St Johns Hill
Sevenoaks
United Reformed
Church

February – March 2026
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

February

1st	10.00		Rev. Angela Rigby
8th	10.00		Albert & Elizabeth Wood
15th	10.00	**Communion**	Rev. Angela Rigby
22nd	19.00	**Thinking Day Servic**e	SJH Team

March

1st	10.00		Rev. Angela Rigby
8th	10.00		Albert & Elizabeth Wood
15th	10.00	**Communion** **Mothering Sunday**	Rev. Angela Rigby
22nd	10.00		Rev. Vic Webb
29th	10.00	**Palm Sunday**	Rev. Angela Rigby

April

5th	10.00	**Easter Sunday**	Rev. Angela Rigby

Dear friends,

During the season of Epiphany, on Sunday mornings, we have been exploring what it means to be the light of the world (Isaiah 49:6; Matthew 5:14). We also considered Romans 12:1-2 and the process of the Holy Spirit changing (metamorphosing) the way with think, bringing our thoughts and our ways of seeing the world more in line with God's ways. We looked at the Exodus story and how God tried to guide the people into ways of experiencing and being with him that they had not experienced before in their lifetimes. We also looked at the Beatitudes in Matthew 5 and considered how Jesus was teaching the disciples to have a different perspective.

Over the weeks during Lent, I will continue these themes, by looking at some of the issues that are happening in our world. We will consider themes such as scarcity vs abundance, 'fight the world' vs empathy, and shaming vs encouraging integrity. I hope these themes will help us to think afresh about some of the events happening locally and globally.

Jesus said: "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:14-16 NIV

Let's spend some time considering how we might reflect God's light and be Jesus' hands and feet in our world today.

Blessings

Angela

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Home Group at Church – Studying Revelation over Lent

The study guide we will follow is the LICC study guide for Revelation, written by Ian Paul. It can be found here: https://licc.org.uk/product/revelation/CC

The Home Group at Church will meet from 2-3:30pm every week over Lent on the following dates:

Thursday 26th February - Seeing God Afresh - Rev 1:1-11

Thursday 5th March - Heeding God's Perspective - Rev 3:14-22

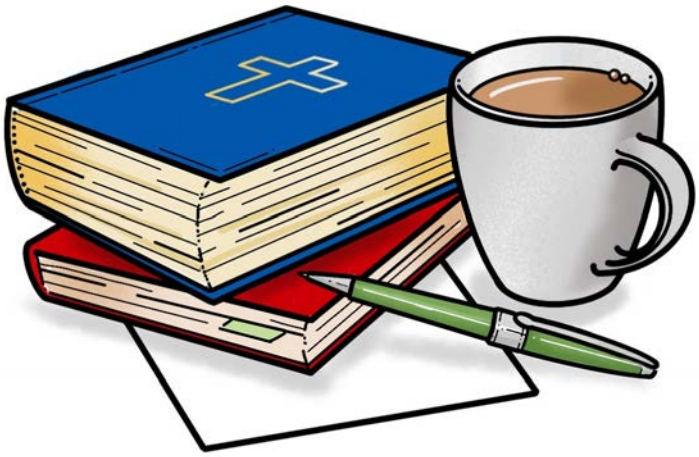
Thursday 12th March - Encountering God's Majesty - Rev 4:1-11

Thursday 19th March - Picturing God's People - Rev 7:1-14

Thursday 26th March - Living Between the Times - Rev 12:1-12

Thursday 2nd April - Celebrating the Goal of History - Rev 21:1-14

As Thursday 2nd April is Maundy Thursday, we will finish by sharing communion together at 3pm. Anyone is welcome to join us for communion.



St Johns Hill URC – Prayer Diary – February/March 2026

Each week you are encouraged to pray for three people from the church fellowship and two people from the community.

February 1 – 14

- Pray for Southern Synod office and staff, including Ross (office and finance administrator), Mark (property administrator), Catherine (finance), Colin (property), Russell (Synod Council Convenor), Martin (Synod Clerk), John (Treasurer), Tom (CYDO), Jo (Mission and Discipleship), Charisa (training and development), Cristina (Ecumenical development), Natalie (safeguarding), and Ian (Green apostle).
- Pray for the process of finding our new Synod Moderator and for the person who is selected to serve our synod in this role.
- Pray for the elders meeting on Tuesday 10th February.
- Pray for those in our fellowship who are grieving.

February 15 – 28

- Pray for St Johns Hill URC as we discern who is being called to serve as elders. Pray for those who are considering this call at this time.
- Pray for children, young people and their families during the half term break.
- Ash Wednesday is 18th February. The lectionary reading is from Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21. You may wish to spend time reading and reflecting on these words from Jesus.
- Pray for Worship and Outreach Group as it meets 25th February. Pray about our Sunday worship and our outreach into the community. Please come along to share with the group. Alternatively, you can share any thoughts or prayers with the minister Angela or the Worship and Outreach group convenor Pauline.
- Pray for our Home Group at Church as we start our study of the book of Revelation on February 26th.

March 1-14

- Pray for our church meeting on the 8th March.
- Pray for the elders meeting on the 10th March.
- Pray for the KESSA (our synod area) Pastoral Committee meeting.
- Pray for the Southern Synod Together meeting.
- Pray for Mothering Sunday. Pray for churches across Sevenoaks and the surrounding towns. Pray that people return to the churches.

March 15 – 28

- Pray also for those who are mothers or grandmothers and for those who serve in a mentoring-type role.

- Pray for Most Rev Dame Sarah Mullally as she is installed in the role of Archbishop of Canterbury. Pray for the worldwide Anglican Communion – Bishops, clergy and laity.
- Pray for emergency services personnel, like the Police, Fire service, and ambulance staff.

On Wednesday, 4th February, there will be a Bible Study led by Albert and Elizabeth via Zoom. The Zoom link will be sent out by e-mail a few days before the event and the link will be open from about 7.45 p.m. Do feel free to pass on the link to anyone you know who might be interested. We are using the Zoom format because that makes the study accessible to those who would not be able to join us in person. We hope you will be able be with us and look forward to this opportunity to learn together.

Edward John Stanley Moorlen
September 1946 – December 2025

Eddie was born in Lingfield in 1946. He started school there and attended a school in Redhill at the age of 11.

He had a number of jobs working in a Coal Yard, Surrey County Council – 20 years, Sundridge Hospital, which is where he met Rosemary and when it closed he worked for 3 garages in Sevenoaks and Tonbridge.

We all know that Eddie loved Rosemary who he called either his Rose or Bubbles and moved from Edenbridge to Sevenoaks be with her.

A true partner for life is hard to find and are worth their weight in gold…
An ear to always listen and a hand to hold in time of need.

They shared their best and worst memories and all those precious secrets.
Life has had highs and lows and they have got through them together.
He made Rosemary laugh.

Eddie showed the way he cared for his Bubbles in many different ways – with wonderful holidays and when these were not possible, they had many day trips which usually finished with a fish and chip supper.

If you met Eddie in one of our super markets you would see him with his cap on and either a Latte or flowers for Bubbles

Also, his kindness could be shown with his untiring visits whenever Rosemary was in hospital.

He loved voicing his opinion on many topics; some were - Old Sevenoaks, his younger days, coffee, NHS, Cars, politics, Country Western music.

We are all so lucky to be called a friend of Eddie's and you will have your own memories of him so I pause for a moment to give you the chance of thinking about them.

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Eddie and Rosemary had been together for 31 years and dedication to each other was obvious. Rosemary we will be there to help you, as Eddie would want us to.
God bless

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'Making Sparks Fly' is a science show presented by Albert & Elizabeth. It will be packed with live demonstrations of all the ways we can think of to make electric sparks - and the bigger, the better! We will attempt everything from the well-known 100,000 volt sparks of the Van de Graaff generator to the less well-known ball lightning in a microwave oven, from melting glass with mains electricity to the gherkin table lamp.
Invite your friends - all are welcome to the Sanctuary for a memorable evening of excitement and education.

Sevenoaks (Loaves & Fishes) Foodbank and its team of fantastic volunteers would like to thank you for your amazing generosity and support over the past year.

This year, I am happy to report that besides the distribution of food, our special focus on the wellbeing of our clients and our collaboration with many other charities have borne fruit.

In the summer, a charity which helps with budgeting and debt management let us know that several clients who they met at our Foodbank are now debt free and without need of our support.
In one particular case, the person is also free from mental health issues thanks to his recovered pride.

At the Foodbank, we also sometimes witness smaller positive changes such as one client who, during the first few months of his visits, would only take tinned food but who today, loads his bags with many vegetables!

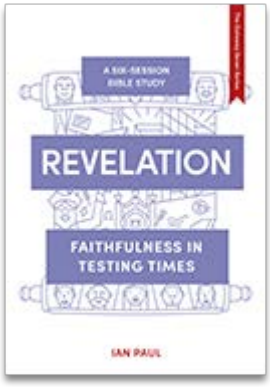
One of our new targets is to help our clients to find employment. To this end, we have received the visit of the employment branch of West Kent Housing Association and we are hoping to invite another similar agency. This way, we are hoping to accumulate further successful stories.

Finally, I have to report that we received an incredible amount of donations at Harvest time: from having two very depleted stores in September, we were able in November to support another foodbank - the Community cupboard that operates in Swanley & West Kingsdown where the food poverty is dire. Their full van made their Christmas!

It is only because of you that we can do all of this! Thank you once again.

Sevenoaks (Loaves & Fishes) Foodbank wishes you a happy year 2026!

Home Group in Church will be using the LICC study on Revelation by Ian Paul.



Revelation: Faithfulness in Testing Times
Written by Ian Paul

The book of Revelation has often been treated as a futuristic prophecy − a road map of a bizarre future to be inflicted on the world by an angry God. Ian Paul invites you to explore how the book's author draws on a style of writing familiar to Jesus and his first followers and encourages God's people to stay faithful despite the world's pressures to compromise. This fascinating six-session guide will help you to approach this book with fresh eyes. You'll gain a richer understanding of God's world and a fresh confidence to reimagine your place in it.

We will meet weekly during Lent from Thursday 26th February to Thursday 2nd April (Maundy Thursday)
For the Maundy Thursday meeting we would like to conclude with Communion to which everyone is invited whether they have attended previous meetings or not.

Porchlight

26416 1087
St John's Hill United Reformed Church
St Johns Road
SEVENOAKS
Kent
TN13 3LW

January 2026

You don't know me, but you changed my life.

Thank you.

Dear everyone at St John's Hill United Reformed Church,

Not so long ago I was sofa surfing, with everything I owned in bin bags. I'd been through more than I can describe having left a difficult living environment with my daughter, and every day felt like a battle I was losing. I didn't know how to make my situation better.

But someone like you believed I deserved another chance, a place to call home. And because of your kindness, Porchlight helped me before things went too far.

They didn't judge me. They didn't ask me to explain everything all at once. They offered me time, warmth, and safety. My support worker listened to me, helped me apply for benefits and helped me regain my identity. It all meant so much after years of feeling scared and worthless.

The day I moved into my flat I cried. Four walls, a door that locked, and a place where I could breathe again. It was a safe home for me and my daughter.

And I wasn't the only one.

Because of St John's Hill United Reformed Church, 4,505 people in Kent found hope last year — people who were sleeping on the streets, trapped in poverty, or struggling with their mental health. People who had nowhere else to turn. People like me.

You didn't only change individual lives. You gave hope to everyone at Porchlight too.

After years of relentless funding cuts, the gap keeps growing between what the government expects and the resources available to make it possible. Yet you — and thousands of people in our local community — stood with Porchlight. You refused to give up on people who need help when it matters most.

I still have difficult days. But now I have support around me. I have plans. I have a future.

And I have that because you cared.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you.

Jodie

Former Porchlight client and Porchlight volunteer

This is how you're changing lives every single day. In nine months* you've helped us buy:

*from Jan to Sept 2025

198 drinks for individuals and 71 groups of clients provided with refreshments. Hot drinks and food - an essential which can feel like a luxury to some.

27 mobile phone top-ups to help clients stay connected to support services, access essential emails and online systems.

21 birth certificates, enabling people to claim benefits and open a bank account. This simplifies processes when trying to apply for work or register for GPs and dentists.

These are just a small selection of some of the essentials you've helped us provide for our clients so they can achieve their goals, improve their wellbeing, and take further steps towards independence. **Thank you.**

Because of you, incredible things have been achieved in the past year:

4,505 people received support when they needed it most.

351 people have been given a stable place to live through our supported housing or housing first accommodation while we help them to rebuild their lives.

238 people who spent countless nights on cold, damp streets now wake up every morning in warm, cosy beds, no longer afraid for their safety.

porchlight.org.uk

Keep up-to-date with the difference you're making by following us: Porchlight1974

Head Office, Porchlight, 15 New Town Street, Canterbury, CT1 1BX
01227 760078 | getinvolved@porchlight.org.uk

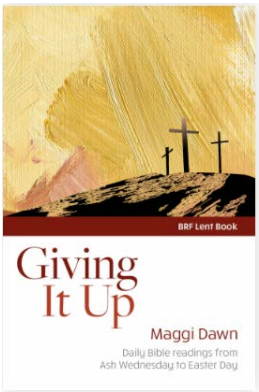
Porchlight is a limited company registered in England and Wales.
Registered company No: 01157482. Registered charity no. 267116

Registered with FUNDRAISING REGULATOR

Save the date!
Church Open Morning Saturday 9th May

to include Community Prayers, plant swap and garden games

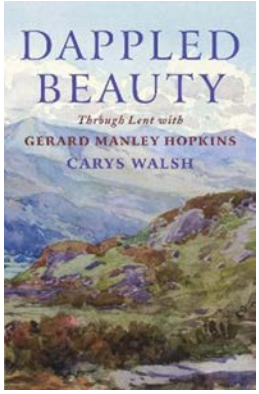
BOOK REVIEWS



Giving It Up: Daily Bible Readings from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day
By Maggi Dawn, BRF Lent Book, £9.99

We all know about the practice of 'giving something up for Lent'. But how many of us know that the Lenten fast had several purposes? It was designed to be a reminder of our daily dependence on God for all our needs, to draw us closer to God in prayer, to reconnect us with the idea of community, and to help us follow Christ's journey through the wilderness and on to Jerusalem.

In this series of daily studies, Maggi Dawn shows how, throughout Scripture, people were radically changed by encountering the true God.



Dappled Beauty – Through Lent with Gerard Manley Hopkins
By Carys Walsh, Canterbury Press, £12.99

Gerard Manley Hopkins is one of English literature's most celebrated religious poets and a powerful companion through the Lenten season. This book takes readers on a journey of reflection and renewal, guided by Hopkins' vivid imagery, inventive language and deep theological insight.

Whether you are new to Hopkins or a long-time admirer, *Dappled Beauty* opens a poetic and prayerful path through the season, from Ash Wednesday to Easter Day.

16th Feb: Shrove Tuesday, Pancake Day

Ever wonder why we eat pancakes just before Lent? The tradition dates back to Anglo-Saxon times, when Christians spent Lent in repentance and severe fasting.

So on the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday, the church bell would summon them to confession, where they would be 'shriven', or absolved from their sins, which gives us *Shrove* Tuesday. At home, they would then eat up their last eggs and fat, and making a pancake was the easiest way to do this. For the next 47 days, they pretty well starved themselves.

Pancakes feature in cookery books as far back as 1439, and today's pancake races are in remembrance of a panicked woman back in 1445 in Olney, Buckinghamshire. She was making pancakes when she heard the shriving bell calling her to confession. Afraid she'd be late, she ran to the church in a panic, still in her apron, and still holding the pan.

Flipping pancakes is also centuries old. A poem from Pasquil's Palin in 1619 runs: "And every man and maide doe take their turne, And tosse their Pancakes up for feare they burne."

Some people have noted that the ingredients of pancakes can be used to highlight four significant things about this time of year: eggs stand for creation, flour is the staff of life, while salt keeps things wholesome, and milk stands for purity.

Shrove Tuesday is always 47 days before Easter Sunday and falls between 3rd February and 9th March.

The droughts, heat and hunger threatening the Middle East and Afghanistan

World Vision has warned that millions of people in the Middle East and Afghanistan are suffering such severe drought, heat and hunger, that the aid agency fears we are reaching a 'tipping point'.

In its recent report, *Children on the Brink,* World Vision reviews the current situation:

- Iraq's catastrophic drought has displaced more than one million people in the region.
- Lebanon has its most severe drought on record, with more than 40 per cent of the people reliant on water trucking.
- Afghanistan has an estimated 17.5 million people in food crisis.
- In Syria, one million people are rated at 'food insecure'.
- Meanwhile, the West Bank is struggling with "severe restrictions on land and water access, damage to infrastructure, and hunger and malnutrition.

Considering all this, World Vision warns: "The Middle East and Afghanistan are approaching a critical tipping point as drought conditions intensify rapidly across the region. Rising temperatures, prolonged dry periods, and chronic water-management challenges are driving alarming levels of food and water insecurity.

"Close to 50 million people in the Middle East and Afghanistan are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity that threaten their wellbeing and survival."

Alongside internal and cross-border displacement, the risk of "deepening tensions between communities" is rising, the report continues. "Children and already vulnerable families are being pushed to the brink, resorting to negative coping mechanisms to secure the food, water, and shelter needed."

World Vision's response in the region includes restoring watersheds, using earth and stone structures to increase water retention, recharge groundwater, and improve year-round availability. It is also promoting what it describes as 'climate-smart technologies', including drip irrigation, also called trickle irrigation; drought-tolerant seeds and livestock; and training in agroecological and conservation agriculture practices.

However, the reports warns: "The scale and pace of drought demand unified action from national authorities, international donors, and local communities."

Meanwhile, the recent World Meteorological Organisation's *State of the Climate in the Arab Region* report has found that a number of countries in the region had temperatures of above 50 C (122 F) in 2024. The agency's Secretary-General, Celeste Saulo, says these high temperatures are pushing society to the limits. "It is simply too hot to handle. Human health, ecosystems and economies can't cope with extended spells of more than
50 C."

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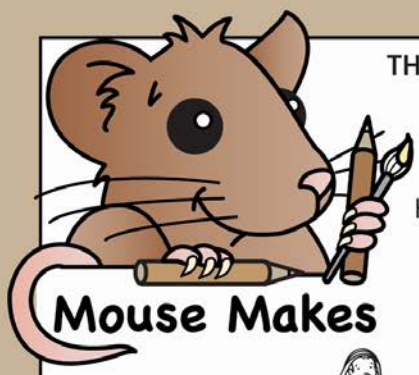
A prayer as Lent continues

Let me hold fast to You, beautiful Lord, whom the angels themselves yearn to look upon. Wherever You go, I will follow You. If You pass through fire, I will not flinch, I fear no evil when You are with me. You carry my griefs, because You grieve for my sake. You passed through the narrow doorway from death to life, to make it wide enough for all to follow. Nothing can ever now separate me from Your love.

By Bernard of Clairvaux 1090 -1153



Mouse Makes

Read the story in
Luke 4:1-13

THE TEMPTATION OF JESUS

After Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan where did the Holy Spirit lead him to? v1

How many days was Jesus being tempted by the devil? v2

What did Jesus eat? v2

What did the devil tempt Jesus to turn a stone into? What did Jesus say? v3-4

What did the devil offer Jesus if He worshipped him? What did Jesus say? v7-8

What did the devil ask Jesus to do? What did Jesus say? v9

FIRST TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:
"If you are God's Son order this stone to turn into bread."

JESUS REPLIED:
"***Man shall not live on bread alone***."

Read Deuteronomy 8:3

WE LEARN:
Read the Bible
Learn God's word.

SECOND TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:
"I will give you power and wealth if you worship me."

JESUS REPLIED:
"***Worship the Lord your God and serve only Him***."

Read Deuteronomy 6:13

WE LEARN:
Put God **first**
Worship *only* Him.

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JESUS • BAPTISED • RIVER • JORDAN • HOLY SPIRIT • LED
WILDERNESS • DESERT • FORTY DAYS • HUNGRY • DEVIL
TEMPTATION • STONE • BREAD • WRITTEN • SON • WORLD
KINGDOMS • GLORY • WORSHIP • SERVE • GOD • HIGH
JERUSALEM • TEMPLE • SON • JUMP • DOWN • LIFT • FOOT • LORD • TEST • LENT

THIRD TEMPTATION

THE DEVIL SAID:
"If you are God's Son throw yourself down, the scriptures say God will take care of you."

JESUS REPLIED:
"***Do not put the Lord your God to the test***."

Read Deuteronomy 6:16

WE LEARN:
God cares, **trust**
Him do not test Him.

Jan26 © deborah noble • parishpump.co.uk

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 April/May edition of the Church Magazine should reach me by the 26th March 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.