

Newington Methodist Church

Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT

News and views for the week commencing 11th July 2021

We are OPEN!

**All are welcome to join in our
Sunday services.**



Notices

Sunday service on 11th July in the church will be led by Jenny Gilbert. It is Action for Children Sunday. **Next Sunday's** service 18th July will be led by Rev Robert Z.



- **Sunday 11th July circuit live stream service 10:30** will be led by Bart Woodhouse. Follow the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6PVzqK_fBM

Dates for your Diary:

- **17th July 11-1pm Table top sale** in the church car park (weather permitting)
- **22th July 10:30** Stewards meeting at ministers manse with coffee and cake
- **25th July after Sunday morning service** we are invited to Church family picnic in the churchyard at St Mary

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>

Reflection on God's word

Mark 6: 14-29 Ephesians 1:1-14

The story about John the Baptist does not have a happy ending. John is executed in prison, while somewhere upstairs a wild birthday party is running. But the voice of John has not been silenced. John was calling people to repent because the Kingdom of God is near. Even Herod liked to listen to John and developed a certain level of respect towards him. Yet in a moment of entertainment Herod did not honour all this inward recognition and gave way to evil.

What a shame and tragedy we have in this gospel account. It displays the dark side of human nature. We can hear similar stories in the news, and often feel shocked by the intensity of evil and lack of logic in them. We often ask why? How could somebody do this?

The testimony from a Jewish holocaust survivor Yehiel Dinur¹ reveals a shocking truth. We are all capable of horrible things. The law protects people from injustice and violence but there will always be some “birthday party” or World War, where everything can go wrong.

John the Baptist’s voice echoes down the ages. Repent, change your minds and you will be saved. We often maintain the concept of salvation by Christ as being saved from an outer evil. But this testimony of Dinur indicates a great need to be saved from ourselves. That is the space where the real peace needs to be established.

To silence the truth, remove its voice and its presenters is Herod’s way of doing things². But there is another way, an alternative. We do not have to silence uncomfortable voices or pretend we are ok. God’s way is to admit the truth and ask for his power to be in control of all our being.

The lectionary for this Sunday connects this brutal story from Mark with the text from Ephesians 1:1-14 . Here Paul speaks profoundly about what our salvation is about and what a spiritual blessing is. It perhaps doesn’t carry much material value but the indoor space, that unseen nature of a person is absolutely stuffed with the positive, noble and powerful presence of God in control.

When Jesus heard what happened to John he went to a quiet place and spent time in prayer³. He could see it all, human nature at its worst and yet he could see beyond it. He knew that he is going to take all this on his shoulders, he is going to pick it all up and carry it on the cross so we can be free. That is the love of God we talk about when we talk about love.

People and places for prayer

- Pray for our upcoming Table top sale.
- Pray for each other’s health, blessing and the presence of peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
News from Val T. – she is in a care home Gravesham Place, not very well, had to visit hospital again. Family pick up Val’s post from her home so if you want to send a card it will be delivered.
- 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.

¹ Source from the internet: **Yehiel De-Nur** also known by his pen name **Ka-Tsetnik 135633**, was a Jewish writer and Holocaust survivor, whose books were inspired by his time as a prisoner in the Auschwitz concentration camp. He testified at the Eichmann Trial on 7 June 1961. After speaking, De-Nur collapsed and gave no further testimony. In an interview on 6 February 1983, De-Nur recounted the incident of his fainting at the Eichmann trial. The interviewer asked: “was Dinur overcome by hatred? Fear? Horrid memories? No; it was none of these. Rather, as Dinur explained to Wallace, all at once he realized Eichmann was not the god-like army officer who had sent so many to their deaths. This Eichmann was an ordinary man. “I was afraid about myself,” said Dinur. “... I saw that I am capable to do this. I am ... exactly like he.”

² Source from the internet: Ryanair aircraft carrying dissident Belarusian journalist Roman Protasevich was scheduled to fly from Athens in Greece to Vilnius in Lithuania on May 23 2021. While in Belarusian airspace, the pilot was ordered to divert from its course and to land in Minsk. On the ground, the airport authorities searched the baggage of the passengers, checked their identities and detained at least two of them: Protasevich – a prominent opponent of Belarusian dictator Alexander Lukashenko – and his girlfriend, law student Sofia Sapega.

³ Matthew 14:12-13