



ASTCOTE METHODIST CHURCH

News & Notices-July 2015

5th July

10.30am Rev Tina Swire : HC

12th July

10.30am Rev Romeo Pedro : AGM

19th July

10.30am Family Service : John Atkin

26th July

10.30am Mrs Mary Winchcombe

On Duty at 10.30am July-Gulliford/Roz/Sue Aug—Hysom/Boenke
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Eastcote Baptist Chapel

3pm Service on 1st Sunday in the month

www.astcotemethodistchurch.org.uk

Ministers Letter for July is from Dcn Richard Beckett

“God delights in diversity”

Jonathan Sacks, in his book “The Great Partnership” writes the line above and goes on to explain that there are, for example, forty thousand different varieties of beetle.

The writer of the Psalms rejoices in the variety that God creates too as we can read in Psalm 104:24-25

“Lord, you have made so many things! How wisely you made them all! The earth is filled with your creatures. There is the ocean, large and wide, where countless creatures live, large and small alike...”

But coming back to Jonathan Sacks book again, his opening line is actually taken from a chapter which is about Darwin and the whole book is about the way in which Sacks sees the need for science and religion to work together rather than what seems to be the usual approach which brings these two into opposition in the ‘Science verses religion’ debate.

This approach tends to compartmentalise science and religion and treat them as separate worlds and ignores the view that science and religion speak about different ways of looking at and exploring the world which says that ‘Science is about the world that is and religion is about the world that ought to be’

I get really excited though at the point where Jonathan Sacks book stops and that is where I begin to explore God’s delight in diversity from a Christian viewpoint. For one of the criticisms I have heard levelled at Christians (or perhaps more accurately levelled at the church) is that the aim is to make a people who are uniform, where all Christians have the same belief structure, bound by the same rules and think the same thing.

In reality though, if we explore the Bible we find that Jesus’

think the same thing.

In reality though, if we explore the Bible we find that Jesus' approach was very different. Rather than encouraging those things which bind, oppress and restrict, he set out to free people from them.

Take for example the man at the pool of Bethesda (John 5:1-15) bed-ridden by an infirmity for thirty eight years, waiting for someone to lower him into the healing waters. A word from Jesus and the man was made well. Or what of Blind Bartimaeus, (defined by his blindness) and Jesus healing words "Go your faith has made you well" which sets Bartimaeus free to be the individual God wants him to be. The much discussed verse in the Old Testament (Genesis 1:27) seems to have something to say about diversity too: *"So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."* Amongst other things I believe that verse teaches that all people are created with the Godly characteristics which the Holy Spirit reveals such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, and so on.

If God 'delights in diversity', that image which he creates us in is not a restricting image but one which frees us to live and rejoice in the difference and individuality which God longs for in you and in me.

Richard

Deacon Richard Beckett



News & Dates

Many thanks to those who helped and supported the **Plant Sale**. In the region of £270 was raised.

The community event **Aspects of World War I** attracted a whole range of people to see our display about the Shoe Industry and those from Astcote who were involved in World War I. There was a full house for the talk on Sunday afternoon by Colin Chapman on the Eastcote Detention Camp. We were grateful to the Northampton Museum for providing lots of interesting artefacts:



Don't forget—a Book Club for the community is held at Astcote on the last Wednesday evening of every month—contact Kate on 830115

Messy Church in June was great fun. The theme was spreading the Good News of Jesus. We even made sandals just like the disciples



Our

Family Service helped us to remember that Jesus is always with us and we need not be afraid. We made boats to remind us that the disciples were safe when they remembered Jesus was in the boat on the stormy Lake Galilee.



Our **Church Council AGM** will be part of our service on Sunday 12th July. Please do not be put off as this will be just part of our normal Sunday morning service. It is an opportunity to share what is involved in keeping the Chapel running and to think about how to think about how we can use ourselves and the Chapel for mission.

The **Mission Meeting** with Rev Romeo Pedro will now be on Monday 27th July 7.30pm at the Chapel (not 20th July). Please come along if you are interested in the future of the church.

A Prayer

Dear Jesus, as we think about the future of your church here in Astcote, may we remember that with you nothing is impossible. Help us to follow you in all that we do and to make you the centre of all our plans.

Amen

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 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 in September.

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

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)