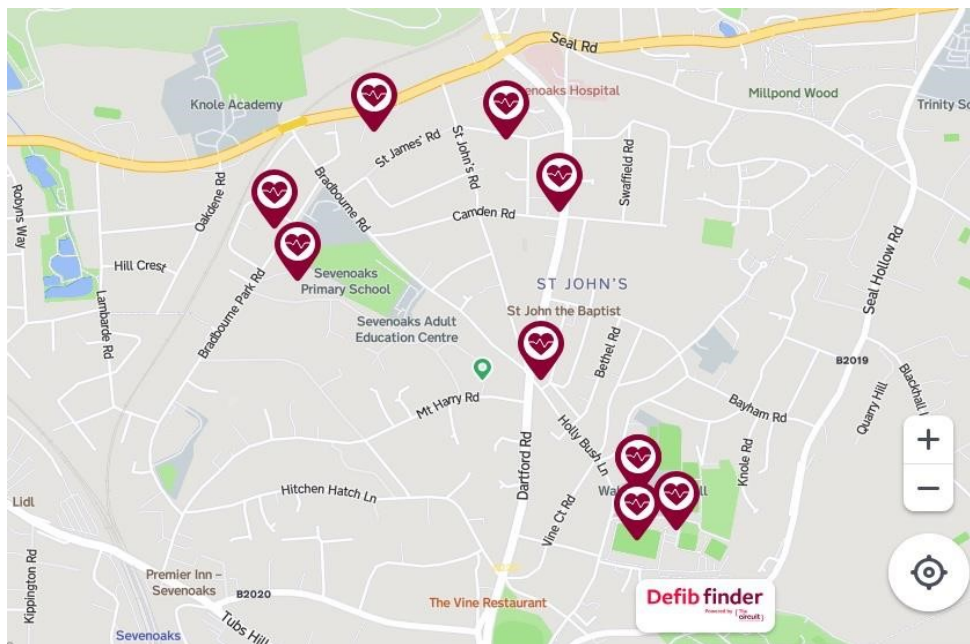
2. **Heart Defibrillator:** They demonstrated how to use a defibrillator, which was much more straightforward than I imagined. The issue is locating one. Chris suggested a link to a website called "defibfinder.uk." Your search engine will take you to the site, which is run by the British Heart Foundation. Then it's just a matter of saving the link as a favourite.
3. The third idea they recommended is the [Whats3words App](#) **What3Words** is the easiest way to describe any precise location. It has divided the world into 3-meter squares and given each one a unique identifier made from three words.

What3Words is accepted by over 85% of UK emergency services. To find your What3Words address, open the What3Words app or visit what3words.com in a web browser. Then, either search for a known location like a postcode or street address, or allow the app to pinpoint your current location. Once the map displays your location, select the precise 3-meter square to reveal the unique three-word address for that location.

The BBC highly recommends creating an account to get the most from What3Words. This will allow you to save locations, organise favourites with lists, and sync locations across multiple devices. Click to see the [BBC article](#).



Netty and Chris demonstrating how to use the defibrillator



Here is a map of local Sevenoaks defibrillators.

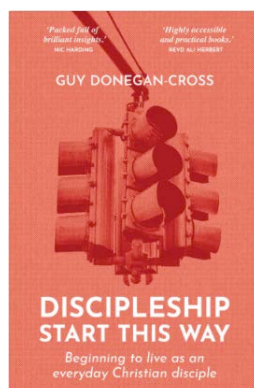
Jean-Pierre (aka JP) Darque
 Sevenoaks Group Coordinator for Hi Kent.
 Email: jpdarque@btinternet.com
 Mobile: 07880828880

For those who do not know us, our social group aims to share hearing loss experiences and tips on managing it. We do this in a friendly atmosphere over a cup of tea or coffee. We learn from and chat with people who face similar daily challenges, helping to combat isolation and potential loneliness.

Hi Kent social groups are spread throughout the county and meet monthly. We often have guest speakers, activities, and Hi Kent representatives who provide information about their services. I am acting as the coordinator of this group. For actual help and guidance, please contact Hi Kent or visit www.hikent.org.uk.



BOOK REVIEW



Discipleship: Start This Way: Beginning to live as an everyday Christian disciple

By Guy Donegan-Cross, BRF, £9.99

This book emphasises the difference that discipleship can make in our day-to-day experience. Both a resource for the enquirer and a tool for anyone wanting to support someone in their faith journey, this book provides an accessible and grounded route into the beginnings of discipleship, with a clear explanation of what it looks and feels like to become a disciple and to start to live as one.

p	e	o	p	l	e	s	i	n	a	i	c
p	r	o	t	e	c	t	a	n	g	r	y
b	u	o	f	a	u	l	t	p	o	h	b
a	l	g	m	a	k	e	i	s	d	e	u
c	e	o	j	i	b	h	t	m	e	b	r
k	s	l	a	b	s	c	j	u	b	r	s
z	n	d	k	r	a	e	t	i	d	e	q
q	a	f	o	r	g	a	v	e	s	w	d
h	a	w	t	a	t	u	k	o	w	b	f
r	r	n	j	s	o	l	m	w	n	a	s
m	o	u	n	t	a	i	n	b	m	y	q
c	n	o	s	t	o	n	e	g	y	p	t

forgave
 stone
 angry
 worship
 Moses
 people
 back
 slabs

promise
 gold
 talked
 climbed
 mountain
 Egypt
 contract
 Aaron

statue
 Hebrew
 Sinai
 protect
 fault
 God
 make
 rules

BLOOD DONOR SESSIONS

June	Wednesday 4th	12.10 -21.00
	Friday 20th	12.10 -21.00
	Wednesday 25th	12.10 -21.00
July	Friday 4th	12.10 -21.00
	Wednesday 16th	12.10 - 21.00

If you would like further information on any of the following,
please phone the church office.

HOUSE GROUPS

Please speak to Rev. Angela Rigby or one of the Elders if you
would like to join a house group.

Youth activities: Sevenoaks Campaigners (Mondays)
 Rainbows (Mondays)
 Eagles (Thursdays)

If you would like us to pray for you, or for someone you know,
please leave a message on our phone, or email us at
sjhsevenoaksurc@gmail.com or by post to the address on page 2.

**You can pray to God, anytime, anywhere, and in your own words –
He is listening.**

***The Homepage of the Church website (specifically the
Newsfeed) needs updating regularly to keep it up-to-date, so
any information should be sent to Simon so he can refresh
this. s.browitt@sky.com***

Any material for the August/September edition of the Church Magazine should reach me by the 25th July either by email to jpbrowitt@sky.com, by hand or via the church office.

If you would like your copy e-mailed to you, please send your e-mail address to sjhsevenoaksurc@gmail.com and all future issues will be sent to you in this way.

Large print copies of this magazine are available on request.

