

**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 ALL**

*News & Notices—March 2019*

**3rd March**

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

10.30am Paul Barford

**Saturday 9th March—Messy Church**

**2-3.30pm at Astcote Chapel**

**10th March**

10.30am Rev Phil Snelson HC

**17th March—Family Service**

10.30am John Atkin

**24th March**

10.30am Rev Brian Kennard—Baptism

**31st March**

10.30am Mrs Firita Pedro

**Eastcote Baptist Chapel 3pm**

**Service on 1st Sundays**

On Duty at 10.30am  
March—Stretton/Bell  
April –Gulliford/Roz/  
Sue



Dear Friends,

We like to think that we are good at making choices and taking the initiative but there is a verse in John's Gospel which I have wrestled with for some long time and I want to share the tension it provokes in me with you, the reader of this letter.

*"You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name." (John 15:16)*

In some ways it goes against the current notion that there must be choice and every person has a right to make choices: We can choose schools for our children; we can choose where we shop; once we have chosen where to shop, there are numerous brands and varieties to choose from; and so on. Of course we need to remember that there are many people in our communities who do not have these choices but it is a principal of modern day life that they are there.

In Jesus' day disciples would attach themselves to a particular teacher or rabbi. But in the case of Jesus, the disciples did not hold the initiative. On the contrary, it was Jesus who took the initiative and chose them.

So why should I have a problem with this because surely 'being chosen' in any circumstance should make one feel special, purposeful and motivated. Instead I am uncomfortable with the way the passage suggests that by Jesus choosing some people in particular, others are *not* chosen.

**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.

28th March—Rev Brian Kennard will speak about 'Prison Chaplaincy Today'

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.

### **DO YOU BELIEVE PRAYER WORKS?**

Well if you do you might like to join the campaign for Peace on Our Streets. Go to the website: [www.peaceonourstreets.org.uk](http://www.peaceonourstreets.org.uk) where you can sign up to receive a short prayer each day, at midday, on your mobile phone to join with thousands of others across the country to pray against the violence and knife crime that we hear about all the time.

Worth a try ... if you believe prayer works.

### **METHODIST CHURCH ONLINE PRAYER WALL**

Submit a prayer or pray for others on the Methodist Church UK website: [www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/prayer/prayer-wall/](http://www.methodist.org.uk/our-faith/prayer/prayer-wall/)

**MONTHLY FOOD BANK ALERT**—Currently in short supply:

LONG LIFE MILK : SPONGE PUDDINGS : FRUIT SQUASH  
TOMATO SAUCE

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.

Of course this question is not a new one but has been asked by many Christians (and non-Christians) throughout the ages. Indeed the passage above is not the only one which raises the question of 'why some and not others?' We only need to think about the way in which God chose one particular group amongst whom to reveal himself (the people of Israel) to realise that this characteristic of 'selection' has long seemed to be a feature of who God is.

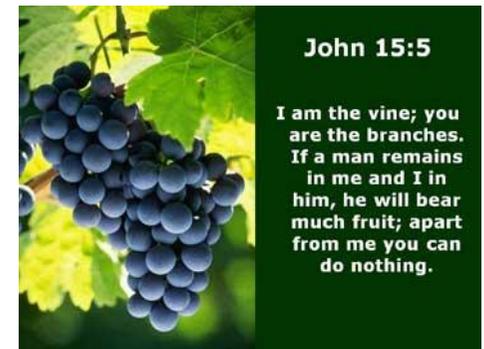
There is not space here to provide a full answer but I would appreciate your thoughts as you read this if the question resonates with something in you. However, from my reading of the verse above I want to make two points:

First that God chooses us for a specific purpose and in the passage this purpose is clear. We are chosen to 'go and bear fruit' and a few verses before this passage Jesus talks about the vine and the branches, the very purpose of which is to produce fruit. Christians are chosen to be emissaries of Christ through what we say and do and are.

Secondly that God will hear us if we ask for something in Jesus name and certainly it is my belief that a prayer spoken or unspoken by anyone which is in accordance with the will of God will be answered.

Deacon Richard Beckett

March 2019



## News & Dates

### What's happening during Lent?

**Tues 12th March 7.30pm at Emmanuel Church, Weston Favell** You are invited to come along to find out more about

'Connecting with the Community'. Paul Foster, Community Worker at Emmanuel will be speaking, together with Rev Phil Snelson. Want a lift? Speak to Ann or John 830907.

**Lent Course at Astcote Chapel**—three sessions on 'The Mystery of God' on the following Tuesdays at 7.30pm:

26th March with Rev Francis M'Itiiri

2nd April with Rev Phil Snelson

9th April with Rev Romeo Pedro

Everyone is invited

**Sat 16th March 2-4.30pm—Fair Trade Sale & Afternoon Tea**

How can you help? There is a box in the kitchen for donations to the TOMBOLA. Please make a cake if you can and help is needed to make and serve teas in the kitchen—please add your name to the blue clipboard. Invite your friends and neighbours. All proceeds from teas/cakes and tombola will be for church funds.

We will be joined this year by Barbara from Karibuni which is a charity working with children and young people in Kenya. She will be selling a variety of craft items in aid of the charity—bags, jewellery, stone and wooden items etc. There will also be food items from the Daily Bread

### Easter Offering

At the Church Council Meeting one of the items discussed was where to send our Easter Offering. Our main times of giving are Harvest, when we usually give to the Methodist Charity for work overseas *All We Can*; Christmas, when we give to a national charity, and Easter when we give to a local charity. If you would like to suggest a local charity that is in need of funds please place your suggestion in the envelope on the kitchen notice board—we can then pull one out of the 'hat' nearer the time.

**Prayer Book & Praying**—don't forget to add the first name of anyone you would like to be prayed for in the book at the front of the church on the table. No need to give any details as God will know what there need is. Anyone is welcome to join us to pray for the community at 9.30am on the first Sunday of every month.

## FUTURE DATES

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE 19th APRIL 3pm  
led by Rev Phil Snelson

**Saturday 1st June—Plant Sale**

**Friday 26th July—Sara Spade & The Noisy Boys**