

Newington Methodist Church

Church Lane, Newington, Sittingbourne, ME9 7JT

News and views for the week commencing 30th October 2022

**Stress and strain have caught
up with me, but your
commandments are my joy!**

Psalm 119:143



Notices

Sunday Worship 30th October is united service at Bearsted MCH 10:30. There will be no service in Newington this Sunday. If you need transport call Robert. There will be lunch after the service, please let Robert know if you are staying for lunch.

Next Sunday Worship 6th November will be led by Martin Smith.

Circuit live stream 30th October will be led by Revd Gill Le Boutillier - Scott. The service starts at 10:30 am <https://www.nkmethodists.org.uk/news/worship-from-home.html>

Next Sunday live stream service 6th November will be led by Revd Bonni Belle Pickard.

Calendar

- **The clocks change into winter regime between 29th – 30th October.**
- **4th November, Friday 7pm - Ecletic Avenue Variety Concert** at Third Avenue, Gillingham
- **5th November - Newington Coffee morning on Saturday**
- **Remembrance Sunday 13th November**, joint service at St. Mary's. The service starts 10:15 am
- **Bearsted Quiz night, Saturday 19th November 2022 at 7pm.** We look forward to welcoming teams at the church with a zoom option for those who cannot join us in person. Further details: bearstedmethodistchurch@gmail.com
- **20th November, Sunday 3pm at the manse – worship planning**
- **26th November, Saturday 2pm – Christmas Fete at Village hall.** Organised by St. Mary's.

Reflection on god's word Luke 19:110

Jesus entered the ancient city of Jericho. This place has been dated as one of the oldest known human settlements by modern archaeological science. In the biblical context we know that this was the first city Joshua entered in the Promised Land. It was here where the prostitute Rahab sheltered spies and actually became part of the blood line of the future king David and Jesus. We know that Jericho was demolished and a terrible slaughter took place and Joshua pronounced a curse (Josh 6:26) that if anyone wants to rebuild Jericho it will cost him his first born. This actually happened 500 years later, during the reign of Israel's king Ahab, when Hillel of Bethel rebuilt the city at the cost of his two sons. (1Kings 16:34) In his NT notes John Wesley mentioned that 12 000 priests lived there and took their turns to serve in the temple. Perhaps, because the city was close to Jerusalem. So Jesus enters the place of his very ancestors. The City of Palms as ancient historians called it. A place where he restored sight to the blind, where he set his story about the Good Samaritan and where he meets Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector.

Zacchaeus was rich. We can imagine that everyone in Jericho knew of him. We tend to say that he was hated and lonely but let's admit that rich people have lots of "friends" while they are rich. Jesus does not explain how he was working on Zacchaeus and how he was preparing this man to meet him. But clearly Zacchaeus was ready to meet him. It all took place in the unseen realms of prayers, meditation and supplication. Prevenient grace was poured over Zacchaeus. What he did that day was his decision but he would not have been able to change his life if Jesus had not passed by. He made himself a bit of fool climbing a fig tree, but this was the least of his worries. He completely betrayed himself with a statement about his life. I will repay, refund and give back what I have stolen. This must have shaken his life and he was set free. It was not just a religious experience but a practical act of repentance. This echoes what James writes in chapter 2: 18 *"show me your faith without deeds and I will show you my faith by what I do"*.

How could Zacchaeus keep his word and actually do what he promised? Pure maths would say it was impossible and pure common sense says it was impossible to restore the damage once done through our ignorance or on purpose, but it is the work of God in every human heart which makes this possible.

This story may actually open old scars of what we have done and how we could ever see healing, restoration and forgiveness. Or how we could contribute to lessening the damage and restoring what we destroyed. On a personal level these are our deepest secrets which we may not even find a person to share with. On a communal scale we think of all the lost species, devastated landscapes and nations wiped off the maps. How can we really make up for all we have done? What is impossible to man is possible to the one who passes by and wants to sit at table with you. Will you make a step like that or perhaps climb a tree?

Prayer from the Methodist worship book

All saints 1st November

Holy God,

You have called witnesses from every nation

And revealed your glory in their lives.

Grant to us the same faith and love

That, following their example,

We may be sustained by their fellowship

And rejoice in their triumph,
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. AMEN
(MWB, pg 558)

Prayers

Let the prayers fill the space where there is so much need to see God's grace, mercy and compassion. We pray for people who are unwell and long to be relieved from pain, fear and loss of independence. Lord give us the word of wisdom, encouragement and compassion. Lord pour out your Spirit on us to proclaim your Good news to all who are unwell.

We pray for our government, new leaders, and the challenges they face on our behalf. The future is full of hard times and uneasy prognosis, help us to endure it all and remain faithful to you, as your prophets declared:

Even if the fig tree doesn't blossom, and there is no produce on the vine – I will rejoice in the Lord. I will rejoice in the God of my deliverance. The Lord God is my strength. He will set my feet like the deer. He will let me walk upon the heights
Habakkuk 3:17-19

We continue in our prayers and practical support to the food bank mission. Remember and pray for all volunteers as they offer their time and energy to serve. Recent call is to bring more food as the shelves in the warehouse are getting empty so fast. Please bring an extra to our next harvest festival if you can.

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.jj