

Newington Methodist Church

Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT

News and views for the week commencing 14th March 2021

The church building
remains closed in March
and until further notice.



Notices

- **Sunday on-line service at 10:30am** will be led by Bart Woodhouse from Ebsfleet Community Church. The service can be found on YouTube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vbxwMSkgPE4>

- **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 21st March**, will be led by Deacon Elisabeth Hartfleet from Gravesend area
- **Newington Coffee morning** - we all enjoyed the quiz prepared by Jenny G. The score was tight, we had two winners!! All our respect to the knowledgeable Lis and Peter W. and Martin S. Our next coffee morning falls on Easter Saturday.
- **Our Daily Bread Bible reading notes.** More copies are available for March-May. If you want one contact Alan T. 01795 478215 or alanrthorn@hotmail.com) Allan also gave me this lovely encouragement to pass on:

Don't just `give up` something for Lent - take up something as well!

- **AGM Annual General Church meeting** will be on **15th March, Monday 2pm** via Zoom. Please put this in your calendar. The AGM is open to everyone, do not have to be a member of the church so please if you feel someone could be there and contribute to our discussion feel free to invite. We will be talking about our church life. The agenda and reports are attached to these notices. Part of the meeting agenda will be election of the church stewards and offices. The nomination list has been corrected and is included in the agenda. The link for AGM :

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89605523185?pwd=ei9NaDM2dldXS1A1ZDIEVllkMGFQdz09>

Meeting ID: 896 0552 3185

Passcode: 537839

By Phone dial +441314601196 When requested enter the meeting ID 89605523185 and press # and you should be in the meeting.

“Breaking Day” passion play by **Riding Lights Theatre Company**.

Possibility to watch online. Available to stream 19 March - 15 April.

Up to 60 households will be able to view the play ‘Breaking Day’ across a 4 week period, the usual cost would be £10.00 per household, however, we have a sponsor who is willing to cover the total cost, but it would be good if all households or individuals participating felt that they would like to make a donation to defray part, or all of the cost please send your payments to Chris Chare Treasurer of Newington Church. To book your ‘seat’ please email paul@greenapplegraphics.co.uk once you have booked a link will be sent to you

Click this link to see a short clip of the play

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XPJ4BIDgTkc>

Other activities you can join in during the week via Zoom

- **Bible study** During the Lent season we will explore Biblical texts supporting spiritual practices of fasting, prayer, Holy Communion and others. Tuesdays 2pm. Look for the poster for more details.
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83665077649?pwd=SzQyQjZnTGRxeFNEOUUxMENla1d3Zz09#success>
- **Prayer meeting** Wednesday 11 am. On Zoom:
<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/4351397999?pwd=eHZFVGJXdi9QeGFZdnhtMFdlT3BuUT09#success>
- **Prayer and Share** 9:30 am led by Elena Markova (every first and third Friday of the month)
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87438656633?pwd=QUNhNWVjZHBQTUF5am1YMy9xTjhZZz09>

Reflection for 14th March 2021 Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-21;

The people of Israel are in the middle of the desert. No water, no food but they are alive! How was this possible? God miraculously provided food for them. It is the famous manna or bread from heaven that we read about in these lines. How precious and special. How assuring it must have been for people that God cares for them in their greatest need. However we also read about people being fed up with manna and complaining against God.

“we detest this miserable bread” v. 5.

What followed doesn’t give us a lovely picture of a kind and pampering God but a rather hard and uncompromising one. But only if we stop reading and start complaining. The story goes on and together with disastrous consequences to the people’s rebellion, God provided help. This came after the rest of the survivors approached Moses and asked for prayers of intercession. This was a sign of repentance. Realising their own misery has come on them because they refused what God had provided.

What follows again is the immediate relief but also gives reference to the time of Jesus. What is interesting is the procedure in this story which has to be followed. Everyone who looked at the bronze snake was healed. When Jesus spoke to Nicodemus, he quotes this story from the desert and explains to Nicodemus that the same gaze is going to be a saving contact from a much more serious snake than those in the desert. Jesus did not say to “look at” but “to believe in” which is a deeper expression of the same action if

we like. NT speaks about people who gazed on Jesus but it was not just a sense of sight in their eyes, but more likely the sense of hope, trust, expectation, pleading. Jesus also said that the window of our soul are our eyes. What we look at fills our hearts. To look at something you have to turn around to face it and show your own face. There is no hiding shadow or veil but direct contact and that is what God looks for. If you do that, if you look at Jesus with the eyes of your soul he will enter your heart.

We are in the middle of the Lent season. Some people are chasing Easter egg deals and remain preoccupied with everyday life demands. For many people, Lent is a serious season of spiritual exercise. Half way through to Easter you may experience a hard pressure to quit, give it all up. Some nasty things could rise to the surface and you are really struggling with how to handle your real self. Perhaps you feel like the Israelites in the desert, fed up with too much focus and too little entertainment, social life or freedom to choose. In a way we are all experiencing a desert emptiness and even though we can reach out for the heavenly food we are just fed up and do not see much point. I would like to say it is ok, and it is indeed, but it also could not be ok. I mean it is ok if you break your promises or fall in your own expectations and it feels like you betrayed God. We all do and our strength is not in boasting about it. It is about standing up again and starting again although we might not feel anything in a sense of spirituality. It is about returning's, coming back to what counts and works because God waits for you to call on him in your weakness, distress and hopelessness. He answers your cry and sets your feet on the rock.

1. O soul, are you weary and troubled?
No light in the darkness you see?
There's light for a look at the Saviour,
And life more abundant and free!

Refrain:

**Turn your eyes upon Jesus,
Look full in His wonderful face,
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,
In the light of His glory and grace.**

2. Thro' death into life everlasting,
He passed, and we follow Him there;
O'er us sin no more hath dominion--
For more than conqu'rors we are!

3. His Word shall not fail you--He promised;
Believe Him, and all will be well:
Then go to a world that is dying,
His perfect salvation to tel

People and places for prayer

- Val Trice still in care home.
- Beryl and Peter W.
- Michael and Ro and 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.