

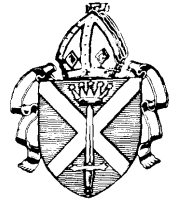


Methodist
Church

The Partnership

26th October 2003
30th in Ordinary Time

The 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 Holy Communion - At both churches
9.30am St. Mark's Church - Morning Worship with Baptism. Preacher – Mr John Stubbs
Leadership Team - Mrs Iris Perry
Intercessions - Mr Mike Elliott
11.00am Putnoe Heights Church - Morning Worship
Preacher – Mr John Stubbs
Leadership Team - Mrs Betty Wyatt
Intercessions - Mrs Sue Allen

Church Services - 2 November

8.30am Service of Holy Communion - At both churches
9.30am St. Mark's Church - Family Worship
Preacher – Rev Dr Joan Crossley
Leadership Team - Mr Jim Williams
Intercessions - Mr Ian Farthing
11.00am Putnoe Heights Church - Family Worship
Preacher – Rev Dr Joan Crossley
Leadership Team - Mrs Sue Allen
Intercessions - Ministers

Refreshments Please do feel welcome to stay behind after church for coffee which will be served in the church

Sunday School takes place during morning service a Crèche is available at the back of the church, please feel able to walk in and out during the service.

Parents Please remember that colouring boards and crayons are available for children during the service.

Hard of hearing? Please note that a hearing aid loop is fitted at our churches. Please switch to the 'T' setting.

Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Christina and Maurice Halsey in memory of their daughter, Lesley Robinson.

We are extremely grateful when donations are made for the 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 (Putnoe Heights).

Prayer for Sunday

O Holy Spirit, come as the wind to forward our goings. Come as the dove to launch us heavenward. Come as the water to purify our spirits. Come as the cloud to abate our temptations. Come as the dew to revive our languor. Come as fire to purge our souls; for your truth and your name's sake. Amen

Contact Details

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR
266952 Fax- 402624 Sam_Cappleman@hotmail.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 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
309175 Mobile 07973 113861 Vicar@ThisisChurch.com

Time for God Volunteer Kasha Piecyk

St Mark's Flat - 315455

Partnership Website - www.ThisisChurch.com

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.

Putnoe Heights Church Centre (Open 9am - 1.00pm)

Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 www.ThisisChurch.com
Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613
Wendy @thisischurch.com

Leadership Team - Mr Stephen Clare 308299

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 - Mr Jim Williams 360605

Treasurer - Mr John Day 295592 treasurer@Thisischurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator Mr Jim Williams 360605

Hymns are printed under CCL Lic No. 1501

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 at St. Mark's Church G.O.L.D. (Growing to Overcome Learning Difficulties).

Day Care Centre - Contact Mrs. Karen Bywater 269515 **12.00pm - 1.00pm Storybox** at Putnoe Heights Church. A new service for parents / carers and children under 5. Sandwich lunch, Bible Stories Children's activities songs and prayers, all in one hour from 12-1pm!

3.45 - 5.15 pm Kumon Maths at Putnoe Heights. Contact Ms R.Mistry 01908 217555

6.00pm Brownies St Mark's. Mrs Gill Lake 218091

6.15 pm Brownies Putnoe. Contact Alison McEwen 358583

7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild meets first Monday every month at St. Mark's Contact Mrs. Jill Williams 357020

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

7.30- 9.30pm Creative Needles at Putnoe Heights. Mrs Hayward 307648

7.30pm Whist Drive - At St Mark's each month. Next 17 November—Moorfields Christmas Drive — Contact Mrs. Judith Stanton. 823313

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

8.00 - 9.00 pm 'Get Fit, Stay Fit' at Putnoe Heights. Mrs Diane Field 404976

Tuesday

9.30am - 12.30pm Candlewicking (Needlework) at Putnoe Heights - Contact Mrs Olive Shotbolt 267203

9.30am - 12.30pm Jo Jingles at St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Contact Renu Elston 01908 282866

10.00am - 11.00am - Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights. Contact Mrs Stileman 822230

1.30 -3.00pm Putnoe Heights Church Toddlers Playtime Contact Geraldine Skeel 406828

1.45pm - 10.00 pm Slimming World at St. Mark's Contact Val Careless 345213.

2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship - Next Meeting 28 October—Mrs.A.Alderman Contact Mrs Betty Wyatt 350188

2.15pm Putnoe Heights Men's Fellowship. Next meeting 28 October—Imam Irshad Ali 'The Concept of Fasting In Islam.' 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 Church. Please contact Mary Stubbs 406784.

6.30 - 7.30pm Yoga at Putnoe Heights. Contact Rachel Leontyne 01234 783129

6.45pm Guides at Putnoe Heights - Liz Rix 363607

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

7.30 - 9.30pm Bibleway Church at Putnoe Heights - Bible study & prayers. Contact Pastor Tarr 348438 or 07773354129

7. 30 pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club - Meets fortnightly . Next meeting 4 November - Annual General Meeting Contact Mrs C Davies 219130

8.00pm Tuesday Housegroup next fortnightly meeting is at 16 Swindale, Contact Alison 403551 or Brian 305347.

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

Wednesday

10.00 am Childminding Support Group at Putnoe Heights. Mrs. Simmonds 328380 or Mrs. Sheward 823045

10.00 am G.O.L.D. (Growing to Overcome Learning Difficulties) meets at Putnoe Heights Church. Day Care Centre. Contact Mrs Karen Bywater 269515

10.00 am Holy Communion at St. Mark's Chapel. This is a half hour service followed by coffee - all welcome.

Luncheon Club at St. Mark's meets fortnightly. Next one 5 November Contact St. Mark's 342613

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

3.45pm - 5.15 pm Kumon Maths at Putnoe Heights Contact

Ms R Mistry 01908 217555

6. - 7.00pm Self Defence at Putnoe Contact Mrs James

Mr James 07711 687449 or 07810 234890

6.00 -7.30 pm Brownies at St Mark's Contact Mrs Carol Warden 219731

7.00pm Putnoe Heights Church Bunyan Bridge. Contact Brian Sallows 407725

7-10pm Putnoe Guild - Putnoe Heights 3rd Wednesday each month. Contact Mrs Dallas 212609

7.45 - 8.45pm Kick Boxing Junior classes 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.

10.30am - 12.00am Brickhill Clinic at St Mark's with

Fledglings 2.00pm—3.00pm Contact 267444

10.00am - 11.30am Yoga at Putnoe Heights
Contact 244970

1.30 - 3.00 pm St. Mark's Church Toddler Group.
Contact Debbie Coppenhall 356828.

1.30 -3.00pm Putnoe Heights Church Toddlers Playtime Contact Geraldine Skeel 406828

6.15 pm Weightwatchers at St. Mark's.

Contact Mrs Margaret Ralph 01767 224978.

6.15pm Brownies at Putnoe Contact Mrs S Lewis 300198

7.30 - 9.30pm Club 2000 Putnoe 2nd Thursday of the month. Contact Mrs Moreton 771261

6.15 - 7.30pm 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 John Harbour 355234.

7.30 - 9.30pm Embroiderer's Guild St Mark's— 3rd Thursday 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 Church 3rd Thursday each month. Contact Mr John Broadhouse 740271

Friday

10.00 am at St. Mark's - G.O.L.D.

(Growing to Overcome Learning Difficulties). Day Care Centre - Contact Mrs. Karen Bywater 269515

6 -7.00 pm Self Defence at Putnoe Contact Mr James 0771 687449 or 07810 234890

Friday cont:

7. 30 - 9.30pm Young Peoples meeting Contact Pastor Tarr 376841

7.30pm Music Group St. Mark's Church (monthly).

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

Saturday

10.00am - 1.00pm & 2 - 5pm Theatre Train at St Mark's –dancing acting, singing,- Kate Randle 304865

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 Pastor Tarr 348438
Mob. 07773354129

YPG (Young People's Group) meets every Sunday at Putnoe 7.30 - 9.00pm 215983

News, Views and Information

Today ! Putnoe Ramblers will next meet on Sunday 26 October, Sandy Heath 4 mile walk. Meeting time 2pm not 2.30pm.. Meet at Sand car park, High Street, Sandy (next left after the Market Square). For further information contact Margaret & Alan Massey 327219

Forthcoming Church Meetings Please check your diaries and inform the church office of any alterations or additions

November

Tuesday 11 St Mark's Leadership Team

Monday 17 Putnoe Leadership Team

Monday 24 Putnoe Management (Date may be changed)

Putnoe Heights Jumble Sale/Cake stall/Bring & buy in aid of Mission Funds Saturday 8 November 10 - 12 noon. Church will be open Friday 7 November 7 - 8.30pm to receive sale items and produce (please make a cake). Please contact Tel. Julia Bailey 300367 or Fiona Cooke 312436 if you

can help in any way or need goods collecting.

Please remember to invite our Time for God Volunteer Kasha Piecyk to have meals with you. Kasha would love the opportunity to meet with people in our churches.

NSPCC Coffee Morning/ Bring & Buy. at Putnoe Heights Church Friday 31 October from 10— 12 noon. White Elephant, raffle & Tombola. Entrance £1 (inc. refreshments) Enquiries Mary Bull 270329.

Christmas Cards from Cancer Research UK .

I have the full range of Christmas Cards available for purchase at my home, by appointment. Tel : 267837. Buy now, while I still have a full selection !! *Howard Lawrence*

Experiences of Ghana On Thursday 30th October, I would like to invite everyone along to an informal evening of photos and stories from my trip to Ghana with Habitat for Humanity. I promised that I would share my experiences with you at the fund raising

stages for my trip and I hope that many of you will be able to join me at Putnoe Heights at 7pm. For more details, phone 344417. Thanks. Hannah Snelson

Anglican Methodist Covenant at Methodist Central Hall, Westminster on 1st November at 11.00am. There are tickets available for this historic event. If you would like to go they will need to know quickly. Please would you contact Sylvia Norton, Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London. Tel: 020 467 5141

Christians Ministry to the Dying and their families. Morning conference to be held at St Andrew's Church Saturday 1 November 10.00am - 1.00pm. Speaker Revd Elizabeth Hughes, Chaplain to Hospice of St Francis. All with hospice links, pastoral support team etc. invited. If you wish to attend please contact Charles Royden in the first instance.

Kempston Musical Society will give a concert of light music on November 8th at Priory Methodist Church—7.30pm. Programmes at the door.

A Concert organised by Bedford Branch SSAFA / Forces Help by The Concert & Dixie Bands of Bedford School will be held at Elstow Abbey on Thursday 13 November at 7.30. Tickets £8 from Pam Kinselly - 354480 or at the door (inc. Programme & wine / soft drink)

Placement From 27 October for a period of two weeks Janet Humphries will be joining us in the Partnership as part of her training for ordination. Please welcome Janet if she asks to come to any of the activities taking place in our churches.

Volunteers needed at Putnoe. As you may know, we are at the start of a long term plan to make better use of storage space at Putnoe. There will be a working party on Saturday 1st November at 10.30am. Help is needed to take things to Charity Shops and the tip, to make tea etc. Many thanks. Joan and Neil

Tritex Fabric Sale on Monday 27 October from 7 – 8 pm at the home of Val Morgan at 109 Putnoe Lane Tel. 266963 . Usual fabric bargains of Liberty Tana Lawn, sheeting, wadding, Fleece & Christmas Prints. Also off cuts for patchwork. 10% of sales to charity.

Churches Together in Bedfordshire. Church leaders Covenant Service. This will be a service of commitment and support and a joint statement will be signed. Bunyan Meeting Free Church, Mill Street, Bedford. Sunday 9 November 6.30pm.

Thank You Barbara Sherley & Charlotte would like to thank the Rev. Dr Joan Crossley for the lovely service she conducted on 20 October at Bedford Crematorium for her husband Cyril. Also for all the help they have received from St. Mark's Church.

Putnoe Heights Toddlers Playtime are having a Children's entertainer 'Tricky Micky' on Thursday 30 October at 11am. Tickets are £1.50 per person & can be bought in advance from Shelley 306695 or on the door.

1st Putnoe Brownies need a Unit Helper/volunteer to help with Brownies at 6.15 on Monday evenings. Please contact Alison 358583 or Penny 406045.

Wrong Date last week!

Service of Commemoration for the Faithful Departed. Our annual remembrance will take place on **9 November** at 3.00pm at St Mark's Church. Over 400 invitations have been sent to those who have had funerals conducted by clergy in our Partnership over the past years. However we would very much invite all members of the congregation and especially those who have suffered bereavement to join with us in this special service. Our preacher this year will be The Reverend Dr Joan Crossley, a minister in our Partnership and also a chaplain at Great Ormond Street Hospital.

Bedford Care is an outreach of the Christian Churches in Bedford. They are hoping to increase awareness of their work by inviting people from churches to attend their committee meetings. The meetings are held at Kimbolton Road on Thursday at 7.30pm, future meetings on 27 Nov, 8 Jan, 19 Feb, 1 April. If you would like to be involved please speak with Charles Royden

Craft Fayre Tuesday 18 November 2—4 pm in Raglan Court Lounge, 1 Devizes Avenue, off Dover Crescent. Stalls available Please contact Mary Shopland 01234 340446.

Photocopying St Mark's Office can now provide you with fully collated and stapled documents at no extra charge. You may also Email your photocopying to office@ThisisChurch.com and your documents will be printed using the best quality digital printing. Simply collect your documents when they are printed!

Do you expect high standards from local Councillors? If the answer is yes, then Bedford Borough Council would like to hear from you. The council is looking for two independent members to sit on the Standards Committee. Please telephone 2221609 for an information pack or visit www.bedford.gov.uk to download the documents.

Applications must be in by Monday 3 November.

Mission Packing—Warmest thanks to all who have contributed time, money and talents to Mission Packing since 1986 and enabled us to send 1761 boxes of clothing to Tanzania and 255 to Mozambique through Faith in Action. Sylvia Cohen 343424

World Aids Day— a service will be held on the 1st December in St Paul's Church, Bedford at 6.00pm

Thank you to Judith Stanton and supporters for their generous donation to the church raised at their last Whist Drive. Their support is much appreciated

Autumn Craft Day on Saturday 8 November 9.45am to 3.30pm at Southdown Halls, Harpenden. Choice of 14 craft workshops £3 per session. Early booking before 15 October required. Further details and booking forms from Pam Seymour 305695.

Christians Ministry to the Dying and their families. Morning conference to be held at St Andrew's Church Saturday 1 November 10.00am -

1.00pm. Speaker Revd Elizabeth Hughes, Chaplain to Hospice of St Francis. All with hospice links, pastoral support team etc. invited. If you wish to attend please contact Charles Royden in the first instance.

Now is the Time. For pruning your fruit trees, call Andrew's Services 07709 364785. Andrew will be pleased to give advice and free estimates. Call him now for reducing your conifers, topping out, re-shaping - No job too small. Andrew is a member of our Partnership Traders Scheme.

Magnolia - The Magnolia in the centre of the Garden of Remembrance has flowered! This will be an encouragement to those of us who feared for its welfare over the summer. A Willow hedge will be planted in the Garden in November to replace the damaged conifers.

The Partnership - How you can help us

The Partnership is produced at St. Mark's Church Office. Information for inclusion should be handed to Putnoe Heights or St. Mark's Church Offices by 12noon on Friday. You may telephone or fax notices to the 24hr answerphone 342613 (St.Mark's). Please leave your name and telephone number in case we have to contact you. If you are away from home please collect information, notices and leaflets from other churches and leave copies at the church office.

Post and Email Please ask if you would like us to Email or post The Partnership to you each week. Please contact the church office telephone 342613 or Email webmaster @thisischurch.com with the word subscribe in the subject line.

Partnership Traders

Do you want somebody reliable, with reasonable rates? The following companies participate in our trading scheme and offer a professional service whilst contributing (usually 5%) to your church. All participants in the scheme offer free estimates. When the work has been completed simply ask for your voucher which can be placed on the offering plate or given to a minister or Church Treasurer.

Odd Job Dave. Our church cleaner/decorator and handyman will carry out gardening, rubbish clearance, decorating, carpentry and all those other Odd Jobs! No job too small, call for a personal quote. (tel: 01234 401184, 07788 862609)

Alan Charnock - Design, heating, and plumbing contractors 01234 346385

Cording Allen Partnership - Mr.Ian Cording - Architecture, Building, design, planning 01234 214993

Denton Flooring and Carpets A high class professional supply and fitting service. Mr. Denton will visit you in your home with a wide range of samples and can give competitive estimates for any kind of carpet, vinyl or flooring needs. 01234 351615

R. M. MOTORS (CAR REPAIRS) Richard Kennington offers MOT testing and a complete vehicle maintenance service which includes free collection and return of your vehicle to your home or place of work. His work is of a very high standard, honest, and prices are exceptionally good value. Contact Richard on 01234 771013 or Mobile 07831595182

TVF Taymar Video Film Productions Barry Ingram will be pleased to help you with a variety of video services for weddings, baptisms and family occasions. 01234 353704

Neil Ibbott Decorator 18 Wagstaffe Close, Ravensden, Bedford. MK41 8DY 01234 771731. Qualified painter & decorator Free quotations

Electrician Mr Steve Gray . Telephone 823555 Mobile Telephone 07786914377

Tree Surgery—Now is the Time. For pruning your fruit trees, call Andrew's Services 07709 364785. Andrew will be pleased to give advice and free estimates. Call him now for reducing your conifers, topping out, re-shaping - No job too small. Andrew is a member of our Partnership Traders Scheme.



BIBLE NOTES

30th Sunday in Ordinary Time Year B

Verse of Scripture Luke Chapter 4:18 "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

Collect Prayer for the Day—Before we read we pray

Blessed Lord, who caused all holy Scriptures to be written for our learning: help us so to hear them, to read, mark, learn and inwardly digest them that, through patience, and the comfort of your holy word, we may embrace and for ever hold fast the hope of everlasting life, which you have given us in our Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

First 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**)



For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, blameless, undefiled, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens.
Hebrews 7:26

Second Reading Hebrews Chapter 7:23-28

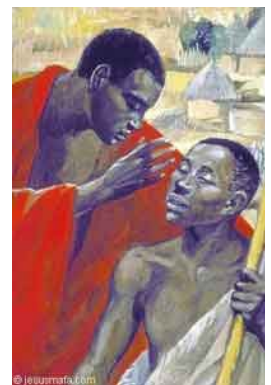
Now there have been many of those priests, since death prevented them from continuing in office; but because Jesus lives forever, he has a permanent priesthood. Therefore he is able to save completely those who come to God through him, because he always lives to intercede for them. Such a high priest 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

God of all grace, your Son Jesus Christ fed the hungry with the bread of his life and the word of his kingdom: renew your people with your heavenly grace, and in all our weakness sustain us by your true and living bread; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen

Commentary

In first century Palestine there were no government benefits or charities to help blind people, you were inevitably useless to society, a drain on resources and subject to poverty. You were reduced to begging for all of your life and at the mercy and the generosity of others. So listen afresh then to the words of Jesus who began his ministry with those beautiful words

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour." *Luke Chapter 4:18*

Today we read of Jesus on his way to Jerusalem, the City of David, when on his way he is acclaimed by a blind beggar to be the 'Son of David.' This is a big story, the last healing miracle in the gospel and Mark is making an important point. Last week we were told about James and John who asked Jesus for power. They could not see what Jesus was about in his ministry. Herein lies the irony in the structure of Mark's Gospel, for just as we have been shown how the disciples are spiritually blind, now we are told about Bartimaeus who is literally blind but still sees spiritually. What is more important blindness of sight or soul? Bartimaeus has the vision to use the messianic title, 'Son of David' when he calls to Jesus. Nobody has used this title and Jesus has discouraged people from seeing him as the messiah, not least because they would see him as one to use military power to overthrow the Romans. Now it is Bartimaeus, an insignificant blind man, who announces that the messiah, Jesus, has arrived at Jerusalem the Holy City. The impact is forceful, Jesus might not be what people expected, but nonetheless he is plainly visible as Messiah to all of those who have the eyes of faith like Bartimaeus.

We are told that Bartimaeus 'threw his cloak aside.' The cloak was important and Jewish law forbade taking the cloak as payment for a debt, because a poor person would need it to keep warm. Mark is reminding us that Bartimaeus had little, but even his cloak he was willing to leave behind to follow Jesus. Mark had told his readers about the rich man who lacked the faith to follow Jesus, contrast that with the spiritual focus and singleminded determination showed by Bartimaeus. The reader is meant to be challenged not to consider any sacrifice too big for the sake of following Jesus.

The crowd wanted to silence Bartimaeus, he was presumed to be too unimportant to speak with Jesus. We should not be surprised that once again in his ministry Jesus turns the attention away from those who we expect to be important and makes the marginalised person the centre of his attention. The people we expect to be important are not, it is those who are often neglected that Jesus wants to draw attention to. Mark will tell us the story of the widow's mite in Chapter 12: 41-44, teachings such as this are meant to encourage those who think that their contribution is too small, their part a minor one in the drama of the life of Jesus. The mere fact that we are able to remember 'Blind Bartimaeus' testifies to the importance which Jesus and the early Christian community gave to him — his name has been preserved. It is an encouragement to us all to leave our places and to follow Jesus. *Charles Royden*

Meditation

Do not care much who is with you and who is against you; but make it your greatest care that God is with you in everything you do. Have a good conscience, and God will defend you securely; no one can hurt you if God wishes to help you. *(From 'The imitation of Christ' by Thomas à Kempis)*

Hymns for Sunday (Hymns and Psalms)

276 When morning gilds the skies, 135 Go tell it on the mountain, 705 take my life and let it be (Tune:624 Mission Praise Nottingham), 429 Out of the depths 381 Forth in thy name

Prayers

Eternal God, giver of love and peace, you call your children to live together as one family. Give us grace to learn your ways and to do your will, that we may bring justice and peace to all people, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Lord of creation, you give a new strength to our faith. Grant that we may recognise your presence in all life and history, and face our trials with serenity and peace. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Partnership News has Changed!

Yes, there have been some changes this week! Take a look at this new trial method and give us your views. The Ministers, and some of our preachers, have commented that it would be helpful to include the three lectionary readings. This new format will allow us to have an Old Testament, New Testament and Epistle Reading. The new size will also enable us to print the text in a larger size and clearer font. We have been restricted for some time on some of the things which we wish to include, simply due to lack of space. This new format will allow greater flexibility. The added cost is about 1p per copy and the printing and stapling is all done by the photocopying machine itself. We no longer have to insert pieces of paper manually each week. This new Partnership publication will be sent to all members who requested copies by Email of either publication previously.

Please do tell us what you think of the new style in order to determine whether it is the best for our churches, hopefully you will be pleased and recognise it as a further step forwards.

Thank You. Next Wednesday at St Mark's there will be a funeral for Mr Singh. I was so pleased that the family have decided to offer the collection from the service towards the fundraising for the new centre at St Mark's. With a target of £200,000 this is extremely kind and we are grateful for gestures such as this to help us reach our target for which we are very grateful. - Charles Royden



The LORD has
done great
things for us,
and we rejoiced.

Psalm 126.3



Partnership Advent Course 2003 at Putnoe Heights Church

An opportunity for some bible study before Christmas. This year we will be holding a

Partnership Advent course on four consecutive Mondays prior to Christmas. Each evening will start with refreshments at 7.30pm and a presentation will be given at 8.00pm. After questions each evening will finish at 9.00pm prompt.

Monday 24 November Sam Cappleman will look at the Old Testament and consider some of its implications for us. A chance to think about those prophecies which told of the Messiah's birth.

Monday 1 December - Neil Bramble-Chapman will consider how we got the Bible, who did decide what should be included or left out of the canon of scripture?

Monday 8 December Joan Crossley will look at the New Testament with specific interest in how the role of women was considered by the early Christians and the later church.

Monday 15 December Charles Royden will look at ethical issues such as abortion, divorce and homosexuality to identify how the Bible can help us make tough decisions.

*Its not to be missed so put
the dates in your diary now!*

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

**Cyril Edwards
Walter Holloway
Norah Flynn
Lillian (Gert) Riseley**

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

Funerals Arranged For This Week

The funeral of Mr James MacConnachie will take place at Bedford Crematorium at 4.00pm on Monday 27 October

The funeral of Mr John Singh will take place at St Mark's Church at 2.30pm on Wednesday 29 October

The burial of ashes of Gwendoline Freeman will take place at Foster Hill Road on Friday 31st October at 2.15pm