

## Newington Methodist Church

*Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT*

### News and views for the week commencing 21<sup>th</sup> March 2021

The church building  
remains closed in March  
and until Pentecost.



### **Notices**

- **Sunday on-line service at 10:30am** will be led by Deacon Elisabeth Hartfleet. The service can be found on YouTube at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nAlPaqV6hgg>

- **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 28<sup>st</sup> March Palm Sunday**, will be led by Rev Robin Selmes
- **Be aware of** the time change between Saturday and Palm Sunday
- **Sittingbourne online service** this Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March, 4 pm on this link:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C4XwYIENQYo>
- **Easter Sunday service with Holy Communion at Sittingbourne Methodist Church. Booking is in place at:** Paul Skip at [paul@greenapplegraphics.co.uk](mailto:paul@greenapplegraphics.co.uk) or phone the minister 07504840781
- **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](mailto: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** took place this last Monday. We used the time to talk and think about our Church and all the nominations were approved. More details will come with the minutes next week. However we are still short of help in some areas, particularly looking for volunteers in:
  - gardening
  - assistant to Letting officer
  - Cleaning the church premises

More about the job description will be available for those interested in these positions.

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

Still spaces in our sponsored ticket, just call Paul S. 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=eHZFVGJXdj9QeGFZdnhtMFdIT3BuUT09#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 Ex 7:8-24; Luke 22:1-13**

Have you ever found yourself on an unexpected journey? I was very much inspired by the latest movie based on J.R.R. Tolkien’s novel Hobbit. The story begins with an unexpected supper and from that moment everything is just an unexpected, unpredictable series of events and it all comes out as a great adventure. Something like that happened in the reading from Exodus between Moses and Pharaoh and also in the gospel readings between Jesus and his disciples.

In Exodus, Moses is called by God to challenge the status quo. He goes to Pharaoh and his powerful magic supporters. The first sign is that Aron’s rod turned into a cobra. At the second sign all the water turned into blood. Yet these did not convince Pharaoh at all and the even more scary signs to which powerful Egyptian magic could not match, did not soften Pharaoh’s heart.

This hardened heart reappears in Judas. In the gospel reading we can see how these two characters who experienced extraordinary events and signs of Gods power did not surrender to God. We often feel for Judas, perhaps as it was with the 10 plagues, we often think God was a bit hard on the people. Judas could have been given a second chance. I am sure he did have more than two chances to give his life to Jesus.

These two tragic characters, Pharaoh and Judas, represent so many other tragedies of human lives of people who never open their heart to listen God’s call, to respond his signs. Hardened hearts are all around

us. Not necessarily murderers and traitors like Judas but deceived by dark power acting on its behalf. Here is our mission.

Let's look further into the gospel reading - Jesus told his disciples to prepare the Passover meal. This was a special meal like our Christmas turkey and Easter chocolate eggs times two. The disciples knew how to set up a Passover supper with all its details. Finally Jesus asked them to do something they know. It is not about feeding 5000 people or sailing in the storm or casting out demons. This is a straight forward kind of job. I must say I like this kind of job. Knowing exactly what and how to do it. But most of the work for the Lord is an "unexpected journey" experience. None of the disciples expected that this supper will be remembered for ever by so many.

So these characters jump out of the story. Pharaoh with his hardened heart unable to surrender to what was obvious. Judas who could not imagine a new world. And then Moses and Aron, and the rest of the disciples. These last two are a group who knew that God is on the move but could not imagine the scale and significance of the events they had the privilege to take part in.

Perhaps not so long and we will prepare the Passover meal to remember the Lamb of God, Jesus who died for our sins and rose again to eternal life. Let us be aware how important it is to approach God with a humble heart, open mind and wondrous expectation what journey we are taking from that table and in his strength. **AMEN**

### People and places for prayer

- John G. had a fall on Friday, taken to hospital
- 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](mailto: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.