

Weekly News

14th October 2026



Last night (Tuesday 13th) a number of us gathered to pray together ahead of an important weekend in the life of NBC. No, I'm not talking about our Bake Off competition (although Mia is determined to retain her title in the under 12s category!) I am of course referring to the visit of Jess, our prospective Minister-in-Training.

Inevitably it's made me reflect upon my own journey as a minister, starting out as a MiT at Regent's Park College in September 2011. My sense of call developed when I took a year out as a ministerial intern at my home church in Romford the year before. I had a growing feeling my future didn't lie in journalism, but I wasn't sure it was "proper" church ministry either. At 25 I felt too young and too inexperienced compared to all the other ministers I saw around me. I remember after our Senior Minister had conducted the funeral of my Uncle Bill in 2010 he asked me if I could see myself doing the same thing. I really wasn't sure.

Yet through a series of significant encounters with God, I was left in no doubt as to his call on my life. This included my first meeting with the Principal at Regent's, where, having been on the receiving end of a stray elbow playing football the day before, I turned up with an enormous black eye and three stitches below my eyebrow. I needn't have worried; it turned out he was a huge sports fan and was only surprised I did it playing football and not rugby!

Interestingly, it was the same Uncle Bill who predicted to my family a few months before his death that I'd end up in "the ministry". And having now conducted almost 50 funerals, I can safely say any uncertainty over that question no longer remains.

I'm keen on chatting with Jess and seeing if she shares any of those same thoughts and feelings as she makes those first steps in her ministerial formation. Everyone's journey is different, but there are some common threads; namely that everyone has to start somewhere. I felt fortunate to be placed in my home church, where everyone knew me and I felt (sometimes too) confident. To be considering a completely new church whilst starting at a new college is a lot of change at once.

Therefore it's important we continue to uphold Jess in prayer, as well as carefully listen to God regarding her possible appointment at NBC. I encourage you to say hello on Sunday, encourage her that we are praying for her and with her, and to be mindful not to 'hog' her time.

It's a weekend to look forward to and I'm excited to be sharing it with you.

Peter





QUESTIONING JESUS

SCAN THE QR CODE
TO ASK A QUESTION



The questions have slowed down a bit this week, but here's a great one I was asked a couple of weeks ago: *Jesus is the Son of God and was adopted by Joseph. Why is there so much stress put on Joseph's family tree, as he was not blood-related to Jesus?*

To answer this I need to credit the work of a scholar called Kenneth Bailey, who spent 40 years living and teaching in the Middle East. His book *Jesus Through Middle Eastern Eyes* is a real treasure trove, especially concerning anything related to the nativity story.

In the West we tend to think family trees are about blood. In traditional Middle Eastern villages, Bailey says, your lineage was about who you belonged to, where you were welcome, and what you could inherit. People knew their genealogies by heart because those lists told them who they were.

That's why Joseph mattered. When he took Mary as his wife and named the baby (Matthew 1:25), he was publicly claiming Jesus as his own son. From then on Jesus was legally Joseph's son and heir. The prophets had promised a king from David's line, and through Joseph, Jesus belonged to it. This is why the census took Joseph to Bethlehem. It was David's town. A man of David's line coming home would have found family to take him in. Joseph's family tree gave Jesus a place to belong from the day he was born.

Joseph's choice was also costly. Mary was pregnant, and the child wasn't his. In a culture built on honour and shame, the easy option was to walk away. Joseph didn't. He took on the gossip and gave this child his name. That's adoption at its most costly and most loving, and is a reminder of just how remarkable adoptive parents usually are.

If we look closely at the genealogy of Jesus in Matthew we also find four women: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and "the wife of Uriah". Bailey notes that all four are Gentiles or linked to Gentiles. Rahab was a Canaanite, Ruth a Moabite, and Uriah was a Hittite. Several of their stories are messy. So Joseph's family tree isn't a record of pure bloodlines. It's a record of outsiders being brought in and made family.

Luke gives a different genealogy of Joseph, tracing his line right back to Adam, "son of God". Scholars don't agree on how the two lists fit together, but Luke's does show how Jesus belongs to the whole human family.

Joseph's adoption of Jesus also reminds us of God's relationship with humanity. We have been adopted into God's family through Christ. So when you talk to adoptive parents, remember that they are modelling something of God's relationship to you through the love, care and inclusion of their children. It's also an image used by Paul in Romans 8:15 and Galatians 4:5. In Roman law an adopted son had exactly the same standing as a natural one: the same name, the same inheritance.

So Jesus was adopted into a human family, and we're adopted into his. While we live in a culture which may not care so much about family trees, who we belong to remains just as important. The family God brings us into is not second best or partial. It is fully ours.

Notices



NBC Bake Off

NBC's popular Bake Off is back! Bake a cake and bring it along this Sunday October 18th. Our very own Prue Leith & 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.

CTNA Joint Service

To mark the conclusion of the UK national week of Prayer, churches across Newbury will gather for a joint service in St Nicholas' Church at 6pm this Sunday (18th). All are very welcome!

Shoebags for Ukraine

Thanks to all those who have already donated a shoebag full of gifts for Ukrainian Children. Please make sure that all bags are returned to church before NEXT SUNDAY, 25th October. There are still bags to collect from the Welcome Area in church if you haven't yet picked one up.

New Music!

Some of you will know Miracle, whose two children were dedicated at NBC last year. Today he has released a song he wrote and recorded, after being inspired during one of our Sunday services. **The artist is 'Miracle UC' and the song is called *He Lives*.** You can find it on all streaming platforms.



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



Jess' Visit This Weekend

Lord we pray for this coming weekend as we meet Jess and spend time in worship and fellowship together.

We pray that all we do and say might honour Christ, and that your name would be lifted high and glorified through our worship this weekend.

Thank you the calling you've placed on Jess' life and for the opportunity to explore with her whether we might play a part in that calling. We seek the guidance of your Spirit and for a clear sense of whether this is a door opening for us at NBC.

We pray for a real sense of communal discernment as she shares and has conversations. We also ask that you would bless the youth weekend where she is leading the sessions, and that our teenagers would feel completely part of our decision making process and learn what it means to discern the mind of Christ together.

We ask all these things in Jesus' name. Amen.

Youth Weekend

Please pray for the youth weekend on 23rd-25th October.

Every year this event has been covered in prayer and we have seen God moving in remarkable ways among the young people.

As mentioned on the notice pages, we are still looking for more people to commit to praying for individuals by name throughout the weekend.

Light Party

We also pray for the Light Party as invitations are handed out and final plans made by the team.

Loving God, we thank you for the opportunity the Light Party has given for us to connect with so many people who don't usually come to church. We pray that the invitations being shared would be well-received, and that every child who attends has a brilliant time.

We pray for our leaders as they make the final preparations, and that you would use every activity, conversation, and moment to shine a light for you.