

Newington Methodist Church

Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT

News and views for the week commencing 20th February 2022

Blessed are those who trust in the Lord
Jeremiah 17:7



Notices

Sunday Worship will be led by Rev. Bonni Belle Pickard. Service starts 9:30 am

Next Sunday Worship with Holy Communion 27th February will be led by Rev. Robert Zachar.

Sunday 20th February circuit live stream worship 10:30 will be led by LP Roger Byard. Follow the link: <https://www.nkmethodists.org.uk/news/worship-from-home.html>

The next Sunday circuit live stream, 27th February will be led by Deacon Elizabeth Harfleet.

Dates for your calendar

- **Sectional stewards meeting** at Sittingbourne, Sunday 27th February, 4pm
- **Lent Bible study on ZOOM.** BECOMING CHURCH, Online Lent Course

Tuesdays 7pm via Zoom

- 8 March: Learning & Growing Together — Rev Robin Selmes
- 15 March: Breaking Bread Together & Prayer — Rev Robert Zachar
- 22 March: God's Power At Work — Bart Woodhouse
- 29 March: A Sense Of Community — Rev Tony Graff
- 5 April: An Outward-Looking Church — **Rev Naomi Oates**

Meeting ID: 929 3964 3962 Passcode 578033

<https://zoom.us/j/92939643962?pwd=K2xDU0MzQzNTdVF1cUdlOHBJczNDZz09>

Reflecting on God's word Luke 6: 27-38

Know your enemies - Love your enemies

Jesus teaches his disciples to love their enemies and refrain from judgment and condemning. This is solid spiritual food in our Christian teaching. Hard to digest, but lasting and nutritious to make us strong in our faith.

The disciples were Jews, and this nation in particular has the history of being surrounded or subdued by someone. You've got to hand it to them, they managed to develop a strong defence mechanism to preserve their identity. It was embodied in the Law carried by Tradition and Sacred scriptures.

When Jesus told his disciples, and surely his message went further to all his followers, to love their enemies they immediately knew who their enemy was. The Jews were under the firm grip of the Roman Empire. They hated the Romans and everything Roman. They expected the Messiah to break Roman power and restore the glory of the old kingdom.

Today we do not necessarily have such a strong view about our enemies and often we do not even know who our enemy is. We can live very peacefully and feel safe. So this challenge of Jesus needs to be interpreted into our world a bit differently. Perhaps with the phrase "know your enemy".

Who is your enemy? What limits you, enslaves you, controls you. It seems like these effects are equally as damaging and active as when the Romans embodied them but today they are hidden, undefined and often it is ourselves who is our greatest enemy.

Jesus is not telling us to enjoy and love being annoyed by anyone but he wants us to abide in love which crosses all boundaries and reaches out into the darkest places of people's motives. He wants us to exercise a real free will, opposing the pressure of our natural instincts to destroy all that is against us. In fact to love your enemies is the worst thing you could do to them because it is going to stop them sooner or later and it is going to transform them beyond their imagination. To express love requires a lot of effort, thought and action and it is a life task in many cases as we have to live alongside very difficult people. In some cases we find it much harder if our children, property and reputation are damaged but this power of love applies equally. As I already said it is a powerful spiritual exercise which strengthens our faith.

People and places for prayer

We continue to hold each other in prayer and we pray for the mission of our church.

Prayers for Jenny G. and Bernard.

Ernie S. and Pine Lodge being closed last week because of Covid.

Peter and Beryl W. Peter is now in care home at Hempstead Valley. The quarantine will finish this Sunday.

Elena M. and her family.

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.