

Newington Methodist Church

Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT

News and views for the week commencing 26th December 2021

**He is the same one who shone in
our hearts to give us light of the
knowledge of God's glory in the
face of Jesus Christ**

2Corinthians 4:6



Notices

Invitation to celebrate Christmas Day with the online service led by Rev. Robin Selmes and Third Avenue. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbTJHXQvGR4>

Next Sunday Worship 2nd January 2022 will be led by Rev Bryan Tolhurst from Chatham.

Please note that there is no circuit live stream, but you can join in The Triangle and Westhoughton Methodist churches joint service . Follow the link here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QL6nI5HcHxg>

Circuit live stream Sunday worship starts on 2nd January 10:30 am led by Supt. Rev Bonni Belle Pickard

Covid update – The government has announced that England will move to Plan B in response to the risks of the Omicron variant. We will monitor any changes in restrictions. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/covid-19-guidance>

At the moment, please be aware that at all services we have to wear a mask all the time when in building. Sanitize and wash your hands frequently, use a home test kit and if you feel unwell do not socialise.

Christmas season in Newington Church



- **24th December Christmas Eve Crib** service 4pm St Mary Newington
- **24th December Midnight communion** 11:30 pm at Newington St Mary
- ~~25th Dec. Saturday, Christmas Day – no service. Invitation to worship at Sittingbourne 10am~~
this service is **Cancelled!!!**
- **25th Dec. Saturday, Christmas Day** Circuit Live stream service 10:30 am with Rev Robin Selmes <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bbTJHXQvGR4>
- **25th December Newington St Mary** 10 am Communion service
- **26th Dec. Sunday after Christmas** – no service. Invitation to Benefice service at St Michael's Hartlip 10:30 to worship with our friends from The Six.

Reflection on God's word *Luke 2:1-16* "Let's go and see..."

In the song *"Never lose your sense of wonder"* Ronan Keating sings about preserving that sense of curiosity, that living in the world of wonders and remaining passionate about it. I remember summer holidays at my grandma's. She lived in an ancient village house which use to be a small holding with stables, fields and sheds. She wore traditional costume and going to her for holidays was always like time travel. That one thing we had though was her. She could be doing anything but when my brother and I stormed into the kitchen and shouted, *"Grandma lets go and pick cherries"* she would just shake her apron, abandon the kitchen with all the half done cooking and baking and just go with us. How many times do children come to us with some wonderful discovery or piece of paper with their own drawing and disturb us in our adult world. How do we react? Are we ready to go and see? How many times does God want to speak to us and we decline in the name of different priorities? What a pity!

When God set up the single bush to burn he wanted to see if Moses will stop and come and see what it is. *Ex 3:3-4*. Moses was in his 80's! Still curious! Curiosity equals genius.

The shepherds were shocked at seeing angels but more over by the information they heard. The fear and the shock was overcome by curiosity though. Perhaps the sacred feature of human beings. We are ever curious and once we stop we are equally dead. Spiritually dead at least.

The birth of Jesus is the beginning of the greatest mystery unfolded in front of our eyes! This child enters into this world and grows in it, yet remaining so untouched by it. The power in him was greater than all the powerful influences we are submitted to in this world. In 1John this greatness is related to all believers: *"Dear friends if our hearts condemn us, God is greater than our hearts and he knows everything"* and in 4:4 *"the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in this world"*

Who would not be curious to understand, to find out how this can be possible? Mary and Joseph saw the face of God. Here the words of John's gospel became truth: *John 1:18 "no one has ever seen God. God the only Son, who is at the Father's side, has made God known"*. And to complete John's reflection on the birth of

Jesus here is the quote from 1:16 *"from his fullness we have received grace upon grace"*. The Apostle added later on in 2Corinthians 4:6 *"God said that light should shine in the darkness. He is the same one who shone in our hearts to give us light of the knowledge of God's glory in the face of Jesus Christ"*.

Moses in his 80's, shepherds abandoning their flocks and wise men traveling so far. They all felt like let's go and see. And it was the best thing they ever did.

Dear friends, I wish you a blessed and peaceful Christmas season and I continue to pray may we all *"go and see"* what God has done and is going to do in our lives and churches through Christ Jesus. Our churches are the stage on which God wants to perform the story the whole world needs to come and see.

Happy Christmas

Rev Robert

People and places for prayer

We celebrate the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks for the work of all charities and the generosity of people in sharing their resources for those in time of need.

We continue to hold each other in prayer. We pray for the mission of our church to reach those who look for God. We also remember those for whom Christmas is not such a happy season.

Prayers for Jenny G. who is still recovering from a minor stroke. Please also remember Bernard as he takes on more roles in their daily lives.

Prayers for Peter and Beryl W. Peter is still in hospital and contracted Covid, but so far is asymptomatic. His recovery is taking longer than expected and the family cannot see Peter so pray for them all.

Prayers for Ernie S. who is with his son during Christmas and also doesn't feel well.

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.



Rev Robert, Rachel and all the family wish everyone at Newington Methodist
a happy and blessed Christmas and New Year.

