

## Newington Methodist Church

Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT

### News and views for the week commencing 13<sup>th</sup> June 2021

**We are OPEN!**

All are welcome to join in our

Sunday services.

Check the new time 10:30 am



### Notices

- **Sunday service on 13<sup>th</sup> June in the church** will be led by Rev R. Zachar. All precautions remain in place as we continue to prevent the infection of Covid 19. Next Sunday preacher will be Margaret Bowerman.
- **Sunday 13<sup>th</sup> June circuit service will be different.** There will be a main service afternoon to celebrate Hartlip anniversary. Follow the link below: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Eg2gP-Dz4c>  
If you would like to watch morning online service, 10:30 am, here is the link on Methodist Central Hall <https://www.youtube.com/user/MCHWevents>
- **Naomi Oates Testimony Service** – Saturday 12th June, 2 pm. (Naomi is due to be ordained during the Methodist annual conference, on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June). The testimony service will be online for those who are able to access it. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jQvydwKQQvg>

### Other activities you can join in during the week via Zoom

- **Bible study** – Tuesdays 2-3pm. We are studying the book of Acts.  
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83665077649?pwd=SzQyQjZnTGRxeFNEOUUxMENla1d3Zz09#success>
- **Prayer and Share** 9:30 am. Meets fortnightly: 11.6.; 25.6.; 9.7.; 23.7.  
<https://zoom.us/j/84866590559?pwd=UzILQklnK1BZa3Nya1p6M3lVNnN4Zz09>

Meeting ID: 848 6659 0559 Passcode: 604787

### Reflection 1Samuel 15:34-16:13; Psalm 20; Mark 4: 26-34 and 2Corinthians 5: 6-17

It became quite a list of bible readings for this reflection and I hope you will take time to read it. I normally shorten the options but this time I included them all as they link so strongly and it would be a shame to miss this linking thread going through.

So what do these bible passages have in common? Any observations?

We start with 1Samuel. Here we read a dramatic climax where the anointed king Saul disobeyed and rebelled against God. He was sent on a mission, to destroy the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they were on move from Egypt. It was a rather merciless mission, but we will not follow this line for now. The point is that Saul did it his way and it really displeased Samuel and God. The way we have this recorded caught my attention. Samuel mourned and God grieved for Saul. These two were really sorry for Saul. Both

God and Samuel really meant for Saul to go well, they really believed in him. They had not anticipated his fall, they did not want it to go this way. We have here two broken hearts, hopes faded away and dreams dispelled. This is an unusual description of what is the response to the fall of any man. Normally we pronounce judgement and sometimes add: “we knew it!” Perhaps it is important to pause and really notice this scene. We should not just jump in to a new chapter. There was a deep grief and pain and all that happens next was born out of this compassionate concern. God is not an angry God, but compassionate and mourns each time we choose to go our own way.

But what really connects this dramatic story about Saul and David to Psalm 20 is the last verse in 1Samuel 13 “*Samuel anointed David and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came on David in power*”. It was this Spirit which inspired David to become a psalm writer. We have many Psalms described as David’s. This particular one is a song about trusting God. The very essence of why we fail or stand as we see from the previous story about Saul.

And this leads us further to Mark’s gospel where we read the parable. The parable unfolds in two steps. Jesus speaks about seeds dying and then growing into a spectacular structure of a mustard seed plant hosting birds and thriving with life. Mark uses the particular Greek word which we can easily understand as it filtered into the modern languages with a slight moderation - in verse 28: *automate* – “*the earth produces its crops by itself*”. The farmer doesn’t know, understand or do anything about this. Life is born from death. God works in paradoxes. He turns death to life, makes things out of nothing, brings new things out of our failures. Do not be mistaken these are born from a great passion and pain and finally from the sacrifice on the cross at Golgotha.

Finally we hear Paul speaking about how a new creation is put together. The old has gone the new has come! The Corinthians were not an easy congregation to speak to. They considered Paul as “*unimpressive and his speaking amounts to nothing*” (2Cor 10:10) But Paul’s reply to this was that he will come not with words but with the power of the Holy Spirit. Just as Samuel was rebuked by God to not look on appearance but character, Paul is saying how misleading appearances can be. Our judgements based on look and appearance can carry us through life but it would be a very superficial base on which to build our world views and understanding. Jesus speaks in parables to catch our attention and then, as we step forward listening his words, he draw us closer as he speaks to us plainly as things are.

I just want to point out one more scripture to support this statement. It is when Jesus told his disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the power from on high to fill them with the Holy Spirit and then go. (Acts 1) The waiting must have been hard, so hard. It is hard, whether we feel ready and charged for action, or immersed in uncertainties and unable to imagine the next step. In both cases it is hard. Waiting before the action should take place, or after we did things and it is time to expect the results, it is all hard. “*O Lord give me patience but give it to me NOW!*” But waiting is not a passive dwelling at all! We are waiting for His return! The farmer waits for seeds to grow. We are to sow in tears and wait with hope and harvest with joy. Panicking is the opposite of waiting.

In this context waiting is the new ingredient of doing things. It is not a wasted time. The disciples spent this time in prayer. That is the time when we are filled with strength from above, where the Holy Spirit fills our hearts with all we need and removes all we do not need. It is time to trust the Lord

**AMEN**

### **People and places for prayer**

- We pray for our indoor services to be Spirit filled. We pray for the stewards as they take extra care for our safety and prepare the service to be a worship experience. We pray for Newington community and may God open doors to the hearts of people.
- Pray for each other’s health, blessing and the presence of peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

- Val T. was taken to hospital Friday morning. No news so far.
- 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.