

ASTCOTE METHODIST CHURCH

SHARING GOD'S LOVE WITH ALL

Welcome to our March 2021 Newsletter

There are no church services at the moment but the Chapel will be open for a time of private prayer and prayer for the community on

Sundays 14th & 28th March, 10-10.30am

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Weekly services are available via the Northampton Methodist Website, together with podcasts and other information—click on the following link:

<https://methodist-churches-northampton.org.uk>

**We are hoping to have an Easter Sunday Service 10.30am  
on 4th April—details will be emailed to you**

If you need to speak to a Minister, for any reason, please contact our Pastoral Minister

Rev Phil Snelson on 07906 627650



***Welcome to another Lockdown Newsletter ... but with signs of HOPE!***

Hasn't it been a difficult few months? But Spring is in the air and with a plan to bring us back to something near normal we hope and pray and give thanks for the vaccinations that seem to be helping us out of the pandemic.

We intend to have a service on Easter Sunday and will keep you posted about that. Do please help us give a good number of Easter Eggs or Chocolates to the Food Bank. Please place the box outside our house at 31 Gayton Road, Eastcote by Sunday 21st March. (I promise we won't eat them!)

We continue to have a regular 30 minute Zoom meeting on Monday evenings at 7.30pm to keep up to date with each other, and plans for the future. Do let me know if you would like to join us.

**'Prayer for the Community'** Prayer requests can be placed in the Prayer Box on the wall outside the Chapel, or given to Kate on 830115 or [kate.stretton@btinternet.com](mailto:kate.stretton@btinternet.com)

Next Zoom meeting for the Well Group is 1.30-2.30pm on Thursday 25th March when Rev Lucy Brierley will be speaking.

Stay Safe,  
Every blessing,

Ann

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***Inside you will find .....***

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## Minister's Letter for the month of March-Francis M'tiri



I hope that you are keeping well under the current climate. I am writing this letter between Lent and Easter having just returned from my paternity leave to bring and share with you the fantastic news on the birth and arrival of our new-born daughter baby Makena who is just turning one month old at the time of writing. In my mother tongue, her first name 'Makena' means '*happiness*', while her second name 'Nkatha' means '*one is welcoming and hospitable*'. There is nothing more important than a new life that brings hope during these unprecedented times. Thank you for your prayers, kindness and love expressed to us during this time. God bless you all abundantly.

Strangely interesting, I am writing the minister's letter at a period when the entire human race has been shaken by Covid19, the un-presenting environment and climate change realities which have been experienced on a large scale globally.

As part of our core values and practice, the church will be expected to respond to these challenges, as it has done before and will continue to do so and to be more specific with the migrating of vulnerable people coming from different cultures of the world, running away from various type of dangers.

On a different topic, as you go about your shopping; you are likely to find some shelves remaining empty in various supermarkets, due to a reduction in supplies of certain goods, making many employees redundant. By default, or divine design this challenge appears as a great opportunity for online jobs and self-employment.

From a theological perspective, there are numerous lessons to be learnt during these strange times. It is worthy reflecting on certain historical heritages from the early new testament church (see **Acts 2:40-47**) and how the early Methodist movement thrived and preserved her spiritual vitality during unprecedented times of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. It is believed that they tended to be inspired by a letter written by apostle Paul to the Galatian Christians and that John Wesley and the Methodist movement, were sent by God to bring about spiritual renewal and social enlightenment at a time when Europe and other parts of the world were facing a serious industrial crisis.

In **Galatian 4:4-7 NIV**, we reads; ...*4 But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.6 because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."* *7 So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.* It is in this regard we take the challenge to remind ourselves of the 'Methodist Way of Life' commitment as a constant reminder to live and express our Christian faith in response to God's love which is expressed in the four inter-connected aspects of the Methodist core values. To those who might have attended the first session of the Lent Course on the Methodist Way of Life, I am sure you have gained substantial rich spiritual insights that will enable us to continue accounting our personal discipleship this year. I am sure you have noticed that the element of prayer and scriptures cut across these conversations.

At this juncture it is important again to remind us on the **World Day of Prayer (WDOP)** set for **March 5<sup>th</sup>** this year. Hopefully you will be encouraged to join others in whatever form and pray together. The theme of the WDOP is "*Building on a Strong Foundation*" and is drawn from the gospel of **Matthew 7:24-27** . As you agree to meet in whatever form, I am sure you could decide, for example, in my opinion to pray, sing, present

poems, display handmade accessories; and this could be done within a non-judgmental space that could in the end encourage and inspire those willing to share their own stories and be in awe of God's love and his beauty of the diversity of his creation. Please do whatever suits your situation!

May we be a blessing within and beyond God's Church, for the transformation of the world.

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Revd. Francis M'Itiiri

## TOWCESTER FOODBANK



Towcester Foodbank is part of Britain's biggest foodbank network, The Trussell Trust which is aiming to end food poverty.

Charity commission number 1157338

### **Astcote Chapel Easter Egg/Chocolate Appeal**

Let us share some Easter joy with those who use Towcester Foodbank by donating Easter Eggs or Chocolate .... Please leave any donations at 31 Gayton Road, Eastcote by 21st March in the plastic box outside our front door. Many thanks



## **Christian Motorcyclists Association – Towcester branch – report of last 12 months**

Hello, and a big, friendly, CoVid safe one at that, from your local Gospel sharing motorcyclists. With Fi and Malcolm in your midst I know that we still have a wonderful presence in Astcote. Your generosity in helping us when we need it has been gratefully and greatly appreciated over the years. I thought you might be wondering how we have got on in the last 12 months and, to be entirely honest, this isn't going to take long. In a normal year we would have been at locally organised events from Rugby Bike Fest to Milton Keynes Bike Show to Brackley Festival of Motorcycling with stands and helmet parks. We would have been camping at rallies; meeting at local focal points and going on Easter Egg runs and Christmas toy runs. We would have had our uniquely motorcycle focused Remembrance Service & Ride and so much more. At least that would have been a normal year but, along with everyone else, we have been keeping to the rules, volunteering where we can and avoiding catching the dratted virus wherever possible. We have kept in touch with each other via ZOOM (who hasn't?) and taken the opportunity to use our legs rather than 2 wheels (unless they were the engineless variety). So we are generally physically fitter but many of us have struggled with being contained in one place and we have prayed long and hard to maintain our sanity. Fortunately you can still make essential journeys on a motorcycle, especially when the sun is out and the Gritting lorry has stayed at home.

**Christian  
Motorcyclists  
Association**



Every cloud is an opportunity to find, or create, a silver lining and we have spent more time thinking about those we already know rather than looking for the next person to share our testimony with. The last twelve months have seen us building on foundations previously laid and that goes for inside the Branch as well as the mission field. I have realised what a wonderful team the Lord has put together in Towcester CMA and we are ready for the time when we are able to return to the fields to help harvest what has ripened. The pandemic will have raised many questions about the value of life and the true purpose in living; we must be ready to show that it is only through God that the real meaning can be found.

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A few of us know we have had the virus, and many of us may have had

it without knowing, but the Lord has spared us and our numbers remain as before. Two of us are struggling to full recovery with the “long” CoVid but the Lord is merciful and we trust in Him. In this world or the next we hold Him close and He holds us closer still.

Once the regulations start lifting we are going to be faced with frenetic activity as all the event organisers try to fit their activity in the remaining part of the calendar. We will do our best in the power of the Holy Spirit and the power of prayer. We continue to respectfully ask you to add your prayers for our success in spreading the Word. We continue to pray for your church.



May we continue to count the amazing blessings that the one, true God showers upon us.

Peace be with you.

Mark Coupe

Chairman Towcester Branch CMA



God of all hope we call on you today.

We pray for those who are living in fear:

Fear of illness, fear for loved ones, fear of other's reactions  
to them.

May your Spirit give us a sense of calmness and peace.

We pray for your church in this time of uncertainty.

For those people who are worried about attending worship.

For those needing to make decisions in order to care for  
other

For those who will feel more isolated by not being able to  
attend.

Grant us your wisdom.

Holy God, we remember that you have promised that  
Nothing will separate us from your love – demonstrated to  
us in Jesus Christ.

## **Astcote Methodist Church**

If you need to speak to a Minister, for any reason,  
please contact our Pastoral Minister

Rev Phil Snelson on

07906 627650

**Methodist Online Service—Sundays at 10.30am**

Or at any time convenient for you

<https://methodist-churches-northampton.org.uk/worship-at-home/>

**God Bless you and**

**keep you safe**

For items or suggestions for this newsletter  
please contact::

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ann.atkin51@btinternet.com