



Methodist
Church

Partnership News

15 May 2011

4th Sunday of Easter



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

9.30 am St Mark's - Holy Communion

Preacher – Andrew Gale CEDO
Leadership – Mrs. Margaret Appleton
Intercessions – Mr. Chris Izzard

11.00 am Putnoe - Holy Communion

Preacher - Andrew Gale CEDO
Leadership – Mrs. Jenny Snelson
Intercessions – Mrs. Sylvia Cohen

22 May - 5th Sunday of Easter

9.30 am St Mark's Church - Morning Worship

Preacher – Revd Charles Royden
Leadership – Mrs Laura Farthing
Intercessions – Mrs Delia Shephard

11.00 am Putnoe Heights - Morning Worship

Preacher– Revd Charles Royden
Leadership– Mrs Jean Kirk
Intercessions – Mrs Sam Ware

Bible Readings 1. Acts 7: 55-60 2. 1 Peter 2: 2-10
3. John 14: 1

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 Veta Hudson-Rae to celebrate
the birthdays of Christopher, Johanne and Joshua.

*We are grateful when people make donations towards
flowers perhaps to celebrate a special occasion such as
an anniversary or in memory of a loved one. Please
contact Miss Marion Prior 303254 (St Mark's) or Ann Hitt
404186 (Putnoe Heights) or add your name to the rota in
the foyers.*

Prayer for the Week

God, our Shepherd,
give to the church,
a new vision and a new charity,
new wisdom and fresh understanding,
the revival of her brightness
and the renewal of her unity;
that the eternal message of thy Son,
undefiled by the traditions of men,
may be hailed
as the good news of the age;
through him who maketh all things new.
Amen.
(Percy Dearmer)

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)

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.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 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 Worker Emma Gordon email - 07593266091
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 - Laura Farthing 210892

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

- 9.15 –3.45 pm Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school.** See website for more details www.ThisChurch.com
Head teacher Mrs Janet Smith ☎326685
- 8.30-5.30pm Pre-school** Mon-Fri St Mark's
- 9.30-3.15pm Top Marks** Mon-Fri St Mark's
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.
- 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 J Birks ☎219607
- 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 Emma Gordon ☎07593266091
- 2pm U3A Music Appreciation** - Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next meeting Contact Linda Reed ☎ 216623
- 3.30pm Storybox Plus** Putnoe Heights for 4-9 year olds. Meet at 3.30 for refreshments & games. Then until 5pm stories, drama, singing & craft activities.
- 4.15pm Rosemary Conley Diet & Fitness.** Putnoe Heights. Margo Needham ☎843747 or 07881730747
- 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
- 7.15pm Fit for Life Yoga** - Putnoe Heights Contact Jane Butcher ☎07891879571
- 7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild** St Mark's 1st week Pat Nicholson ☎353518
- 7.30pm 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 May 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 ☎07790296016
- 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** for the less mobile. Sally Banks ☎ 870357
- 1.15pm Toddlers Playtime/Sing & Stomp** - Putnoe Heights for toddlers and their carers. Run by Putnoe Childre's Centre Trudy Hamilton ☎340552
- 1.30pm U3A Cinema Group.** St Mark's 4th Week in month . Mrs Beaumont ☎261461

- 2.00pm U3A Book Group.** St Mark's 3rd Week Mrs Forrest ☎344043
- 2.00pm Library Walk W.I.** Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Morag Tomkins ☎356895
- 2.00pm U3A Music Appreciation** fortnightly. Contact Mrs Reed ☎216623
- 2pm U3A Photography** (Group 3) St Mark's 1st Week. Contact John Farish ☎ 824984
- 2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship.** May 17 South Wing Hospital. For more details contact Betty Wyatt ☎350188.
- 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.
- 6.30pm Creative Card making.** Putnoe Heights Church. Carol Houghton ☎346718
- 6.30pm Yoga** Putnoe Heights Veronica Lafferty ☎781466 or 07788750360
- 7pm Keep Fit.** St. Mark's Jan Gregory ☎328455
- 7pm MT Karate** [all ages] Putnoe Heights. Karen King ☎07941 264885
- 7.30pm Hearts in Beds. Cardiac Support Group** 1st Tuesday in the month at St Mark's. Brian Ibberson ☎403497
- 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 May 17 'Charity Evening' For more 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.
- 9.00am 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 U3A Card Making,** St Mark's Church. 4th week in the month. Janet Fitch 838689
- 12.30pm Luncheon Club.** Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next - 11 May Putnoe Heights Office ☎365630
- 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** Putnoe monthly .All welcome Nancy Barr ☎268147
- 2-5pm Police Surgery.** St Mark's Foyer. ☎349179
- 1.30-4.30pm U3A Craft St Mark's** 1st & 3rd week. Pat Holland ☎262823
- 2.15pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit.** Putnoe Heights Mrs Webster ☎856966
- 3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church.** St Mark's for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. 3rd Wednesday in the month.. Wendy Waters 401834

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

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

6.00pm Shooting Stars. Youth Group for 9-13yrs at Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next meeting 26 January.

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 Janice Loxley ☎347073

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 May 18 2011 Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Ring Graham 406359 ,Valmai 219555 or Rosemary 405594 for more details.

8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club St Mark's 1st week in the month. Mrs Gansfield ☎215016

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 group for Mums & toddlers. Meet again on 28 April. Jo Garner 400071 or 07719670624

11am-12noon Citizens Advice Bureau Putnoe Heights.

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. Meet again on 28 April. Contact Jaana Swaby ☎363283

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

1.30pm Toddler Playtime. Putnoe Majella Atkinson ☎325293

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

2pm Putnoe Bridge Club. Gerald Palmer ☎345991

2-4pm U3A Indoor Games St Mark's Contact Radmila Dancer ☎404811

2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society at St Mark's. Malcolm Smith ☎400741

4 - 7.00pm Police Surgery. St Mark's Foyer. ☎349179

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

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Heights Nina Ovenden ☎825059

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

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale ☎406094

7.30pm Bedford Embroiderers' Guild St Mark's 3rd week in month. Pauline Lynham ☎01525 714517

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 Jean Birks ☎219607

8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group St Mark's 1st and 3rd week in month. Julia Nicholson ☎353642

Friday

9.30-12.30pm U3A Photography (Group 1) St Marks 4th week in month Val Scrivener ☎346397

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

10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French St Mark's Joyce Fields ☎353086

12.15pm U3A Photography (Group 2). St Mark's 4th week in month. Sue Butler ☎354183

2.00pm U3A Gardening Group Putnoe Heights Eve Whitehead ☎356875

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

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

7.45 - 10.45pm Bedford Astrology Club. St. Mark's. 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

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

7-9pm Tae Kwon Do St Mark's Contact Adrian Felice www.bedfotrdtkd.com or bedfordtkd@googlemail.com.

Diary Dates

**St Mark's Church Council –
St Mark's Leadership Team**

**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 6 June
Putnoe Heights Management Meeting - .26 May**

St Mark's Forum Meeting - 13 July

Putnoe Church Council - 13 June –7.30pm

Pastoral Group Meeting - 14th June

Churchyard Committee - 19th May –11.15am

Brickhill Parish Council Meetings -

Circuit meeting -

Deanery Meeting - .

Woodland Burial Trustees – 15th May 12.30pm

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth –

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

4th Sunday of Easter

Opening Sentence from Scripture –

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want

Collect Prayer for the Day (*Before we read we pray*)

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life: raise us, who trust in him, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that we may seek those things which are above, where he reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. *Common Worship*

First Bible Reading- Acts 2: 42-47

. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved

(This is the Word of the Lord — **Thanks be to God**)

Second Reading - 1 Peter 2: 19-25

For it is commendable if a man bears up under the pain of unjust suffering because he is conscious of God. But how is it to your credit if you receive a beating for doing wrong and endure it? But if you suffer for doing good and you endure it, this is commendable before God. To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps. "He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth." When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were like sheep going astray, but now you have returned to the Shepherd and Overseer of your souls.

(This is the Word of the Lord — **Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - John 10: 1-10

(When the gospel is announced: **All: Glory to God our Saviour**)

"I tell you the truth, the man who does not enter the sheep pen by the gate, but climbs in by some other way, is a thief and a robber. The man who enters by the gate is the shepherd of his sheep. The watchman opens the gate for him, and the sheep listen to his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes on ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice. But they will never follow a stranger; in fact, they will run away from him because they do not recognize a stranger's voice." Jesus used this figure of speech, but they did not understand what he was telling them. Therefore Jesus said again, "I tell you the truth, I am the gate for the sheep. All who ever came before me were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. He will come in and go out, and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

(This is the gospel of Christ - **All: Praise to Christ our Lord.**)



Post Communion Prayer

Living God, your Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of bread: open the eyes of our faith, that we may see him in all his redeeming work; who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen.

Hymns St Mark's *(Please distribute Holy Communion and Hymns and Psalms)*

Lord, enthroned in heavenly splendour 616 (Tune St Helen)

The Lord's my Shepherd (On Partnership News)

Now the green blade riseth 204 (Tune Noel Nouvelet)

Stand up, stand up for Jesus 721 (Tune Morning Light)

Commentary

This Fourth Sunday of Easter is known as Good Shepherd Sunday. In all three lectionary years – A, B, and C – we read the Good Shepherd monologue from the tenth chapter of John. It is a complicated passage, in that Jesus identifies himself as being the Good Shepherd, the Gatekeeper, and even the Gate to the sheep-fold. This is a beautiful passage today about Jesus as the Good Shepherd. When I read about the sheep hearing his voice and responding to him, I think particularly of Lazarus and Mary, both responded directly to Jesus when they heard him use their name. Lazarus came out from the tomb and Mary had her eyes opened to who Jesus was after she met him in the garden following the crucifixion.

Just before today's passage we are told that Jesus had been addressing the Pharisees, who had confronted him for curing the blind man on the sabbath (9:40-41). So, in today's selection, he may be continuing his criticism of them when he alludes to "a thief and a robber." Prophets like Ezekiel used this theme frequently; they condemned false and corrupt religious leaders ("shepherds") for failing to care for their people ("the sheep"). But the audience in this passage could also be his own disciples and the message can surely apply to us today. Jesus' criticism isn't just against the inadequate and flawed leadership of the Pharisees; but a critique of poor or corrupt church leaders in every age. It's sad to say, but each generation and denomination of church leaders has had its bad apples with terrible consequences, both within their faith communities and to those outsiders who learn about them through the media or other means of communication.

Throughout John's gospel Jesus gives many images for his ministry, there are the "I am" statements. "I am the way, the truth and the life," "I am the resurrection," "I am living water" etc. John shows that Jesus refused to be pigeonholed; as we saw in the exchange after the cure of the blind man (chapter 9). The Pharisees would want precision, strict interpretation and adherence to the laws and traditions. John's richly layered gospel defies such strictures. The mystery of God in Jesus is just too rich a mystery to be summed up in one way. The "I am" statements are a good example of this openness as John's helps us interpret the meaning of Jesus for our lives. In this way Jesus words can speak throughout the ages – which the original disciples, John included, would not have imagined. John records language and images which are deliberately open, and we can be free to apply them to our own time and place.

Today another "I am" statement appears. Jesus says, "I am the gate." Where shall we turn in times of trouble, distress, confusion and spiritual hunger? John's suggestion is clear: he invites us to again choose Jesus, to enter through the gate which offers life. Entering a narrow way, a gate, at first, may seem restrictive. But not if it leads us to a place of rest and then out to places of nourishment. A gate can keep sheep locked up. However the gate that is Jesus, is open to a coming in and going out.

Our relationship to Jesus is not generic. We are not mere faces in the crowd. He knows his sheep by name and we know his voice. Periodically we forget or ignore his voice and we become lost. But he seeks us out and finds ways to call us back: perhaps through a friend's advice, a message in a book we are reading, or a preacher's words. Then, after hearing his voice, we make another turn in our lives and head back to the open gate of Jesus' which we enter for forgiveness, rest and renewal.

True, Jesus uses various images to describe himself to us today. But the repeated message in each is that he is concerned about our well-being. He wants us to be careful of those shepherds who would lead us astray and scandalize us by their poor example and faulty leadership. They would rob us of life, he tells us. He redirects us to turn to him, whose voice we know and can trust. He wants that we "might have life and have it more abundantly." Such poor shepherds today may not be found in religious places but could easily be in lifestyle magazines or on television. They may not declare themselves to have any religious motivation, but they communicate messages about life which are contrary to those which we find in the teaching of Jesus.

How have we experienced the unique care Jesus has for us? Let's give thanks today for the prophetic and spiritual men and women in the history of our church who have inspired and fed us. Can we name our favourites; those who have been most instrumental in directing and redirecting our lives? We also give thanks for the shepherd's voice we hear in the wisdom of caring parents and family members, teachers, artists, writers and friends. Through them the Shepherd spoke and thankfully we recognized his voice and responded. Peter heard the Shepherd's voice when Jesus first called him from his boat. He "entered through the gate" and followed the voice of the Shepherd as he listened to Jesus' teaching and observed his healing actions on their way to Jerusalem. Even though Peter turned from his Shepherd and abandoned him in his need, he also heard his voice of forgiveness when Jesus appeared to the frightened disciples in the locked room and said, "Peace be to you." Peter returned to Jesus, he passed through the open gate of his forgiveness. Today, in our first reading, we hear part of Peter's Pentecost preaching. He addresses "the whole house of Israel" (Acts 2:36). In Jesus' name, Peter is now the voice of the Shepherd calling out to his sheep. The people heard that voice in Peter's preaching and responded, "What are we to do?" Peter instructs them to turn from their ways and be baptized in Jesus' name – to enter through the gate into the sheepfold. Many do, 3000 heard the Shepherd's voice and entered.

Entering the "sheepfold" can sound like going into an enclosed, detached world. "Come join our little, private group." Hardly! Peter is an example of one who entered the sheepfold through the gate. He received the gift of the Holy Spirit, which he promises his hearers would also receive and then he went out through the gate to the world outside. After Jesus' arrest Peter denied knowing Jesus. Now he claims his association with him and boldly and publicly professes his faith in Jesus as "Lord and Christ." Peter's speech today is part of his Pentecost sermon. Scripture texts since Easter and for the next month, are turning our focus towards our celebration of Pentecost (June 12). We still have time to hear the renewing voice of the Good Shepherd. He will gather his sheep once again into the sheepfold, renew us in his Spirit and then, the one who identifies himself as "the gate," will lead us out into the world – as he did Peter and the first Christians. There we too will make a bold witness to Jesus' name by our words and actions. We hope that through our lives others will hear the Shepherd's voice inviting them to also enter through the gate which opens us all to the life Christ offers us.

Meditation

While it's often associated with funerals, Psalm 23 sings of God's tender care throughout life just as much as it provides comfort in death. On our journey things are not the same when we are accompanied by a God who encourages us to ease our anxiety: We are safer, more cared for than we imagined. It is the presence of God that transforms dangerous places and tough circumstances. We are helpless sheep who can trust the good shepherd who cares for us. We're not in charge; God is. So things should be different and the life journey should be different than those who do not know God's presence with them. Our priorities are different, for example 'I shall not want' is a decision made against the greed and lust and aggressive ambition of a consumer society. Our consumer society is driven by the notion that we always must want one more thing...." A bishop who served for many years in the upper Midwest of America tells stories he learned from the Native Americans of the area:

A wise man among the Indians—many Native Americans in the Midwest still prefer to be called Indians—was asked by his grandson about the conflict and discord in the world today. The elder reflected for a moment and then replied, "My child, there are two dogs battling within my heart. One is full of anger, hatred, and rage. The other is full of love, forgiveness, and peace." The old man paused, and he and his grandson sat for a moment in silence. Finally the boy spoke, "Grandfather, which dog will win the battle in your heart? The one filled with hatred or the one filled with love?" The old man looked at his grandson and replied, "The one I feed will win."

Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead

Shepherd of all, by laying down your life for your flock you reveal your love for all. Lead us from the place of death to the place of abundant life, that guided by your care for us, we may rightly offer our lives in love for you and our neighbours. Amen.

God of new beginnings, our love to us knows neither measure nor end. Reveal yourself to us in the ordinary things of life, so that each day's tasks may be done for love of you and each day's living may bring us nearer you; through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Saviour. (*Orthodox prayer*)

Prayer must mean putting one's very soul upon our hands and offering it to God.
From the Babylonian Talmud (6th century Persia)

Charles Wesley Praise Service

Sunday 22 May at 6-30pm at Putnoe Heights Church. Conducted by Rev. Eric Royden. You are invited to come and join in singing a feast of Wesley's most famous hymns. Entrance free

Churches Together in Bedfordshire Annual Forum. Wednesday 25 May at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church, Flitwick. Speaker The Rt. Revd Richard Inwood, Bishop of Bedford. Buffet meal from 6.30pm, meeting at 7.30pm.

Action for Children—Thanks to all took part in the Home Collectors Box opening event, counting the sum of £162.03. The teas and home-made cakes were enjoyed in the Wren Room with a further £18 donated. Do look out for notices of coming events nationally. Would anyone like to take part in the Big Jump—19 June or the London Walkthrough, the history of Action for Children 2 July. See details on notice boards in Church Foyer. Margaret Standley

Offer for music lovers—2 tickets for Philharmonia Concert, 7.30pm, Saturday 4th June, at Corn Exchange. (Tchaikovsky Piano Concerto etc.) £15 donation to Christian aid. Contact Betty/Lawrence 350188.

Worship We at Putnoe Heights are committed to providing a short act of worship at Puttenhoe care home every Thursday morning at 11am. This is attended by a growing group of residents who enjoy the contact, and those who have taken part to date have found it very rewarding. At present Deacon Jane leads it at least twice a month and the Monday night house group do one a month, other weeks are occasionally covered by others. We would appreciate a larger group of volunteers. In addition to a further person or group willing to lead the service once a month Jane would value people willing to attend with her, to either play piano, read or simply chat and help residents find the hymns etc...A rota is on display in the office, please add your name or speak to Jane or any of the Monday evening housegroup if you want further information..

Thank you to all of those who gave time and energy to help with the St Albans Woodland Burial Trust Open Day. It was a magnificent day with so many people attending to see the woodland which looked spectacular. Many people took the opportunity to make reservations as well as admire how much the woodland has progressed over the last four years.

Hazeldene Heights Pre-school at Putnoe Heights is short of teachers and would appreciate hearing from anybody who would be able to offer additional hours when called upon. Please contact Janet Smith

if you are interested in learning more about hours, pay etc. Phone 01234 326685

Easter Offering at Putnoe Heights raised £343.30 incl Gift Aid for the Methodist Church World Mission Fund. Many thanks to all contributors".

Tuesday Club Annual Charity Evening on Tuesday 17 May at Putnoe Heights Church at 7pm a concert by Bedford Town Band in aid of Breathe Easy (British Lung Foundation). Cost is £6 on the door including refreshments and a raffle ticket. Everyone welcome

Shannon Express Concert at St Andrews Church, 8pm on 11 June 2011. Pre-concert Summer Supper 6.30pm. Concert and supper tickets £14, £13 concessions, £10 students 16-21yrs. Tickets available from St Andrews church office only Concert tickets £7, £6 concessions. £3 students. Children free accompanied by an adult. Church Centre office Tel:01234 216881

Beds, Essex, Herts Methodist District Women in Britain Network Spring Craft Day on 21st May at Priory Methodist Church 9.45am to 4.30pm. Information and booking forms (to be returned by 7 May) from Pam Seymour tel. 305695.

Hymn for Sunday

- 1 The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want.
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.
And I will trust in You alone.
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.
- 2 He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.
- 3 And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me, and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.



Please remember to always shop online using the links on www.thisischurch.com

Christian Aid

We believe in life before death

Christian Aid week This Sunday, 15 May, thousands of people in churches and homes throughout the UK and Ireland will be backing your efforts for Christian Aid Week with prayer. Christian Aid have written a special prayer for collectors who will go from house to house in your community this year, a prayer for collectors who will go from house to house in your community this year, bringing the movement for change right onto the doorstep.

Pray for people living in poverty

Pray for people living in the poorest areas of the world. Christian Aid works in nearly 50 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Pray for the insight to acknowledge how difficult life can be in these places.

Pray for people living in situations of war and conflict.

Pray for those who are paying the price of the financial systems from which we benefit in the developed world.

Pray for communities affected by recent emergencies (for example, at the time of writing, over a million people were still living in makeshift shelters in Haiti). Pray that we do not forget when they have vanished from the media.

Pray that we recognise our common humanity and hold out hands of friendship and support.

Pray for Christian Aid partners

Give thanks for all who are standing alongside some of the poorest communities in the world, and working to bring life and hope. In particular, give thanks for the work of Soppexcca in Nicaragua. This is the partner featured in the Christian Aid Week resources. It is bringing profound change within communities of small-scale coffee farmers,

making the coffee process more sustainable and environmentally sound, and bringing justice to business practices throughout the country. Give thanks for the courage and tenacity of partners when they are working in situations of conflict and sometimes considerable adversity.

Pray for the success of Christian Aid Week.

Give thanks for all who witness the possibility of transformation, who pray, act and give for a better world.

Give thanks for anyone from your own church community who is collecting this week.

Pray for governments and those in positions of power

Pray for commitment to policies that bring opportunities and transformation to poor communities.

Give thanks for campaigners and all who speak out for those who have no voice.

Pray for ourselves

Pray that we may be open to the stirrings of God's creative Spirit, that we may choose to live not only for ourselves and those we love, but for our neighbours, at home and on the other side of the world.

Collectors - can you help ?

St Mark's

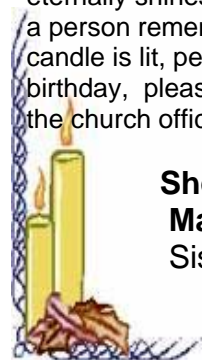
Can you give one or two hours of your time to help with delivering and collecting gift envelopes for Christian Aid ? Envelopes and collectors' packs are available today for those who have already agreed to help. Please see John and Irene Harrison after the service or call at the office during the week.

Putnoe Heights Church

Envelopes at Putnoe Heights will be available from Carolyn Morris

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.



Sheila Marie Humphrey
Mary Singleton - dearly loved
Sister of Christine Davies

Holy Spirit of God, light a flame within us, burning for justice, glowing with kindness, shining for hope for the end of poverty. As we prepare for Christian Aid Week, we come together: collectors and givers, those who pray and those who campaign, poor and rich united in God, longing for justice and living in joy.

Forthcoming Funerals

The funeral of John Murray will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Friday 20 May at 4.00pm

The funeral of Doris Cooper will take place at St Mark's Church at 3.15pm on Friday 27 May

