

Northampton Methodist Circuit Team Ministry

Superintendent: Rev Romeo Pedro

Rev. Phil Snelson Deacon Richard Beckett

Rev Francis M'ltiiri

Rev Brian Kennard Rev Alan Sharp

Contact point is Circuit Office: 01604 702 178

Wootton Trinity Church, High Street, Wootton, NN4 6LP

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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

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



# ASTCOTE METHODIST CHURCH

## SHARING GOD'S LOVE WITH

*News & Notices—January 2019*

### 6th January

**9.30-10am Prayer for the Community**

10.30am Linda Leathersich

Saturday 12th January—Messy Church

2-3.30pm at Holy Cross Pattishall

**13th January—Covenant Service**

10.30am Rev Alan Sharp HC

**20th January—Family Service**

10.30am John Atkin

**27th January**

10.30am Pam Kirkland

**3rd February**

9.30-10am Prayer for the Community

10.30am Joyce Nemasango

**Eastcote Baptist Chapel 3pm**

**Service on 1st Sundays**

On Duty at 10.30am

Jan-Gulliford/Roz/Sue

Feb— Hysom/Boenke

### ***A pastoral letter from Rev Francis M'Itiiri***

It is humbling to be writing the minister's letter for January as a new member of the Circuit Team. In my opinion we might all have faced different experiences during the year. Some may be coming to terms with what January presents itself with. Perhaps bills of Christmas festivities waiting to be dealt with. While others may be dealing with resolutions that have already been broken while the year is still young. In the midst of all this God has a way of inspiring us especially when we feel like life quite often has been too unfair or too dull. Similarly, John Wesley felt the same way one time. In 1738 he felt dull within and a little unmotivated and reluctantly responding to his pastoral duties at Aldersgate. He struggled to go for the meeting anyway. Someone read from Luther's Preface to the Epistle to **Romans 1:16-17**. While Wesley was describing his experiences that evening, he says, '***I felt my heart strangely warmed...***' 'I felt I can trust Christ again with my life' (paraphrased).

Do you feel like John Wesley? Let a new beginning start. You can trust Christ with your life again. Remember, even when *winter comes spring is bound to come!* To those who feel a great deal of regret that 2018 was a wasted year and missed big opportunities in their life, this is your portion of Scripture; **Philippians 3:13-14**. "*Forgetting the things that are behind and reaching out for the things that are ahead, with this goal in mind, I strive toward the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus*". But Paul says that the only way to move forward is to put the past behind and focus on what is ahead. Perhaps to us, it means accepting God's forgiveness and grace. I am not actually saying you overlook the lessons learned from the year; you can as well use them to build new bridges to the future. Take therefore advantage of the circumstance you are in to do something, it may be being a church steward this year or something else. Think about it and pray.

New diaries and calendars are now in our possession and new dates are already being booked. I do not know what

**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.

31st January—Reflections with Sue Tigeridge

Contact Alison Brierley on 830770 or Ann Atkin on 830907 if you would like to join us.

### **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— helpers needed, speak to John on 830907, if you are interested.

**Book Group**—Last Wednesday in the month at 8pm—variety of books—contact Kate Stretton on 830115 for more information.

### **FOOD BANK ALERT**

Kate has recently started to help at the Towcester Food Bank and the following items are currently in short supply:

TINNED POTATOES

PACKETS OF MASHED POTATO

TINNED FRUIT

If you are able to help with these or any other items (perhaps not baked beans as they have quite a lot of those) please leave at one of the Supermarket collection points. Alternatively Kate will be happy to accept donations on a Sunday morning.

Thank you.

### **MANNA HOUSE CHRISTIAN BOOKSHOP CLOSING**

**31ST JANUARY 2019**

Despite their best efforts the Manna House will close at the end of this month. At present they have 30% off books and gifts, as well as reductions on birthday cards etc.

Fortunately the online business will continue, with plans to open a new bookshop at New Creation Farm in Nether Heyford in March 2019. This will be known as HEYFORD BOOKS. More details when they are available.

dates are booked in your diaries to enhance your spiritual growth if that is part of your resolutions. Realistically you should know where you ought to invest most this year! In your diary may I request you to include one resolution: we **all** aim at increasing our current church membership by at least **10%** by the end of Methodist year **2019**. Is that possible anyway? God will give us the grace to do it, I believe. In our chain prayers, pray for one, ask the Lord to direct you to one person, once you have done it, take pastoral care of the person, see that the person receives the necessary discipleship training and mentored into Christ. You are now a soul winner! **Daniel 12:3** '*and they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever*'.

At the end of the year we can have a recognition service to appreciate those who will have met their target. And perhaps request either our circuit superintendent minister or the District Chair to present a stick of chocolate to them! We can ambitiously aim for such a day in our circuit. Our capable circuit leadership team (CLT) could perhaps give it a little thought on how best this dream could be achieved. I do believe that God is presenting to us this golden opportunity to participate in mission starting from where we are. Remember we have a **calling** as the people called the Methodists: **to respond to the gospel of God's love in Christ and live out its discipleship in worship and mission**. We respond to this prayer; '**Here I am Lord**'.

In August 2018 I was set for a new Methodism ministerial experience in a multi-cultural setting. It was marked with a warm welcome in all aspects here in Northampton Circuit. My experiences so far are that I am where the Lord feels I should be serving. And as a family it has been a peaceful stay so far especially to our two daughters who have been able to adjust quickly in the school environment with very little challenges.

In the wisdom of God the British Methodist conference was able to match my gift here with Northampton circuit. So far I have enjoyed the brilliant Circuit Team Ministry model of

sharing ministerial gifts and means of grace and at the same time embracing a working culture of accountability amongst ourselves. I am sure our congregations are equally reaping some of the benefits from experiences brought along by each one of us in the team.

Lastly, one of my responsibility is to oversee work in grouped churches (Kingsthorpe MC, St. Andrews MC & Towcester Road MC), as I work alongside my colleagues around the circuit. During my pastoral work in these churches I have noticed the same leaders are throughout on rota as church stewards every Sunday. What a commendable faithfulness in them! Should we sit and let them alone continue carrying these roles? No. they need us to step in and support them. To be able to do that, I am proposing in the spirit of John Wesley 'priesthood of all believers' a Methodism quadrilateral model drawn from a biblical thematic Motif on prayer event, '**Here I am Lord' (Isaiah 6)**. An event like this is likely to challenge our church membership to respond and begin to enlist in stewardship and programs that welcome church visitors every Sunday. Please let us take time and pray about this and work together to see this prayer event translated into action.

Let me conclude this letter by appreciating everyone who has been involved and continue to get involved in supporting me perform my Pastoral responsibilities in the circuit. So far I have able to preach and provide Holy Communion to our 11 churches in our circuit and attend Pastoral and Council meetings in all the grouped churches and it has been a tremendous experience. I thank you all and I look forward to working with you in the years ahead.

### **Blessings**

In Deuteronomy 31:8 '**Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord will personally go ahead of you. He will be with you; he will neither fail you nor abandon you.**'

**I wish everyone a blessed Happy New year.**

*Revd. Francis*

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## **NEWS & DATES**

Thanks to everyone who contributed to our Christmas Offering for Cancer Research. £ 230 was raised (plus gift aid to be added as indicated on completed Cancer Research gift aid envelopes ) .

Hope you had a chance to see the mural that was painted by the children at Christmas Cracker under the direction of Rev Phil Snelson.

### **Coming up we have:**

**Church Council**—Monday 14th January 7.30pm—open to everyone.

**New Year Lunch** will be after the Family Service on Sunday 20th January at approximately 12.30pm. Roast dinner etc. Please put your name on the list at Church or speak to Ann on 830907 if you would like to join us. Donation on the day.

**Messy Church** is on Tour! rotating between Holy Cross, Pattishall School and Astcote Chapel. It will be held each month on the 2nd Saturday from 2-3.30pm so a shorter length of time but action packed and ending with refreshments. Please look out for the Messy Church banner to see which venue, starting at:

**Holy Cross on Saturday 12th January 2-3.30pm**

**For all the family and all ages!**