

Newbury Baptist Church

weekly news

16th October

EXPECTING THE UNEXPECTED!

Some of you may remember when *Monty Python* was at its peak, in the 1970s and early 80s. This British comedy troupe combined satire, surrealism and wordplay to wow and shock audiences. From parrots which had "ceased to be", to a false messiah who was just "a very naughty boy", their sketches became ingrained in the cultural psyche of a generation.

One of their most famous recurring skits involved John Cleese, Michael Palin and Terry Gilliam interrupting a scene by leaping out dressed as Catholic cardinals and declaring: "Nobody expects the Spanish inquisition!"



On Sunday we followed our own twist on this, by thinking about how nobody expects the Jesus inquisition, which took place while he was perched on Jacob's Well and talking to a Samaritan woman.

The passage from John 4 is unexpected in a number of ways, not least because of the unusual location and time of day of

the encounter. (*Want to know why? Then watch Sunday's service on our YouTube channel!!*)

It strikes me that Jesus is often to be found in places we might not expect, and conversely, is not always found in the places we might expect to find him. For example, those serving during the service on Sundays will testify that we are often so focused on ensuring whatever area we are responsible for is delivered to the best of our ability, that we don't have the time to slow down and worship God in the same way as the rest of the congregation. This is why healthy teams and balanced rotas are so important, ensuring everyone is able to have time when they are not on duty, hence the focus this month on encouraging new volunteers to come forward.

On the other hand, I wonder how often Jesus surprises us by turning up in the middle of work; or at the supermarket checkout; or in a conversation at the school gates?

Are you even willing to engage with Jesus when he approaches us on his terms, and not our own?

The danger in this of course, is that we are drawn into the kind of 'Jesus inquisition' which takes us out of our comfort zone and has the power to address our sin and shame, transforming it (and us) in the process. This can be a scary thought, but as we see with the woman at the well, the upside of embracing an encounter with Jesus - however unexpected - is always worth it.

God bless you this week.

Peter

CHURCH NEWS

NBC BUILDING WORK UPDATE

Our planning application to replace the windows in the church has been submitted to West Berks Council. In faith, the windows have also been ordered! The work to install the windows is likely to happen independently of other building work, and can be carried out midweek with no disruption to church activities.

With just over three weeks to go until work starts, we've been liaising with our building contractor. They are likely to section off an area of the car park during the work. We've also placed the order for a new partition for the church hall. It's due to be installed when the building work has been completed.

As always, if you have any questions or concerns, email nbcbuildings@newburybaptistchurch.org

SHOE BAG APPEAL DEADLINE: 20TH OCTOBER

A reminder that the deadline for returning filled shoe bags is **THIS SUNDAY**.

Over 100 bags have been taken from the stall, but only around 70 have been returned. If you are one of the 30 who have an empty shoe bag at home, please remember to bring it this week, as the team from Hope Now will be collecting all the bags from NBC on Monday 21st October.

Thank you for your continued support of this ministry.

LIGHT PARTY, 31ST OCTOBER: BOOK NOW!

The Light Party will be returning on 31st October, 5-6:30pm, for a fun evening of games, crafts, food and stories. This is for all children in primary school (reception - year 6).

Invitations are available for children to give to their friends. You can book on our website [here](#).

YOUTH WEEKEND: 25TH-27TH OCTOBER

The Ignite youth weekend away is almost upon us, and we would love your support!

Cakes & Movie Night Snacks: Teenagers eat a lot! Would you be willing to bake a cake or donate some snacks for our movie night? (If baking yourself, please list the ingredients). These can be dropped off at church or to Sarah Dent by Thursday 24th October.

Prayer: Prayer is the foundation of all our youth work. We would love for each young person and team member to be prayed for individually in the build up to and during the weekend away. Is this something you can commit to? Please email youth@newburybaptistchurch.org to register your interest and during the week before the weekend away you will be sent a name to pray for and some prayer pointers. It was such an encouragement last year to know there was an army of people praying for us!

SONRISE CHRISTIAN RESOURCES

Sonrise Christian Resources will be having a stall in the town market every Saturday. This is manned by Steve, who was the former manager of Shoemakers Christian Bookshop. The stall will be selling a variety of resources, including Advent calendars and Christmas cards.

VOLUNTEER MONTH

Throughout October's Weekly News we are featuring various groups and areas where you might be able to serve. This will include a contact person and email if you would like to express an interest in finding out more or would like to sign up to a rota.

CHATTABOX

If helping with Chattabox is something you would like to explore then this is all you need to know...

There are two roles in the Chattabox team; leader and helper. The leader will prepare the lesson plan ahead of time and will lead the time with the children altogether. The helper will support with registration, give 1-2-1 support to children as needed in the altogether moments and will lead one of the age groups when the group splits out. All members of the team have termly planning meetings to look at the term ahead, discuss safeguarding best practices and pray together.

But whilst those are the practicalities of what happens, the spiritual role of a Chattabox team member is equally important. We work each week following a mixed program of Old and New Testament story series to provide the children with a foundation of faith. We are the worker sowing the seeds in the field. There are many moments of joy watching those seeds take root but also knowing that much of what we are doing is the first step on the journey for these children. We have fun learning together and teaching those fundamentals truths about what it means to live a life with Jesus as our friend.

If you would like to explore further joining the team please speak to Bethan (bethand@newburybaptistchurch.org) or any of the current team.

FLOWER TEAM

You may have noticed the church has been beautifully decorated recently as we celebrated Harvest.

The flower team is responsible for arranging flowers each week, (apart from a brief holiday period in the summer), and decorating for the major celebrations – Christmas, Mothering Sunday, Easter, Harvest, and Remembrance Sunday.

The cost of the flowers for the arrangements each week is provided by people celebrating an event or remembering a loved or for some other special reason. There is a calendar in the Foyer for people to sign up for a particular Sunday. You are welcome to arrange the flowers yourself, or a member of the team will do it for you, taking into account the colour and type of flowers you would like subject to availability.

After the service you are then welcome to take the flowers to distribute as you wish, or they become part of the pastoral work of the church, delivered to those in need or celebrating something special.

We are a small, friendly team and would welcome new members, particularly anyone with experience of arranging flowers. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Valerie Vardy or any other member of the team, as listed on the rota.

In the meantime thank you to the team for their work for harvest, and we hope you enjoy the beauty of God's creation each week.



Prayer Space

PEOPLE FOR PRAYER

Please continue to pray for the following people in our church family who are in particular need of our prayers and support:

- **Beryl R** who is recovering from surgery yesterday.
- **Shirley B** who is recovering from surgery yesterday, following a fall last week.
- **Joyce & Brian C**
- **Barbara M & family**
- **Joy & Gordon S**
- **Jonathan E**
- **Bethan C** As she serves God in South Africa
- **"Arthur & Reeta"** serving God overseas.

PRAYERS FOR HEALING

In light of two of our church members undergoing surgery yesterday (Tuesday), we pray specifically for them as they recover.

Loving Father, we lift up before you our sisters in Christ, Beryl and Shirley, following their surgeries.

We pray for their steady recovery, and for excellent care from doctors, nurses and other hospital staff.

May they also know of your healing and peaceful hand resting upon them, and experience the continued peace of Christ, in spite of their pain and limited mobility.

As their bodies recover and they regain strength, we ask that their faith might also be strengthened, so that through this time, they may point to your faithfulness and give you glory. Amen.

USING THE BIBLE TO PRAY FOR OUR WORLD

It can be difficult to know how to pray for global crises and complex situations which we struggle to understand. Here are some suggestions of how to use scripture to pray, in light of the aftermath of Hurricanes Milton & Helene in the USA, the ongoing escalation of war in Israel, Palestine and Lebanon, and the proposed Assisted Dying Bill, which is being introduced to parliament today (Weds).

Acknowledge God's power using Psalm 24: *"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it. The world and all who live in it."*

Pray for God's Kingdom to come using Matthew 6:9: *"Your Kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*

Pray for individuals, communities and those in power, using 1 Timothy 2:1-3: *"I urge then, first of all that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way."*

Pray for the church to continue to bring hope, using 2 Corinthians 4:17-18: *For this light momentary affliction is preparing us for a weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen, but to the things that are unseen. For the things that are seen are transient, but the things that are unseen are eternal."*