

Weekly News

NEWBURY BAPTIST CHURCH

2ND APRIL 2025

Tent Pegs & Holding Spaces

What are our responsibilities as members of NBC?

It's a tricky question to answer, as there are a lot of moving parts, meaning there's unlikely to be a one-size-fits-all response. A lot depends on what stage of life we are at, demands on our time from work and family, as well as health concerns and limitations.

But I think it's a question worth reflecting on from time to time.

There are some obvious answers which we would probably turn to first: Praying for the work of the church and for one another; attendance at Sunday worship and Church Meetings; giving to God, both in our time and financially; living lives in accordance with Christian values and the teachings of Jesus. These are actually all set out in our constitution (section 12:3 to be precise!)

But there are other, less obvious responsibilities, which are perhaps harder to pin down, but can have a huge impact on the culture of the church, as well as revealing the maturity of our faith.

One such example is if and how we 'hold spaces' for others. This concept finds its roots in Isaiah 54:2, which says: "Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back; lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes."

In the passage God is talking to Israel as they prepare to return from exile. It is a call to trust in God for growth and development, as well as a call for Israel to prepare to change what it knows and remembers from before the exile. It finds parallels in Ephesians 2, where Paul reminds the church that in Christ, the promises God makes to the Jews are extended to include the gentiles.

In our own context, we might want to reflect upon what it means to trust in the work God is doing, so that we are "enlarging the place of our tent", so others may know and worship God.

For example, what does it mean to be generous gatekeepers of the church? Does our behaviour collectively and individually encourage an open place for all to belong, or a closed place, belonging only to a few? The common feedback of NBC being a welcoming place to visit is a good sign!

I love the idea that as we grow in our faith, we increasingly reflect the generosity of God in how we encourage newcomers and make space for those younger in their faith to 'find their feet' in how and where they serve God. I have always been grateful for the example and encouragement of others further along in their journey of faith, as well as their grace when I inevitably made (and make!) mistakes. It's a beautiful picture of the family of God at work, growing together.

Who are you 'holding spaces' for? What does it look like to be a responsible member of NBC at this point in your life? May God bless you as you reflect upon those questions this week.

Peter

Notice board

Holy Week & Easter Services

We hope you're able to join us as we journey through Holy Week through to Easter Sunday:

Maundy Thursday - 7.30pm at NBC - with Thatcham Baptist Church

Good Friday - 10.30am, St Nic's Church - CTNA service

Easter Sunday - 10am, all-age service at NBC

Deacons Elections

Deacon elections are planned for the church AGM which will be held on Sunday May 11th. None of the current deacons are stepping down, but we are able to have a maximum of 12 deacons and have 9 in post at the moment. If you would like to discuss the role, please speak to Peter or one of the deacons.

Nominations must be submitted to Neal (Church Secretary) before Easter Sunday, 20th April secretary@newburybaptistchurch.org.

Men's Breakfast

The next Men's Breakfast will take place this Saturday (5th April) at 8am. We look forward to welcoming this month's speaker Jonathan Edwards and enjoying a hearty breakfast together. Please register online to let us know you're coming [here](#)

First Thursday

Come and join us for our Easter First Thursday service and lunch tomorrow, 3rd April, at 12 noon. There is a £4 charge for lunch. If you haven't already let us know you're coming please do so by speaking to Daph or Steve or emailing: firstthursday@newburybaptistchurch.org.

Street Pastors

The Newbury Street Pastor management committee are on the look out for trustees. If you might be interested please get in touch with Amanda at Street Pastors (newbury@streetpastors.org.uk). Nominations will need to be submitted before 6th May.

Prayer Space

Lent Week 5 Prayer

Gracious God, we humbly approach you during this Lenten season, seeking your guidance and strength as we journey towards the cross and the promise of resurrection.

Lord Jesus, as we remember your suffering and sacrifice, your willingness to endure pain and death for our salvation. Help us to see in your cross a symbol of hope and redemption.

Forgive us, Lord, for the times we have strayed from your path, for the times we have failed to love as you love, and for the times we have turned our backs on your teachings.

Renew our hearts and minds, that we may be transformed into your image. May we be filled with your Holy Spirit, that we may live lives of service and compassion.

Give us the strength to bear witness to your love, to stand up for what is right, and to follow in your footsteps, even through suffering. May we be instruments of your peace and love in a world that desperately needs it.

As we journey towards Easter, we pray for the hope of resurrection, the promise of eternal life, and the joy of being reunited with you in heaven.

We praise you, Lord, for your boundless love and mercy. We bring these prayers to you through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.



Church Family Prayers

Please pray for the following people in our church family:

John P

Jonathan E following his operation

Brian C and family

Beryl R

Jeanette H

Mary H

Nigel B and family

Naomi in the Middle East

Arthur & Reeta in Asia

The Mahon Family in Peru

Myanmar Earthquake

Following the recent earthquake in Myanmar, reports indicate more than 1700 people have died, and a further 3000 injured.

Pray for the families impacted, that they would know God's peace and comfort, and that he would provide for all their needs as they grieve.

Pray for the wisdom and safety of organisation leaders as they seek to coordinate critical response efforts. Pray for the provision of vital aid such as clean water, food, medical supplies and shelter.