



Methodist  
Church

## St Mark's Church Bedford

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Church of  
England

## Garden of Remembrance



St Mark's Church provides the only consecrated  
Garden of Remembrance available for all the people of Bedford.



# **The Garden of Remembrance**

## **About the Garden of Remembrance**

In 1992 a beautiful new Garden of Remembrance was consecrated by the Bishop of Bedford at St Mark's Church. This Garden is now available to the whole community as a specifically Christian place of burial. It is the only consecrated churchyard available to the public in Bedford. The Garden is completely non-profit making and we are therefore able to combine beautiful facilities with the lowest cost available. Indeed there is no charge at all for the scattering of ashes.

The large grounds surrounding St Mark's Church have offered the opportunity for landscaping and the Garden has been continually extended to accommodate the increasing number of people who have appreciated this peaceful place for the burial of ashes. The grounds continually benefit by the addition of new plants, trees and shrubs, often donated in memory of a loved one. The chapel at St Mark's Church contains a Book of Remembrance and is a place of prayer where candles can be lit in memory of those who have died. The chapel is open every day during daylight hours and visitors especially enjoy the outstanding stained glass window.

The Garden at St Mark's Church provides the opportunity for interment in marked plots with granite stones, alternatively some people prefer a scattering of ashes in an unmarked plot. We are also pleased to have been able to construct a memorial wall upon which engraved granite plaques can be placed in memory of those who have died, irrespective of where they may be buried. The Garden is always open and we welcome visitors. The location of the church in Brickhill offers many advantages, on major bus routes and has excellent parking, including full provision for those with disabilities.

Please do contact us for further information if there are any questions not answered in this booklet. We are also pleased to speak with you to discuss your requirements or to make reservations. Contact details are shown on the back of this booklet.

## **Information about St Mark's Garden of Remembrance**

The following information is provided to answer any questions which you may have about the Garden of Remembrance.

### **Visiting the Garden and Chapel**

St Mark's Garden of Remembrance is located at the rear of St Mark's Church. Car parking is provided and the entire premises and Garden are completely accessible for people with disabilities.

You may visit the Garden at any time. Access to the garden is through the gate at the side of the church. If you would like to telephone before coming, we would be pleased to arrange to show you around. We have tried to make every effort to provide a totally safe and peaceful place for you to visit. You will notice the complete absence of any vandalism whatsoever. Security lighting illuminates the whole garden during the hours of darkness and the garden is covered by CCTV with infrared monitoring at night.

St Mark's Chapel is usually also open during daylight hours and a Book of Remembrance is available for inscription in memory of those who have died. The chapel also has facilities for the lighting of prayer candles for those who visit..

### **Burial in the Garden**

All burials which take place at St. Mark's do so in the presence of one of the ministers and a short burial service of prayers and a reading takes place. Although we believe that our loved ones have departed to God's merciful keeping, we treat their bodily remains with the respect and dignity required for those whom God created. Families and relatives may decide to attend at the interment, or you may prefer for this to be done quietly at the church by the minister some time after the service. We offer two types of burial of cremated remains at St Mark's.

### **Scattering of ashes**

If you would like ashes scattered without any separate plot or gravestone, this can be provided at St Mark's. A small hole is dug in the Garden and the ashes are poured loosely into the ground. The ashes are delivered to us by the funeral director or crematorium in a poly container.

There is no charge for this service

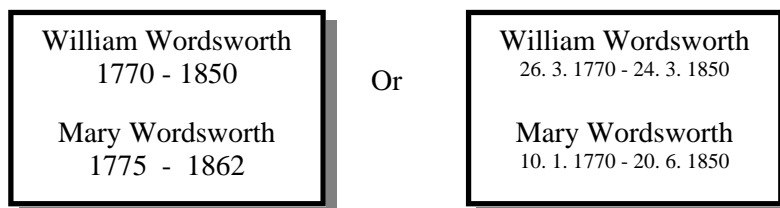
When ashes are scattered, you may make use of the memorial wall to place a marked plaque in memory of the person who has died.

### **Burial of ashes in a marked plot**

Many people appreciate the opportunity to have a marked plot for interment and this is provided at St Mark's. Granite plaques mark the area in which the ashes are buried and each plot will accommodate two full size caskets. The ashes can be buried without a casket if you would prefer.

### **Inscriptions**

We are obliged to ensure that the lettering on the stone is fairly simple in a style, which records only the name of the person who has died and their dates of birth and death or alternatively age. This lettering style allows sufficient space on the stone for two interments. As an example





### **Private interment in exclusive vault**

St Mark's Church has built a magnificent granite columbaria to offer interment in a consecrated vault. Each vault will accommodate at least four sets of ashes and a plaque can be inscribed with suitable words in memory of the person who has died. The columbaria was



consecrated in June 2007 and offers the unique quality of exclusive rights of burial in perpetuity. In commercial cemeteries families are usually offered rights for a period of time, perhaps 40 years, after which the ashes are removed and the vault sold to somebody else. St Mark's can guarantee that the remains of our loved ones will rest undisturbed for all time, now they really can Rest in Peace.

Cost of exclusive use of vault **£750.**

Families may wish to have the black granite memorial cover inscribed with a suitable inscription in gold lettering. This can be arranged at an additional cost.

### **The cost of interment**

We ensure that interment at St. Mark's is as inexpensive as possible. Our costs should not exceed charges made elsewhere and are usually about half the cost of local cemeteries. It is our desire to make only those charges necessary to cover the cost of memorial stones and to ensure that the garden is properly kept, and developed. All fees are paid into a separate bank account used solely for the costs associated with the maintenance and management of the Garden.

### **Book of Remembrance**

A Book of Remembrance is kept on view at the church in memory of those whose names are recorded on the date on which they died. If you would like an entry recorded following an interment, then please contact Mary Stubbs with the details, she will be able to give advice over a suitable inscription. The inscription will be made free of charge by a writer skilled in calligraphy.

### **Interment**

It is important for families to know that the cremated remains brought to the church for interment are those of the person who has died. The ministers frequently visit the crematorium and can assure you that this is the case and that the highest code of ethics is observed. A document issued by the Federation of British Cremation Authorities can be obtained from church outlining the procedure in some detail if you should wish to know more.

### **Memorials**

You may wish to donate a tree, shrub or some other plant for the garden as a continuing reminder. We will be pleased to discuss a suitable choice and location in keeping with our plans for the future development of the churchyard. Occasionally we receive requests to donate some other kind of memorial either in the garden or the church itself. We are always grateful to receive such kind gifts as a lasting memorial; however, in such cases the ministers will be required to obtain authorisation from the Church Council and the St. Albans Diocese.

### **Floral tributes**

Understandably relatives often wish to leave flowers in the Garden near to the place where a person has been buried. Please feel able to do this. Small plants or arrangements can be placed on the plaque. Please ensure that they are small enough that the view of other plaques is not obscured, and that the arrangement will not easily blow over. We have a tap fitted in the garden for your use and rubbish bins are also provided.

Flowers left outside very quickly begin to look untidy especially in adverse weather conditions, when they can be blown around the Garden and onto other stones. Floral tributes left in the Garden are collected at the end of each day and taken inside the church and placed in vases on the special memorial table in the church foyer by the prayer board. Occasionally these can be incorporated into arrangements for the Sunday service.

These measures ensure that the Garden is always kept tidy, and your flowers are used in a way that is honouring to the one you wish to remember. For best appearance, when inside the building,

the flowers are displayed in Portmeirion vases, and we always appreciate donations of these vases for our collection. We would ask that these vases are not used in the Garden, other are provided for use outside.

### **Provision of Sunday flowers**

Many people like to provide flowers in the church on a Sunday and this is a fitting way to remember somebody who has died. Arrangements exist for you to contribute to the provision of flowers on a particular Sunday at St Mark's and our sister church of Putnoe Heights. Please contact

**Putnoe Heights Church** Mrs Anne Hitt 404186

**St. Mark's Church** Miss Marion Prior 360503

### **Christmas and Easter**

We understand that many people appreciate the opportunity to visit the Garden of Remembrance and leave flowers at these holiday periods. Over Christmas and Easter, the Garden will be carefully looked after each day, and suitable floral arrangements will be allowed to remain at or near the place where they were left. We do have to be particularly careful with some wreaths which due to the presence of metal wire can cause rust staining to enter the granite. We recommend that you place some plastic under the arrangement if steel wire is used.



### **Woodland Burial**

St Mark's Church also operates a woodland burial ground at Keysoe in Bedfordshire. This is also suitable for burial of interment of ashes. The Woodland is also consecrated and therefore a safe and responsible place to

lay loved ones to rest. If you would like further information please contact our Administrator:

**Mrs Linda Parry**

Tel/Fax 01234 342613

Email: [woodland@thisischurch.com](mailto:woodland@thisischurch.com)

Website [www.thisischurch.com/woodland](http://www.thisischurch.com/woodland)



## **Consecration**

The Garden of Remembrance was consecrated by the Bishop of Bedford, it is hallowed ground, a special holy place where the memory of your loved ones will be treated with respect.

Plots are not purchased only for a period of time and then reused, as in cemeteries, once laid to rest the plots will be undisturbed for all time. No activity can take place within the Garden without strict controls and everything is monitored closely by the Diocese of St. Albans. This is the only consecrated place of interment available to the public in Bedford.

Working closely with our Diocesan Advisory Committee, we have managed to achieve what the Chancellor of our Diocese declared to be an exemplary scheme. We hope that you will agree.

Our grounds are maintained totally by volunteers and we believe that St Mark's offers a model way forward for churches to meet the mixed needs of their communities. Thank you to everybody who gives of their time so generously to make our Churchyard such a beautiful place which is loved and appreciated by so many people.





In designing the churchyard we have taken care to ensure that plants have been incorporated to provide all year round colour and interest. Fragrant Jasmine in July has been contrasted with the beautiful colour of Viburnums in Winter. There are also plenty of traditional Yew trees, Holly bushes and evergreen trees and shrubs to cheer even the coldest English Winter.

### **St Mark's Church Community Centre**

Office	Telephone and Fax 01234 342613
Email	<a href="mailto:office@ThisisChurch.com">office@ThisisChurch.com</a>
web	<a href="http://www.Thisischurch.com">www.Thisischurch.com</a>

### **Who to contact**

For matters relating to the Garden, Book of Remembrance, booking plots etc. please contact Mrs Mary Stubbs on 406784 or the Church Office at St. Mark's Tel: 342613.

August 2007