



# ASTCOTE METHODIST CHURCH

*News & Notices—May 2017*

## **7th May**

9.30-10am Prayer for the Community

10.30am Rev Tina Swire (Holy Communion)

## **14th May**

10.30am Mrs Mary Winchcombe

## **21st May—Family Service**

10.30am Dcn Richard Beckett

## **28th May**

10.30am Mr Keith Brooks

On Duty at 10.30am

May– Hysom/Boenke

June-Stretton/Bell

## **Eastcote Baptist Chapel**

3pm Service on 1st Sunday in the month

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

## **Ministers Letter from Rev Romeo Pedro**

Dearest Friends

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of May, we celebrate Ascension Day. The “beam me up Scotty” moment in the Christian Calendar. Well actually not really. Ascension Day has more to do with theology than geography.

Ascension is not about Jesus defying gravity but rather defying and defeating the principalities and powers that weigh down on the shoulders of the marginalised poor and vulnerable of society with a force heavier than gravity.

Ascension Day is a radically subversive day; as the early disciples of Jesus reached the conviction to start singing that Jesus, and not Caesar, was Lord. It was a very distressing day for the political powers! And of course it was a very dangerous day for the followers of Jesus who were now deemed a great threat by these powers. But more than dangerous it was hope-full: full of a hope that was able to disperse their fear and despair and encourage them to face the danger. Their hope rested in trusting that Jesus reigns — that Jesus is the power above all other powers. The early disciples knew they were on the winning side and were released to imagine a new world and creatively live it out – finding expression in the life of the Early Church.

The Early Church were a group of people who had nothing else in common, but their love for Jesus. They were all there, their differences overcome, for the simple reason that they adored Him. Christians have been drawn together for the same reason ever since. Even in this Circuit – we are drawn together every Sunday in spite of our differences, because we remember Jesus.

There is something about the everlasting Christ that draws people together. And when people are drawn together in a Christian fellowship, they all share on an equal basis, to varying degrees the same experience.

Ascension also reminds us that Pentecost is coming! It is of course at Pentecost when this diverse, alternative community finds itself wonderfully expressed. Everyone understood each other at Pentecost, because they were talking about the same thing, the wondrous thing of God. We are drawn together by God’s love and when talking about this common experience, we should be able to share in a Spirit of unity, reconciliation and understanding.



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As a result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, the disciples became aware of a new inward power which completely changed their whole outlook. They believed this because they were possessed by the Spirit of God. They became aware of the Spirit as a Power, because of the promise of Acts 1:8, “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you”. It is in this spirit of power that they were to spread the gospel: “and you shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth”. It was this Spirit that made it possible for them to not just imagine a new world, but to live obediently and to proclaim the gospel courageously.

I was so encouraged at one of our churches, where they have started using name tags on a Sunday morning – encouraging their diverse congregation to get to know each other better. There is nothing as affirming as knowing that someone remembers your name (especially when you are new). This very simple exercise is an effort to build relationships and to create a loving, affirming and diverse community, where differences are respected and valued. Well done!

Many of you will also be involved with Christian Aid Week (starting on the 14<sup>th</sup> of May), doing your bit for the marginalised and the poor. In doing that, you will be living the message of the Ascension (hope for the hopeless).

At this very moment in our world’s history, we can create alternative communities of grace and love, where all feel welcome, care for and all are affirmed. In doing this, we become subversive – holding before the world a model that is so different from those powerful voices that encourage fear and hatred.

The God of the Ascension and of Pentecost empowers us to bring hope and to be (like the Early Church), that alternative reality. We know nothing can change this fragmented world, but only a power greater than anything, the Holy Spirit. And we can be the loving, inclusive community through which the Spirit can work to do that.

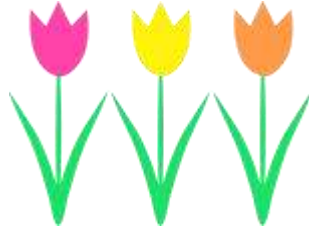
Grace

Romeo

## News & Dates

### **Saturday 3rd June 2-4.30pm Annual Plant**

**Sale**—Donations of plants are vital! Please pot up and label anything you are able to give and speak to Ann to organize collection/delivery ... 830907.



Offers of Cakes or help with Refreshments please speak to Kate. *Many thanks*

**Saturday 10th June 2-4.30pm Messy Church** We are always in need of helpers ... please speak to Kate Stretton if you would be available for 10th June.

**Help needed at Monday Club:** Could you be available on Monday afternoons to help John A. and Jackie? This is a great opportunity to share bible stories and simple activities with the young children at Pattishall School who we look upon as our 'Sunday School'. With up to 20 children attending it is important that we have one or two more people to help. (DBS clearance necessary)

### **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. Check with Fiona 830??? Or Ann 830907.

## **News from the Church Council Meeting on 24th April**

We have been fortunate to receive an additional £250 from the Piddington Trust in order to move the organ blower from the kitchen to a cabinet next to the organ. We will also be having the organ tuned. We are also looking into the possibility of having a water heater to provide constant hot water for drinks. All the windows have been cleaned.

**Annual Spring Clean** will be on Saturday 9th September when the Chapel is open for the *Ride & Stride* visitors

Mr Lee Wood, Headteacher at Pattishall School will be leaving in July, with a new Head having been appointed. Also, the Rev Marion Reynolds, Rector at Holy Cross, is moving away at the end of July. The Stewards are planning to meet with Church Wardens and members at Holy Cross in order to continue the work that we do together.

**Easter Offering £175 for Action for Children :Thank you**

News from the Circuit Jenny Brooks (wife of Keith) has commenced training to become a Local Preacher.

Sunday 4th June 4.30pm Circuit Pentecost Service at Queensgrove.

Sunday 24th September—Circuit Harvest Celebration in the morning at St Andrews (no service at Astcote)

**Mission Northampton**—Sat 20th May, 2017 10am-3pm with Dr Jonathan Oloyede, Leader of the Global Day of Prayer & Worship

*For more details about the Meeting or events please see the notice board in the kitchen.*



**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

Thursday 27th April— Margaret Williams :  
the Challenge of William Carey

**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.—see page ??? Regarding extra help needed.

## **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.

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

For items or suggestions for this newsletter  
please contact::

Ann Atkin, Church Secretary on 830907

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