

Newington Methodist Church

Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT

**News and views for the week
commencing 26th September 2021**

Brothers and sisters, whatever
is excellent or praiseworthy-
think about such things.

Philippians 4:8



Notices

- **Sunday service with Holy Communion on 26th September** will be led by Robert Zachar. The service starts at 09.30 am.
Next Sunday service 3rd October will be led by LP Richard Wade.
- **Sunday 26th September circuit live stream service 10:30** will be led by Rev Robert Zachar. Follow the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xqjx3ovQHCE>
- *The next Sunday circuit live stream, 3rd October, will be led by Rev Bonni Belle Pickard*

Looking back with thanks:

- **Sectional stewards meeting at Hope street.** We met on Sunday afternoon with stewards from Sittingbourne, Bearsted and Hope Street. It was our first time together. We read scriptures from Acts 6:1-7 about "The Magnificent seven" and what does it mean to commit ourselves in the church. We also prayed for each other and the churches we are from and it was good. There will be next meeting on 26th February 2022 in Sittingbourne. If you are steward in your church and would like to join then, you are welcome.

- **Circuit meeting met 16th September** on ZOOM and important part of the agenda was the report from Mission and Strategy committee. The more details needs to be discussed by each church and report back to Circuit by mid-January. The report gave us bad news and good news and it is very clear that the church is in the middle of very challenging times. All Church councils need to know to answer the questions relating to the state of their spiritual growth and how viable they are(financially and people wise), not only now, but looking 5 years hence and who will be doing what you are doing now. We are asked to apply the traffic lights system – is your church set in green, amber or red?

- **Dates for your Diary:**

- 28 September Safeguarding training 7.00 Robb/Skipp
- 30 September Safeguarding training 7.00 Robb/Skipp
- Christmas season in Newington Church (this may be altered, watch this space!!!)
 - 28th November, 1st Advent Sunday, Covenant service
 - 19th Dec. Sunday service in a Christmas spirit.
 - 24th Dec. Friday Christmas Eve – no service
 - 25th Dec. Saturday, Christmas Day – no service
 - 26th Dec. Sunday after Christmas – no service or joined to St. Mary



Reflection Numbers 11:16-17 and 24-29, Mark 9: 38-50

Disciples (John) approached Jesus with the question. V 38. We saw stranger, casting out demons in Jesus name, we stopped him because he was not one of us.

Certainly this resemble conflicts perhaps we are familiar with. *How do you feel about this?* We might be familiar with the scene perhaps from our high streets when group of people are evangelising. What do you do when passing by?

There are some histories of how Methodist movement began and how J.Wesley answered perhaps the same complaints of the opposition clergy saying: *"the whole world is my parish"*

Most of the new denominations historically rose up as a result of conflict inside the mother church. And so churches split and goes their way. The world Christian encyclopaedia records 30 000 Christian denominations!

We perhaps think in a deeper context and consider how much the message of Christ can be destroyed by church quarrelling. The good work can be destroyed if we have to live side by side with some extreme and aggressive denominational recruitment instead of calling people to Christ. We are not calling people to our church but to inviting people to Christ in our church which is different.

These are hard questions and each church has to make sure we all work together and not against each other.

And when we feel threatened it may as well be because we ourselves have to wake up. Perhaps it could be the work of God to wake up the rest of the churches to become more involved in saving people's lives for heaven.

Disciples obviously made a mistake stopping others, who are not from their circle, to do the work of God. But at least they spoke about this to Jesus and were corrected.

What Jesus said resounds earlier event between Joshua and Moses. **Jesus defends the progress of the Gospel** (not himself. We should support the same cause). There are enough walls built to stop the message of Jesus even in the recent legislation and public views. Western culture is the hardest mission field of all. Churches working together are the message we have to give.

Let's now focus on what Jesus added after he said to disciples that they should not stop people to speak in his name.

First he said: *no one who does the powerful acts in His name, can quickly turn around and curse me...* and whoever *isn't against us is for us*

What matters is that the power of darkness is destroyed, satanic stronghold in people's lives, society and community are destroyed. Jesus said he came to destroy the works of Devil. What are these? Basically all what denies life, threatens it. The evil can be so mascaraed, hidden and interwoven into everyday life, often unnoticed that it takes more than the church brain to notice. God employs press people, politicians, charity workers, carers, policemen, and teachers, all honest people. From this point we can understand that **Jesus employs all people of the good will to use his authority.**

Jesus also said: *"whoever give a cup of water to you because you belong to Christ will certainly be rewarded"* – weather it is a gesture of support or lifesaving support, God remembers and counts these acts of kindness and courage as noble and worthy of reward. Remember what Jesus said to the women who broke an expensive oil jar and poured it on Jesus feet. Has it happened to you or something like this you have done to someone else? An act of kindness or support. I remember one event from Eastern Slovakia, when visiting a poor household, I was given food the lady was keeping aside for the preacher. It is humbling and not easy to accept knowing the person doesn't have much.

Jesus also speaks a bit harder statement and this is what we must include also. Here is what he said to disciples: v. 42 *"whoever causes these little ones who believe in me to trip and fall into sin it would be better for them to have a huge stone hung around their necks and to be thrown into the lake"*

It even goes deeper when Jesus turns attention to our self, saying that we can experience things in our lives which constantly cause us to sin and we need to cut these thing off. There is no other cure we could find.

I am sure we all understand this principle well, but perhaps we are asking **where we can find the power to do it ?** How can we cut off something what became so dear to us and so much part of our lives? Human world gradually learned to live with sin (under power of it), and perhaps realised that it can be tolerated. But not by God. He wants us to be his and no one else. He is a jealous God in these things. He wants us to be his. Perhaps it sounds a bit selfish but he is like that because only he can satisfy our soul.

We cannot solve this by redefining of what is evil and what is not. Just because everyone does so, or because we like it, or we think it is impossible to change things. Jesus is warning us here from redefinitions of our moral and ethical principles because these are sacred. God has clearly stated that the works of devil are deceit, lie, and murder. Life is sacred and no one has right to destroy it.

So where is the power to overcome? Do not wait that Jesus gives you a magic word and you will be changed. But what he does, or what he is, he becomes the reason to stand against sin.

Some things which cause us to sin have very deep hold on us and it takes time to overcome. The message to all is - do not give up, keep the faith. I believe we are not always delivered from things but we can experience constant and continuous desire to overcome them and that is what I would point out is walking with Jesus.

If this is too complicated I rephrase these last lines again. Perhaps we are not perfect yet but God works on us. Walking with Jesus, reading scriptures, contemplating over what was said and worshipping in the church together with serving to others are the signs of power to overcome all that separates us from God. **AMEN**

People and places for prayer

God beyond all speech, above all thought and surpassing all imagination, when you speak,
may we listen, when you draw near, may we rejoice in your presence, when you reveal
yourself,

may we bow down in adoration. **Amen** *(Gregory of Nazianus, Methodist prayer handbook, day 24)*

We remember in our prayers all those unwell. Lift them in our prayers to the Lord of all comfort. May His goodness restores our souls and health.

John G. is having eye surgery this coming Sunday.

Val T. is back home, feels well and sends her regards to everyone.

We remember those who died and their loved ones. Audrey G, 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.