



Methodist
Church

Partnership News

9 October 2005
28 in Ordinary

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



Church of
England

Church Services Today

8.30 Service of Holy Communion

Held at both churches

9.30am St Mark's Church - Morning Worship

Preacher - Mr Alan Davis

Leadership Team - Mrs Delia Shephard

Intercessions - Mr Mike Elliott

11.00am Putnoe Heights - Morning Worship

Preacher - Mr Alan Davis

Leadership Team - Mrs Wendy Nash.

Intercessions - Mr Eddy Peck

16 October 29 in Ordinary

8.30 Service of Holy Communion

Held at both churches

9.30am St Mark's Church - Holy Communion

Preacher - Revd Charles Royden

Leadership - Mr Ian Farthing

Intercessions - Mrs Mary Stubbs

11.00am Putnoe - Holy Communion

Preacher - Revd Charles Royden

Leadership Team - Mr Lawrence Wyatt

Intercessions - Mrs Sylvia Cohen

1 Reading - Exodus 33: 12-23 **2 Reading** - 1 Thess

1: 1-10 **3 Reading** - Matthew 22: 15-22

Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Doreen Denny in loving memory of her husband Len on their wedding anniversary, and by Deborah Wallace in loving memory of her daughter Julie Wallace.

The flowers in Church at St Mark's this week have been given by Barbara Edwards in memory of her husband Cyril.

Prayer for Sunday

Let me desire you, O Lord,
with my whole heart.

Thus desiring you, may I seek you;

seeking you, may I find you;

finding you, may I love you;

loving you, may I be parted from those sins

which separate me from you;

and this I beg for Jesu's sake. Amen

Congratulations ! To Joan Crossley on her election to The General Synod of the Church of England. Synod is the national assembly of the Church of England and decides on key issues in the life of the Church.

Contact Details

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

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

The Reverend Neil Bramble-Chapman BA, CTM

(Day off Friday)

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The Reverend Dr. Joan Crossley (Day off Friday)

30 Cutcliffe Grove, Bedford. MK40 4DD.

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The Reverend Charles Royden (Day off Thursday)

The Vicarage, Calder Rise. MK41 7UY

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Partnership Youth and Children's Worker

Mrs Liz Spavins 302349 youth@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 putnoe@thisischurch.com

Centre Manager Mr Barry Snelson 365630

Leadership Team - Mrs Sue Allen 407264

Treasurer Mrs Kathryn Morse 216428

treasurerph@Thisischurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator - Mr John Hitt 404186

Junior Church Co-ordinator - Mrs Liz Spavins 302349

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

Tel/fax & Answering Service 342613 office@thisischurch.com

Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613

Leadership Team - Mr Ian Farthing 210892

Treasurer - Mr John Day 295592 treasurer@Thisischurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator Mr Jim Williams 360605

Children's and Youth Worker-Mrs Liz Spavins 302349

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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).

9.00 am Clubhouse at St. Mark's for those with Learning Disabilities. Karen Bywater 315460.

10.00am Supple Strength at Putnoe Heights. Louise Woodcock 270302

12.00pm - 1.00pm Story box Putnoe Heights church welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible story, singing and activities. Lots of fun, no charge. Contact Liz on 01234 302349

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

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

6.15 pm Brownies Putnoe. Penny Fulham 406045

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. Jacky Hayward 307648. New members welcome.

7.30pm Whist Drive - At St Mark's each month the next one 17 October St. Mark's 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. Mrs Olive Shotbolt 267203

9.30am Jo Jingles at St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Jayne Phillips 01582 485333

10.00am Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights. Mrs Stileman 822230

1.30-3pm Toddlers Playtime at Putnoe Heights. 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 Val Careless 345213.

2.00pm Library Walk W.I. at Putnoe Heights meets monthly. Contact Morag Tompkins 356895

2 - 5pm Police Surgery. St Mark's Foyer.

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

2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship - Next meeting 11 October Social, Mr. Alan Cox-Betty Wyatt 350188.

2.15pm Putnoe Heights Men's Fellowship. Next meeting 11 October—Mr. Alan Cox Lawrence Wyatt 350188.

2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group. Meets

fortnightly at St. Mark's. Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225

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

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

6.45pm Guides at Putnoe Heights. Emma Holloway 293792

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

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

7.30pm Bibleway Church at Putnoe Heights. Bible study & prayers. Revd. Tarr on 360188 or 07866775515

7.45 pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club - Meets fortnightly. Next meeting 7.45pm

4 October - Teaching Innuvit Children Mrs. Joyce Thomas Madge Walsh 359088

8.30-9.30pm St. Mark's - Qi Gong (Self help healing group) - 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 . Jenny Coggins 266379

9.00 a.m. Clubhouse at St Mark's for those with Learning Disabilities. Contact Karen Bywater 315460.

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

Luncheon Club at Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next meeting 5 October Putnoe 365630

1- 3pm Police Surgery at Putnoe Heights .

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

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

6.00pm Self Defence at Putnoe Mr James 07711 687449

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

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

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

7pm Putnoe Guild meets monthly at Putnoe Heights. 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. Ken Marriott 214867

8.45-9.45pm St. Mark's - Qi Gong (Self help healing group) starting 1 Oct - Mr F Steele 355937

Thursday

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

9.45am Yoga at Putnoe Heights. Karen Simpson 244970

10.30am - 12.00am Fledglings at St Mark's

2.00pm - 3.00pm Clinic at St. Mark's 267444

12pm Story box St Mark's Church welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12 noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible story, singing and activities. Lots of fun, no charge. Contact Liz Spavins on 1234 302349

1.30-3pm Toddler Playtime at Putnoe Heights. Geraldine Skeel 406828

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

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

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

4.00 Story box Plus at Putnoe Heights for 4-10year old. A preparation group for a drama for the first Sunday in the month.. Meets 4-5pm, drinks from 3.30pm Liz Spavins 302349

5.30 - 7.30pm Police Surgery. St Mark's Foyer.

6.15 pm Weightwatchers at St. Mark's.

Mrs Margaret Ralph 01767 224978.

6.15pm Brownies at Putnoe Heights. Helga Nash 218521

7.00pm Club 2000 at Putnoe Height. Pat Stidolph 345247

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

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

7.30 - 9.30pm Embroiderer's Guild St Mark's- 3rd Thursday of the month. Mrs K Sage 771525

7.30-9.30pm Bibleway Church- Bible Studies every 2nd Thursday- Pastor Tarr 360188

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

8.00 - 10pm Bedford Writers Circle meets at St Mark's 3rd Thursday each month. 1st Thursday as from January 2006 Mr John Broadhouse 740271

Friday

9.30am U3A Exercise at Putnoe Heights. Carole Maunder 301325

9.00 am Clubhouse at St. Mark's for those with Learning Disabilities. Karen Bywater 315460.

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

7. 30pm Bibleway Young Peoples meeting Contact Pastor Tarr 360188

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

Saturday

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

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

2.30pm Calligraphy Group at Putnoe Heights. Meets monthly next meeting. Philip Jones 350295

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 360188 Mob. 07866775515

6.00pm TNT (The Nearly Teens) meet fortnightly at Putnoe Heights for various fun activities. Contact

**Don't Forget.....
Church Councils this week
everybody invited**

Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council

12 October

Circuit Meeting 16 March

St Mark's Leadership Team -

4 October at Vicarage, 17 January,

21 February, 24 April, 6 June, 12 September

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team 21 November

meet at Putnoe Heights Church

St Mark's Church Management Meeting

1 November. All meetings to start 7.00pm

Putnoe Heights Management - 14 Nov,

16 Jan 2005

Putnoe Church Council 10 Oct 2005, 6 February

Deanery Synod 16 November

Pastoral Group Meeting - 6 February 2006 2.00pm

Churchyard Committee -

Putnoe Heights Mission Group Meeting .

Partnership Council - 24 January,

Brickhill Parish Council 13 October

Visit of Bishop Christopher 23 October

Joint Deanery Circuit 18 January,

Annual Congregational Meeting 7 May

Calendar dates appear also on our church website www.ThisChurch.com.

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

Bible Notes

Ordinary 28 Year A Trinity 20 (Green)

Verse of Scripture Philippians Chapter 4

Rejoice in the Lord always.
I will say it again: Rejoice!

A Collect Prayer - Before we read we pray.

Lord, in your goodness, open our eyes to your light and so fill our hearts with your glory, that we may acknowledge Jesus as Saviour and hold fast to his word in sincerity and truth. We make our prayer through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

First Reading – Exodus 32: 1-14

When the people saw that Moses was so long in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said, "Come, make us gods who will go before us. As for this fellow Moses who brought us up out of Egypt, we don't know what has happened to him."

Aaron answered them, "Take off the gold earrings that your wives, your sons and your daughters are wearing, and bring them to me." So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron. He took what they handed him and made it into an idol cast in the shape of a calf, fashioning it with a tool. Then they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." When Aaron saw this, he built an altar in front of the calf and announced, "Tomorrow there will be a festival to the LORD." So the next day the people rose early and sacrificed burnt offerings and presented fellowship offerings. Afterward they sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in revelry. Then the LORD said to Moses, "Go down, because your people, whom you brought up out of Egypt, have become corrupt. They have been quick to turn away from what I commanded them and have made themselves an idol cast in the shape of a calf. They have bowed down to it and sacrificed to it and have said, 'These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt.' "I have seen these people," the LORD said to Moses, "and they are a stiff-necked people. Now leave me alone so that my anger may burn against them and that I may destroy them. Then I will make you into a great nation." But Moses sought the favour of the LORD his God. "O LORD," he said, "why should your anger burn against your people, whom you brought out of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, 'It was with evil intent that he brought them out, to kill them in the mountains and to wipe them off the face of the earth'? Turn from your fierce anger; relent and do not bring disaster on your people. Remember your servants Abraham, Isaac and Israel, to whom you swore by your own self: 'I will make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and I will give your descendants all this land I promised them, and it will be their inheritance forever.' " Then the LORD relented and did not bring on his people the disaster he had threatened. (This is the word of the Lord -- Thanks be to God)

Second Reading - Philippians 4: 1-9

Therefore, my brothers, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, that is how you should stand firm in the Lord, dear friends! I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, loyal yoke fellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life. Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you (This is the word of the Lord -- **Thanks be to God**)



Many
are
called
but few
are
chosen

Matthew 22.14



Third Reading - Mathew 22: 1-14

Jesus spoke to them again in parables, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a king who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his servants to those who had been invited to the banquet to tell them to come, but they refused to come. "Then he sent some more servants and said, 'Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet.' "But they paid no attention and went off—one to his field, another to his business. The rest seized his servants, mistreated them and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his army and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding banquet is ready, but those I invited did not deserve to come. Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find.' So the servants went out into the streets and gathered all the people they could find, both good and bad, and the wedding hall was filled with guests. "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing wedding clothes.

¹²'Friend,' he asked, 'how did you get in here without wedding clothes?' The man was speechless. Then the king told the attendants, 'Tie him hand and foot, and throw him outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' "For many are invited, but few are chosen." (Reader: This is the word of the Lord - **Thanks be to God**)

Commentary

In the passage from Matthew this week we read about a very special invitation to a banquet. It is not just an ordinary party to which a man invites guests, it is an invitation from a king. The best food and drink would have been prepared, servants were sent out to "summon the invited guests to the feast." According to the custom of the time, the guests had already received the invitation and were waiting for when things were prepared and they received the announcement to come to the feast. The guests had already accepted the invitation and been catered for! But the story takes an unexpected twist. At the last minute and for some unexplained reason the cream of society behaves quite rudely. They claim they have more important things to do, important business to conduct and so, cannot come to the feast. What an insult to the royal house! They are utterly unappreciative of the offer which is made. They are so ungrateful that one not only refuses to go but kills the servant who bring the invitation.

So in the story Jesus is clear, the deviant guests were not outsiders. When people heard Jesus speaking about a king inviting people to a banquet they would know exactly what he was speaking about. The King is God and the people who were invited were the Jews. God was planning the great party for which the Jewish people had waited for so long, but now at the last minute they were refusing. The prophets who had proclaimed the coming kingdom had been ridiculed and killed, the Messiah was present and ready and they all rejected the offer.

The hearers would also come to realise exactly what Jesus meant when he spoke of the King sending his soldiers to destroy the city. After the fall of Jerusalem in AD70 the pieces of the story would all fit neatly into place.

So what about those who came? Nobody who came would be able to boast of anything they had done to get there. They could claim no privilege or rank. None of them had a special status. They came because they were hungry, not because they could afford it or were posh. So the parable becomes our story too. We are now the recipients of God's gracious hospitality and generosity. We are Christian people because of God's generosity, not because of any good we may have done. We claim no right and we feel privileged to find ourselves in the banquet hall. We are from the highways and byways no longer. We are honoured guests. Just like the guests invited to the banquet in the story, each one of us is invited as a special guest by God to his celebration. It is a truly remarkable thing that God should bother with us at all and yet he goes so far as to make us honoured guests.

In the midst of a troubled and turbulent world, where the frailty of life is ever before us, the simple message of this parable should come to us as a great reassurance. In spite of the seeming unimportance which attaches to us in the universe, nevertheless our lives are significant. Life might so often seem cheap and unimportant and yet we are individually watched over and cared for by God. The realisation that God is involved with each of us should change the way that we think about things, life is no longer a series of abstract choices, we are not adrift subject the vagaries of life. This message should cause us to have much peace and a sense of purpose for the future which gives real meaning to our lives. Sadly for many people this is simply not the case, offered such a magnificent invitation they choose to ignore the blessings of God and miss out on the generosity of God. The message of the story is clear, if you choose not to go, then somebody else will take your place. For this reason we should not be slow to respond but willingly answer God's call on our lives. *Charles Royden*

Meditation Ramadan - Understanding other faiths

The Islamic holy month of Ramadan began on the sighting of the new moon, 4 Oct 2005. During the 29/30 days of Ramadan all adult Muslims must give up food, drink, smoking and sexual activity during the hours of daylight. Sawm (fasting) is the fourth pillar of Islam.

Listen to Umh Haider of Basra

"Ramadan isn't about how much you eat or drink, it's an examination of the faith inside of your soul. God said that 'your reward depends upon your effort,' and that 'all the other months of the year are for the people, but this one month is for me.' Ramadan is the best month to clean your heart and soul. When you feel hungry you can remember the suffering of the poor, who are usually hungry, and by remembering you can help them always. Ramadan isn't just to forbid you from eating and drinking; it's to forbid you doing any bad thing. During Ramadan, Islamic activities increase, like praying, reading from the Quran, and helping others. These activities strengthen Islamic relationships because you must join with other Muslims."

Post Communion Prayer.

God our Father, whose Son, the light unfailing, has come from heaven to deliver the world from the darkness of ignorance: let these holy mysteries open the eyes of our understanding that we may know the way of life and walk in it without stumbling, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hymns (*Please distribute Morning Worship and Hymns and Psalms*)

1. Tell out my soul 86, 2. I'll go in the strength of the Lord, 3. Come sinners to the Gospel feast Tune Fulda 460 4. What a friend we have in Jesus 559 5. Mine eyes have seen the glory 242

Second Hymn 862 Mission Praise

I'll go in the strength of the Lord, in the paths he has marked for my feet.
I'll follow the light of his word, nor shrink from the dangers I meet.
His presence my steps shall attend, his fullness my wants shall supply.
On him 'till my journey shall end, my unwavering faith will rely.

*I'll go, I'll go in the strength, I'll go in the strength of the Lord.
I'll go, I'll go in the strength, I'll go in the strength of the Lord.*

I'll go in the strength of the Lord, to work he appoints me to do.
In joy which his smile doth afford, my soul shall its vigour renew.
His wisdom shall guard me from harm, his power my sufficiency prove.
I'll trust his omnipotent arm and prove his unchangeable love.

I'll go in the strength of the Lord, to conflicts which faith will require.
His grace as my shield and reward my courage and zeal shall inspire.
Since he gives the word of command to meet and encounter the foe.
with his sword of truth in my hand to suffer and triumph I'll go.

Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead

God, the journey ahead is one into the unknown. To move forward with confidence, I need to know that you are with me. Make your presence known to me. Show me your glory. Pass by me in this time of prayer and show yourself to be with me. I will declare your glory. I will speak your name. I will declare your presence so that my companions on the journey may be encouraged. Help me today, God, to be distinct—to stand out in the courage and hope and faith, born of glimpses of your passing through my life—that I might be a source of courage and hope and faith to others. Amen. Jana L. Norman-Richardson Book of Daily Prayer

When we stand gazing upwards, bring us down to earth: with the love of a friend through the songs of the sorrowing in the faces of the hungry. When we look to you for action, demand some work of us, by your touch of fire, your glance of reproof, your fearful longing. As ruler over all: love us into action; fire us with your zeal; enrich us with your grace to make us willing subjects of your rule. *Janet Nightingale, Christian Aid, from Acts 1-2*

Lord Jesus Christ, you said, 'May they all be one, just as, Father, You are in me and I am in You, so that the world might believe it was You who sent me.' Dear Lord, bring together in love and peace all who believe in You. Amen *Cardinal Basil Hume OSB (1923-99)*

News, Views and Information

Bedford Ecumenical Lay Training Centre

'Practical Spirituality' course. Wednesday 12, 19 October & 2, 9 November 2005. 7.45 - 9.30pm at St Andrew's Church. Rev Dr Joan Crossley 344536

Storybox at Putnoe If you would like to join the story telling rota, contact Liz Spavins on 302349. We are also looking for extra hands to help set up and put away tables once a month.

Pilgrimage of Faith On Sunday 16 October at Priory Methodist Church at 2.30pm. As part of the seminars, Anne Topping will leading a session on Human Sexuality.

Gwen and Peter Beswick would like to say a deep and heartfelt thank you for the varied ways of continuing help and the many cards sent during and since Peter's stay in St John's.

A seminar at Priory Methodist Church on Sunday October 16th from 2-30 to 4-30 to explore issues in relation to sex and sexuality within a faith community. Please let Gordon Beeden on 01234 267782 know if you are coming.

Footprints next Sunday walk is on October 16th in the Keysoe area for parts of the Triple Triangle Walk. We will meet at 2.30pm at the entrance to Keysoe Park Wood on the Riseley Road approx 2 miles from the B660 at Keysoe Brook End. It is on the roadside just before Riseley Hill (Map ref. 053620). If it has been wet, stout footwear will be required. Contact Sue & Richard Butler on Bedford 354183 for further details.

Commemoration Service. The Partnership Commemoration Service for the Faithful Departed takes place at St Mark's Church on Remembrance Sunday 13 November at 3.00pm. This annual service is open to everybody and we hope that you will feel able to come, especially if you have a special memory for somebody who has died.

Deanery Circuit Service. There will be a special joint Deanery / Circuit meeting on January 18 2006 at Priory Methodist Church. This is open to anybody who would like to attend,.

Recycling St Mark's are getting serious about recycling, reducing energy use and waste. New signage has been placed around the Centre covering all areas of waste and energy use. Please help us as we seek to play our part - reuse, reduce and recover.

Bridge Cottage is advertised this week on the

church website, with photos details, specs and guide price etc.

Mr.Frank Branston The Mayor of Bedford attends Brickhill Parish Council meeting at 7.45pm on Thursday 13 October at St Mark's .Open meeting & all are welcome to come along & talk to the Mayor about issues that concern the community.

Christmas Cards & small gifts on sale in Aid of Sue Rider at Moggerhanger in Shopmobility on Wednesday from 9.30—1pm

NSPCC Coffee morning/Bring & Buy Friday 28 October from 10 –12 noon at Putnoe Heights Church. Entrance £1 including coffee/tea.

Autumn Craft Day Saturday 19 November at Priory Methodist Church from 9.45 to 4.30. £3 per half day session. Information & booking forms from Pam Seymour 305695.

Wanted a person to work in Hazeldene Heights Pre School 2 sessions a week. Must be willing to train. Please apply in writing to Mrs Janet Smith at Putnoe Heights Church by 14 October.

Want to know more about NCH? Come to Priory Methodist Church on Monday 10th October 2005 at 7.30pm for the latest videos showing the work, and an update by the local representative. Refreshments during the evening. Vera Pearson

Fifties Nite at Putnoe Heights Saturday 22 October at 7.30pm. To celebrate the dedication of a new Methodist Church at Putnoe Heights in October 1955. Tickets £7.10s 0d (£7.50)

Brass, Buffet and The Bishop A night with Bishop Christopher on Sunday 23 October at 7.15pm. Ticket £5. Bedford Town Band will play. After refreshments there will be an opportunity to meet the Bishop informally. There will be a public session at which the Bishop will respond to questions from the audience. Please try and let us know if you have any questions beforehand. Email, telephone or fax St Mark's Office.

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Putnoe Heights Church Finance

What is the current situation?

Currently the income at Putnoe Heights church is less than its expenditure. Each month the shortfall is approximately £800, which will grow to more than £1000 per month next year if we do nothing.

How serious is it?

The situation is very serious and it is imperative that we take immediate action.

What exactly is the problem?

The fundamental problem is that our weekly giving through the offertory plate, envelopes and standing orders (including the tax rebates we can claim) do not cover our Ministry Costs. These keep increasing between 5-10% per year and our giving has not kept up. Other costs at the church, such as building maintenance costs, have also risen due to increased usage of the premises but these are more than offset by the increase in revenue we receive from lettings. In fact, the income from lettings subsidises our ministry costs each month.

What are Ministry Costs?

Ministry Costs are the money we have to pay to the Methodist and Anglican churches for our ministers Neil and Charlie (Joan and Sam are effectively 'free'). These costs are called the Methodist Assessment and the Church of England Parish Share. In addition to this these costs there are some small costs for ministerial expenses such as petrol and telephones each month but these are not substantial.

Can we look to the Circuit for financial help?

The circuit could, in principle, offer us a loan but the view of the Leadership team is that this would not reflect good financial management. This is because loans have to be repaid, and without the income to repay the loan we would be putting the church into further debt.

Did we see this coming?

Back in 2002 we published a booklet called 'How much does it cost?', indicating the need to increase our giving by 15% each year if Putnoe, and the circuit were to match projected expenses with income. This has not happened and the congregation has been informed of this several times in the past.

What about the money we will receive from Great Barford?

The money we will receive from the Great Barford legacy is effectively ring fenced by the Methodist church so that it is rightly used for capital projects rather than ongoing church expenses. In any case, using a legacy to solve ongoing cash flow problems and a shortcoming in giving is thought not to be appropriate.

Can't we just cut our costs?

The gap between income and expenditure is sufficiently large that cutting costs alone will not bridge the gap. However, it is important to be financially prudent and good stewards of God's resources and to the leadership team is targeting to cut the church running costs by 15%. These savings will come from a reduction in utilities, consumables and other general expenses.

So what do we need to do?

We need to increase our giving as a whole Church Community and as individuals by 15% each month. So, for example, if you currently give £1 per week, please consider raising this to at least £1.15, if you give £5, increase to at least £5.75, if you give £10, increase to at least £11.50. This, together with the cost savings we will make will put the church back on a sound financial footing and provide a solid basis for mission and worship.

What are the implications if we don't increase our giving?

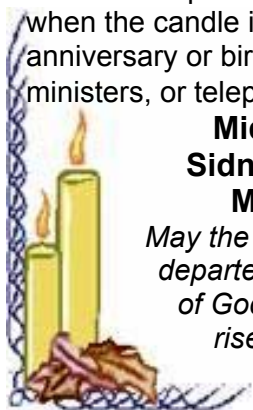
If we cannot increase our income to match our expenses, we will become insolvent and ultimately we will need to reduce the number of Stipendiary Ministers (Methodist or Church of England) in the Circuit in order to balance our books. However, the leadership team are confident that with sound financial and cash flow management coupled to responsible, committed and increased giving we will be able to meet our current financial shortcomings and move forward and grow our mission, ministry and witness in the local community and beyond.

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.

Midge Howard
Sidney Reginald Sells
Malcolm Fisher

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



The Methodist Relief and Development Fund received an extra £110,000 in the year to 31 August. The Gift Aid scheme enables charities to claim back tax paid on donations. For every £1 'gift aided' by a taxpayer, the charity receives an extra 28p at no cost to the donor. Sarah Hagger, MRDF Supporter Relations Team, said, "This extra £110,000 comes as a result of hundreds of people doing something as simple as filling in an MRDF gift aid envelope or a declaration form. The total raised through gift aid this year is the highest that we've ever achieved."

Forthcoming funerals to be taken by our Ministers
The funeral of Dawn Margaret Bobbett will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Friday 14 October at 1pm Neil Bramble-Chapman
The funeral of Peter Raymond Green will take place at Bedford Crematorium Thursday 13 October at 4pm Neil Bramble-Chapman