

Newington Methodist Church

Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT

News and views for the week commencing 24th January 2021

The church building
remains closed in January
and until further notice. ☹️



Notices

- **Sunday on-line service at 10:30am** will be led by Roger Byard and Helen Hollands (Assistant Chair, South East District) The service can be found on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T8Jvh5QWel0&feature=youtu.be>
- You're also invited to join in the **Newington social catch-up before the service at 9am** online using Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4628098433>
(meeting ID 462 809 8433) ... or join by telephone: 020 3481 5237; when requested enter meeting ID 462 809 8433 followed by #; press # again when asked for a participant ID
- **Next Sunday's service on-line**, will be led by Vic Downs
- **Quiz night at Bearsted Methodist church** 20th February 7:30 pm., see the poster in attachment. The link is also at: <https://www.nkmethodists.org.uk/>

- **Other activities you can join in during the week via Zoom**

Bible study Tuesdays 2pm: <http://www.sittingbournemethodist.org.uk/>

All welcome, we already have people from Sittingbourne and Bearsted.

Prayer meeting Wednesday 11 am. <http://www.sittingbournemethodist.org.uk/>

Prayer and Share 9:30 am (every first and third Friday of the month)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87438656633?pwd=QUNhNWVjZHBQTUF5am1YMy9xTjhZZz09>

Reflection **Jonah 3:1-5.10; Mk 1:14-20**

God spoke to Jonah and called him to go to Nineveh. Jesus spoke to Simon and Andrew, who were fishermen, and also James with John, sons of Zebedee, and called them to follow him. All these people and many others listened to the call and responded by doing what was right. Jonah had some objections and his story helps us to understand that the right thing to do is usually hard. It is always a hard decision. But

Jonah's story also shows us that it is not easy to ignore God's call and resist his way. So I suppose we just have to choose our hard.

As we see in Mark's gospel, following Jesus is very much about letting go. Leaving behind. And again that is extremely difficult. In these past days we have had to let go of so many things. Good things, good ideas, important business and even good friends, loved ones. Many NHS staff are just dropping off from exhaustion and stress. Seeing some footage in the news these are heart-breaking scenes. Looking into the face of our leaders, who are asking us to follow the rules, reminds me of the response that happened in Nineveh.

People give up their comfort, family, dreams and they do it for various reasons. It is often giving up one thing to gain another. (*Family sacrificed for career. Friendship for promotion. Truth for profit.*) It is not always God's call that makes us give things up. It also works in reverse.

There are many people giving out their last for noble reasons, yet they would not agree for me to say that they are doing it because of God and as a follower of Jesus. It is not my place to judge the motives of other people. I fully accept and deeply appreciate every helping hand. All NHS people, our leaders and front line services are saving our lives at such a rate that we can only be inspired and give them all our respect. Learn from their sacrifices and remember them in our prayers. But I can't help but see beyond. I believe that God uses all people, their skills and talents. It is Him who fills hearts with true compassion which cannot be paid by any money in this world. We pray may all these hard working people receive peace and rest from the Lord. May they are filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit, showing them the beauty of their works.

Following Jesus today can even be quite easy. We have manufactured a Jesus who is not so difficult to follow. These are the thoughts from the book I got for Christmas. We happily follow the nice things about Jesus but the hard things are softened, reinterpreted, outdated and made culturally irrelevant. Is that really so? Is this where we have got after centuries of following his lead? We created a life, built on his message and now we do not need him anymore? What Jesus do you follow? What makes a difference in your letting go for Jesus and in the so common letting go for getting more?

Amen

People and places for prayer

A time of prayer

<https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/worship/singing-the-faith-plus/seasons-and-themes/worship-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic/>

Lord God, throughout history you have called people to respond to your challenge to follow you, undaunted by the task to which they were called believing that you would guide and lead them, inspire and enable them to fulfil the work to which they were called. We give thanks for those whose faithful discipleship and friendship encouraged and guided us. *Help us to learn from their example and to respond* faithfully and willingly whenever you call. Help us to have faith to follow wherever you lead.

- Praise the Lord for accelerating the vaccination network. Some of our members have already had their vaccine. We pray for NHS, the entire system as it is in such a challenging situation.
- Val Trice is now in a nursing home for rehab. Her husband has confirmed that she is well in herself and would love to receive a card or letter from people. Please contact Rev Robert for the address.
- Beryl and Peter W. Peter is waiting for medical results this week after a couple of hospital visits this last week.

- Margaret N, will have a vaccine this Saturday. It is their first time out since March. She sends greetings to everyone.
- Michael and Ro are preparing for moving to their new home.
- We remember our friends who have died and their loved ones: Audrey, Margaret S.

Please send news, prayer requests and any other contributions for inclusion in the weekly newsletter to robert.zachar@gmail.com

Bank details for Offerings:

Newington Methodist Church, HSBC Sittingbourne. Sort Code 40 – 42 – 04, Account 70614696.
If you prefer to send a cheque contact our church treasurer Chris Ch.