



# ASTCOTE METHODIST CHURCH

*News & Notices—March 2017*

## **5th March**

9.30-10am Prayer for the Community

10.30am Rev Tina Swire (Holy Communion)

## **12th March**

10.30am Mrs Norma Baxter

## **19th March—Family Service**

10.30am Mr Keith Brooks

On Duty at 10.30am

March— Stretton/Bell

April— Gulliford/Roz/Sue

## **Saturday 25th March—Messy Church**

2-4.30pm at Pattishall Parish Hall—for everyone

## **26th March**

10.30am Mrs Maggie Munday

## **Eastcote Baptist Chapel**

3pm Service on 1st Sunday in the month

[www.astcotemethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.astcotemethodistchurch.org.uk)

## Ministers Letter from Deacon Richard Beckett

As I write this I have just heard Donald Trump repeat the phrase “America First” again and emphasise the need for building the economy through creating jobs and revitalising home-grown industry and productivity.

There are many issues raised by this new presidency which for me are completely at odds with the message of the Christian Gospel perhaps most importantly the nature of the campaign and subsequent legislation which seems to set out to divide race, faith groups and ethnicity.



Perhaps equally importantly the issue of putting one’s own priorities first fit least comfortably with The Gospel passage (Matthew 19:16-22) in which Jesus says

*“If you wish to be perfect, go, sell your possessions, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.”*

This is primarily about following Jesus but also challenges us about how Christians should view possessions and money. I am particularly interested in how the passage from Matthew reflects on the current world stage and whether it is possible for a country’s economy to reflect this also. A good book to read on the subject is ‘Just Living’ by Ruth Valerio in which she explores the whole issue of ‘Faith and Community in an age of Consumerism’ and raises some important points about what productivity and creativity are for.

God himself has been involved in creation and has given that same gift of creativity to humankind. It is natural that we should want to use and encourage others to use these same gifts to explore, to make things, to develop and refine.

But I am saddened by the inward looking way in which we can justify creativity. I am a great fan of the TV series 'The Apprentice', in which young business entrepreneurs compete for Alan Sugar's backing. Of course I am very aware that significant editing produces a programme which highlights confrontation and competition thus making it more watchable! The disappointing part is that very rarely do the competitors propose a business which is anything other than relatively trivial as happened in the last series where one of the finalists was seeking support for his business of making novelty goods.



And we can begin to see instances in the wider world where large civil projects such as HS2 are often justified by the number of jobs they will create regardless it seems of the actual need of the project.

We are all consumers and we easily justify the need to upgrade to the latest phone or TV or tablet thus encouraging the disposability that seems to be at the heart of the need for higher productivity. But there are other ways of doing things. You may be aware of Sweden's proposed legislation which gives tax breaks on repairs for everything from washing machines to bicycles.

Now I am not an economist and it might appeal to my (sometimes annoying habit – ask my wife!) principal of ‘repair first, replace second’ but there has to be something here worth considering which could actually *create* work.

There is of course so much more to say and as always I am happy to explore the issues further with those interested but to sum up I want to ask what, or who, comes first for you?

For me it is following Jesus and the recognition that having made that decision, it should affect all aspects of life and living, giving and generosity, productivity and creativity.

*Richard*

Deacon Richard Beckett



## *News & Dates*

### **Fairtrade Afternoon Tea Saturday 4th March 2-4.30pm**

Helpers on the day and items for the tombola very welcome.

**Card Workshop Saturday 11th March 2-4pm** at the Chapel with Kate Stretton—book a place by ringing Kate on 830115.

**Messy Church Saturday 25th March 2-4.30pm** at the Parish Hall—helpers always welcome—please speak to John Atkin on 830907. Messy Church Planning—Monday 13th March 7.30pm

### **Tuesday evenings : Worship Time 7.30-8.30pm**

Everyone is welcome to join a few of the musicians and other members of the congregation for a time of worship. Arrive any time from 7pm.

### **Help Children Learn to Read**

Pattishall Primary School would welcome anyone who could spare an hour or so on a regular basis to sit and help young children learn to read. This could be a rewarding time for both the helper and the child. Please speak to John Atkin or ring Pattishall School, 830301 and ask to speak to Mr Wood (Head Teacher).

### **Holy Week & Easter Sunday at Astcote**

There will be a service on Tuesday 11th April 7.30pm with Deacon Richard Beckett which will include more modern hymns. On Easter Sunday there will be Easter Breakfast at 9.30am, followed by a **Family Easter Celebration Service** at 10.30am, again led by Richard. More details next time.



## Call to action

The Israelite prophet Micah said:  
"What does the Lord require of you? Only to act justly, love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

God of mercy and source of justice,  
pour on your people such love and compassion that

we cannot remain silent,  
we cannot tolerate injustice and poverty.

As your grace fills our hearts  
so may we be stirred into action  
to demonstrate your love for all the world  
and for all creatures that live and move on this earth.

**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 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 or Ann Atkin on 830907

Thursday 30th March—Rev David Bown : Needs and pitfalls of rural Village Life in South India

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

**'Sunday School' after school 3.15-4.15pm at Pattishall Primary School**

Organised and run by John Atkin and Jackie Bell.

## **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**

~~~~~

**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.

[www.astcotemethodistchurch.org.uk](http://www.astcotemethodistchurch.org.uk)

For items or suggestions for this newsletter  
please contact::

Ann Atkin, Church Secretary on 830907

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