



ASTCOTE METHODIST CHURCH

News & Notices—November 2016

6th November

9.30-10am Prayer for the Community

10.30am John Atkin—HC

13th November—Remembrance Sunday

10.45am United Service at Holy Cross, Pattishall

20th November—Family Service

10.30am Mrs Linda Leathersich

27th November (Advent)

10.30am Rev John Marriott

On Duty at 10.30am

Nov– Hysom/Boenke

Dec—Stretton/Bell

Eastcote Baptist Chapel

3pm Service on 1st Sunday in the month

www.astcotemethodistchurch.org.uk

Ministers letter from Rev Phil Snelson



One of the things I quite often find that people struggle with is forgiveness.

When I responded to God's call to ministry I was sent to ministers' training college for two years and my family came with me. We were blessed with a large family flat on campus and that was where we lived – even across the summer holidays. However in the summer between the two years, the college decided to bring in a large number of French exchange students to stay in all the vacant rooms – far more students than was safe or manageable. As a result all sorts of things happened that made life very difficult and unhappy for us across that summer.

I became angry at the college authorities for all the hurt they had caused my family – rightly so I thought. I wrote letters to the Principal and to the Pastoral Committee. Some people, even a tutor or two, actually encouraged me in my “*righteous anger*” and my desire for justice, but as the weeks went by I found I was growing more angry and it was beginning to “eat me up”.

The following Easter we went to a Christian festival called Easter People. One morning the message was about forgiving and I knew God was speaking to me, but my problem was that I just didn't feel I could forgive. I decided to talk with one of the ministry team afterwards who listened as I told him some of my story and why I didn't feel that I could forgive. Then he simply said, “Phil, you have to choose to forgive. The feelings will follow.” I didn't like his answer much, but I sort of knew he was right and he helped me through wilfully choosing to forgive before God even though I didn't feel like it.

To be honest I didn't feel much different afterwards or for the rest of the day, but the next morning I felt so relieved like a great weight had lifted from me emotionally. It had been a struggle but I had chosen to forgive, let go, giving it to God and the healing had begun.

As I talk with others I often find that they have not really thought through or understood how forgiveness works.

Forgiveness is NOT forgetting or trying to pretend it doesn't matter. People who want to forget all that was done to them will find they cannot do it. Forgiveness is not something we wait to do when we feel we can, or when we

finish feeling angry at someone. If you wait to forget, or to “feel forgiving” you may well never get there. Nor is it that we wait for the other person to ask for our forgiveness. Don’t put off forgiving those who have hurt you, hoping the pain will one day go away.

Forgiveness is choosing not to hold someone’s wrongs against him or her any more. Once you choose to forgive someone, then Jesus can come and begin to heal you of your hurts. The healing cannot begin until you first forgive.

“But you don’t know how much this person hurt me!” you say. You’re probably right. I don’t, but Jesus does, and He still tells us to forgive – it is so important that it is the only thing Jesus comments on after teaching the Lord’s Prayer (Matthew 6:14-15).

It is common for bitter people to bring up past issues with those who have hurt them. They want them to feel bad. But don’t you see?! We must let go of the past and choose to reject any thought of revenge. Until you let go of your anger and hatred, what’s actually happening is that you are the one still hurting. We have to live with the consequences of what others have done anyway whether we like it or not, so the choice we have to make is whether we will do so in the bondage of bitterness or in the freedom of forgiveness. You can stop the pain, but there is only one way to do it — forgive.

We have to trust - and we can - that God will deal with the person justly and fairly, something we simply cannot do ourselves (Romans 12:19-20).

This doesn’t mean we continue to turn a blind eye to the sins of others in the future. God does not tolerate sin and neither should we. We don’t have to allow ourselves to be continually abused by others. We can take a stand against sin while continuing to exercise grace and forgiveness toward those who hurt us. If you need help setting wise limits and boundaries to protect yourself from further abuse, talk to a trusted friend, counsellor, or minister.

Forgiving is vital to our emotional, spiritual and physical health. Forgive one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you. (Ephesians 4:32)

Yours in Christ,



News & Dates

Harvest Service Thank you for all donations on the day. A total of £138.20 (not including Gift Aid) was sent to the Methodist Charity **All We Can** and a whole boot-full of food etc. was delivered and gratefully received by the Towcester Food Bank. *Thank you.*

'Old Friends' Evening—28th October

What a brilliant time we had! £357 raised for EVE (Nene Valley Christian Family Refuge) not including gift aid.
Thank you to everyone for their support



Tuesday evenings : Worship Time Everyone is welcome to join a few of the musicians and other members of the congregation for a time of worship—singing new and old songs as led by the Holy Spirit. We arrive from 7pm, and sing from 7.30pm-8.30pm. We have had friends from other churches join us and we will continue to do this (providing people are available) for the foreseeable future with the exception of 22nd November—see next page.

Tuesday 22nd November 7.30pm

Healing & Wholeness Service led by

Rev John Marriott

Please come with your own concerns or your concerns for others.



PRAYER
changes things

A Blessing Some of you will have met Amina who came to our Harvest Service the other week. Until John and I went to Luton Airport on 9th October we had never met or spoken to Amina. She had just emailed the Circuit Office asking if anyone would be happy for her to stay while she came to experience nursing at Milton Keynes Hospital for two weeks. As no-one else had offered we decided to invite her. We did know that she was a member of the United Methodist Church of Switzerland, so at least we had that in common.

Our time with her has indeed been a blessing to us and we feel that we have gained a 'daughter' and she is calling us her 'English parents'. We certainly hope to see her again soon.

On a card she left us she has put the following blessing which we would like to share with you:

May your life on this earth be a happy one.

May the sky be blue and

May the sun be warm.

May each storm that comes your way

Clear the air for a brighter day.

May the saints and the Saviour watch over you.

Ann & John

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

24th Nov—Bring & Share lunch with speaker

David Painter

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

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