



Methodist
Church

Partnership News

7 January 2007

1st Sunday of Epiphany

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



Church of
England

Partnership Church Services Today

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

9.30am St Mark's - Morning Worship

Preacher - Revd Charles Royden
Leadership - Mrs Janet Day
Intercessions - Mrs Alison Holden

11.00am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher - Revd Charles Royden
Leadership Team - Mrs Sam Ware
Intercessions - Dr Tim Wilkes

Services next week 14 January

9.30am St Mark's -

Covenant and Renewal of Baptism Vows

Preacher – Revd Dr Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mrs Delia Shephard
Intercessions - Mr Chris Izzard

11.00am Putnoe Heights -

Covenant and Renewal of Baptism Vows

Preacher - Revd Dr Sam Cappleman
Leadership Team - Mr Lawrence Wyatt
Intercessions - Mrs Sylvia Cohen

Reading 1: Exodus 24:3-11
Reading 2: Jer 31:31-34
Reading 3: Rom 12:1-2 & John 15:1-10

Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Neil and Pam Kinselley to mark their Silver Wedding Anniversary, and also by Jill Richards in memory of her husband, Barry.

We are always grateful for any donations for flowers perhaps to celebrate a special occasion, an anniversary or in memory of a loved one. Please contact Miss Marion Prior 303254 (St Mark's) or Miss Jennie Cooper 404950 (Putnoe Heights)

Prayer for Sunday

**O God, whose glory the heavens are telling, the earth your power, the sea your might, and whose greatness all the hosts of heaven proclaim; to you belongs all glory, honour, majesty and praise; both now and forever, and to the ages of ages.
Amen**

Liturgy of St James, 5th century

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

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 News is also archived on our church 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. 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 - Mr Alan Bayliss 268101

Treasurer Mr Ian 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 - 5.00pm)

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

Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613

Leadership Team - Mrs Janet Day 295592

Treasurer - Mr John Day 295592 treasurer@thisischurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator Mr Jim Williams 360605

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

9.30 - 12.00 pm Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school Mrs Janet Smith 326685

8.30 - 5.30 pm Mon-Fri St Mark's Pre-school Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

(See website for more details)

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

Mini-Strikers Sport for Children at Putnoe aged 2-4 years. Contact Andy Carey 01908 313751 or 07766 142754, or www.ministrikers.co.uk

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, donations. Contact Liz on 01234 302349

2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Arts Society at Putnoe Heights contact Malcolm Smith on 01234 400741 (weekly from 25 September 2006)

4pm Monday Club at St. Marks for 3—8 year olds meet at 3.30. for refreshments , between 4 & 5 Bible story, craft activities & songs. Lots of fun. Contact Liz 302349

4.15pm - Rosemary Conley Diet & Fitness. Putnoe Heights. Miriam Adcock 01908 565044

4.15 - 6.00pm Kumon Maths at Putnoe Heights. Contact Ms Raksha Mistry 01908 392698

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

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 next January '07 Contact 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

10.00am Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights. Mrs Stileman 822230

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

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

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

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

2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship - Next meeting 9 January 2007 The Reverend Dr Sam

Cappleman Contact Betty 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. For details of next meeting contact Mary Stubbs 406784.

3.45 - 5.30pm Stars School of Dance at Putnoe Heights. Esther Sancto 272517 or 07917 0582468.

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

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

Tuesday - 7pm-9pm MT Karate [all ages] at Putnoe Heights. Please

contact Karen King 07941 264885

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

7.30pm Tabernacle of Truth 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 12 December Members Christmas meeting. Contact Madge Walsh 359088

8.30pm St Mark's Church Qi Gong. Contact Mrs D Steele 356384

Wednesday

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

9.30am - Body Control Pilates at Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith 357787.

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

10.30 am U3A Art Appreciation meets fortnightly at Putnoe Heights - For details of next meeting Contact Audrey Hancock 365915.

Luncheon Club at Putnoe Heights fortnightly. For details of next meeting 10 January 2007 contact 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

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

4.15pm - 6pm Kumon Maths at Putnoe Heights Ms Raksha Mistry 01908 392698

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

6.15pm - 7.45pm Yoga and Relaxation at Putnoe Heights. contact Racheall Monton 01234 297138

6.30 - 7.30 at St Mark's Karate contact Karen 079412 64885

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

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

7pm Putnoe Guild meets monthly at Putnoe Heights. Janice Loxley 347073

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

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.*

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

9.45am Yoga at Putnoe Heights. Karen Simpson 244970

1.30pm - 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, donations. Contact Liz Spavins on 302349

1.30-3pm Toddler Playtime at Putnoe Geraldine Skeel 406828

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

2pm - Putnoe Bridge Club. Gerald Palmer 345991

4.00 Story box Plus at Putnoe Heights for 4-11 year old. Meet at 3.30 for refreshments & games. Then till 5pm make props, sing & rehearse a short play to perform in church on the 1st Sunday of each month Lots of fun And it's free! 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 Helga Nash 218521

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

7pm Street Dance at Putnoe Heights. Contact Curtis Ritchie 349255 or 07984 525147

7.00pm Club 2000 at Putnoe Mrs M White 404992

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

7.30 - 9.30pm Embroiderer's Guild at St Mark's 3rd Thursday of the month. Mrs E Rigby 344442

7.30 - 9.30 Tabernacle of Truth Church at Putnoe Bible Studies every 2 Thursday- Pastor Tarr 360188

7.45pm Housegroup meets fortnightly Contact Betty Wyatt 350188

8.00 - 10pm Bedford Writers Circle at St Mark's 1st Thursday each month. Mr Broadhouse 740271

Friday

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

1.30 - 2pm Stars School of Dance at Putnoe.

Contact Esther Sancto 272517 or 07917 582468

2pm U3A Gardening Group at Putnoe Heights

Contact Eve Whitehead 356875

7 - 10pm Bedford Arts Society meets fortnightly at Putnoe Heights from 8 September. Contact Malcolm Smith 01234 400741

7.30pm Youth Club for age 13-18 at St Mark's Church. Contact PCSO Rowland Gilbey 349179

Saturday

9.30 - 11.30am Stars School of Dance at Putnoe.

Contact Esther Sancto 272517 or 07917 582468

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

5 - 7pm Bethesda Church . Contact Pastor Denis Baka 07944 749357

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

Sunday

Junior Church with crèche for under 3's

9.30 - 10.30 at St. Mark's

11-12 at Putnoe Heights.

1 - 4pm Tabernacle of Truth Church at Putnoe Heights - Worship. Contact Revd. Tarr 360188 Mob. 07866775515

6-7.30pm T.N.T. for 9-12 year olds (fortnightly) join us for fellowship, fun, games & outings. At Putnoe. Ring Liz 302349.

6 -7.30pm T.X.T for 13 + fortnightly , join us for fellowship , debate & discussion at Putnoe. Ring Liz 302349

Diary Dates

**St Mark's Church Council – 6th February 07
Circuit Meeting -**

St Mark's Leadership Team – 22nd January 07

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team -

19 February 2007 at Wendy's house

St Mark's Church Management Meeting -

Putnoe Heights Centre Management - 15 January

Putnoe Church Council 29 January 07

Pastoral Group Meeting – 31 January 07

Churchyard Committee - 15 February 07

**Putnoe Heights Mission Group Meeting – 7.30pm
17 January 07, at 14 Flint Way**

Partnership Council - 20 February 07 at St Mark's

Brickhill Parish Council -

Deanery Meeting

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth—

**Calendar dates appear on our church website
www.ThisChurch.com. Please advise St Mark's
Church Office of the dates of your meetings.**

First Sunday of Epiphany

Verse of Scripture - When the Lord had been baptized, the heavens opened, and the Spirit came down like a dove to rest on him. Then the voice of the Father thundered: This is my beloved Son, with him I am well pleased. (Mt 3:16-17)

Collect Prayer - *Before we read we pray*
Heavenly father at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son: may we recognise him as our Lord and know ourselves to be your beloved children; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.
Common Worship Shorter Collect



First Bible Reading - Isaiah Chapter 47:1-7

"Go down, sit in the dust, Virgin Daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, Daughter of the Babylonians. No more will you be called tender or delicate. Take millstones and grind flour; take off your veil. Lift up your skirts, bare your legs, and wade through the streams. Your nakedness will be exposed and your shame uncovered. I will take vengeance; I will spare no one." Our Redeemer--the LORD Almighty is his name-- is the Holy One of Israel. "Sit in silence, go into darkness, Daughter of the Babylonians; no more will you be called queen of kingdoms. I was angry with my people and desecrated my inheritance; I gave them into your hand, and you showed them no mercy. Even on the aged you laid a very heavy yoke. You said, 'I will continue forever-- the eternal queen!' But you did not consider these things or reflect on what might happen.
(Reader: This is the word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**)

Second Reading - Acts 8:14-17

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. When they arrived, they prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit had not yet come upon any of them; they had simply been baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus. Then Peter and John placed their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. (This is the word of the Lord - **All: Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - Luke 3:15-22

The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ. John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." And with many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them. But when John rebuked Herod the tetrarch because of Herodias, his brother's wife, and all the other evil things he had done, Herod added this to them all: He locked John up in prison. When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

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

Post Communion Prayer Lord of all time and eternity, you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son: by the power of your Spirit complete the heavenly work of our rebirth through the waters of the new creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hymns (Please distribute Mission Praise)

1. O breath of life 488 Spiritus Vitae
2. Make way 457
3. Fill thou my life 146 Richmond
4. Name of all majesty 481
5. All hail the power 13 Miles Lane

Commentary

This is the time of year when we remember how Jesus demonstrated his commitment to the ministry to which he was called. We are told that it was while Jesus was praying that the wonderful events occurred. The miraculous Baptism was not something out of the blue, but rather something to confirm what Jesus had known all along. We know this from the events last week where Jesus went missing at the age of 12. He knew that he was in the right place when he was found in the temple. Jesus has spent more than two decades growing in his understanding of the service which he knew he must offer, and the sacrifice which he knew he must make. Here is the baptism experience to affirm him in his role and prepare him for the journey ahead.

When Jesus was baptised he posed an interesting question for Christians. The baptism of John was about repentance and the forgiveness of sin, why then would Jesus be baptised?

Various reasons have been given for Jesus' submitting to the ritual washing.

1. Some think Jesus was manifesting a strong consciousness of sin and its effects on humans.
2. Others, that Jesus was showing God's approval of John's ministry to the people.
3. Or, Jesus may have undergone the ritual as a sign of unity with those outside the Law; his future death would free people from sin. Later, Jesus will refer to his passion and death as a "baptism" he will undergo.)
4. There are those who believe Jesus was a disciple of John and in accepting baptism Jesus was taking the first step towards establishing his own ministry. He may have been taking the first steps away from John and on his own.

But, think about Jesus' being in the same water the crowd had just left. He gets wet with water that touched them and what they left there with John's baptism. Think of what they brought down into the Jordan, what was clinging to them. Not just the sins; but the pain of their lives; the struggles against the big evils that surrounded them--- terrorism, crushing taxation by a foreign power and daily fears of unpredictable violence.

What burdened their hearts when they went into the water? Did they wonder what God was doing to help them out of the mess of their lives--- their dyings, the crippled children, the feeble elderly, the deaths from painful sickness? What about their feelings of inadequacy for not being able to provide enough food for their families or to protect them from the vagaries of daily life? Did they feel they hadn't done enough for God or taken God seriously enough?

Wouldn't we want Jesus to join us in the places and times when we feel most frail, pained, inadequate and sinful? Jesus does not remain aloof from us, judging us from on high. He comes right to where we are gathered with all our burdens and takes them up into himself.

The descent of the Spirit upon Jesus is not just about Jesus, just as our baptism is not just about our personal relationship with God. We are baptized into a community. We share together a creed, a history, and a struggle to make that faith real in the world. The Spirit calls us into community and is present in the community.

God does work in spectacular ways; but if we look for spectacle we most often will be frustrated. In this episode Jesus makes an anonymous entrance that the crowd missed, even though they had been "filled with expectation." Even the voice from heaven is not a public broadcast, but a voice directed to Jesus. It will take the Spirit's gift of fire to burn away the veil over our eyes and our false expectations to purify us so that we notice Jesus' daily entrance ---there among the ordinary, especially the downcast, people.

Meditation

Some voices are unforgettable. If I mention the name 'Edith Piaf', a whole generation will straightaway recall the haunting, desolate beauty of her voice. In our own time the voices of Bryn Terfel and Katherine Jenkins have similar effects - that spine-tingling "something", indefinable, never to be forgotten. Other voices, less famous, remind us of childhood, or adolescence, or times when we were either

extremely happy or very sad.

Imagine now the voice of God. In the Bible there are times when the poets compare God's voice with the sound of an earthquake (the 'foundations shook'), or the sound of 'many waters'. The effect is of awesome majesty and power.

At other times, however, the voice of God is described as quiet, intimate and very close.

This Christmas, as indeed every Christmas, God speaks to us through the stories of the birth of the Christ-child. The voice of God is tender, and very, very beautiful, calling to each one of us to enter the truth that the stories reveal.

Let me put it like this. When I hear a voice from my own place of birth - on the Welsh borders, I experience a pang of homesickness; a deep and sudden longing for the place where I was born and the people with whom I grew up. The place has, of course, changed and many of my family are no longer alive - but the sounds of that place, the sounds of those voices, continue to lie deep within my memory, and the yearning, the longing, are stirred. The Germans refer to this longing in their word 'Heimat', and the Welsh in their word 'Hiraeth'. It is a deep and poignant longing for a place and a people.

Such a longing does not always look backwards: think of the voice of your husband or wife or child or a friend. Their voices too are vibrant with the same kind of intense beauty; the same haunting loveliness.

And so it is with God. At Christmas, amongst all the noise and hullabaloo, if we listen deeply to the silence of our innermost souls, we shall be met by God. He calls us to simply be with him as he is with us in Christ Jesus. The voice of God is the voice of one who calls each of us to our eternal home.

He is the source and the destiny of the longing in our souls.

The Rt Revd Christopher Herbert. Bishop of St Albans

Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead

Grant to us, O Lord, purity of heart and strength of purpose, that no passion may hinder us from doing your will, and no weakness from doing it; that in your light we may see light clearly, and in your service find perfect freedom; through Christ Our Lord. Amen *St Augustine of Hippo, 354-430*

O God, we pray for all those in our world who are suffering from injustice:

For those who are discriminated against because of their race, colour or religion;

For those imprisoned for working for the relief of oppression;

For those who are hounded for speaking the inconvenient truth;

For those tempted to violence as a cry against overwhelming hardship;

For those deprived of reasonable health and education;

For those suffering from hunger and famine;

For those too weak to help themselves

and who have no one else to help them;

For the unemployed who cry out for work but do not find it.

We pray for anyone of our acquaintance who is personally affected by injustice.

Forgive us, Lord, if we unwittingly share in the conditions or in a system that perpetuates injustice.

Show us how we can serve your children and make your love practical by washing their feet.

Mother Theresa of Calcutta

A Prayer of the Ancient Church: Come, O Holy Spirit, come! Come like Holy Fire and burn with us. Come like Holy Wind and cleanse us. Come like Holy Light and lead us. Come as Holy Truth and teach us. Come as Holy Love and enfold us. Come as Holy Power and enable us. Come as Abundant Life and Fill us, Convert us, Consecrate us, Until we are wholly thine. Come, Holy Spirit, Come!

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, grant you a spirit of wisdom and insight to know him clearly. May God enlighten your innermost vision that you may know the great hope to which he has called you, the wealth of his glorious heritage to be distributed among the members of the church, and the immeasurable scope of his power in us who believe.
Ephesians 1:17-19a

News and Information



Chapel Chairs. Buy a chair for St Mark's chapel. Chairs can be donated for a cost of £60 which includes a plaque with inscription

St Albans to Taize 2007. Join this year's pilgrimage 21st - 30th July. If you are aged between 15 & 30 and would like to take part come along to a meeting on Saturday 31st March at Christ

Church, Goldington Road, Bedford at 7.30pm.
www.taize.fr

Putnoe Sunday creche. We are hoping to open a small creche for the very young members of our congregation during our Morning Service, allowing some of our Mums much needed time to worship in peace. If you feel you would like to join us in this venture please speak to Joan or Liz

Books. Please save your books for our Mission Group Book Sale, planned for the end of February at Putnoe Heights Church. More details in the New Year, Sylvia Cohen 34342

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2007

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity a worldwide movement of Christians of many denominations, languages, and great diversity of race and culture, who are engaged in praying and working for the unity of Christians in the service of the wider redemption, unity and peace of all peoples. Every year the dates are the same, 18 to 25 January, regardless of the days of the week. Praying for unity does not involve prayer for any specific schemes for unity. It is about being faithful to the prayer of Jesus Christ, as seen in John 17, 'that they may be one'.

The theme for 2007 is 'He even makes the deaf to hear and the mute to speak,' based on Mark 7.31 - 37. The theme was chosen by the Churches of South Africa. Saturday is 'funeral day' in South Africa when communities, devastated by HIV/AIDS, bury their dead. Week after week, they cope with mourning and carrying on with life. Their experience – of despair, resilience and hope – forms the backdrop for the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2007. Prayers from Africa and striking posters and pamphlets with vibrantly coloured designs of hands reflect the wish from the Churches in South Africa to speak out for those whose suffering is overlooked. The design of hands was inspired by the British Sign Language (BSL) sign for 'speak out'. Christians in South Africa find their faith in Christ gives them the courage to speak out, to break their

silence, to overcome the shame of victims and to overcome ignorance about preventing the disease. The Revd Bob Fyffe, General Secretary of CTBI, said the annual Week of Prayer was more than just an intellectual exercise. For the writers, to listen to the Churches in Africa became 'an exercise of the heart and into the heart of God'. Churches are encouraged to work and pray for all whose suffering is overlooked, who may be other than those with HIV/AIDS.

Local Services for the week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Midday (12.30) services

- 18.1.06 Friends Meeting House
- 19. 1.06 St Joseph & Holy Child
- 22 .1.06 Salvation Army
- 24. 1.06 Miracle Church
- 25. 1.06 St John's Church

Main Service

Sunday 21st 6.30pm Bunyan Meeting Speaker Bishop Richard



Telecare

We are all delighted with the way that Telecare has been so well received. It is extremely helpful to the Ministers to be able to have feed back, especially if somebody is poorly or in hospital. If you have not yet put your name down, please do so. It helps us make our churches more able to care.

Please simply tell one of the Ministers as you leave church after the service.



Holy Communion

There will be a service of Holy Communion at Sir William Harpur House on Monday 8 January at 10.00am led by The Reverend Charles Royden.

Everybody is welcome to attend.



Divine Art

The BBC are currently featuring the stained glass window from St Mark's Chapel on their religious affairs website. If you would like to see the window and listen to

a quick interview you may do so by visiting www.bbc.co.uk/threecounties/content/image_galleries/divine_art_gallery.shtml

Woodland Burial. Progress is being made on establishing the woodland burial site at Keysoe. A booklet is now available which can be downloaded from the church website, www.thisischurch.com/woodland. Alternatively contact our administrator Mrs Linda Parry at St Mark's Church office or by Email, woodland@thisischurch.com

Flowers for Putnoe We all appreciate the beautiful flowers which are kindly donated each Sunday at our churches. We are grateful to those who arrange them so beautifully as well as the kind gifts of money to purchase flowers.

If you would like to donate flowers to Putnoe Heights Church or St Mark's Church, for any Sunday during January to June 2007, please write your name on the Flower Rota on the notice board in the Welcome Area.

Putnoe Heights New Year Family Lunch Sunday 14th January 2007 at 1pm. We look forward to our traditional 3 course New Year Lunch including starters, main course roast with all the trimmings, dessert, wine, coffee, and wonderful celebration atmosphere. Tickets now available - £8 adults, Children [under 10] £ 4.50p.

Rest in Peace

It was with great sadness that we learned this week of the deaths of three long standing members of our Partnership Churches.

Peter Beswick (Putnoe)
John Standley (St Mark's)
Cynthia Quickenden (St Mark's)

They were all long standing members of our congregations. Peter and John were until recently worshipping with us, Cynthia has been resident in Kimbolton Lodge for many years.

Our thoughts and prayers are especially with their families at this time of loss. Times and dates of services will be published in Partnership News.

*The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and no torment shall touch them. In the sight of the unwise they seemed to die. Their going looked like disaster, their leaving us like utter destruction: but they are in peace:
Book of Wisdom*

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.

**David Woods
Louise Brown**

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



The funeral of Joan Chandler will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Monday 8 January at 12.15pm
Royden

The funeral of John Standley will take place at St Mark's Church at 3.30pm on Monday 8 January. *(Royden)*

The funeral of Cynthia Quickenden will take place at Bedford Crematorium at 2.30pm on Thursday 11 January 2007 *(Royden)*