

Newington Methodist Church

Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT

News and views for the week commencing 29th August 2021

The one who is in you is greater
than the one who is in the world

1 John 4:4



Notices

- **Sunday service on 29th August in the church will be local arrangement, led by LP Elena Markova. Next Sunday, 5th September.** There will be no service at our church; we are invited to join with St Mary's at an open-air service in the orchard close to the Parish Church. The service starts at 10.30 am. See more details below.
- **Sunday 29th August circuit live stream service 10:30** will be led by Julien Myles. Follow the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShLBABec-So>
The next Sunday circuit live stream, 5th September, will be led Rev Bonni Belle Pickard.

Dates for your Diary:

- **Change of Sunday morning worship time!!** Please remember that we will revert to 9.30 am start time on Sunday 12th September.
- **Coffee morning**, Saturday 4th September 10- 12 am. We would like to organise our traditional Coffee morning with all set up. If possible we get more tables for church sale, perhaps outside weather permitting. If yes there will be posters, and the time will extend until 1pm. All depends on volunteer's willing to help. Please contact the minister if you feel safe to help, by next Tuesday latest.
- **Sunday 5th September service at St. Mary** in the orchard is to celebrate Climate Sunday. There will be external speaker Sarah Chapman, who was the priest at the Living Well before she retired. The orchard is on the other side of St Mary's car park. There is a request to bring a garden chair (folding) if you can. St Mary's usually bring a few stacking chairs from the Church for those without their own chairs. Their folk are encouraged to bring a packed lunch with them for a picnic after the service. We are invited to join them, and bring our sandwiches too. There will not be sharing of food, but hot drinks will be available.
- "Our friends at Hartlip Methodist church are restarting the **Christian Fellowship on Thursday**, 9th September at 2.30pm. The programme card will be with us in due course and the first session will be a short church service led by the Rev Robin Selmes. Our members are warmly welcomed"

- **There have been changes in the Newington Preaching Plan:**

- Mandy Harris will take the service on 12th September
- Margaret Bowerman will take the service on 19th September.
- We will revert to starting services at 9.30am from 12th September.

Reflection on Mark 7:1-8.14- 23 by Robert

In this chapter we see Jesus introducing a new understanding of what can make us unclean. This clashes with the understanding of those representing the Law – Pharisees.

As a child, I would support Jesus, just to avoid constant rebuke of my mum. *“Have you washed your hands?” she would ask.* But we grow and learn that it is important to observe basic hygiene rules.

What the Pharisees questioned, when they saw Jesus’ disciples eating with unwashed hands had little to do with hygiene as we know it today. It was about ritual cleansing. Washing hands and items meant to wash away all what was ritually unclean. There was a long list of what is clean and what is unclean. Jesus did not like it because he saw through it and pointed out that according to these rules it is ok not to care for your own family member if they paid donation to the temple. Jesus called the Pharisees hypocrites for this. That was a very hard statement but surely in place.

Jesus states that these ritual cleansing practices, and even any attempts to become pure in heart by our own means will not have much effect eventually. Just as the Pharisees had their ritual cleansing practice so do we. If there is something what makes us feel unclean, some heavy burden on our conscience we do all kind of things to get rid of that constant uneasy feeling. Perhaps we donate money to the charity and feel like we balanced out our failures. But let us understand that to be washed in the biblical language means to approach Christ on the cross and accept his ultimate sacrifice for our sins. Ask Him to take away all the baggage and even the guilt and shame. It is free and available 24/7. We are saved by grace.

But there is even more on this new way. Jesus made a great statement when he said that nothing can contaminate us from the outside. We only get unclean by what we let out from ourselves, by what we do!!! How does this work? Is it really possible? Jesus is saying that within us we can have a power greater than that in this world. In *1 John 4:4* He claims that with him we have immunity and can digest all the moral filth and poison and yet remain pure in heart. With this inner strength from Him we do not have to separate from this world but we can stay in touch and yet remain pure in Gods eyes. This world can throw a lot at of hard stuff at us. Jesus said he is not taking us out of this world but gives us the strength to overcome as he overcomes. The most beautiful people in this world are those of whom this world is not worthy (*Hebr 11:36*). I often think about this quote from Letter to Hebrews and see how much truth is in it even in our days. Those like Job upon whom so much was thrown but he never denied or cursed his Lord. Knowing Jesus is a kind of love relationship where Jesus embodied all the goodness, love and justice we could imagine. *Matthew 11:28: “Come to me you hard working and heavy burdened and I will give you rest”*. Do we know people who by this world’s standards could be filled with hate and bitterness, yet they love their enemies, do not pay back an eye for an eye? Are we like that?

People and places for prayer

Lord we pray to you with many concerns and worries for this world around us. It is important that we can know for sure that you are alive, and always ready to comfort us and those we pray for. We give you thanks for you speak to us in so many ways. You bless us as we meet together and worship you in our church. It is such a joy and comfort each time. Bless us as we carry on our faith and strengthen us to be the salt and the light for this world and our community. AMEN

- Prayers for all who are unwell and taking medical treatment.
- Remember our Superintendent as she sadly lost her mother and visiting family in USA.
- We remember our friends who have died and their loved ones: Audrey, Margaret S.



It is John G. birthday – happy birthday and good health. God Bless you John

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.