



Methodist  
Church

# Partnership News

13 July 2008

Ordinary 15



Church of  
England

## Partnership Church Services Today

### 8.30am Holy Communion every Sunday

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

### 9.30am St. Mark's Morning Worship

Preacher - Revd Dr Joan Crossley  
Leadership Team - Mrs Avril Williams  
Intercessions - Mr Warwick Holden

### 11.00am Putnoe Heights - Morning Worship

Preacher - Revd Dr Joan Crossley  
Leadership Team - Mrs Wendy Nash  
Intercessions - Mrs Sue Allen

## 20 July - Ordinary 16

### 9.30am St. Mark's - Holy Communion

Preacher - Revd Charles Royden  
Leadership Team - Mrs Morag Stewart  
Intercessions - Mr Mike Elliott

### 11.00am Putnoe Heights - Holy Communion

Preacher - Revd Charles Royden  
Leadership Team - Mr Lawrence Wyatt  
Intercessions - Mrs Claire Peck  
Joan is away on holiday this week

### Bible Readings

1. Genesis 28: 10-18a
2. Romans 8: 12-26
3. Matthew 13: 24-30, 36-43

## Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights this week have been given by Grace Foster to celebrate the graduation of her son Robert, with a PhD degree in Theology.

The flowers at St Mark's this week have been given by Barbara Joy in memory of her daughter Linda.

## Prayer for Sunday

Flood our lives with your grace, O Lord.  
Fill our whole being with your radiance,  
our innermost souls with your presence,  
and our very wills with your strength.

Let us shine with the light of Christ,  
let us preach by example  
and let us carry nothing in our hearts  
but your love; through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

*John Henry Newman, 1801-90*

## Contact Details

### The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR  
266952 Fax- 402624 NSM@ThisisChurch.com  
(Sam also works full time as a General Manager for Hewlett Packard)

### The Reverend 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

### For Data Protection Purposes

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

Partnership News is also archived on our  
church website [www.ThisisChurch.com](http://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.  
Please also ask us if you would like a home visit for any reason.*

## Putnoe Heights Church Centre

Open 9am—5pm Monday to Friday

Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com

Centre Manager Mr Barry Snelson 365630 & 344417

Leadership Team Mrs. Wendy Nash 357119

Treasurer Mr Ian Morse 216428 treasurerph@thisischurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator - Mr John Hitt 404186

Youth & children's worker - Mrs Spavins 302349

youth@thisischurch.com

## St. Mark's Church Centre (Open 9am - 5.00pm)

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

Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613

Leadership Team - Mr Mike Cooper 306751

Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator Mr Williams 360605

# Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

## Monday

### 9.30-12.00pm Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school

Headteacher Mrs Janet Smith ☎326685

### 8.30-5.30pm Mon-Fri St Mark's Pre-school

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin ☎312634

(See website for more details)

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

### 10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group.

St Mark's Mr Kellie ☎721063

### 10.45am U3A Playreading

St Mark's C Birks ☎219607

**12.00pm Story box** 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. ☎Liz 302349

**1.45pm U3A History Group** St Mark's 2nd & 4th week of the month. ☎ David Fowler 824474

**4.00pm Storybox Plus** Putnoe Heights for 4-9 year Old. Meet at 3.30 for refreshments & games. Then till 5pm 'follow the year' through stories, drama, singing & craft activities. We then make a short presentation in church on first Sunday in each month. ☎Liz Spavins 302349

**4.15pm Rosemary Conley Diet & Fitness.** Putnoe Heights. Margo Needham 843747

**4.15pm Kumon Maths** Putnoe Heights. Mrs Raksha Mistry ☎01908 392698

**6.00pm Brownies** St Mark's. Mrs C Mathew ☎826190

**6.15 pm Brownies** Putnoe. Sharon Tanner ☎07720713738.

6.15 Pilates at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859

**7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild** St Mark's 1st week every month Pat Nicholson ☎353518

**7.30pm Cancer Care Society.** Meets monthly at St Mark's. Contact Mr J Dewhurst ☎01908 377020

**7.15pm Guides.** St Mark's. Mrs Gill Lake ☎218091

**7.15pm Yoga.** Putnoe Heights Lena Holland ☎244970

**7.30pm Whist Drive.** St Mark's 3rd & 5th week each month. Next meeting 21 July Judith Stanton. ☎823313

**7.30pm House group** 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck ☎267567.

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

## Tuesday

**9.30am Candlewicking** (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Judi Staughton ☎341821

**9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World** St. Mark's. Helen Folbigg ☎351223

**10am -Bedford Arts Society** starting at St Mark's on the 11th September. ☎Mrs Brown 771676

**1.30pm Toddlers Playtime.** Putnoe Heights Majella Atkinson ☎325293.

**1.30pm U3A Cinema Group.** St Mark's last Tuesday of the month. Mr Austin ☎365184

**2.00pm U3A Book Group.** St Mark's 3rd Tuesday of the month Mrs Berman ☎364723

**2.00pm Library Walk W.I.** Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Mrs C Allen ☎363878

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

**2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship.** Next meeting 5 August - Summer meeting. Betty Wyatt ☎350188.

**2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group.** St Mark's alternate weeks. Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling ☎262225

**2.30pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup.** St Mark's alternate weeks. Mary Stubbs ☎406784.

**3.45pm Stars School of Dance.** Putnoe Heights. Esther Sancto ☎295862 or ☎07917582468.

**7.00pm Hearts in Beds Cardiac Support Group** St Mark's 1st Tuesday ☎Parsons 351150

**7pm Keep Fit.** St. Mark's Jan Gregory ☎328455

**7pm MT Karate** [all ages] Putnoe Heights. Karen King ☎07941 264885

**7.30pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Bible study & prayers. Revd.Tarr ☎360188 or 07866775515

**7.30pm Chartered Management Institute** St Marks 3rd week of the month. Mrs Dimmock ☎01525 862374

**7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club** - Meets fortnightly. Next meeting 15 July 'Bring and Share Meal' Audrey Wilkins ☎365068 or Margaret Gentle ☎309043

## Wednesday

**9.15am Paint Tots** St Mark's Jacqui Hanahan ☎824475

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

**9.30am Body Control Pilates.** Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith ☎07973174430.

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

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

**10am Sewing & Chat.** Putnoe Heights Valerie Russell ☎01462 815966

**10.30 am U3A Art Appreciation** Putnoe Heights Fortnightly. Audrey Hancock ☎365915.

**Luncheon Club.** Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next meeting 18 June 2008 Putnoe Heights Office ☎365630

**12.30pm Men's Fellowship Lunch** St Mark's 2nd week each month. Chris Izzard ☎212164

**1.00-3pm Police Surgery** at Putnoe Heights .

**1.15pm Bridge Club for the Retired.** St. Mark's. Mr Barnes ☎261811

**1.45 Scots Society Whist** monthly .All welcome Nancy Barr 268147

**2pm U3A Whist Group** St Mark's 3rd week of the month Ken Silvester ☎400584

**2.15pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit.** Putnoe Heights Mrs Webster ☎856966

**4.15pm Kumon Maths.** Putnoe Heights Mrs Raksha Mistry ☎01908 392698

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

**6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation** Putnoe Heights Racheall Monton ☎01234 297138

**6.30pm Karate.** St Mark's Karen ☎079412 64885

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

**7pm U3A Whist Group** St Mark's 4th Wednesday of the month. Ken Silvester ☎400584

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

**7.00pm Putnoe Guild** Putnoe Heights monthly Janice ☎Loxley 347073

**7.00pm U3A Sky at Night** 2nd Wednesday of the month. Mr Farish ☎824984

**7.45pm Badminton Club** Putnoe Heights All welcome. Ken Marriott ☎214867

**8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club** St Mark's, 1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesday. Next meeting 16 July 2008 Guest caller - Don Flowers. Graham ☎406359 or Alan 345312.

**8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club** St Mark's 1st week in the month. Mrs Gansfield ☎215016 7.45 for 8pm God talk—women's group monthly meeting 11 June for worship and friendly chat at Wendy Nash's Contact Majella Atkinson ☎325293

### Thursday

**9.30am Thursday Prayer Group.** Putnoe Heights in the quiet room. 26 June will be at 14 Flint Way. Sylvia Cohen ☎343424

*Request for prayer can be written in the prayer diary on the information table.*

**9.40am Jo Jingles.** St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Jayne Phillips ☎01582 485333

**9.45am Yoga** Putnoe Heights Lena Holland ☎244970

**9.45am Chat and Play** weekly at St. Mark's. A group for Mums & toddlers. £1.75. More details from St. Marks Office ☎342613 or Emma Strangwick ☎211070

**12pm Storybox** weekly at 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 Emma Strangwick ☎211070

**1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic** St. Mark's 267444

**1.30pm Toddler Playtime.** Putnoe Majella Atkinson ☎325293.

**2pm Putnoe Bridge Club.** Gerald Palmer ☎345991

**5.30pm Police Surgery.** St Mark's Foyer.

**6.15 pm Weightwatchers.** St. Mark's. Mrs Margaret Ralph ☎01767 224978.

**6.15pm Brownies.** Putnoe Heights Helga Nash ☎218521

**6.15pm Bedford Junior Chess Club.** St. Mark's Mr C Hill ☎772922

**7.00pm Club 2000** Putnoe Heights Nina Ovenden ☎825059

**7pm U3A Folk & Poetry Group.** St Mark's 2nd & 4th week of the month. Doug Ovenden ☎825059

**7.00pm British Cardiac Patients Assoc.** at Putnoe bi monthly Mrs. E. Marriot 303834

**7.30pm Bedford Senior Chess Club** St Mark's Mr P Housden ☎376597

**7.30pm Bedford Embroiderers' Guild** St Mark's 3rd Thursday of the month. Mrs C Smith ☎344544

**8.00pm Bedford Writers Circle.** St Mark's 1st week each month. Mr Newton ☎01525 378193

**8.00pm Magpies Women's Group** St Mark's 2nd & 4th week Jean Birks ☎219607

**8.00pm Brickhill Wives** St Mark's 1st and 3rd week Next meeting Mrs Woods ☎404702

### Friday

**9.30-12.30pm & 12.30 - 2.30pm U3A Photography Group** St Marks 4th week Joyce Fildes ☎353086

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

**1.30pm Stars School of Dance** Putnoe Heights Contact Esther Sancto ☎295862 or ☎07917 582468

**2.00pm U3A Gardening Group** Putnoe Heights Eve Whitehead ☎356875

**6.30pm -7.30pm Line Dancing. Beginners 7-8pm Improvers** St Mark's Christine Rushton ☎782360

**7pm Bedford Arts Society** fortnightly Putnoe Heights from 8 September. Malcolm Smith ☎01234 400741

**7.45pm Astrology Group** St Mark's as from 11th January. Mr Kenworthy ☎402792

### Saturday

**9.00pm Stars School of Dance.** Putnoe Esther Sancto ☎295862 or ☎07917 582468

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

**1.30pm Young Embroiders** bi monthly Terry Fletcher Tel 357198

**7.00pm Duplicate Bridge.** St Mark's Mrs Pillinger ☎212066

### Sunday

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

**11.00 - 12.00 Church and Junior** at Putnoe Heights for the under 9's and Young Peoples Fellowship (Y.P.F) for our young adults. A crèche is also available.

**1pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Revd. Tarr ☎360188 or ☎07866775515

**6pm T.N.T.** Putnoe. For 9-12 year olds (fortnightly) join us for fellowship, fun, games & outings. Next meeting 13 July at 6pm. A trip to Wild Britain CANCELLED Please see Liz ☎302349.

## Diary Dates



**St Mark's Church Council** – , 18 November  
**St Mark's Leadership Team** – 8 September, 24 November  
**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team** – 1 September  
**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Committee**

**Putnoe Heights Management Meetings** 14th July.

**St Mark's Church Forum Meeting** - .9 September, 12 November all at 12 noon

**Putnoe Church Council** - 6 October.

**Pastoral Group Meeting** - Monday September 30th at 4.30pm

**Churchyard Committee** - November 12 at 11am

**Putnoe Heights Mission Group** –

**Partnership Council** - May 13th at St Mark's

**Brickhill Parish Council Meetings** -

**Deanery Meeting** - 18 September, 13 November

**Circuit/Deanery Meeting**

**Woodland Burial Trustees** -

**Mission Group Meeting**

**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth**

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

# Ordinary 15

## Opening Verse of Scripture - Romans 8:14

Those who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father." The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children.

## Collect Prayer for the Day

Lord of all power and might, the author and giver of all good things: graft in our hearts the love of your name, increase in us true religion, nourish us with all goodness, and of your great mercy keep us in the same; 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 - Genesis 25; 19-34

This is the account of Abraham's son Isaac. Abraham became the father of Isaac, and Isaac was forty years old when he married Rebekah daughter of Bethuel the Aramean from Paddan Aram and sister of Laban the Aramean. Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was barren. The LORD answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant. The babies jostled each other within her, and she said, "Why is this happening to me?" So she went to inquire of the LORD. The LORD said to her, "Two nations are in your womb, and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger." When the time came for her to give birth, there were twin boys in her womb. The first to come out was red, and his whole body was like a hairy garment; so they named him Esau. After this, his brother came out, with his hand grasping Esau's heel; so he was named Jacob. Isaac was sixty years old when Rebekah gave birth to them. The boys grew up, and Esau became a skillful hunter, a man of the open country, while Jacob was a quiet man, staying among the tents. Isaac, who had a taste for wild game, loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob. Once when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came in from the open country, famished. He said to Jacob, "Quick, let me have some of that red stew! I'm famished!" That is why he was also called Edom. Jacob replied, "First sell me your birthright." "Look, I am about to die," Esau said. "What good is the birthright to me?" But Jacob said, "Swear to me first." So he swore an oath to him, selling his birthright to Jacob. Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and some lentil stew. He ate and drank, and then got up and left. So Esau despised his birthright. (This is the Word of the Lord - **Thanks be to God**)

## Second Reading - Romans 8; 1-11

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God. You, however, are controlled not by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you. And if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ. But if Christ is in you, your body is dead because of sin, yet your spirit is alive because of righteousness. And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you. (This is the Word of the Lord - **Thanks be to God**)

### **Third Reading - Matthew 13: 1-9, 18-23**

That same day Jesus went out of the house and sat by the lake. Such large crowds gathered around him that he got into a boat and sat in it, while all the people stood on the shore. Then he told them many things in parables, saying: "A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path, and the birds came and ate it up. Some fell on rocky places, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly, because the soil was shallow. But when the sun came up, the plants were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants. Still other seed fell on good soil, where it produced a crop—a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown. He who has ears, let him hear." "Listen then to what the parable of the sower means: When anyone hears the message about the kingdom and does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is the seed sown along the path. The one who received the seed that fell on rocky places is the man who hears the word and at once receives it with joy. But since he has no root, he lasts only a short time. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, he quickly falls away. The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful. But the one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown." (This is the word of the Lord—**Thanks be to God**)

### **Post Communion Prayer**

Lord God, whose Son is the true vine and the source of life, ever giving himself that the world may live: may we so receive within ourselves the power of his death and passion that, in his saving cup, we may share his glory and be made perfect in his love; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen

### **Hymns** (*Please distribute Mission Praise and Morning Worship*)

1. Praise to the Lord, 564      2. Bind us together, Lord, 54      3. Lead us, heavenly father lead us, 400      4. Breathe on me breath of God, 67      5. O for a thousand tongues to sing 496

### **Commentary**

The parable of the sower is very familiar and you will have heard many explications of it over the years. I must confess when I hear the parable, I think of my own little attempt to grow lettuce or sunflowers in the garden. When things don't grow it isn't of any importance. But Jesus was trying to tell his people that the barriers to growth, spiritual growth, were real and frightening and could mean the difference between life and death. In Jesus' time the population as a whole were much more keenly aware than most of us now are, of the vital nature of agriculture. The people around Jesus all knew that if the seed did not flourish then starvation, illness and death would shortly follow. This brings a new urgency to the parable.

In his explanation of the story Jesus spoke of the parable as meaning that the types of soil meant different types of personality and their ability to grasp and retain the meaning of the Word. I wonder too, if Jesus' story might be applicable to each one of us: that we are across our lifetimes quite differently able to be receptive to God's word? What if we move in and out of being strong healthy productive plants and revert to becoming spindly or drooping plants at others?

People in this congregation often speak to me about their sense of grief about their children or grandchildren either not having any faith or not a faith which takes them to church. I do not feel we should despair. Many people return to regular worship at key change points in their lives: when they have their first child, when their children do not need them quite so much, after a bereavement. I firmly believe that God calls to us. I believe that our hearts are restless till they rest in God, and that we are pulled gently back to Him, if not in our lives then at the end. God will never let go of us, though we may not always be conscious of it. To return to the metaphor that Jesus uses. I think there are times when we are barren soil indeed. Perhaps when we are very sad or vulnerable. We become barren when we are disappointed or feeling lost.

But the sower, God, just keeps on patiently sending out the seed until we are ready to receive it aright! *Rev Dr Joan Crossley*

## **Meditation**

York. The debate about how to legislate for those who cannot accept Women Bishops was all over the news for days, so if you read a paper or watch television news you could hardly NOT know! It was our own lovely Bishop of St Albans' last time at Synod before he retires and he made a speech to remember. He pointed out that 90% of our time in Synod was spent on debating and legislating on domestic issues such as church fees, clergy discipline and the women bishops procedures. This leaves only ten per cent of our time to work on mission, social justice and the other big issues of the day. Bishop Christopher rightly pointed out that Jesus did not commission his followers to go forth and legislate and debate! Once a national church has a large membership, a legal framework and financial responsibilities, then all the rigmarole of management naturally follows. And of course Synod is the legal body responsible for all that administration and management. It is disheartening to note that all the good people gathered together at Synod are focussed on issues of gender and sexuality almost to the exclusion of anything else. In my sermon today I shall be talking about the challenges of global climate change, which formed the basis of a carefully researched document presented to Synod. The other main external issue this time was a motion on Christian in the workplace, and the spiritual implications of work in general. The tone of this debate was simply uplifting, showing the Church at its very best. A great many wise and experienced people from all walks of life are represented on Synod and they brought their experiences to the floor of the debating chamber. The special challenges of excessive work and the stresses that arise from Britons working the longest hours of any country in Europe were discussed. Another member of Synod spoke movingly of the evil of unemployment and the feelings of desperation, dislocation and worthlessness (as well as the obvious economic hardships) that arise from unemployment. The very good work done by ministers in secular employment (like Sam) were mentioned: the very special role they play in presenting a Christian perspective in the business world and the opportunities they have for ministry to colleagues and contacts.

Several speakers mentioned chaplains, in city centres, shopping malls and commercial centres. The chaplain to Canary Wharf in the economic heart of the city minister to thousands of overworked city employees, retail outlet and catering staff in that densely packed centre of stress and opportunity. The general feeling of the debate was that Christians are already alert to the need to spread the Good news and Christ's love beyond the limitations of Church and the time frame of Sunday. But that we should be alert to the need to support those whose ministry is in these new areas and to divert funding in these new directions. *Rev Dr Joan Crossley*

## **Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead**

O Lord, my God, grant us your peace; already, indeed, you have made us rich in all things! Give us that peace of being at rest, that sabbath peace, the peace which knows no end. *(St. Augustine)*

Keep us, O God, from pettiness; let us be large in thought, in word, in deed. Let us be done with faultfinding and leave off self-seeking. May we put away all pretences and meet each other, face to face, without self-pity and without prejudice. May we never be hasty in judgment and always generous. Let us take time for all things; make us to grow calm, serene, gentle. Teach us to put in action our better impulses-straightforward and unafraid.

Grant that we may realize it is the little things of life that create difficulties; that in the big things of life we are as one. Oh, Lord, let us not forget to be kind. Amen. *(Mary Stewart, Queen of Scots)*

I arise today through the strength of heaven; Light of the sun, Splendour of fire, speed of lightning, swiftness of the wind, depth of the sea, stability of the earth, firmness of the rock.

I arise today through God's strength to pilot me; God's might to uphold me, God's wisdom to guide me, God's eye to look before me, God's ear to hear me, God's word to speak for me, God's hand to guard me, God's way to lie before me, God's shield to protect me, God's hosts to save me afar and anear, alone or in a multitude.

Christ shield me today against wounding Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me, Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me, Christ on my right, Christ on my left, Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ in the heart of everyone who thinks of me, Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me, Christ in the eye that sees me, Christ in the ear that hears me.

I arise today through the mighty strength of the Lord of creation. Amen (Traditional.)

**TNT** next meeting to Wild Britain has been cancelled.

**Junior Church & YPF** at Putnoe will not take place during August, but we hope to see you all at our summer workshops. Have a great summer. Liz and Sam.

**Shout** 8 places available for 5 –11 year age group at this all day workshop at St. Mary's Goldington, run by the Diocese on Saturday 13 September. Bible activities, mini sports and crafts. Sounds great, see Liz for details and to book your place.

**Congratulations** to Claire Peck on completing her training as an accredited local preacher. A service of recognition will be held later in the year.  
Margaret Peck

**Partnership Council.** Meeting of the Partnership Council on Tuesday 19 August at 6.45pm in the chapel at St Mark's Church. This for the sole purpose of meeting with Circuit representatives to discuss the profile for the new Methodist Minister for the Partnership. The appointment is proposed to involve an appointment in the Partnership which is not full time but includes additional circuit wide duties. If you have any thoughts about the profile for the new minister, please speak with any member of the Leadership Team.

**The Valedictory Service** for Rev. Dr. Joan Crossley will be held at Putnoe Heights Church on 24th August at 6.30pm. All Welcome.

#### **Report from Methodist Conference July 2008.**

Revd Stephen Poxon was inducted as President of the Conference, and Mr. David Walton as Vice President. Conference also ordained 55 new Methodist ministers (50 Presbyters and five Deacons).

Conference addressed a number of contemporary issues, including knife crime, Burma, Zimbabwe, stem cell research and abortion.

Time was spent looking at the Youth Participation Strategy (YPS), a major new initiative aimed at increasing the involvement of people aged 16-23 in the running of the Church both nationally and locally. The YPS will see an investment of more than £4 million over the next five years. The Youth Conference also brought its concerns, including knife crime, Burma and the pressures on young people combining church activities with further education or work.

Conference also committed the Church to fresh ways of expressing its mission. The successful Fresh Expressions scheme, a joint venture with the Church of England, has been renewed by both churches for a further five years. The Methodist

Conference also gave its support to a new Pioneer Ministries scheme, in which the Church will invest over £4 million to establish new congregations across the country, aimed especially at young adults and those who have had no prior contact with any form of church.

Conference received a major report on early human life, looking at issues such as stem cell research, fertility treatments and abortion. The report offers guidance on how to approach these complex and often highly personal topics. It also recognises that attempts to respond to particular medical developments can easily be quickly out of date as the technology moves on. Conference has commended for study the report which says that embryos should not be created solely for the purpose of research, but that it is acceptable for embryos created during fertility treatments to be used for research. The Conference also voted to review the Church's current stance on abortion. Conference affirmed the Covenant with the Church of England, signed in 2003, and supported the creation of a new body to continue the work of implementing it. This new body will for the first time include representation from the Church in Wales and the Scottish Episcopal Church, in recognition that the Methodist Church serves all of Great Britain. The United Reformed Church will also be invited to continue to participate. Conference offered prayer and support to the Church of England's General Synod (meeting almost simultaneously in York) as it addressed major issues.

For the first time, live video of Conference proceedings was broadcast via the Conference website, and a video archive is also available. Live audio was also broadcast in partnership with Premier Christian Radio. Conference also elected its President and Vice-President for 2009-10. The Revd David Gamble were designated to serve as President and Dr Richard Vautrey as Vice President at next year's Conference.

**Future Dates for your diary.** 'The partnership Summer Musical Workshops !!! - a mixture of story, music, dance, drama, crafts & fun. Tuesday 19 August 2– 4 pm 'Its Raining Cats and Dogs' aimed at the under 5's with carers. Tuesday 26 & Wednesday 27 August 10am—3pm 'The 7 Days of Creation' 5 years plus, all abilities . Full details to from Liz.'

**The Great Gappo'** (children's entertainer) joins Storybox and Storybox Plus on Monday 28 July at Putnoe Heights. Meet at 12 for a sandwich lunch. Tickets £2 in advance from Liz. All welcome.

**John Spillman** Many in the Putnoe Heights congregation who remember John and Jane Spillman will be sad to hear that John died last week. Before their retirement to Lancing they were both very active members of the our Church, particularly in their concern for Mission. They initiated our long standing link with the work at Kisiizi Hospital where their son Ian was Medical Director for some years. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jane and the family.

**Methodist Conference Scarborough 5-10 July 2008**

The Methodist Conference has received a major report challenging the Church to eliminate discrimination in an increasingly diverse Christian community. This report is the result of a project initiated in 2004 by the Conference and carried out by the Equalities and Diversity Project, a representative group including members who have experienced oppression due to race, gender, sexuality and disability. The report shows journey the Church has taken in considering these issues since 2004 and indicates the direction of future developments.

The report was presented for exploration by the wider Church, offering an opportunity for the Church to engage in its first comprehensive dialogue about the broad agenda of equalities and diversity. It addresses the many different kinds of discrimination faced by groups both with the churches but also in wider society including, sexism, racism, disablism and homophobia. It also outlines some of the stories that people in these situations have shared with the group. The stories will be collected into a series of booklets to accompany a further report in 2009. Alison Parker, Equalities and Diversity Project Worker for the Methodist Church, says; 'This is a major step on the road to creating a more inclusive, welcoming and credible Church. The Church as the Body of Christ is an expression of unity in the great variety of God's creation. This report has offered a challenging and exciting opportunity to hear the voices of the marginalised and those working for change in the Church.'

The report identifies areas for further work on equalities and diversity in the Church including a theological

exploration of the issues and the formulation of an equal opportunities policy for adoption by the Church in 2009. Conference received the report and commended Equally Different?, a new equalities and diversity campaign resource for use in local churches, circuits and districts. This will include worship and Bible study materials for use by individuals and groups, resources for children and young people considering the issues and display materials such as posters and postcards. A supporting website, [www.methodistchurch.org.uk/equallydifferent](http://www.methodistchurch.org.uk/equallydifferent), will offer the chance for people to share their own experiences and ideas.

The full timetable for the Methodist Conference, including downloadable versions of all the reports to be debated, will be available on the Methodist Conference website. During the Conference you can listen live online to the debates as they take place.

[www.methodistconference.org.uk](http://www.methodistconference.org.uk)

**Explore the meaning of faith in the world of politics - free housegroup resources**

The Art of the Possible is the name of a new resource for churches - six sessions for housegroups with leaders' notes and group handouts. Sessions include: How our images of God shape our understanding of politics What do we mean by "justice"? Being a change-maker How should Christians relate to the state? How does parliament work – and how can we influence it? What does politics mean for your local church? Produced by the Joint Public Issues Team of the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church, the resources can be freely downloaded from:

[www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/artofthepossible](http://www.jointpublicissues.org.uk/artofthepossible)



Petertide ordinations have just taken place in the in the St Albans Diocese, notice anything in particular about the candidates ?

**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.

**Bill Fox  
John Spillman**

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



**Rest in Peace**

There are no funerals this week