

Newington Methodist Church

Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT

News and views for the week commencing 24th April 2022

**Happy are those who don't see
and yet believe.**

John 20:29



Notices

Sunday Worship with Holy Communion 24th April. The service will be led by **Robert Zachar**. The service starts at 9:30 am. Rachel will play the piano.

Next Sunday Worship, 1st May is Local arrangement.

Sunday 24th April circuit live stream worship 10:30 will be led by LP Tracey Burch.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4le2u4FtWU>

The next Sunday circuit live stream, 1st May, will be led by Bart Woodhouse.

Dates and actions for your calendar

- **The funeral for Ernie S.** will be 10th May 10 am at the Garden of England, Bobbing crematorium followed by the service of thanksgiving at 11 am at Sittingbourne Methodist church.
- **Joint service with St Mary's will be on 4th September**, the proposal is to hold the service in the Orchard. The Pentecost Orchard service will not take place as the Queen's jubilee celebrations are at the same time and we will participate on the event organised by the village council at the green.
- **The church council agreed** to move our Coffee morning in June to the second Saturday, June 11th, and on the first Saturday we will join in the Queens Jubilee event on the Village green instead.
- **Please remember** in your diary the special joint services which will take place every time there is a fifth Sunday as follows: 29th May in Sittingbourne, 31st July in Newington, 30th October in Bearsted

- **Rev Tony Graff - a farewell service** will take place at Gravesend Methodist church on 31st July 4pm

Reflection on God's word: John 20: 24-31

Thomas was not there! Such an important chain of events and Thomas was not there? Where was he? What was more important than staying with the rest of the apostles? Perhaps he could not stand the atmosphere of fear, disillusion and even guilt anymore as the disciples failed to stand up for Jesus. All that is only a clue though with no answers. Sometimes at the start of our Sunday service we kind of scan the church to see who is there and who is not there. This is ok because then we can call the people who are not there and make sure everything is ok. We just have to give Thomas the benefit of the doubt and let's be honest we are often just the same. Don't be a doubting Thomas, we say. Why not? Thomas asked for proof outright and got it. He then went on to great things. Doubting isn't wrong, finding the proof and not acting on it would be.

I remember a phrase used every time I did not produce a quick enough answer, people would say: "*ah, where were you when they taught you this in school?*" "We could say to Thomas: "*ah, where were you when Jesus came and we learned he is alive*"

Thomas' reaction to the news is not given much credit either. It is like the testimony of all his fellows was not enough. Makes us wonder what relationship they had between themselves. Jesus was the glue that held them together but they did not choose each other. Again and again in the church history we have to remind ourselves that we are not a selection of the same kind of people but we are called from rather different backgrounds and we are held together because of Jesus.

So Jesus is revisiting the apostles eight days later. It all looks like this visit is particularly because of Thomas. Thomas wanted to put his hands into Jesus's wounds. I would not really want to do that. That sounds so rude and so morbidly selfish. And let's pause here, aren't we just like that in our demands and requests? Yet Jesus did this to help Thomas for what he needed. I guess Thomas regretted that claim but he got what he asked for.

This is the last lesson from their master telling them that faith in him is not limited by space and time. Since now Jesus' presence shifted from the physical to the resurrected and that has no precedence. No legacy was ever carried on by a resurrected person. This is going to be fun. The news about the living God is going to fly and reach the most unexpected kind of people.

Again and again we can be surprised at how even the most confident and happy people amongst us are longing for the moment of relief, the message of forgiveness and a new beginning. According to the Church historians, Thomas took the good news to India and became the apostle for today's great nation. They even have a special celebration, The Feast of Saint Thomas on 3rd July as India's Christians day.

People and places for prayer

Jesus appeared to his disciples with the words “peace be with you”. The peace he established is the answer to all our fears and worries. As we come to the father we find comfort and forgiveness. In our prayers we bring to God all people in need of the peace we know in Christ.

We remember the brokenness of the world we live in and pray that those suffering would find comfort, and those who cause suffering would find mercy and repentance.

We pray for our church family and give thanks for everyone. In our thoughts and prayers we remember those unwell, recovering from treatment.

We ask God to extend his blessing to our families, children and grandchildren, friends and all people of good will.

We remember those who died and their loved ones. Audrey G, Margaret S., Peter W., Ernie 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.