

Weekly News

7th October 2026



Just under 12 months ago it seemed a great idea to hold a barn dance on the same weekend as Harvest Festival, not noticing that our First Thursday gathering was immediately before it. From the insulation of 11 months ahead I didn't think of the workload that would entail, nor that the usual family pressures would continue alongside. With the help and support of the First Thursday team, the Flower Team and a Barn Dance team we got there! Thank-you to everyone who helped, we couldn't have made it without you.

Many people have told me how much they enjoyed the recent Harvest Events and we are pleased they have been enjoyed by so many. The sea of smiling faces bobbing up and down together at the Barn Dance, as well as the willingness to clear tables and chairs etc, spoke volumes to me.

I'm writing this with various thoughts from Peter's Harvest sermon swirling in my head. For the ancients, Harvest is a time when they celebrated gathering enough food into store to sustain them through the winter support the work required to maintain the land would again provide.

Harvest is the celebration of achieving that significant milestone in the yearly cycle. It also marks the beginning of the next cycle of planning for success in the coming year.

As a church we are working to understand God's calling for us over the coming years. I pray that we can maintain the sense of togetherness we experienced over this past week as we seek God's will in our thoughts and plans.

As you consider how God is calling you personally, may I mention First Thursday. The attendance at this monthly mission to the senior members of our community has been slowly but surely rising over the past year. We have a super team that comes together faithfully each month to host this event. If you feel called to help sustain and develop this mission, please join the team. Please speak to me .



Steve

If you still have items to donate to the Foodbank for Harvest, please bring them to church this Sunday (12th).



QUESTIONING JESUS

SCAN THE QR CODE
TO ASK A QUESTION



Please keep sending your questions! This week: How will we recognise each other in heaven?

What a great question! The Bible gives us a few clues which I'll attempt to unpack.

Let's start with heaven. It's a loaded word and one we rarely think about in isolation. It's usually connected to people we've loved and lost. The question is: Do you picture it to be *up there*, or *down here*?

The Bible's big hope is not us going up. It is heaven coming down. John sees "a new heaven and a new earth" and hears that God's home is now among people (Revelation 21:1-3). Paul says creation itself is waiting to be set free (Romans 8:19-23). So the end of the story is not escape from the physical world but the physical world remade, with God fully present in it.

That matters because if the future is a remade creation, then it has places in it, and bodies, and I think something *like* time, because bodies move and meet and speak. Believers who have died are safe with Christ now (Philippians 1:23), but that is not yet the finished thing. The finished thing is resurrection.

So will we know each other? Yes, I think so. When Paul comforts the Thessalonians about those who have died, his comfort is that we will be "together with them" with the Lord (1 Thessalonians 4:17). That only comforts if they are still recognisably the people they were pre-death.

Our best clue is the risen Jesus. He ate fish and could be touched. He also appeared in unusual ways which the Gospels don't try to explain. People also recognise him, but in a different way. Mary thinks he is the gardener until he says her name (John 20:14-16). The two on the Emmaus road walk with him for miles and only know him when he breaks bread (Luke 24:30-31). He still carries scars (John 20:27). So recognition doesn't seem to come from his face alone. It comes through relationship and his story: a voice, a familiar action, wounds. That suggests to me that what lasts is not how we looked at a particular age but who we are: our story and our loves.

The transfiguration is also interesting. Peter had never seen Moses or Elijah, yet he knew who they were (Mark 9:4-5). We aren't told how. Luke says they were talking with Jesus (Luke 9:31), so perhaps it came out in the conversation. Perhaps it was a divine revelation. Either way, it hints that knowing each other then won't depend on having a face to remember. Paul says that then "I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known" (1 Corinthians 13:12). So I suspect we will know each other better than we do now, not less.

This sometimes raises questions about marriage because Jesus says in Matthew 22:30 that in the resurrection people "will neither marry nor be given in marriage." He's been asked about a woman widowed seven times: whose wife will she be? Jesus says the question doesn't work because that life is not this one rerun. Marriage, as an arrangement of vows and households, belongs to a world with death in it. Jesus doesn't say they won't know each other, or that the love is lost. Ephesians 5 calls marriage a picture of Christ and his people, and scripture ends with a wedding feast (Revelation 19:7-9). When the real thing arrives, the picture has done its job. I don't think that means less love between a husband and wife. I think it means the love they had was always pointing at something bigger, and they get to share that together.

Finally, at the centre of John's vision is not a reunion. It is this: "they will see his face" (Revelation 22:4). Everything else gathers round that. We will know each other, but we will know each other in God's presence, and I think that is what will make it so good. Augustine put it well: we will enjoy God, and one another in God.

What we can't say is what it will all look like. "What we will be has not yet been made known" (1 John 3:2). I'm content to leave that part with God.

Notices



CAP Money Coaching

CAP Money coaching is a free service designed to empower you with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to better manage your finances. We are running the course at NBC, and held the first session today. It is a free course open to all. If you'd like to join in subsequent weeks, (14th and 21st October 10am-12pm, book online [here](#) or contact David Clark or Helen Andrews for further info.

CTNA Joint Service

Join in with others from churches in Newbury on 18th October for a joint service to conclude the UK National Week of Prayer. The service will be held at St Nicolas Church at 6pm.

NBC Bake Off

NBC's popular Bake Off is back! Bake a cake and bring it along on October 18th. Our very own Prue Leith and Paul Hollywood will judge and award prizes! All donations will go to Newbury Street Pastors. Each cake must have a completed entry form including a list of ingredients. Please collect from church.

Light Party

Come dressed as your favourite toy and have a Rootin' Tootin' Good Time at our Toy-Story themed Light Party on 31st October (5-6.30pm). There will be a disco, craft, games and food. Places are free but must be booked in advance [here](#).

If you're able to help supervise crafts, cook some hotdogs, join the prayer team or be part of the clean up crew for half an hour or so after the party finishes please sign up [here](#). For more information contact Sian

Can you help with painting and preparation for the Light Party the evening before (October 30th at 7pm)? If so, please let Hannah know hannahs@newburybaptistchurch.org

NBC Youth Weekend

The 5th Annual NBC Youth Weekend Away is nearly here – 23rd–25th October 2026 – and we are excited for all that God has in store. Prayer is the foundation of our youth work, and we invite you to stand with us in prayer as we prepare for this weekend. As in previous years, we hope that every young person and leader will be personally prayed for throughout the weekend. If you feel able to support us in this way, please contact Sarah at sarah_dent@hotmail.co.uk. A prayer letter will be sent out the week before, including key prayer points and the name of someone you can be praying for.

Encounter

We're coming together with Thatcham and Basingstoke Baptist Churches for "Encounter" - a joint worship evening, led by John & Florrie Bishop-Hall. It's at 7pm on Sunday 15th November at Basingstoke Baptist Church. All are very welcome - no booking required.

Prayers



Below are some prayer requests from two of our missionaries serving in Asia.

Please also note in your diary an invitation to pray together as we discern whether to appoint a Minister-in-Training. The dates are designed around Jess' visit to NBC and the Church Meeting where a decision will be taken. They will be held in church on:

Tuesday 13th October, 8pm.

Wednesday 18th November, 7.30pm.

Arthur & Reeta Prayer Update

- Join us in giving thanks that a staff member was able to enter the country before her visa expired. Pray the renewal process will go smoothly, and that she will be an encouragement to the local team.
- Pray for our finance director as they take a week off to attend a retreat organised by their congregation in Australia. Pray their time back home will be spiritually refreshing.
- Discussions are continuing around changes to housing needs for the team. The options revolve around renting a couple of apartments or finding a suitable house which can be split into units. Please pray for wisdom and clarity in order for the best decision to be made.
- The organisation is undergoing a restructuring process due to a reduction in staff and funding. Pray that the process goes smoothly and that no significant challenges arise.
- Relationships with the authorities continue to be a challenge. Pray that the delays in obtaining the relevant permissions would not impact the work of an operating theatre in one of the villages.
- Later this month there are several quarterly report deadlines. Pray that the necessary information can be collected easily and all the deadlines met.
- Conversations have slowed down regarding the possible construction of a hospital in one of the towns where medical care is currently provided. Pray that these may restart and an answer found.
- On 25th October several team and board members are travelling to south Asia for the General Assembly. Pray for safe travels, for the GA to be inspiring, and for the various meetings taking place to be productive.