

Methodist
Church

Partnership News

15 April - Easter 2 - Low Sunday



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

Today Sunday 15 April

9.30am St Mark's - Holy Communion
Preacher - The Reverend Andrew Hollins
Methodist Superintendent
Leadership – Mr Mick Ovenden
Intercessions - Mrs Wendy Waters
11.00 am Putnoe - Holy Communion
Preacher –The Reverend Andrew Hollins
Methodist Superintendent
Leadership –Mrs Sam Ware
Intercessions – Mrs Claire Peck

22 April – Easter 3

9.30am St Mark's - Morning Worship
Preacher - Reverend Charles Royden
Leadership – Mrs Elizabeth Bean
Intercessions - Mr Chris Izzard
11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship
Preacher - Reverend Charles Royden
Leadership –Mrs Veta Hudson Rae
Intercessions – Mrs Sam Ware
Bible Readings 1 Acts 10: 34-43
2.1 Corinthians 15: 1-11 3.John 20: 19-31
Midweek Worship Holy Communion at St Mark's Chapel
every Wednesday at 10.00am and at Sir William Harpur
House on first Monday of every month at 10.00am

Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by June Cook in memory of George and Doris Curness, much loved parents, and Mary Stokes, a dear sister.

Prayer for the Week

Give us courage, O Lord, to stand up and be counted. To stand for those who cannot stand up for themselves, to stand up for ourselves when it is appropriate to do so.
Let us fear nothing more than we fear failing you. Let us love nothing more than we love you, for thus we shall fear nothing indeed.
Let us have no other God before you, whether nation, or party, or state or church. Let us seek no other peace but the peace which is yours, and make ourselves its instruments, opening our minds and our hearts so that we shall always know what work of peace we may do for you.
Alan Paton (1903-1988)

Bidding

Bidding: Risen Lord
Response: **Be present in these needs**

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman
107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR
266952 Fax- 402624 nsm@thisischurch.com
(Sam also works full time as a Vice
President for Hewlett Packard)

Deacon Jane Mason
12 Hartop Close, Bedford MK41 8HE
348091 Mobile 07807 146535 jane@thisischurch.com

The Reverend Charles Royden
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
and may appear in other local media sources.

Partnership News is also archived on our
church website www.ThisChurch.com

Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator
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.*

Churchyards Administrator
Mrs Avril Williams 01234 342613

Putnoe Heights Church Centre
Open Monday to Thursday 9am - 5pm, Friday 9am - 1pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Mr Geoff Gypps 365630 mob 07947 902846
Leadership Team Mrs. Linda Hoar 782717
Treasurer Mr Ian Morse 216428 treasurerph@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator John Hitt 404186
Youth Team Leader Carolyn Morris@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 - Laura Farthing 210892
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Jim Williams 360605

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

9.15 –3.45 pm Mon and Wed/ 9.15-12.15pm Tues/Thurs/ Fri. Hazeldene Heights Pre-school. See website for more details www.ThisChurch.com

Head teacher Mrs Laura Leggett ☎326685

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

9.-3.45pm Top Marks Mon-Fri St Mark's

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin ☎312634

(See website for more details)

.9.45am - Body Control Pilates –Putnoe Heights

Stephanie Smith ☎ 357787 or 07973174430

10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group. St Mark's Mrs Berry

☎211955

10.30am U3A Play reading St Mark's (see contact details below)

12.15pm Story box Putnoe Heights We welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12.15 and 1.15 for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Contact Carolyn Morris

youth@thischurch.com 365630

2.00pm U3A History Group St Marks.(see contact details below)

2pm U3A Music Appreciation - (see contact details below)

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

☎01767699399 or 07720713738.

6.15 Pilates at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859

6.15pm Fit for Life Yoga - Putnoe Heights Contact Jane Butcher ☎07891879571

7.00pm Sugarcraft Guild St Mark's 1st week Pat Nicholson ☎353518

7.00pm Cancer Care Society. St Mark's. 1st Week. Mr J Dewhurst ☎01908 377020

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

7.30pm Whist Drive. St Mark's 3rd & 5th week . Next meeting– 16 April Judith Stanton. ☎823313

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

8pm 'Get Fit, Stay Fit' Putnoe Heights. Mrs Diane Field ☎404976

Tuesday

9.30am Jo Jingles. St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Renu Elston ☎07790206016

9.30am Candlewicking (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Pat McCart ☎365507

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

10am Autism Beds Adult Support Group. St Mark's. Sally Cripsley ☎350704

11.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights (see contact details below)

1pm –2.30pm Drop in Wiggles and Jiggles 0-5 years, Putnoe Children's Centre. Please call Trudy Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information ☎340552

1.15pm U3A Cinema Group. St Mark's (see contact details below)

2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 St Mark's (3rd Wk) (see contact details below)

2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 St Mark's (2nd Wk) (see contact details below)

2.00pm Library Walk W.I. Putnoe Heights, meets

monthly. Morag Tomkins ☎356895

2pm U3A Photography Group 3 St. Mark's (1st Wk) (see contact details below).

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

2.15pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. St Mark's Fortnightly. Mary Stubbs ☎406784.

3.45pm-6.15pm Stars School of Dance. Putnoe Heights. Esther Richardson ☎295862 or 07917582468.

4.30pm—6pm BIGG Writing Putnoe Heights Natalie John 07772184721

6.30pm Creative Card making. Putnoe Heights Church. Carol Houghton ☎346718

6.15pm Pilates St Mark's Church Jane Butcher ☎0789187957

7pm—8.30pm Daisy Birthing Putnoe Heights Susie 07980447390

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

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

7pm Tabernacle of Truth Church Putnoe Heights Bible study & prayers. Sacha Ojo ☎07590597891 or www.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk

7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club - Meets fortnightly. Next meeting April 17 Easter Details call Janet King 313946

8.15pm - 10.15pm Bedford Advanced Dancers St. Mark's 1st Tuesday in month. Shirley Sadler ☎01767 651767

Wednesday

9.30am Body Control Pilates. Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith ☎357787 or 07973174430.

9.30am Discovery & Do (Childminders) St. Mark's. Clare Simmons ☎328380 or 07788824666

10am-2pm Open House at St Mark's for those with learning disabilities., their friends, family , carers and supporters ☎342613.

10am U3A Gardening Group 3 St Marks.(see contact details below)

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

10am U3A Card Making, St Marks (see contact details below)

12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next meeting 25 April 2012 Putnoe Heights Office ☎365630

1.00-3pm Police Surgery at Putnoe Heights (Fortnightly)

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

1.45 Scots Society Whist Putnoe monthly .All welcome Nancy Barr ☎268147

2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft St Marks.(see contact details below)

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

3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church. St Mark's (3rd Wk). for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 18th April Wendy Waters401834

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 or 07910835994.

6-8pm Karate. St Mark's Karen King ☎079412 64885

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

7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society Putnoe Heights monthly. Vanessa Aykac 268098 or 07917385987

7.00pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe Heights monthly Mrs O Holt ☎266004

7.00pm Line Dancing Putnoe Heights Mike Del-Boyer ☎348378

8.00pm Badminton Club Putnoe Heights All welcome. Ken Marriott ☎214867

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club meet at St Mark's 1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next meeting will be 18 April 2012. Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Ring Valmai 219555 Rosemary 405594 or Graham 406359 for more details.

8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club St Mark's 1st week in the month. Jean Ross ☎771870

Thursday

9.30am Thursday Prayer Group. Putnoe Heights. Valerie Capon ☎356306 .

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

9.45am Yoga Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎244970

9.45am Chat and Play St.Mark's. A term time group for Mums & toddlers. Jo Garner 400071 or 07719670624

12pm Storybox . 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 Jaana Swaby ☎363283

1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic 1st and 3rd Thursdays St. Mark's ☎267444

1pm—2.30pm Drop in (large hall) Children's Chatty Time 0-5 years, Putnoe Children's Centre. Please call Trudy Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information ☎340552.

1pm—2.30pm Drop in (small hall) Next Steps 9-24months Putnoe Children's Centre. Please call Trudy Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information ☎340552.

1.45 Friendly Chicago Bridge at Putnoe Heights £2 per session inc. refreshments. New members welcome. Contact Pat 01234 294220.

2pm Putnoe Bridge Club. Mrs. P. Cass ☎294220

2-4pm U3A Indoor Games. St.Marks. (see contact details below)

2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society St Marks Mary Rich ☎272470

6.15 pm Weightwatchers. St. Mark's. Clare Martin 07805408811.

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins .

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Heights Nina Ovenden ☎825059

7pm U3A Folk & Poetry St Marks (2nd and 4th week) (see contact details below)

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale ☎406094

7.00pm Bedford Embroiderers' Guild St Mark's 3rd week in month. Carol Plant ☎01832710504

8 -10pm Bedford Folk dancers (formerly Barn dancers) Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights . Different guest callers each week. All welcome, cost £2 Including refreshments. More details Ron Law 825574.

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

8.00pm Magpies Women's Group St Mark's 2nd & 4th week Pat Cass ☎294220

8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group St Mark's 1st and 3rd week in month Kay Logan 01234 309105.

Friday

10am -12.00 U3A Photography St Marks.(4th week) (see contact details below)

10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French St. Marks (see contact details below)

2.00-4.00 pm Whist St Marks. Patricia Holland.☎262823

5-8pm Stars School of Dance Putnoe Heights Contact Esther Richardson ☎295862 or ☎07917 582468

6.00-7.00pm Zumba at St Mark's. Contact Laura Harrow ☎07834529833

6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation Putnoe Heights. Racheall Monton ☎297138 or 07910835994

7.45 - 10.45pm Bedford Astrology Club. St Marks(2nd week) Carol Brown ☎01438 233385

Saturday

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

Young Embroiderers bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher ☎357198

2.15pm Society of Recorder Players at Putnoe Heights. G Parry ☎01462 674792

6.45pm 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 Sacha Ojo ☎07590597891 or www.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk

7-9pm Tae Kwon Do St Mark's (not 25 March) Contact Adrian Felice www.bedfordtkd.com 07964356355

U3A For information on the U3A groups meeting at St Mark's and Putnoe Heights Church please contact Yvonne Francis ☎405119



Diary Dates



St Mark's Church Council – 19 June

St Mark's Leadership Team - Thursday 17 May

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 28 May

Putnoe Heights Management Meeting

Putnoe Church Council - 11 June

Pastoral Group Meeting - Tuesday 19 June 4.00pm

Churchyard Committee -

Brickhill Parish Council Meetings -

Commemoration Service 4 November 3.00pm

Harvest Festival 30 September

Circuit meeting - 12 June

Deanery Meeting -

Woodland Burial Trustees– 12 May Open Day at wood

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting -Monday

21 May 1.15pm

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

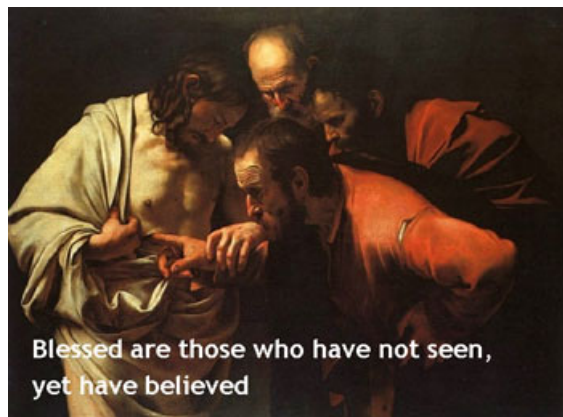
Easter 2 - Low Sunday

Opening Verse of Scripture John 20

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Collect Prayer *(Before we read we pray)*

Almighty Father, who in your great mercy made glad the disciples with the sight of the risen Lord: give us such a knowledge of his presence with us, that we may be strengthened and sustained by his risen life, and serve you continually in righteousness and truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord.



First Reading - Acts 4:32-35

All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need. (Reader: This is the Word of the Lord All: Thanks be to God)

Second Reading - 1 John 1:1-2:2

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched--this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete. This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives. My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. (Reader: This is the word of the Lord – All: Thanks be to God)

Gospel Reading – John 20:19-31 Please stand for the Gospel

(When announced All: Glory to Christ our Saviour)

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it."

A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop

doubting and believe."

Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Then Jesus told him, "Because you have seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

(Reader: This is the Gospel of Christ - **All: Praise to Christ our Lord**)

Post Communion Prayer

Lord God our Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ you have assured your children of eternal life and in baptism have made us one with him: deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life in your love, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Hymns (Please distribute Holy Communion and Mission Praise)

1. Come let us with our Lord arise (*575 H&Psalms, on Partnership News, Tune Sussex Carol*)
2. All heaven declares 14 *Mission Praise*
3. Jesus stand among us 381 *Mission Praise*
4. Jesus, Prince and Saviour 377 *Mission Praise (Tune Gertrude)*

Commentary

Our reading from John's Gospel today takes place on the evening of that first Easter, and the doors "had been shut" by the disciples because of their fear of the Jews. In spite of the locked doors, Jesus "came and stood into the middle" and said "peace to you." Jesus then displays his wounds to the disciples. This is the same Jesus who had been crucified and he shows them his hands. The reference to his side refers to the spear of the Roman soldier after the death of Jesus, from which had flowed both blood and water. The disciples recognize Jesus on the basis of his wounds and rejoice at "seeing the Lord." Jesus says again, "Peace to you." These two statements of peace frame the action of Jesus in showing his hands and side. It is on this basis, his wounds, that peace is won.

No sooner has Jesus calmed their fears than he shifts immediately to mission--"As the Father has sent me, so I send you." Then, "he breathed on them." The disciples are given power from the divine breath. The Greek word translated as "breathed" is *emphusao*. It is the same word the Septuagint uses to translate Genesis 2: 7: "And the Lord God...breathed into (Adam's) nostrils the breath of life." John's use of this word is the only one in the entire New Testament. Clearly, the author of the fourth gospel is equating the breath of Jesus with the breath of God. Where the Lord God breathed life into a human being, the Lord Jesus breathes life into his church. This is one of many of the fourth gospel's references to the book of Genesis.

"If you release the sins of any, they are released," says Jesus, and "if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." This is not a parallel for a similar saying in Matthew. There is nothing here about eternal "binding and loosing." Rather, the New Community is to be characterized by the forgiveness of sins. Conversely, if sins are not forgiven, they are "retained" within the community, thereby threatening the community's life.

Then we are told that Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. He had clearly missed Church and missed Jesus ! So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.'

The disciples proclaim to Thomas, "We have seen the Lord." This is the third proclamation of seeing the Lord in the fourth gospel's Easter narrative. This is not good enough for Thomas, who not only wants to "see" but also to "touch" the places where Jesus had been wounded.

Then we are told that 'a week later' Jesus came again and stood in their midst. Jesus announces "peace" again, and focuses immediately on Thomas. "Put your finger here and see my hands," says Jesus. Then Jesus says, "Reach out your hand and throw it into my side."

Thomas responds, "My Lord and my God." Domitian, the Roman Emperor at the time of the writing of the fourth gospel, was known as *dominus et deus noster*, "our lord and god." Thomas' confession of Jesus as "My Lord and My God" is both a statement of faith in Jesus and a polemic against the Emperor.

Jesus blesses "those who have not seen," which, at the time of the writing of the fourth gospel, would have included many in the church. By AD 90, most of the people in the Johannine community would not have actually seen the wounds of Jesus. The stated purpose of John writing about these signs is so that "you" might come to faith in Jesus is the "Christ" and the "son of God," that we should believe.
Charles Royden

Meditation

Word association is an interesting game, you give somebody a word and they have to say the first thing that comes into their head. 'Steak' = 'chips', and so on. If the word was 'Thomas', most Christians would probably say 'doubt.' This is to such an extent that we call him 'Doubting Thomas.' This is not meant to be a compliment. Thomas has always had a bad press, he was the one who doubted, and we assume that he was a naughty disciple. In some ways it is true that doubt is not a great thing, it troubles and upsets us, we want to 'stop doubting and believe.' Yet in another way it can also be quite good. Paul Tillich saw doubt not as the opposite of faith but as an element of faith itself. Or as Frederick Beuchner put it in his book *Wishful Thinking*,

"Whether your faith is that there is a God or that there is not a God, if you don't have any doubts you are either kidding yourself or asleep. Doubts are the ants in the pants of faith. They keep it awake and moving."

Doubt is like one of those taboo subjects. People feel that they should not doubt. We are afraid that people will think less of us, that we look stupid. Yet doubt is not an unusual or particularly unhealthy thing. Surely we must '*stop doubting and believe*' and yet doubt is a step on the road to belief. Doubt is not scepticism, the decision to doubt as a matter of principle. Neither is it unbelief and act of will, the decision not to have faith in God. Doubt often means asking questions, or voicing uncertainties from the standpoint of faith. You believe but you have difficulty with that faith. As such, doubt is probably a permanent feature of the Christian faith. As life is a permanent battle against disease, so a life of faith is a permanent battle against doubt.

Many people come to faith with doubts. We don't have to understand everything, indeed it would be strange if we did. This is what all relationships are like, we don't know the half of people before we get involved with them, how could we! When we embark upon any relationship we take a risk. Our doubt reminds us that we are in need of growth and development in our relationship with God and from that perspective it is a good thing. We know that God is bigger than our minds, we know that we have to use analogies and images. Doubt is a spiritual reminder that we don't know it all and that we have a limitation as a result of our humanity. We long for absolute security and certain proof. Yet we do well to remind ourselves that what we can know with absolute certainty is likely to be not that important. Tennyson said, '*For nothing worth proving can be proven, nor yet disproven: wherefore thou be wise, cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt.*'

This is not to say that Christianity is intellectual suicide. It is not like the emperor's new clothes, we are not afraid of questions and analysis. If we have serious questions we should ask them and think them through. Christianity is about encounter with the living God and yet there is also a challenge to the mind to begin to understand and grasp our faith. Experience should be reinforced with understanding. But we have to realise that life will be filled with much we do not understand.

An interesting passage from Romans 13:11-12. '*The night is nearly over, the day is almost here*' gives the idea that the Christian life is as walking in the dark. Paul also uses the classic illustration in 1 Corinthians 13:12 '*Now we see but a poor reflection in a mirror.*' He is acknowledging that there are many things which we can expect to be unclear to us.

Faith enables us to trust in the midst of the turbulence which surrounds us. We have not let God down if we doubt. Indeed our faithfulness is proved when we persevere through our doubts and uncertainties. God promises us his love and assures of his presence with us, even when we find it difficult to comprehend. We live in a culture in which faith is hard - accept that fact and do not concentrate on your doubts. That is to focus on ourselves - 'my doubt'. We must see doubt rather as an opportunity to grow, for faith grows like a muscle by stretching. Doubt encourages us to pray more, to seek God more, to worship more, to read our bibles more. *Charles Royden*

Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead

Lord, put courage into our hearts, and take away all that may hinder our serving you. Free our tongues to proclaim your goodness, that all may understand us. Give us friends to advise and help us, that by working together our efforts may bear abundant fruit. And above all, let us constantly remember that our actions are worthless unless they are guided by your hand.

Lord make us sensitive to the needs of those around us that we may never fail to know when they are hurting or afraid, or crying out for someone's touch. May our first thoughts be for others not ourselves.

St Marks's Chat and Play restarts Thursday 19 April
Story Box starts again Thursday 19 April.

St Mark's Church car boot sales for 2012

7 May 4 June 27 August, lots of help very much appreciated.

100th Birthday. All friends are invited to a bring-and-share buffet lunch at Putnoe Heights on Sunday 29 April, 12.30 for 1.00 pm, to celebrate the 100th birthday of Miss Jennie Cooper. Please see Sue Allen for a list of suggested contributions to the meal. At Jennie's request, no presents or flowers but donations welcome to be shared by MHA and Church funds.

Putnoe Heights Prayer Group will meet on the 27 April at 1.45pm

The next Lunch Club at Putnoe Heights is on the 25 April not on the 11 April.

Fashion Show and Nearly-New-Sale at Putnoe Heights Church on Friday 20 April at 7.30pm. All welcome and there will be many bargains in all sizes. Entrance fee £3. 50

Kempston Musical Society present an evening of Mozart, including Requiem at Kempston East Methodist Church on Saturday 28 April at 7.30pm. Admission £7.00. For further details telephone Bedford 781010 or e-mail kempstonmusicalsociety@hotmail.com



The St Albans Woodland Burial Trust will be having an open day at Keysoe on May 12 from 12 noon. All are invited to visit the woodland and enjoy

refreshments.

St. Mark's Craft Club would like to thank everyone for their support buying their Easter Novelties.

Thank you to all our volunteers who helped with our Good Friday Children's Activities. Storybox at Putnoe Heights Church will meet for the summer term on Monday 23rd April at 12.15. For more details please contact Carolyn Morris on 07751348925

Thank You

Many thanks to Neil Kinselly who has made some beautiful wooden candle stands for our paschal candles at Putnoe and St Mark's

Thank you to Mick Ovenden and the team who helped kit out the organ cupboard with shelving and new storage

A Hymn for Sunday

- 1 Come, let us with our Lord arise,
Our Lord, who made both earth and skies:
Who died to save the world he made,
And rose triumphant from the dead;
He rose, the prince of life and peace,
And stamped the day for ever his.
- 2 This is the day the Lord has made,
That all may see his love displayed,
May feel his resurrection's power,
And rise again, to fall no more,
In perfect righteousness renewed,
And filled with all the life of God.
- 3 Then let us render him his own,
With solemn prayer approach his throne,
With meekness hear the gospel word,
With thanks his dying love record,
Our joyful hearts and voices raise,
And fill his courts with songs of praise.
- 4 Honour and praise to Jesus pay
Throughout his consecrated day;
Be all in Jesus' praise employed,
Nor leave a single moment void;
With utmost care the time improve,
And only breathe his praise and love.

A Partnership Service Of Hymn Praise

At 6.30p.m.on Sunday 20 May, there will be a service of praise at Putnoe Heights Church. This form of service has been very well on received on previous occasions, and such further services were suggested during the Lent Course. Prior to our Lord's Ascension He commanded his Apostles to wait in Jerusalem for the giving of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. At this service on the Sunday between the Ascension of Jesus and the day of Pentecost, the theme of the service will be 'Waiting for the Spirit'. This date is also the anniversary of the spiritual experiences which Charles and John Wesley received in May 1738. I invite all who enjoy singing will join us at this service, and of course any friend you would like to bring would also be welcome. *(Eric Royden.)*



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www.thischurch.com

Doubt is a pain too lonely to know that faith is his twin brother. *Khalil Gibran, 20th century*

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.

**Sybil Marjorie Harper
Mary Stokes**

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

Forthcoming Funerals



Please remember these families
and friends in your prayers

**The funeral of Charles Norman
Fuller** will take place at Bedford
Crematorium on Tuesday 17th
April at 12.15pm

The funeral of Margaret Scorer
will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Tuesday
24th April at 1.45pm

Partnership Churches Annual Congregational Meetings and Membership

The Annual Congregational Meetings take place next Sunday 22 April after worship, 10.30am St Mark's and 12 noon Putnoe. Everybody is invited and encouraged to attend. This is a business meeting at which we appoint officers of the church, report back, receive an annual report and also the financial accounts of the church. If you would like to be a member of either church council then we very much would like to encourage you to complete a nomination form available this morning. Do not worry if you are not sure who to ask to nominate you, simply give the form to a member of the Leadership Team.

As ACM's approach it is important for us to have accurate membership information for our church. It is helpful to have up to date details if we need to make contact with you, perhaps when a pastoral situation arises. If you consider yourself to be a member of this church, please check the church membership list this morning. If your details require amendment then complete the form below and return it to the church office, a minister or a member of the Leadership Team. Alternatively please email one of the Ministers and we will ensure that you name is added. It is now very helpful to have your email address. We would like to be able to use this to communicate with you. Please consider giving us this information if you have not already done so. Please be assured we do not release your details to any other organisations.

Church Membership Details

Please enrol me as a member of the Partnership, Putnoe Heights and St Mark's Church

Name (Mr, Mrs, Miss, Ms etc..)

Address..... **Telephone**

Church which you usually attend (St Mark's or Putnoe)

Denominational background (if any) which you may have eg Methodist / CofE / Baptist / R Catholic /

Please feel free to leave blank.....

Email This is increasingly helpful for us for church use such as reminding you of important events.

We promise never to disclose it to anybody else

(You can return this form to a member of the Leadership Team or send an email to a minister)