



# ASTCOTE METHODIST CHURCH

## *News & Notices—January 2016*

### **3rd January**

10.30am Mr Keith Brooks

### **10th January**

10.30am Rev Peter Hancock : Covenant Service (more details on page 7) & HC

### **17th January—Family Service** (followed by lunch)

10.30am Mrs Dawn Smith

### **24th January**

10.30am Mr Chris Hardy

### **31st January**

10.30am Mr Keith Brooks

On Duty at 10.30am Jan—Gulliford/Roz/Sue Feb— Hysom/Boenke
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### **Eastcote Baptist Chapel**

3pm Service on 1st Sunday in the month

## Ministers Letter January 2016

Jesus Christ used everyday things that we around him to reveal God to us.

There can be very few of us who don't connect with the weather forecast or experience the weather for ourselves in any one given day. It influences our mood, our attitude to life, what we want to do and where we want to go in any one day or period of time. Whatever needs to be achieved the weather is a key element.

Living as we do on an island, and far north from the equator it seems the weather has a greater degree of change in influencing our lives and the way we live. Some of us are so involved in the weather that we observe the signs of nature around us and draw our own weather conclusions and forecasts, and this will also change with the seasons that come and go.

When I was working late one night after having come back from a small but sincere prayer meeting down at Towcester Road Methodist Church I tuned into the BBC late night 5 day forecast. Nothing unusual in that you may say. Some of the forecast was given over to what drives and influences our weather on this island. The Forecaster talked about and demonstrated the influence of the Jet Stream; combinations of weather and barometric pressures that come vast distances across oceans that effect not only our island but whole continents and the shape of the world.

The Jet Stream for me showed an enormous influence of dynamic power that shapes each and every person's life. It is that big and very influential, that 'awesome' and 'mega' are two descriptive words that come to mind.

Thinking back earlier to our prayer meeting together it was a meeting of being honest and open to God, going to the sovereign throne of grace in God our Father, in the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the power of the Holy Spirit, dwelling in the presence of God. We prayed about people in our Church family, family, friends and neighbours, the community in which we are placed, the work of the gospel,

the manifestation of the Kingdom of God, the revelation through the power of the Holy Spirit, other Church communities and outreach. We prayed for our nation and nations near and far, situations of immense scale and gravity, and one of the topics was the migration of people across the face of the earth, like we have never seen before. To say that we were overwhelmed was an understatement - a human Tsunami.

What was happening to us was that we were praying in God's Jet Stream, whether we said words, sat silently watching and praying, or silently offering our prayers to God we could not help being affected by the Jet Stream of God, the flowing of the Holy Spirit.

I am asking you in this New Year to pray in God's Jet Stream. To pray is not only a great witness to who we pray to but a sign of hope. Other religions and faiths all have the element of prayer, so Christians do not have exclusivity to the power of prayer in any way. Speaking as a Christian Minister, prayer is a key element and characteristic of Christians and their Faith. To pray personally, collectively and corporately is both vital, essential and necessary and it is great spiritual exercise. Weather gets its vitality from exercise; prayer becomes effective by doing it.

To continually pray without ceasing, with courage, confidence and conviction for a divine solution for the refugee crisis is paramount, a massive undertaking, it might take decades to solve, for we pray to a God who makes things possible out of what we may view to be the impossible. The fall of the Berlin Wall and Communism, the walk to freedom by Nelson Mandela and the bonds of Apartheid are just a few examples where prayer has changed the face of the world and people's lives.

God's Jet Stream and the power of the Holy Spirit in and through the most high name of Jesus Christ Lord of All is where I am challenging you to place yourselves to be influenced and shaped by God as you live your life of faith in a faithful God.

Every blessing to you all in Jesus Name!

*Rev John Marriott*

## News & Dates

Our Christmas Collections raised £250 for 'Samaritans Purse' who are helping with the refugee crisis in Europe. Have a look on their website: [www.samaritans-purse.org.uk](http://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk) for more information. Thank you for your generosity.

### Kingsthorpe Methodist Church to be rebuilt!

A service of Celebration and Thanksgiving will be held at Kingsthorpe Methodist Church on **Sunday 7th February at 3pm**. We are invited to attend the service and stay for afternoon tea. The church will then be closed awaiting demolition and redevelopment.

### Looking ahead to January and 2016 ....

3rd January—we launch our monthly prayer time at 9.30am and the 'Prayer Box' for prayer requests from the Community—see page 28 of Around Pattishall for details.

10th January—Covenant Service which will led this year by the Chair of the Northampton District, Rev Peter Hancock.

17th January—New Year Lunch at approximately 12.30pm following our Family Service. (Book your place for lunch—contact Ann on 830907)

Monday 18th January 7.30pm—Church Council Meeting

Monday 25th January 7.30pm—Messy Church planning

Saturday 6th February—Messy Church for everyone. If you haven't been before why not make it your New Year's Resolution to come along.

As a result of the meetings we have been having with Rev Romeo Pedro the following course 'Shaped for Service' will be run during Lent to help us discover God's will for our lives.

# **SPIRITUAL GIFTS HEART ABILITY PERSONALITY EXPERIENCES**

Join us every Tuesday evening during Lent,  
for 5 weeks

commencing 16<sup>th</sup> February, and then each week on  
23rd February, 1st, 8th and 15th March.

At Astcote Methodist Church

for a meal at 7pm,

followed at approximately 7.45pm by the course  
led by Rev Romeo Pedro.

Each session will finish at 9pm

All are welcome. Please book your place by contacting  
Jeanne Gulliford on 830519 or Roz Henry-Moore  
830103 (letting them know of any dietary requirements).

**Lunch Club** - is for the retired and will usually be held on the 2nd Tuesday each month.

Maureen Corbett can be contacted for more details on 830296.

New members are welcome.

Please give Maureen a ring.

**The Well Group** - An ecumenical ladies group which offers a time to socialise and share a meal for Christian women or those interested in the Christian faith. Meeting 12-2pm, including a simple lunch.

Contact Alison Brierley if you would like to come along on 830770

The next meeting will be on Thursday 28th January with the speaker Dr Rachel Menon

**Monday Club (Reception, Years 1 & 2)**

**'Sunday School' after school 3.15-4.15pm**

**Wednesday Bible Club 'Friends & Heroes'**

**12.30-1pm (yrs 3-6)**

For more information please speak to John Atkin on 830907.

Both groups held at Pattishall Primary School

## All Are Welcome

All are welcome to share in the Covenant Service. You will be welcome whether you are sharing in a Covenant Service for the first time, have done it annually for many years, or simply want to watch what others do without taking part yourself.

The service is a gift not a demand! And God will give you the grace to do it all. You are not alone.

What God offers is a loving relationship. The Covenant is not a contract in which God and human beings agree to provide particular goods and services for each other! It is not something that we have to do to create a relationship with God. God has freely and graciously already made it possible.

Rather, the Covenant is the means of grace by which we accept the relationship and then seek to sustain it. It is therefore not so much about getting in to a relationship with God as it is about staying in it. It is not about acquiring a relationship with God, but living within the loving relationship that God has already offered us.

(Taken from the Methodist Church website)

(You can download a study guide on the Methodist Covenant Prayer from [www.rootsontheweb.com](http://www.rootsontheweb.com))

## **Northampton Methodist Circuit Team Ministry**

Superintendent: Rev Tina Swire

Rev John Marriott

Rev Romeo Pedro

Rev. Phil Snelson

Deacon Richard Beckett

**Contact point is Circuit Office: 01604 721 908**

**At Park Avenue Methodist Church**

**Northampton**

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**To book the Chapel rooms** please ring Kate Stretton on  
830115

Please also contact Kate if you would like to place flowers in the  
Chapel in memory of a loved one or to celebrate a birthday,  
anniversary etc.

For items or suggestions for this newsletter  
please contact::

Ann Atkin, Church Secretary on 830907

[ann.atkin51@btinternet.com](mailto:ann.atkin51@btinternet.com)