

Newbury Baptist Church

weekly news

23rd October

CRACKED FILLINGS & THE IMAGE OF GOD

Earlier this week I cracked a filling in one of my teeth. I can't pretend it put me in the best of moods, and that was before I phoned the dentist. Then I was told the waiting list times, and my mood sank even lower.

The only silver lining is that this all happened on my day off, so there was no unsuspecting recipient of a pastoral visit from a grumpy pastor!

There are many areas in our society which are struggling at the moment, not least NHS dentistry. A recent study by the Office of National Statistics revealed 97% of people who do not have a dentist and tried to access NHS dental care were unsuccessful.

Those working in wider NHS care will also point to the serious problems facing GP surgeries, hospitals, mental health services and more.

As our communities grapple with these very real and practical problems, I am reminded of Jesus' deep concern for physical wellbeing, as well as spiritual health.

Throughout the Gospels, we see Christ healing the sick and caring for the vulnerable, demonstrating that bodily suffering matters to God. When Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10), He spoke of wholeness in both body and spirit.

Access to health and dental care particularly affects the most vulnerable in our society – the elderly, low-income families, and those in rural and coastal areas.

As followers of Jesus, our commitment to social justice and human dignity is rooted in the profound truth that all people are created in God's image (Genesis 1:27).

Theologians call this the *imago dei*, and it is a reminder that every person carries within them a sacred reflection of their Creator – regardless of their age, income, or social status.

To be made in God's image is to share in God's capacity for relationship, creativity, and the ability to care for others. It means that every human life has inherent worth that transcends their economic utility or social standing.

We are fortunate to live in a relatively affluent area. But look closer and you will see people struggling; elderly folk wondering if they can afford to put the heating on yet; families choosing between dental treatment and basic necessities; rough sleepers quite literally on our doorstep.

In these challenging times, we're reminded that while healthcare systems may falter, God's care for His people never fails.

As you go about your daily routines this week, how might you recognise and honour the divine imprint in every person you encounter?

Might each interaction we have reflect the care God has for all people.

Peter

CHURCH NEWS

NBC BUILDING WORK UPDATE

Last Saturday a small group of volunteers helped to move a number of bulky items into the Morton Hall, in order to create sufficient alternative space for our Sunday school classes to meet, and for Giggles and Wiggles to store some of their equipment. Thanks to those who came to help.

Discussions are underway with an audio-visual specialist, Ed Hendry, who will advise us on improving our current system and sound/light set-up in the church and hall. Ed is due to visit NBC to meet with relevant teams, assess the space, and join us for a Sunday service. Please make him welcome if you see him around!

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

LIGHT PARTY, 31ST OCTOBER: FINAL CALL!

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](#).

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.

MEN'S BREAKFAST: SATURDAY 2ND NOVEMBER, 8AM

A reminder that our next Men's Breakfast is coming up on 2nd November. This will be our last in the Church Hall until the building works are completed, so make your booking and prepare for extra bacon, double portions of scrambled egg, and unlimited refills of tea and coffee!*

You can book your place [here](#)

CTNA SENIORS CHRISTMAS DAY MEAL

If you or someone you know is going to be alone this Christmas and are over 65, then you are welcome to join a free community Christmas Day meal at St. George's Church Hall.

The day includes a meal, entertainment, a short reflection on the true meaning of Christmas, and carol singing. Transport can be provided if needed.

This is organised by Christians Together in the Newbury Area (CTNA). To register, please fill in the online form [here](#).

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.

CHRISTIANS AGAINST POVERTY

Do you sometimes wonder how you can live out the Great Commission, connect with new people and love people like Jesus did when he was on earth? Well, how about joining the CAP support team in Newbury? If you are a good listener, could you visit alongside a CAP Debt Coach and support those we meet with kindness and compassion? We usually visit clients in daytime hours and the limited demand on your time can be fitted around your other commitments.

Alternatively, how about joining the team delivering CAP Money, a course aimed at helping people build better financial habits and prevent debt? This volunteering opportunity is one open to anyone as these courses will be delivered in both the evenings and during daytime hours.

Please speak to David if interested or email davidclark@capuk.org



LADIES BREAKFAST

Ladies Breakfast has now been running for 18 months, and continues to go from strength to strength.

With the Men's Breakfast established many years ago, a women's equivalent was well overdue! The group exists to provide a safe space for women to take a break from the usual responsibilities of work, children and families, and enjoy the company of fellow Christians.

Since it launched, Ladies' Breakfast has seen a number of truly inspiring speakers, precious time spent in fellowship, and plenty of pastries, fruit salads and continental treats!

Those on the team help with the set up and clear-away of the breakfast, make teas and coffees and prepare the food. It takes place on the second Saturday of most months, with a break over the holidays, and starts at 8.30am.

Team members tend to arrive around 7.30am and are finished by 10.30am – and we rotate so you don't have to serve every month!

The team is led by Christina and includes Jenny F, Claire S, Luda, Julie, Livia and Jennifer. If you would like to learn more about how you can help or think you might like to lend a hand, then speak to any of the current team, we're happy to chat! You can also email julieb@newburybaptistchurch.org



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 now at home following surgery.*
- **Shirley B** *who is recovering from surgery.*
- **Joyce & Brian C**
- **Barbara M & family**
- **Joy & Gordon S**
- **Jonathan E**
- **Bethan C** *servicing God in South Africa.*
- **"Arthur & Reeta"** *servicing God overseas.*
- **The Mahon Family** *servicing God in Peru.*

CHRISTMAS SHOE BAGS

Over 100 filled shoe bags were collected on Monday by Hope Now, and will be driven to Ukraine to be given to some of the poorest children on Christmas Day. A prayer for safe passage:

*From the splendour of heaven, you came to the poorest of places.
A divine gift, wrapped in swaddling cloths and laid in a manger.*

Your Christmas message o Lord, is one with a particular blessing to the poor and the needy. As we pray for the shoe bags and the gifts inside, we ask that you would protect those entrusted with delivering those parcels, and ensure a swift and safe passage across Europe and into Ukraine. May each bag be filled with your abundant blessings to every child who receives one, so they would know the joy of Christmas and the God who reveals himself through a baby.

PRAYING FOR THE YOUTH WEEKEND (25TH-27TH OCTOBER)

The highlight in the Ignite youth calendar is almost here! The Youth Weekend away at St. Cassian's Retreat Centre in Kintbury has become a staple in the diary for the past few years. Please commit to praying for our teenagers and the leaders through the weekend.

Loving God, we give you thanks for every young person who attends Ignite, and for those going away this weekend. It is a blessing and a privilege to have such a thriving youth group at NBC, and we do not take them for granted. As we pray for them now, we ask that the weekend away would be a rich time of blessing.

May new friendships develop and existing ones grow deeper.

May your Spirit flow freely and abundantly, creating an atmosphere of openness to you.

May the right balance be found between activities, games, worship, study and rest.

Loving God, we pray too for our leaders. We are blessed with a gifted and committed team, and we thank you for all the preparation which has gone into the weekend. We ask for your protection over the leaders as they give their time, energy and experience. Would you renew their strength and energy throughout the weekend, and may they also receive from you as they give of themselves. Amen.