



Partnership News

**Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church
25 October 2015
Ordinary 30**



Sunday Services

8.30am Holy Communion every Sunday
1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday at Putnoe Heights
2nd and 4th Sunday at St. Mark's Church

25 October - Ordinary 30

9.30am St Mark's – Morning Worship

Preacher - Mr. Jim Ragless
Leadership - Mr. Edward Parry
Intercessions - Ministers
Organist - Miss Marion Prior

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher - Mr. Jim Ragless
Leadership - Mr. Martin Fannon
Intercessions - Mrs. Sue Allen
Organist - Mr. Peter Twitchin

1 November - Ordinary 31

9.30am St Mark's – Family Worship & Naming

Preacher - Mrs. Wendy Waters
Leadership - Mrs. Elizabeth Bean
Intercessions - Mrs. Wendy Waters and Young People
Organist - Mr. Martin Thompson

11.00 am Putnoe - Family Worship & Naming

Preacher - Mrs. Wendy Waters
Leadership - Mrs. Vita Hudson Rae
Intercessions - Young People
Organist - Miss Marion Prior

3.00pm Commemoration Service

Readings 1. Isaiah 25: 6-9 2. Revelations 21: 1-6
3. John 11: 32-44

Mid Week Holy Communion at 10.00am at St Mark's
Chapel every Wednesday and at Sir William Harpur
House on first Monday of every month.

Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Christina Halsey in loving memory of her daughter Lesley Robinson, and by Rita and Nigel Platt in memory of Justin and dearly departed family members.



The flowers at St. Mark's this week have been given by George Burton in memory of his wife Joyce. *We are grateful when people make donations towards flowers perhaps to celebrate a special occasion such as an anniversary or in memory of a loved one. Please contact Miss Marion Prior 303254 (St. Mark's) or Ann Hitt 404186 (Putnoe Heights) or add your name to the rota in the Foyers.*

Prayer for Sunday

Come, O Christ the Light, and illumine our darkness. Come, O Christ the Life, and raise us from death. Come, O Christ the Physician, and heal our wounds. Come, O Fire of Love, consume our sins and kindle within us the flame of your love. Amen.

Dimitri of Rostov (1651-1709)

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

Assistant Rural Dean of Bedford
107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR
Tel: 266952 nsm@thisischurch.com

Deacon Jane Mills

c/o Putnoe Heights Church Centre
Tel. 348091 Mobile 07807 146535
itsjanemills@gmail.com

The Reverend Canon Charles Royden

The Vicarage, Calder Rise. MK41 7UY
309175 Mobile 07973 113861 vicar@thisischurch.com

Partnership News is sent out by email every Saturday in a colour edition. If you would like to receive a copy please send an email entitled 'Partnership News' to vicar@thisischurch.com. Please note that any items submitted for inclusion in Partnership News will automatically be posted on our website and may appear in other local media sources.

Partnership News is also archived on our church website www.ThisIsChurch.com

Music Copyright CCL1501

Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator

Mrs Wendy Waters 342613 office@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.

Churchyards Administrator

Mrs Avril Williams 01234 342613

Putnoe Heights Church Centre

Open Mon-Thur 9-5.30pm, Friday 9-1pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Geoff Gypps 365630
Leadership Team Mr Barry Southam 219714
barrysoutham@aol.com
Treasurer Mr John Hitt 404186 treasurerph@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Mr Lawrence Wyatt 350188
Youth Team Leader Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com

St. Mark's Church Centre Charity No 1160981.

Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5.00pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 342613 office@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613
Leadership Team - Mrs Margaret Appleton 354708
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892
treasurer@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Mr Jim Williams 360605

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

Hazeldene Heights Pre-school. Sessional and Full Day care available—open Mon.—Fri. Full Day Care 8.30am to 5pm Sessional times 9am—12noon and 12.45pm - **3.45pm** For more info please contact Laura Leggett 01234 326685 or www.hazeldeneheights.com
8.00am-5.30pm Pre-school Mon-Fri St Mark's
8.00am-5.30pm Top Marks Mon-Fri St Mark's Manager Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634
(See website for more details)
9.00am-12noon St Mark's Pre-School Nursery Manager Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634
9.30-10.30am - Body Control Pilates –Putnoe Heights Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430
10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group. St Mark's Mrs M. Berry 211955
10.00am-12 U3A Play reading Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946
9.45am - 10.45am & 11.00am-12noon Pilates St. Mark's Liz Mason 07816522200
12.00 noon Storybox Putnoe Heights We welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Contact Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com 365630
1.30pm Chat & Make. Term time for babies and toddlers 0-5. Crafts, toys, songs, story and refreshments £1. More details contact St Mark's Church Office on 01234 342613 or Janine 01234 297481
2.00pm U3A Music Appreciation Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946
2.00pm U3A Italian Putnoe Heights– fortnightly
4.15pm Kumon Maths Putnoe Heights. Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698
5.30 - 8.30 NHS Eat Smart Think Active at Putnoe Heights. For more details contact Zoe Wilcox 07767311424
6.00pm Brownies St Mark's. Mrs C Mathew 826190
6.15 pm Brownies Putnoe. Sharon Tanner 07928483418 email firstputnoebrownies@hotmail.co.uk
6.15 Pilates at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859
6.15pm-8.15pm Fit for Life Yoga - Putnoe Heights Contact Jane Butcher 07891879571
6.30pm-8pm Cubs at Putnoe Ages 8 –10.5 Email:phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509
6.30pm Fit For All Putnoe Heights – Laura Amor 341152 / 07976259081
7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild St Mark's (1st week in month) Mary Daly 217127
7.00pm Cancer Care Society. St Mark's. (1st week in month) Mr J Dewhurst 01908 377020.
7.00-8.00pm Laughter Club at St. Mark's 2nd week each month) Cheryl Green 07729187399
7.15pm Guides. St Mark's. Mrs Gill Lake 218091
7.30pm Whist Drive. St Mark's (Weeks 3 & 5 in the month).. Next meeting–16 November Judith Stanton. 823313
7.30pm No Fear Bridge Club St. Mark's Mrs. Susan Ford 300218.
7.30pm House group 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck 267567
7.45-9.15 Get Fit Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights Diane Field 01234 404976

Tuesday

9.30am Candlewicking (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Pat McCart 365507
9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World St. Mark's. 9.30, 11.30, 3.30, 5.30, 7.30. Lorrie Pearson 340473

11-12.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946
1.15pm U3A Cinema Group. St Mark's Contact Janet King 313946
1.30pm U3A Choir. St Mark's Contact Janet King 313946
2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 St Mark's (3rd Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946
2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 St Mark's (2nd Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946
2.00pm Library Walk W.I. Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Morag Tomkins 356895
2.00pm U3A Photography Group 3 St. Mark's (1st Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946
2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group. St Mark's (Alternate Tuesdays) Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225
2.00-3.30pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. St Mark's. A social and Bible Study group. Meets alternate Tuesdays. Mrs Jean Bank 355698
3.30-6.30pm Stars School of Dance at Putnoe Heights. Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468
6-7pm Supple Strength Yoga St Mark's Amanda Alcock 07769747393
7.15-8.15pm Pilates St Mark's Church Jane Butcher 07891879571
7.00pm - 8.30pm Daisy Birthing Putnoe Heights Susie 07980447390
7.30pm Ladies Tuesday Club at Putnoe Heights (Meets monthly Next meeting 10 November - Christmas Craft and AGM Details Diane Bayliss 268101
8.00pm Hearts in Beds Committee St Mark's (week 4 in month) Mrs N Aspey 309816

Wednesday

9.30am Body Control Pilates. Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430.
10.00-2pm Open House at St Mark's for those with learning disabilities., their friends, family , carers and supporters 342613.
10.00am U3A Gardening Group 3 St Marks. Contact Janet King 313946
10.00am Holy Communion. St. Mark's Chapel. A half hour service followed by coffee. All welcome.
10am U3A Card Making, St Marks Contact Janet King 313946
11.15am U3A Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights
12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe fortnightly. Next meeting 4 November Contact Putnoe Office 365630
1.15pm Social Bridge Club St. Mark's. Mr Barnes 261811
2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft at St Marks.1st week of the month. Contact Janet King 313946
2.00pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946
2.00pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit. Putnoe Heights Mrs Webster 856966
3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church. St Mark's (3rd Week in month). for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 21 October Wendy Waters 401834 Jean Bank 355698
4.15pm Kumon Maths. Putnoe Heights Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698
5.00–6.00pm Rainbows at Putnoe Heights Mrs Gill Lake 218091
6.00pm Brownies. St Mark's. Mrs C Warden 219731
6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation Putnoe Heights Racheall

Monton 01234 297138 or 07910835994

6.00-7.00pm ATSK Karate at Putnoe Height Kevin Stark
Tel.01234 353865

7.00pm-9.00pm Scouts at Putnoe ages 10.5-14;
Email:phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509

7.00pm Bunyan Bridge. St. Mark's Colin Jackson 363398
or Brian Sallows 407725.

7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society Putnoe
Heights monthly. Sylvia Woods 365095

7.15pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe 3rd Wednesday in every
month except August Mrs Jo Street 344600

8.00pm Badminton Club Putnoe Heights All welcome.
Ken Marriott 214867

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club at St Mark's
(1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month). Next meeting will be
4 November Everyone welcome. All dances called, only
£1 including refreshments. Rosemary 405594 or Graham
406359 for more details.

8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club St Mark's (Week
1 in the month) Jill Cooper 357960

Thursday

9.30am Thursday Prayer Group. Putnoe Heights. Valerie
Capon 356306. Request for prayer can be written in the
prayer diary on the information table.

10.30pm Spanish Holiday Survival at Putnoe Heights.
Elena 01234 266968

9.45am Chat and Play St.Mark's. A term time group for
Mums & toddlers.0-5 Contact St Mark's Church Office
01234 342613 or Janine 01234 297481

12pm Storybox . St Mark's welcome the under 5's and
their carers to join them between 12 noon and 1pm for a
sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and
singing. Lots of fun. Contact Jaana Swaby 342613

1.00-2.30pm Wriggles & Jiggles Putnoe Heights. Drop
in.

1pm-2.30pm Drop in (small hall) Next Steps 9-24months
Putnoe Children's Centre.Please call Trudy Hamilton
(centre assistant) for more information 340552. 2pm -
Friendly Chicago Bridge at Putnoe Heights £2 per
session inc. refreshments. New members welcome.
Contact Pat 01234 294220.

2pm U3A Current Affairs - Putnoe Heights Contact
Janet King 313946

2-4pm U3A Indoor Games. St.Mark's Contact Janet King
313946

2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society St Mark's Jean
Paterson 307210

3.15-5.15pm Social Care Solutions Drama Group Claire
Creek 262650

5.45pm Weightwatchers. St. Mark's. Clare Martin
07768481499

6-7pm Supple Strength Yoga St Mark's Amanda Alcock
07769747393

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Brenna.
07919402797.

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Audrey Halford 407284

7.00pm U3A Folk & Poetry St Marks (2nd and 4th week
in month)Contact Janet King 313946

7.00pm Bedford Embroiderers' Guild St Mark's
(3rd week in month). Carol Plant 01832710504

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale 406094

7.30pm Magpies Women's Group St Mark's (2nd & 4th
week in month) Rosemary McNeillage 405594

7.30pm Brickhill Ladies Group St Mark's (1st and 3rd
week in month) Linda Stephen 409493

8.00pm Bedford Folk Dancers (formerly Barn dancers)
Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights Different guest callers
each week.Except August. All welcome, cost £2.50
Including refreshments. More details Ron 825574 or

Shirley 01767 651767

8.00pm Bedford Writers Circle. St Mark's (1st week in
month). John Broadhouse 01525 404014

Friday

9.30am -3.30pm Machine Knitting group at Putnoe
Heights, 2nd week per month.. Contact Marion Sutton
217647

10am -12.00 U3A Photography St Marks.(4th week in
month) Contact Janet King 313946

10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French St.
Marks Contact Janet King 313946

2.00-4.00 pm U3A Whist St Marks. (2nd week in month)
Contact Janet King 313946

2pm U3A Gardening - Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King
313946

4.50pm-7.00pm Stars School of Dance at Putnoe.
Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468

6.30pm-8.00pm Beavers at Putnoe Ages 6-8 Email:
phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509

7.00pm-9.00pm Meditation St Mark's.Cheryl Green
07729187399

7.45 - 10.45pm Bedford Astrology Club. St Marks(2nd
week in month)Carol Brown 01438 233385

Saturday

9.00am Faith Temple Ministries St Mark's (1st week in
month) Dawn Kelly 07863762593

10.00am Theatretrain St Mark's. Dancing acting, singing.
Kate Howard 01234 782414

Young Embroiderers bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry
Fletcher 357198

2.15pm Society of Recorder Players at Putnoe Heights.
G Parry 01462 674792

Sunday

9.30 - 10.30 Church and Sunday School at St Mark's
with crèche for under 3's

10 - 5.30pm Bedford Stamp Fayre at St. Mark's. 1st
Sunday Oct/Dec. Contact P Harris 01623 621143

11.00 - 12.00 Church and Junior at Putnoe Heights for
the under 9's . A crèche is also available.

2- 4.30pm Indoor Bowls at St. Mark's 2nd & 4th
Sunday. Ray Seymour 305695 or church office.



Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council -
St Mark's Leadership Team -
Annual Congregational Meetings - 24 April
Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 19 January
Putnoe Heights Management Meeting - 13 January
Putnoe Church Council - 26 January
Pastoral Group Meeting-
Churchyard Committee - TBA
Circuit meeting -
Deanery meeting -
Woodland Burial Trustees -
Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting -
Messy Church Wednesday 21 October, Wednesday
18 November, Wednesday 9 December 3.45pm

*Please advise St Mark's Church Office of the dates of
your meetings.*

Ordinary 30

Sentence of Scripture

I will bless the Lord at all times; his praise shall ever be in my mouth. I will glory in the Lord; let the humble hear and rejoice. Proclaim with me the greatness of the Lord, let us exalt his name for ever.
Psalm 34

Collect Prayer for the Day *Before we read we pray*

O God, forasmuch as without you we are not able to please you; mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.



First Bible Reading Jeremiah Chapter 31:7-9

This is what the LORD says: "Sing with joy for Jacob; shout for the foremost of the nations. Make your praises heard, and say, 'O LORD, save your people, the remnant of Israel.' See, I will bring them from the land of the north and gather them from the ends of the earth. Among them will be the blind and the lame, expectant mothers and women in labour; a great throng will return. They will come with weeping; they will pray as I bring them back. I will lead them beside streams of water on a level path where they will not stumble, because I am Israel's father, and Ephraim is my firstborn son. (This is the word of the Lord —**Thanks be to God**)

Second Bible Reading - Hebrews Chapter 7:23-28

Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. Such a high priest meets our need—one who is holy, blameless, pure, set apart from sinners, exalted above the heavens. Unlike the other high priests, he does not need to offer sacrifices day after day, first for his own sins, and then for the sins of the people. He sacrificed for their sins once for all when he offered himself. For the law appoints as high priests men who are weak; but the oath, which came after the law, appointed the Son, who has been made perfect forever. (This is the word of the Lord – **Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - Mark Chapter 10:46-52

Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you." Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see." "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road.
(This is the word of the Lord —**Thanks be to God**)

Post Communion Prayer

Holy and blessed God, you have fed us with the body and blood of your Son and filled us with your Holy Spirit: may we honour you not only with our lips but in our lives dedicated to the service of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymns for Sunday

(Please distribute Morning service and hymn sheets where required)

1. Jesus Is King And I Will Extol Him MP 366
2. Spirit of God, Unseen As The Wind (Skye Boat Song)
3. There Is A Green Hill Far Away HP 178
4. There Is A Redeemer MP 673
5. To The Name Of Our Salvation (Regent Square) HP 80

Commentary

Before our Gospel reading concerning the healing of blind Bartimaeus, we have just read in the same chapter two stories which help us to understand this passage more clearly. Remember the rich man who refused to leave his wealth to follow Jesus, and also the incident in which James and John asked Jesus to give to them positions of power, seated on his left and right hand. Remember these two stories because Mark has deliberately placed them just before this healing of the blind man.

So we come to consider Bartimaeus. He is physically blind we are told, but he displays a spiritual vision which enables him to see who Jesus is much better than the disciples with perfect physical vision. He wants to have mercy from Jesus and calls Jesus using a messianic title 'Son of David.'. Those around him try to silence him but he will have nothing of it and continues to call to Jesus. Eventually Jesus calls for Bartimaeus and he leaves behind his cloak and he is healed and follows Jesus.

Think then of this man who simply wishes to follow Jesus above all things. The cloak was considered an essential item, but he will leave even this behind for the opportunity to follow Jesus. Contrast this to the rich man who wants to keep all his wealth and puts that before following Jesus. The story is told to show us a man who got his priorities right. Many people will not do this! This is a timeless message, faith is the serious stuff in our life, all of that other stuff is a side issue.

My mother is interesting. When I was young she always told me that I had to work hard and keep try hard. Now whenever she sees me she tells me that I am working too hard and I have to take life more slowly. What has happened is that she has grown wiser and she has changed her priorities. For so many people, in spite of the ability to gain many material things in life, life is still very empty. I have always wondered why it is so often the case that people who have a great deal of things seem the least satisfied. I wonder whether it is to do with some kind of motivation. Those who aspire to wealth, fame and riches have something to keep them motivated, - the hope that one day they will possess something which will give them fulfilment. However those who have got fame and wealth realise that these things are truly are illusory and cannot bring happiness. It is the old paradox that the more possessions we have the less we find fulfilment in them. Bartimaeus knows this, he has his priorities set right, leave all, follow Jesus. The really important things in life cannot be seen with physical sight.

So Mark asks us to consider a question, what are we prepared to leave behind to follow Jesus. What is it which keeps us back? There is a cautionary message here for all of us Church people. The disciples are in the inner circle of Jesus followers and here is one who is blind who sees more clearly than them. So often it is that we Christians find those beyond the church teaching us the ways of Jesus. We as a church throughout history have been slow to understand the grace and mercy of God. We have been slow to understand the value of human life, equality of people in God's eyes. Support for slavery, the practice of racial discrimination and sexual discrimination these are just some of our wickedness. It is those outside the church who have led us into the light.

Bartimaeus was one who would have been looked down upon by society at the time of Jesus. Religious people would have thought that Bartimaeus was blind because of sin, his blindness was considered a judgement of God. Do you remember John 9:2? The disciples saw a blind man and asked Jesus, 'who committed the sin which caused the man to be blind?' Why do we do this? Why do religious people take satisfaction in looking down their noses and being judgemental? We do this in spite of being able to see in the life of Jesus somebody who went out of his way to give precedence to those who were judged and who was at his most critical when he was with people who were judgemental and though themselves better than others.

We spend a great deal of time as a worldwide Christian church arguing and debating about great spiritual truths. We argue about how salvation works, about all manner of complex truths, but we just don't seem to be able to get the very basics right. We still judge others more strongly than we judge ourselves, we forgive our own failings and want those of others to be punished. The Church and Christians create situations where people like Bartimaeus feel unwanted and unloved. Bartimaeus

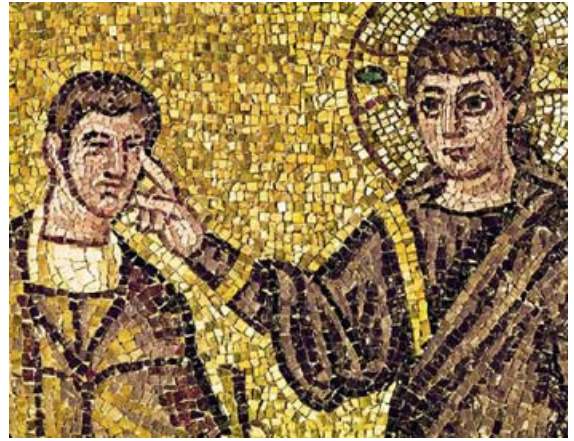
somehow found the strength to bypass the followers of Jesus, and to shout out direct to Jesus, it was when he did this that he found Jesus a lot more sympathetic than his disciples. Bartimaeus was a damaged person and yet by the grace of Jesus he found out how much he was valued and loved by God. Other people disregard him but to Jesus he was of utter value.

Desmond Tutu said,

"Christ, when he was lifted up, did not say 'I draw some people to myself.'

He said 'I draw all, all, ALL!' John 12:32

We are not nearly as welcoming as Jesus and we seem to take delight in excluding the very ones Jesus would have draw near. This man met with Jesus and saw in him the presence of God and knew that he was forgiven. From rock bottom he realised that he was of great value to God. In some miraculous way Jesus had shown him that she was not damaged at all.



6th Century Mosaic, Sant' Appollinare Nuovo, Ravenna.

God wants us to know that we are valuable. No matter how much we think that the beauty of God in us has been disfigured or destroyed—we are precious to him. There are no damaged goods or cheap seconds in God's creation. We can look at people and see the image of God marred, disfigured and broken, but we have to get past the outer appearance and see the goods inside made by God.

God wants us to know is that it is not just us who are special to him. We have brothers and sisters, in God's family we are not an only child. Just because people are different, does not mean that they are wrong. The Pharisees represented a "sick religion" one that excludes people. Jesus' religion is one of grace....includes everyone. He represents a healthy religion that is redemptive and life-changing, not one that labels and condemns. Jesus spent most of his time hanging out with people at the edges of society, people who were considered ungodly, that should give us a clue.

So look at the story and the characters in it and try and see who you are like, how you would treat Bartimaeus, the one who had brought punishment upon himself through his sinful life. Are you a judgemental person who magnifies the sins of your family, your friends, people at work, people who have different points of view? When we recognise this in ourselves there is held out the chance to change and become different, just like the man in the story. Nobody who comes to Jesus is rejected, everybody is offered the opportunity to go away a changed person. *Charles Royden*

Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead

In the silence of the stars, in the quiet of the hills and in the heaving of the sea, you speak O Lord. In the words of the prophets and the message of the apostles, you speak O Lord. Now we pray, speak in this place, in the calming of our minds and the longing of our hearts, by the words of my lips and the meditations of our hearts. Speak, O Lord, for your servants listen.

God, our Shepherd, give to the Church a new vision and a new charity, new wisdom and fresh understanding, the revival of her brightness and the renewal of her unity; that the eternal message of your Son, undefiled by human tradition, may be hailed as the good news of the new age; through him who makes all things new, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Percy Dearmer (1867-1936)*

Gracious and all merciful God - we give thanks to you today for your compassion and your love. We proclaim your goodness and your strength and we call upon you in praise and thanksgiving. Bless us and bless your people everywhere this day with your holy presence. Help us to worship you in a manner worthy of our calling and to render to you the tribute due to your name. We ask it through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

We pray that as Christian disciples we may be a faithful witness in word and deed to the Good News of Christ's Love. We pray for all who govern and hold authority in the nations of the world. We pray that everywhere upon this earth there may be justice and peace. We pray especially today for the well being of people in parts of the world affected by drought and famine. We continue to pray for peace in the Middle East. Lord, we pray for all people in their daily life and work - for our families, friends, and neighbours, and for those who are alone. We name before you individuals and families experiencing personal hardship or facing an uncertain future, those who are separated from loved ones, those who grieve this today, and those who are sick in hospital or ill at home. Hear us Lord as we now lift up those people and those situations you have placed upon our hearts.

Messy Church Samaritans Purse Shoe Box

Appeal 2015 Following the success of previous years, by Messy Church and the wider congregation, we will be packing boxes at our Messy Church session on 18 November. We will be happy to accept donated items from now on. All items must be new. These include Toys, Educational supplies, Hygiene items, Other: Sweets sell by date at least March 2016. Gloves, scarves, sunglasses, hats, bangles, necklaces. Please do not donate: food (especially chocolate), no hand knitted stuffed toys, medicine, no war related items, no clothing other than those above, no fragile items, no liquids. No sharp objects, no novels. We do not need any empty shoeboxes this year. Please see the Messy Church notice board for further details of what can and cannot be put in the boxes. If you require further information please speak to Wendy Waters or Jean Bank.

Lenten Cathedral Pilgrimage 2016

We are organising an evening pilgrimage to St Albans Cathedral on Wednesday 16 March 2016. Depart Bedford at 5.00pm. Cost is £7.50
Arrival at Cathedral and buffet 7.00pm
Pilgrimage and tour 7.45pm
Compline and procession to shrine 9.00pm
Depart St Albans 9.30pm
Arrive back in Bedford 11.00pm
If you would like to take part then please speak with Charlie so that we can book numbers and arrange transport.

Community Coffee Mornings at Putnoe Heights Church at 10am on Wednesdays October 28, November 11 and 25, with the final one this year on December 9.

Partnership Quiz to be held at St Mark's Church on Saturday 28 November at 7.30pm. Do come and bring/make up a team. Tickets £7 includes Fish and Chip Supper. Please put this date in your diary. Tickets available from Church Office.

Remembering the loved ones we have lost

There will be a special service at St Mark's Church, Brickhill, Bedford Sunday 1 November 2015 at 3.00pm (Doves of Remembrance will be released from the Church at 2.50pm). Our address this year will be given by Mrs Delia Shephard, Civil Celebrant. If you know of anybody who would like a special invitation then please let one of the ministers know.

Footprints Walk Sunday 8 November. Please

note change of date A 2.5 mile walk around Thurleigh on field paths and bridleways with a short distance on paved footpaths. The walk takes us by Thurleigh airfield and the reservoir built to take excess water from the runways. Meet at car park for the Playing Field (Thurleigh Club) signposted to right of Keysoe Road, Thurleigh at 2pm. Ray & Pam Seymour 305695

Deanery of Bedford Evensong Sunday 1

November, 2015 4.00 pm St Peter de Merton with St Cuthbert, Bedford (MK40 2TE) Followed by Refreshments All Welcome

The Word Pop-up bookshop. Tuesday 3

November at 3 Rivers Church, Denmark Street, Bedford 7-9.30pm. Books, Christmas Cards, CDs and gifts. Light Refreshments. Presentations from The Foodbank, Street Angels, Pilgrim Homes and The Fountain.

Coffee Morning at Anjulita Court, Thursday 5 November, 10.30am -12.30pm. Sales of Christmas cards, diaries and gifts of all sorts for Arthritis Research UK. All are welcome.

Christmas Fair at Priory Methodist Church, Saturday 7 November 10am-3pm. Variety of stalls selling cakes, cards, gifts, paintings etc. Raffle, tombola. Children's activities, refreshments and lunches. Admission £1 (accompanied children free). All welcome.

A huge thank you to Judith Stanton and her Whist group for a donation of £50.

Messy Church celebrated our 5th birthday with a large cake (brought in to the noise of horn blowing and a drum roll) and fun and games. Our story was the parable of the invitation to the banquet.: our banquet was bangers and mash followed by Apple pie. It was a very happy occasion Wendy Waters was presented with a bouquet. 67 attended - bringing the total attendances since the start to 2,400. You can keep up to date with what we do by looking at the Messy Church board at the back of the church. Please remember Messy church in your prayers. Everyone went home with a piece of cake and every family with an Advent calendar that contained a booklet telling the Christmas Story.

Mission Update Thank you to everyone who has already contributed to our Mission project supporting the work of Karibuni in Kenya. As we were able to see so graphically from the pictures and information Mike Carr shared with us, our contributions make a real and significant difference to the many children Karibuni works with in Nairobi and the surrounding areas. Through our financial donations and prayer Karibuni will be able to provide additional education, books, equipment, classroom and other facilities for an increased number of children which will improve their lives and prospects. Without our commitment these children would be far more likely to continue to face a life of poverty and, without education, more limited opportunities to find work to support themselves and their families in the future. So thank you for your contribution to this important project. If you need a letter with more details of the Karibuni, the project and how to add your support they are available from the back of church or either of the church offices. Thank you.

Bishops United on Syrian Crisis

The Church of England today has published a letter sent to the Prime Minister in early September signed by 84 of its bishops calling for the Government to increase the number of Syrian refugees being resettled to this country "to a minimum of 50,000" over the next five years.

Referring to the situation in Syria as "one of the largest refugee crises ever recorded" the Bishops write that "a moral crisis of this magnitude calls each and all of us to play our parts."

Calling directly on the Prime Minister to increase his current offer to accept 20,000 refugees over the next 5 years to 50,000 the Bishops write:

"We believe such is this country's great tradition of sanctuary and generosity of spirit that we could feasibly resettle at least 10,000 people a year for the next two years, rising to a minimum of 50,000 in total over the five year period you foresaw in your announcement. Such a number would bring us into line with comparable commitments made by other countries. It would be a meaningful and substantial response to the scale of human suffering we see daily."

In addition to "recognising and applauding" the announcements made by the Prime Minister the Bishops offer help from the Church of England in encouraging their churches to provide welcome, housing and foster care to refugees as well as to support the Government in its ongoing efforts. In their letter the Bishops also called for the creation of a National Welcome and Resettlement Board, mirroring the successful work of such boards created by Government in response to past refugee crises in the 1950s and 1970s. Since the writing of the letter the board has been created with the Bishop of Durham serving as co-chair of the board.

Speaking on behalf of the bishops, the Rt. Revd. Paul Butler, Bishop of Durham said:

"The Archbishop of York recently said that the current situation has rightly been described as a refugee crisis but it is also a time of opportunity for us as a country and for our wider continent. The opportunity before us is to rise above narrow self-interest, however defined, and to embrace the highest parts of our humanity.

We recognise that both the Prime Minister and His Government responded to calls from the country for there to be a programme of resettlement and we are grateful to him for responding to those calls. However there is a real urgency to this issue with those increasingly being forced from their land as their homes are literally bombed into the ground. As the fighting intensifies, as the sheer scale of human misery becomes greater, the Government's response seems increasingly inadequate to meet the scale and severity of the problem. It is disheartening that we have not received any substantive reply despite an assurance from the Prime Minister that one would be received. There is an urgent and compelling moral duty to act which we as bishops are offering to facilitate alongside others from across civil society."

St Mark's Christmas Craft Fayre 21 November 2015

It is hard to believe that our Craft is only 5 weeks away on Saturday 21 November 2015. We will be having the usual Church stalls again and donated items will be greatly appreciated.

New Tombola

New and unused items needed so please look in your cupboards etc.

Homemade Cake Stall

Secondhand Bookstall

Books in good condition plus any jigsaws (with all the pieces) please.

Indoor/Outdoor Plant Stall

Now is the time to plant cuttings and bulbs etc.

Refreshments

Donations of tray bakes to sell with our teas and coffees.

And of course the Christmas Prize Draw

Any new items suitable for raffle prizes would be really welcome. Raffle tickets are on sale and will be available from the table in the foyer. Please take a few home to sell to family and friends.

We will need a lot of help nearer the time with leaflet delivering, selling of raffle tickets distributing posters etc. Please let me know of any locations where you think a poster would go.

If you are able to help us with manning a stall, on the 21 November, helping in the kitchen or in any other way, we would love to hear from you. As always your help is very much appreciated and we could not run this large fundraising event without your help. Please contact Avril Williams. 360605

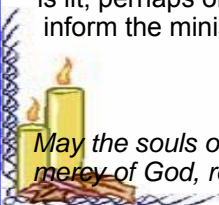


Forthcoming Funerals

The funeral of Pamela Vera Barnett will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Wednesday 4 November 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



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