



Methodist
Church

Partnership News

20 February 2005

Second Sunday of Lent

Methodist Church & the Church of England in Partnership at both
Putnoe Heights Church & St. Mark's Church



Church of
England

Church Services Today

8.30am Services of Holy Communion

held at both churches

9.30am St Mark's Church - Holy Communion

Preacher - Revd Charles Royden

Leadership Team - Mrs Delia Shephard

Intercessions - Mrs Pat Leusby

11.00am Putnoe Heights—Holy Communion

Preacher - Revd Charles Royden

Leadership Team - Mr Alan Bayliss

Intercessions – Mrs Sylvia Cohen

7.30pm Jesus Christ Superstar - Tonight at

Putnoe Heights Church

27 February

8.30 Service of Holy Communion

Held at both churches

9.30am St Mark's Church—Morning Worship

Preacher – Revd Dr Sam Cappleman

Leadership Team - Mrs Iris Perry

Intercessions - Mr John Tatman

11.00am Putnoe Heights- Morning Worship

Preacher - Revd Dr Sam Cappleman

Leadership Team – Mr Dave Allen

Intercessions – Mrs Margaret Massey

Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Betty Munkman in memory of her husband Leslie.

The flowers at St Mark's Church this week have been given by the Appleton family to celebrate Milly Mead's 90th birthday.

We are extremely grateful when donations are made for flowers. This may be as a celebration of a happy occasion such as an anniversary or in memory of someone who has died. Contact Miss Marion Prior 303254 (St. Mark's) or Miss Jennie Cooper 404950

Prayer for Sunday

God of infinite mercy,
grant that we who know your pity
may rejoice in your forgiveness
and gladly forgive others,
for the sake of Jesus Christ our Saviour.
Amen

Contact Details

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR

266952 Fax- 402624 NSM@ThisisChurch.com

(Sam also works full time as a General Manager for Hewlett Packard)

The Reverend Neil Bramble-Chapman BA, CTM

(Day off Friday)

12 Hartop Close, Putnoe. MK41 8HE

326643 Mobile -07740 865167 Minister@ThisisChurch.com

The Reverend Dr. Joan Crossley (Day off Friday)

30 Cutcliffe Grove, Bedford. MK40 4DD.

Home 344536 Crossley@Thisischurch.com

The Reverend Charles Royden (Day off Thursday)

The Vicarage, Calder Rise. MK41 7UY

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Partnership News is now available each week on the
Partnership Website - www.ThisisChurch.com

For Data Protection Purposes

Please note that any items submitted for inclusion in
Partnership News will automatically be posted on our website.

Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator & Churchyards Administrator

Mrs Mary Stubbs 406784 Mary@Thisischurch.com

Please inform us if you know of anyone who is ill, bereaved,

housebound, requires a visit, home communion or counselling services.

Please also ask us if you would like a home visit for any reason.

Putnoe Heights Church Centre

Open 9am - 1.00pm Monday & Friday

9am - 4pm Tuesday/Wednesday & Thursday

Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 www.ThisisChurch.com

Centre Manager Mr Barry Snelson 365630

Leadership Team - Mrs Elizabeth Wyatt 350188

Treasurer Mrs Kathryn Morse 216428

treasurerph@Thisischurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator - Mr John Hitt 404186

Junior Church Co-ordinator - Mrs Samantha Ware 304058

St. Mark's Church Centre (Open 9am - 5pm)

Tel/fax & Answering Service 342613 www.ThisisChurch.com

Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613

Wendy@thisischurch.com

Leadership Team - Mrs Janet Day—295592

Treasurer - Mr John Day 295592 treasurer@Thisischurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator Mr Jim Williams 360605

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Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

9.30 - 12.00 pm Pre-school (See website for more details) Mrs Janet Smith 326685 (Putnoe Heights) or Mrs. Helen Harpin **312634** (St. Mark's).

10.00 am Day Care Centre at St. Mark's for those with Learning Difficulties. Contact K Stenton 07748 760082

10.00am Supple Strength at Putnoe Heights. Contact Louise Woodcock 270302

12.00pm - 1.00pm Storybox at Putnoe Heights. Service for parents/carers & children under 5. Children's activities songs and prayers, all in one hour from.

4.15 - 5.45pm Kumon Maths at Putnoe Heights. Contact Ms R.Mistry 01908 392698

6.00pm Brownies St Mark's. Mrs C Mathew 400987

6.15 pm Brownies Putnoe. Contact Penny Fulham406045

7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild meets first Monday every month at St. Mark's Mrs Pauline Parrott 768419

7.15 m Guides -St. Mark's. Mrs Gill Lake 218091

7.15pm Yoga at Putnoe Heights Church. Contact Karen Simpson 244970

7.30pm Creative Needles at Putnoe Heights. Mrs C Cannon 404319

7.30pm Whist Drive - At St Mark's each month. Next 21 February St. Mark's Contact Mrs. Judith Stanton. 823313

7.30pm Housegroup 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck 267567.

8.00pm 'Get Fit, Stay Fit' at Putnoe Heights. Mrs Diane Field 404976

Tuesday

9.30am Candlewicking (Needlework) at Putnoe Heights. Contact Mrs Olive Shotbolt 267203

9.30am Jo Jingles at St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Contact Renu Elston 01908 282866

10.00am Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights. Contact Mrs Stileman 822230

12.30pm Toddlers Playtime at Putnoe Heights. Contact Geraldine Skeel 406828

12 noon - 10.00 pm Slimming World at St. Mark's. Sessions start at 12, 1.30pm, 4pm, 5.30pm & 7.15pm Contact Val Careless 345213.

1.15pm Library Walk W.I. at Putnoe Heights meets monthly. Next meeting 19 April. Contact Morag Tompkins 356895

1.30pm Body Control Pilates at Putnoe Heights. Contact Stephanie Smith 357787

2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship - Next meeting 1 March 2005 -Rev. Neil Bramble-Chapman. Contact Mrs Betty Wyatt 350188

2.15pm Putnoe Heights Men's Fellowship. Next meeting 1 March 2005 -Rev. Neil Bramble-Chapman. Contact Lawrence Wyatt 350188.

2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group. Meets fortnightly at St. Mark's. Wool and knitting needles provided. Contact Mrs Joan Gravett 356911 and Mrs Marjorie Taylor 305709

2.30pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. Meets fortnightly at St. Mark's. Contact Mary Stubbs 406784.

6.30 - 7.30pm Yoga at Putnoe Heights. Contact Rachel Leontyne 783129

6.45pm Guides at Putnoe Heights. Contact Emma Holloway 293792

7.00 - 8.00 pm Keep Fit at St. Mark's. Contact Mrs Jan Gregory 214107.

7.00 - 10pm Card Makers Club meets fortnightly at St Mark's. Contact Carol Houghton 346718

7.30pm Bibleway Church at Putnoe Heights. Bible study & prayers. Contact Revd.Tarr 309881 or 07891095746

7.45 pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club - Next meeting 1 March Well Dressing. Meets fortnightly. Contact Madge Walsh 359088

8.30-9.30pm St. Mark's - Qi Gong (Self help healing group) - Contact Mr F Steele 355937

Wednesday

9.30am Childminding Support Group at Putnoe Heights. Mrs S Longman 313949

9.30am Bedford U3A at Putnoe Heights meets bi-monthly. Next meeting 23 March. Contact Jenny Coggins 266379

10.00 am Day Care Centre St Mark's for those with Learning Difficulties. Contact K Stenton 07748 760082

10.00 am Holy Communion at St. Mark's Chapel. A half hour service followed by coffee. All welcome.

10am Sewing & Chat Putnoe Heights Contact Valerie Russell 01462 815966

12 - 1pm Total Body Toning at Putnoe Heights Contact Caroline 07778 898135 or 326096

Luncheon Club at Putnoe Height meets fortnightly. Next meeting 2 March 2005 Contact Putnoe Heights 365630

1.30 - 4.00pm. Bridge Club for the Retired at St. Mark's. Contact Mrs Truss Boyce 781133

4.15pm Kumon Maths at Putnoe Heights Contact Ms Raksha Mistry 01908 392698

6.00pm Self Defence at Putnoe Contact Mr James 07711 687449

6.00 pm Brownies at St Mark's. Contact Mrs Carol Warden 219731

7.00pm Bunyan Bridge at St. Mark's Contact Brian Sallows 407725

7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society meets monthly at Putnoe Heights. Next meeting 16 March. Contact Sylvia Woods 365095

7pm Putnoe Guild meets monthly at Putnoe Heights. Next meeting 16 March. Contact Pam Holley 771964

7.45pm Kick Boxing Junior classes at St Mark's. Contact Mr James 07711687449 or 07810234890

7.45pm Badminton Club at Putnoe Heights - all welcome. Contact Ken Marriott 214867

Thursday

9.30am Thursday Prayer Group at Putnoe Heights in the side chapel. Sylvia Cohen 343424 *Request for prayer can be written in the prayer diary on the information table.*

9.45am Yoga at Putnoe Heights. Contact Karen Simpson 244970

10.30am - 12.00am Fledglings at St Mark's **2.00pm - 3.00pm Clinic** at St. Mark's Contact 267444

12pm Storybox at St Mark's. Service for parents, carers & children under 5. Sandwich lunch, Bible Stories, Children's activities, songs & prayers, all in one hour from 12-1pm.

12.30pm Toddler Playtime at Putnoe Heights. Contact Geraldine Skeel 406828

1.30pm St. Mark's Church Toddler Group. Contact Debbie Coppenhall 356828.

2.30 Bedford Arts Society at St. Mark's. Contact Celia Maddison 782901

2pm U3A Indoor Games at Putnoe Heights. Contact Radmila Dancer 404811

4.00 Storybox Plus at Putnoe Heights. A drama group for 4-9year olds. Meets 4 5-pm,drinks from 3.30pm

6.15 pm Weightwatchers at St. Mark's. Contact Mrs Margaret Ralph 01767 224978.

6.15pm Brownies at Putnoe Heights . Contact Helga Nash 218521

7.00pm Club 2000 at Putnoe Height. Next meeting 24 February. Contact Pat Stidolph 345247

6.15pm Bedford Junior Chess Club. St. Mark's Contact Mr & Mrs Pike 823795

7.30pm - 11.00pm Bedford Senior Chess Club at St Mark's Contact Mr P Housden 376597

7.30 - 9.30pm Embroiderer's Guild St Mark's- 3rd

Thursday of the month. Contact Mrs K Sage 771525

7.45pm. Housegroup-Meets fortnightly at 3 Little Headlands. Newcomers always welcome. Contact Betty Wyatt 350188

8.00 - 10pm Bedford Writers Circle meets at St Mark's 3rd Thursday each month. Contact Mr John Broadhouse 740271

Friday

9.30am U3A Exercise at Putnoe Heights. Contact Carole Maunder 301325

10.00 am Day Care Centre at St. Mark's Contact K Stenton 07748 760082

6pm Self Defence at Putnoe Contact Mr James 0771 687449 or 07810 234890

7. 30pm Bibleway Young Peoples meeting Contact Pastor Tarr 376841

6.30pm -8.30 pm Dog Training Classes at St. Mark's. Contact Mrs L. Laton 365601

Saturday

9.30am Stars School of Dance at Putnoe Heights. Contact Esther Sancto 272517

10.00am - 1.00pm & 2 - 5pm Theatre Train at St Mark's -dancing acting, singing,- Kate Randle 01234 782414

2.30pm Calligraphy Group at Putnoe Heights. Meets monthly next meeting 26 February. Contact Kathleen Sage 771525

Embroiderers Guild Saturday Workshop at Putnoe Heights. Meets monthly next meeting 26 February. Contact Kathleen Sage 771525(check also for Young Embroiders)

7.15pm - 10.30pm Duplicate Bridge at St Mark's Contact Ann or Peter 212066

Sunday

1- 3pm & 7-9pm Bibleway Church at Putnoe Heights - Worship. Contact Revd. Tarr 309881 Mob. 07891095746

6.45pm TNT (The Nearly Teens) meet fortnightly at Putnoe Heights for various fun activities. Contact Putnoe Office 365630

News, Views and Information

January 2005	February 2005	March 2005	April 2005
S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S	S M T W T F S
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9
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23 24 25 26 27 28 29	20 21 22 23 24 25 26	20 21 22 23 24 25 26	24 25 26 27 28 29 30
30 31	27 28	27 28 29 30 31	

The Church Calendar

St Mark's Church Council 15 June, 12 October
Circuit Men's Fellowship Lunch on the 9 February
St Mark's Leadership Team
 4 May -Home of Rev Dr Joan Crossley

Deanery Synod

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team -
 25 April 2005 at 7.30pm

St Mark's Church Management Meeting
 23 May, 11 July, 12 September, 2 November. All meetings to start 7.00pm

Putnoe Church Council

7 Feb 2005, 13 June 2005, 10 Oct 2005

Pastoral Group Meeting -27 April at 2.pm.

Church yard Committee 25 April at 10 pm.



Bible Notes

Verse of Scripture **Philippians 2:9**

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

A Collect Prayer - Before we read we pray

Merciful Lord, grant your people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow you, the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

First Reading -Genesis 12: 1-4a

The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." So Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him.

(Reader : This is the word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**)

Second Reading - Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17

What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were. (This is the word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - John 3: 1-7 (When the Gospel is announced - **Glory to Christ our Saviour)**

Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him."

In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again." "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.'

(Reader: This is the Gospel of Christ - **Praise to Christ our Lord**)

Post Communion Prayer

Almighty God, you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves: keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



Hymns (Please distribute Hymns and Psalms)

1. At the name of Jesus 74 (Tune Camberwell)
2. Jesus put this song into our hearts Mission Praise 376
3. When our confidence is shaken 686
4. Will your anchor hold 689

Commentary

When Jesus tells Judas to get on with his terrible betrayal and do it quickly, the Gospel writer of John records (John 13:30) that Judas left the table and went off and 'it was night.' The deed was not made worse by the fact that it was dark outside, but the symbolism of darkness is used to give literary force to the story. So in the reading today from John 3, the writer again uses this method to give effect to his writing. We are told (John 3:1)

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night.

Now some have suggested that the writer was making out that Nicodemus was afraid of being seen. He might have been, but it was this same

Nicodemus who was later to make a bold statement of his support for Jesus (John 19:39)

And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight. Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.

It is probably fair to say that John uses the word 'night' as a metaphor for moral and spiritual darkness.

Nicodemus came to Jesus confused, searching and seeking for his own heart and mind to be illuminated by something which he perceived in Jesus.

The extraordinary thing was that Nicodemus was no fool. He was a member of the Sanhedrin, a Pharisee, a zealot for the law, a highly regarded teacher in Israel, a devout and well educated Jew. Nicodemus would have presumed that his future in God's kingdom was guaranteed. Yet it was to this most exemplary Jew that Jesus says 'You must be born again.'

What does Jesus mean ? The following passage is taken from Ezekiel 36:25

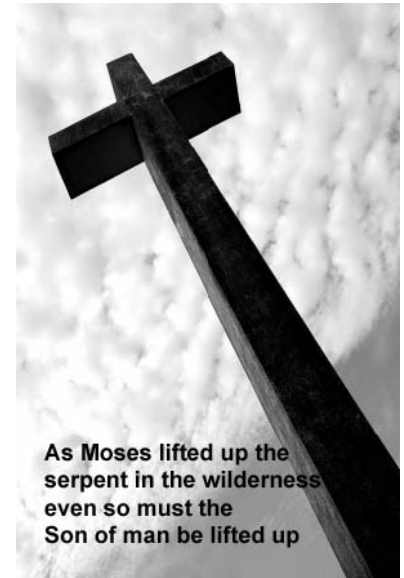
Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.

Nicodemus would have known this passage and he would have associated it with the coming of the Messiah. The passage from Ezekiel is followed by a story about a valley of dry bones brought to life by the Spirit. Wind comes and brings flesh and sinew to the dry bones and makes of them living beings. Ezekiel speak of the dead rising and being brought to life. Jesus is therefore clearly telling Nicodemus that this time of cleansing and regeneration of the promised Messiah is now present. For centuries the Jews had believed that their privilege of birth, their race, circumcision and keeping of the law, made them superior over all others and specially selected by God. The words of Jesus contradict all of this and proclaim that what is needed to understand and enjoy the secret of everlasting life is faith in him.

This new birth through faith in Jesus is not brought to a particular race. God's gift is spread about indiscriminately, just as the wind blows wherever it wills. Jesus makes it expressly clear that God has no favourites, God loves all people, the whole Cosmos, perhaps worlds we have not even seen. That love is nothing transitory or partial, it is a love so deep that God spares nothing, not even his son. If the quality of love could ever be measured by the value of a gift, then there is no greater love. Nicodemus would have been familiar with the concept of a loving God, but it was a Jewish God who had a special love for Israel. Now Jesus tells Nicodemus that God's love is much broader than had ever been thought.

Later in this passage there is a reference to another Old Testament story, Jesus tells Nicodemus that just as Moses lifted up bronze snake, so he must be lifted up. it is worth reading the passage from Numbers 21 to understand what Jesus was saying.

The LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died. Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the



people. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived.

One day Nicodemus would see Jesus lifted up in a most brutal manner on a cross. Only when he saw Jesus in this way would the words of Jesus make complete sense. As the Israelites in the desert received new life when they turned to face the bronze snake, so all of those who turned to Jesus would find the new birth which Nicodemus searched for.

Jesus is saying that new life in him is possible for all. But it occurs not by any kind of outward conformity, but only by an inner change. Nicodemus would have believed in the importance of being born into the right family, of being a child of Abraham, Jesus makes it plain that there is no special privilege given to a particular race or culture, God's gift of everlasting life is not hereditary. Only God is involved and there is no accounting for how God works, God is as unpredictable as the wind. Let's finish by reminding ourselves of those magnificent verses which stand out so forcefully from the Gospel of John. *Charles Royden*

And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.



Meditation For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith. Rom 1:17

Martin Luther (1483-1546) The ideas of Martin Luther changed the church and influenced Christian thinking for centuries. He was sent to university by his father to train as a lawyer, but during a terrifying episode in a thunderstorm when a thunderbolt landed near him he said, 'Help me Saint Anna, I will become a monk.' He kept the vow and entered a monastery. Luther was terrified by his own sins and like other monks he shared in rituals of self mortification, extreme fasting, exposure to cold and beatings. He said that if anybody could have been saved by monkery it was he.

However it was in the Bible that he found the teaching about what that makes people acceptable to God. It is not our own efforts to win favour, but faith in Christ. Forgiveness and eternal life are a gift from God, we are saved not by what we do, but by trusting in what God has done for us in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This teaching was not new, but often we all forget how willing God is to show love and mercy. Some of Luther's prayers are shown below, read the first one with this meditation in mind and think how far he had understood his complete dependence upon God and not his own abilities.

Prayers.

Behold Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled. My Lord, fill it. I am weak in the faith; strengthen me. I am cold in love; warm me and make me fervent that my love may go out to my neighbour. I do not have a strong and firm faith; at times I doubt and am unable to trust you altogether. O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in you. In you I have sealed the treasures of all I have. I am poor; you are rich and came to be merciful to the poor. I am a sinner; you are upright. With me there is an abundance of sin; in you is the fullness of righteousness. Therefore, I will remain with you, of whom I can receive, but to whom I may not give. Amen. *Martin Luther*

Come Lord Jesus be our guest, and may our meal by thee be blest *Martin Luther*

O God, graciously comfort and tend all who are imprisoned, hungry, thirsty, naked, and miserable; also all widows, orphans, sick, and sorrowing. In brief, give us our daily bread, so that Christ may abide in us and we in him for ever, and that with him we may worthily bear the name of 'Christian.' *Martin Luther*

Deliver us, O Lord, from a deceitful heart. Forgive, we pray, the barbed word deliberately spoken; the thoughtless word hastily said and the envious look furtively cast. Forgive the ear rejoicing in the news of another's downfall; the feet loitering in forbidden paths and the grasping hand reaching out for personal gain; and all for the sake of Christ our Lord. Amen *John Baillie, 1886-1960*

News, Views and Information

Partnership Singers Please could we re-convene to prepare for Easter Services (on 27 March), rehearsing on 4 March 7pm at St Mark's, 11 March 7pm at St Mark's-Small Hall, 18 March 7pm at St Mark's, Thursday 24 March at Putnoe.

Wednesday Bereavement Drop in Group.

Next meeting is Wednesday 2 March at St Mark's Church, 2.30pm- 4pm. Mr Michael Dallas will talk about Bedford Arts Society. On 6 April Mr. Alan Cox will speak on "London Curiosities" and on May 4 Lynne Davis will speak about the work of the Citizens Advice Bureau.

A Performance of Jesus Christ Superstar will be taking place at Putnoe Heights Church today Sunday 20 February 7.30pm. This will be presented by singers and musicians from the First Presbyterian Church from Caldwell, New Jersey, USA. There will be a retiring collection for the Tsunami Appeal and for Autism Bedfordshire.

Sharnbrook Methodist Church are holding a Spring Lecture 'Living in China' by Michael Potter on Saturday 26 February at 7.30 pm. Tickets £7 (including supper) from Leonard Halstead 781383. Proceeds are for The Zimbabwe Food Aid Project.

Fun Run and Teddy Bear's Picnic! 22 May at Mowsbury Park, our 5km Fun Run followed by a BBQ, Bring a Teddy to the Teddy Bear's Picnic! Time to get in training!

Missions Group Meeting Tuesday 1 March at 14 Flint Way (off Bamburgh Drive). Starting 7.30pm. All interested in Missions welcome. Sylvia Cohen 343424

Maundy Thursday. The eucharist with the blessing of oils takes place on Maundy Thursday, March 24th, at the Cathedral and Abbey church of St Alban at 11.00am. It is a service at which the Bishop calls together all clergy, Readers and lay ministers who hold his licence in the Diocese and also those who are retired. But it is also a service at which anyone is welcome to be present and it is hoped that many people from congregations around the Diocese will wish to come.

At 7.30pm we will have our own service at Putnoe Heights Church.

The Lent Course 2005

Looking to Easter - The Gospel According to Paul
St Marks and Putnoe Heights Lent Course

The apostle Paul was the first and possibly the most influential Christian missionary, writer and theologian there has ever been. Nearly half of the books of the

New Testament are attributed to Paul providing some of the great foundation stones for the Christian Church. His legacy as a travelling preacher proclaiming 'not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord!' still impacts us today. But where did Paul come from, what did he really believe and how did that influence his perspective on the cross, and the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ?

This year's Lent Course will look at Paul and how he has influenced what we believe about Jesus and our Christian faith.

Wednesday 23 February

Joan Crossley will deliver the first lent talk, her theme will be Saint Paul on the Road to Damascus - perspectives on life changing crises. Using the art of the famous painter Caravaggio, Joan will be offering a new look at this familiar bible story.

Wednesday 2 March

Paul, what did he really believe; can we make sense of his letters? Revd Dr Sam Cappleman

Wednesday 9 March

Paul, where was he going; what lies beyond the cross? Revd Neil Bramble-Chapman

The Lent course will be held at Putnoe Heights church and start at 7:30 pm each week and we'll finish at 9:00 pm promptly.

From General Synod

The Church of England Synod this week edged towards a decision on whether to appoint women bishops, in the face of male allegations that women either do not really believe in God or are akin to terrorists. At the end of three hours of debate in the church's parliament on Wednesday, members accepted the advice of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Rowan Williams, that it discuss the matter further at its next meeting in July, with a decision on whether women priests are fit to be bishops to be made perhaps some time next year.

The synod was debating a report published last November following several years of deliberation by a church committee - with a majority male membership. It offered a range of alternatives, from agreeing to women's consecration as bishops to rejecting it, but did not come down on one side or the other. One representative, Gerry O'Brien of Kent, south-east of London, said many ordained women did not believe central tenets of the faith. He suggested a survey had shown that only a third of women priests believed in the virgin birth of Christ. Another, the Reverend David Banting of Essex, east of London, who chairs the conservative evangelical pressure group Reform, demanded that women's groups campaigning for change be called off, comparing one to the Irish Republican Army and

another to the Irish republican political party Sinn Fein. Dr Williams told the synod he had set up yet another working group to evaluate the options proposed in the previous report, to report back to the next synod. Synod was advised that over the ordination of women more than 720 priests have resigned, with 424 qualifying for compensation that cost the Church £26 million. Their loss has been more than outweighed by the ordination of several thousand women, of whom more than 1,200 are now in stipendiary posts, 20% of priests are now women. In addition, 1,000 parishes, less than one tenth of the total, have passed a resolution stating that they will not accept a woman priest, recently St Martin's Bedford joined this group.

From discrimination to conservation -

Meanwhile The Rt Reverend Richard Chartres gave 900 'Save a Flush' devices to members of Synod for their toilets. (This is not a joke). He had ordered them from Thames Water. The device is a plastic bag containing crystals which expand when submerged.

Footprints (Putnoe rambles) Four churches walk on Feb 27 at 2.00. Meet at Meppershall Church (OS grid ref 135360) and visit Upper Gravenhurst and Shillington on a pleasant cross-country walk. Boots will be needed, as it will be muddy in places, but not deep mud, and you will enjoy views across Mid-Bedfordshire. Approx 4-5 miles and 2½ hours gentle walking. Further details please contact Keyth or Sara Richardson 330029.

London Marathon April 17 2005. Kenelm Richardson (Morwenna's brother) will be running the London Marathon to raise money for a children's charity. If anyone wishes to sponsor him, his website which has full details can be found at; <http://www.justgiving.com/kenelm>. For those who are not yet Internet connected his parents Keyth and Sara hope to have ordinary sponsorship forms soon, and

can be contacted on 330029

St Mark's Clubhouse The Clubhouse project would be very grateful to receive any of the following: double knitting wool, knitting needles, no smaller size than 3.5 mm. Also any unwanted games such as Ker Plunk, Frustration, memory games, etc. Magazines, old birthday cards. Thanks from the Clubhouse Team 315460

Update - Poor response - no Kerplunk - no wool - please help urgently!

Extension Approved. We are pleased to announce that this week the Borough Council agreed for St Mark's to extend the Garden of Remembrance by two metres down the length of the church. This will allow access from the front of the church through a new landscaped entrance. Plans are being prepared for Church Council. We are grateful to Councillor Peter Hand for his support which assisted this application through the stages of consultation and agreement.

A Hymn for Sunday

Jesus put this song into our hearts,
 Jesus put this song into our hearts,
 It's a song of joy no one can take away,
 Jesus put this song into our hearts.

Jesus taught us how to live in harmony,
 Jesus taught us how to live in harmony,
 Different faces, different races,
 He made us one,
 Jesus taught us how to live in harmony.

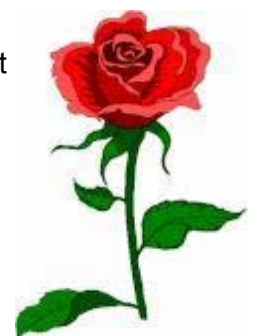
Jesus taught us how to be a family,
 Jesus taught us how to be a family,
 Loving one another with the love that He gives,
 Jesus taught us how to be a family.

Jesus turned our sorrow into dancing,
 Jesus turned our sorrow into dancing,
 Changed our tears of sadness into rivers of joy,
 Jesus turned our sorrow into a dance.

Funerals arranged by our clergy

The funeral of Marie Isabella McGregor at Bedford Crematorium on Monday 21 February at 12.15pm.

The funeral of Heather Symes at Bedford Crematorium on Monday 21 February at 10.00am



Rest In Peace

On the Sunday following a funeral service we remember in church those who have died. We light a candle to symbolise the light of Christ which eternally shines and brings hope. If you would like a person remembered in our service when the candle is lit, perhaps on an anniversary or birthday, please inform the ministers, or telephone the church office.

**Derrick Sidney Joseph Brice
 Michael Brookman
 Vera Hatchard**

May the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God, rest in peace and rise in glory. Amen.'

