

Newington Methodist Church
Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT
Minister Rev Robert Zachar
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Sunday 24th May

Wesley day

The church building at Newington remains closed but as a congregation we remain united through prayer. If you have any concerns or prayer requests please do not hesitate to contact the minister or your pastoral visitor.

Bible verse

...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you..

Acts 1:7

Prayer

Grant us, o Lord, the will to accomplish all that pleases you; the strength to do all that you command and the reverence to respect all that you have made; for your own name's sake.

Amen

Francis of Assisi 1182-1226

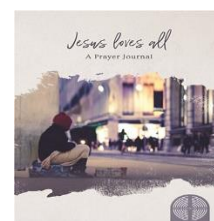
Notices:

- **AGM this year is postponed indefinitely.** I would still like to ask all reps to write a report for the AGM and email them to the minister or Church council secretary Michael R. This way we will be more ready for the time when the actual AGM will be possible. Reports needed are:
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Property Report
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Minister's report
 - Pastoral report

- **Stay alert time** - ? Reopening the church?

As you all aware, there is a shift in the government guidelines from Stay Home to Stay Alert. We are allowed to move around more, but still maintain the distances. Naturally we will soon be asking about reopening the church in Newington. At the moment we are still unable to give the date and have to continue monitoring the updated guidelines. I would like to call a brief virtual meeting to discuss all alternatives so our decisions are made together. This will take place this Sunday 9 am. If you would like to be part of it call the minister. Otherwise look for the next notices to find out what is new. Thank you for your faithful support and prayers.

- **For Sunday service 10:30 am** follow the link on www.nkmethodists.org.uk worship at home. This coming Sunday circuit service will be led by Rev Tony Graff. Next Sunday's service, May 31st ,Pentecost is to be led by Rev Robin Selmes
- The traditional **Pentecost service in the orchard** has been cancelled.
- **Church finances** – although we are unable to meet together at this time our congregation still needs financial support. A huge thank you to those of you who support us via direct debit. If you don't already and would like to start please contact Chris Chare the treasurer. 07842487353. You can of course just continue to put your envelope away each week and bring it when we next meet.
- **Thy Kingdom come** - the global movement of prayer between Ascension and Pentecost is all set to go. How are you taking part? Follow the link:
<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/prayer/thy-kingdom-come/>
Or ask for a printed copy. They are available from the minister, R.Zachar



These are on line meetings on ZOOM. Join us in worship, prayer and study.

- **Bible study** every Tuesday 2 -3pm, find the link at :
<http://www.sittingbournmethodist.org.uk/> (This week we will be talking about Elijah and Elisha and how to receive the Holy spirit)
- **Prayer meeting** Fridays 10 am run by Elena M. If you want to join in call the minister!!!
- **6th June 10 am Virtual coffee morning**, join in by phone or PC.



Reflection Acts 1: 6-14 and Gospel Reading: John 17: 1-11

This Sunday we remember the Ascension of Jesus. It is also Wesley Day in our Methodist calendar. According to his journal, 24th May 1738 he reluctantly attended a group meeting of Moravian brothers at Aldersgate Street in London. It was there, while someone was reading from Martin's Luther's Preface to the Epistle of Romans that he felt that his heart was "strangely warmed". He describes it as:

"I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that he had taken away my sins, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death."

How important this testimony is! The man of God, trained and diligently practicing his belief and yet he still had something to give up. We do not exactly know what, but the difference he felt was so remarkable! Sharing that experience with others can be very discomfoting. Just as it was to Wesley himself. But it is to disturb us in a good way, a right direction - towards the same assurance, the same trust in God in our lives. For Wesley it was the storm at sea where he realised how much he feared the unknown, uncertainties and even the reality of death and yet there were people singing praises to their God with joy and no fear! Similarly we are sailing through very stormy waters now. We might be shocked by that similar realisation as Wesley was or we can serve others as that group of believers and be that calming presence to those who are filled with fear and panic.

Both events carry an important message. Imagine the disciples standing on the Mount of Olives, near Jerusalem. Jesus gave them his last instructions and he was lifted up and the cloud took him out of their sight. They were looking intently into the sky as He was going. This was the last sight of Jesus. From now on they will go by faith. Communication will change into something we could compare to virtual instead of physical.

God is out of sight yet deep in our hearts. We see him with our spiritual sight. In recent days we have been doing church via virtual events. Is it less valuable? Or is it a better experience, because a person is in a safe home environment? Just a few days ago the news came that Ravi Zacharias had died. He was a great speaker and teacher, a man I loved to listen to and was so much inspired by, yet never met him, have no idea what kind of person he was. Virtual communication is only what we make of it. It will never replace the real person to person relationship, but for our walking in faith it is almost like the Ascension experience. No Jesus in front of us but the Holy Spirit living inside us.

I would like to say, let's not panic, but stay calm, and immerse ourselves into that spirituality of Jesus's presence within us. Rediscover or discover that initial experience of being freed from fear and worry because of what Jesus has done for you. And bring out all the good and refreshing greetings to the world around in these hard times.

The Ascension of Jesus and conversion of Wesley are big religious words. How can we talk to a modern minded person about these? To a predominantly rational mind set, Jesus would probably hit an aeroplane or drone and higher up a satellite would just whizz by. But as we see in the disciples and later on in John

Wesley, our role is to be witnesses and remain faithful particularly in hard times like this. Jesus said that the whole world will observe us very carefully. Let us therefore be calming, trusting people. RZ

This week we remember to pray for:

Beryl and Peter, Margaret N., Peter and Ian, Heather and Stephen, Elena
remembering those who have died, and praying for their loved ones. Audrey, Margaret

Margaret Bowerman has spent the last week in hospital with pains in her hip. Any infection was ruled out, Margaret is home but still in pain.

Bernard and Jenny G. will celebrate their 60 wedding anniversary.
Congratulations and prayers for God's blessing over their
relationship and the years to come from all our church family.

Happy anniversary



A riddle to keep you thinking...

What has to be broken before you can use it?

The answer to last week's riddle: candle

