



Partnership News

Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church

18 August 2013 - Ordinary 20



8.30am Holy Communion every Sunday

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

Today 18 August — Ordinary 20

9.30 St Marks – Holy Communion

Preacher – Revd Dr Sam Cappleman

Leadership – Mr. Michael Ovenden

Intercessions – Mrs. Delia Shephard

11.00 am Putnoe – Holy Communion

Preacher – Revd. Dr. Sam Cappleman

Leadership – Mrs. Jean Kirk

Intercessions — Mr. Alan Bayliss

25 August — Ordinary 21

9.30 St Marks – Morning Worship

Preacher – Mrs Wendy Waters

Leadership – Mrs Margaret Appleton

Intercessions – Mrs Mary Stubbs

11.00 am Putnoe – Morning

Preacher – Mrs Wendy Waters

Leadership Mr Barry Southam

Intercessions — Dr Tim Wilkes

Readings 1. Jeremiah 1: 4-10 2. Hebrews 12: 18-29

3. Luke 13: 10-17

Midweek 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 St Mark's Church this week have been given by Janet and Brian Ibberson to celebrate their 51st wedding anniversary.

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 foyer

Prayer for Today

O Beauty,
so ancient and so new!
Late have we loved you,
though you were always with us.
You call to our heart.
You burst on our deafness.
You scatter our blindness.
We draw breath at your fragrance.
Our heart pants for you.
Our soul hungers for you.
You touch us and we are consumed
at the thought of your peace. Amen.

St Augustine (354-430)

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR

Tel: 266952 nsm@thisischurch.com

(Sam also works full time as a Vice President for Hewlett Packard)

Deacon Jane Mills

c/o Putnoe Heights Church Centre

Tel. 348091 Mobile 07807 146535

jane@thisischurch.com

The Reverend Canon Charles Royden

The Vicarage, Calder Rise. MK41 7UY

309175 Mobile 07973 113861 vicar@thisischurch.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 Jenny Snelson 344417

Treasurer Mr John Hitt 404186 treasurerph@thisischurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator Mr Lawrence Wyatt 350188

Youth Team Leader Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com

St. Mark's Church Centre

Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5.00pm

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

Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613

Leadership Team - Mr Michael Ovenden 826738

Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892

treasurer@thisischurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator Jim Williams 360605

Partnership News is sent out by email every Saturday in a colour edition. If you would like to receive a copy please send an email entitled 'Partnership News' to vicar@thisischurch.com. 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

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)
2.00pm U3A Calligraphy at St Mark's 2nd week (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@thisischurch.com 365630
1.30-2.45pm Chat & Make For babies and toddlers 0-5. Crafts, toys, songs, story and refreshments £1. More details email– chatandplay@hotmail.co.uk .
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-8.15pm Fit for Life Yoga - Putnoe Heights Contact Jane Butcher 07891879571
6.30pm Boot Camp Putnoe Heights – Laura Amor 341152 / 07976259081
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– 19 August Judith Stanton. 823313
7.30pm No Fear Bridge Club St. Mark's Mrs. Susan Ford 300218. First session starts 23 September.
7.30pm House group 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck 267567
Putnoe Heights Children and Youth meeting - Monday 23rd September

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 Skinner 07989080389
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 Grp. St Mark's (contacts details below)
1.3pm U3A Choir. St Mark's (contacts 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)
2.00pm Library Walk W.I. Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Morag Tomkins 356895
2pm U3A Photography Group 3 St. Mark's (1st Wk) (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.
4.00pm-6.15pm Stars School of Dance at Putnoe Heights.. Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468
7.30-8.30pm Pilates St Mark's Church Jane Butcher 0789187957
7pm - 8.30pm Daisy Birthing Putnoe Heights Susie 07980447390
6.00-7.00pm Zumba at St Mark's. Contact Denise Worker 07900 232648
6.30pm MT Karate (all ages) Karen King 07941264885
7pm Keep Fit. St. Mark's Jan Gregory 328455
7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club (Meets fortnightly). Strawberry Tea 20 August at St.Mark's at 2.30pm Details Janet King 313946

Wednesday

9.30am Body Control Pilates. Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430.
9.30am Discover & 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. (contact 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)
10am U3A Diet and Nutrition- Putnoe (contact below)
11.15am U3A Keep Fit
12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe fortnightly. Next meeting 11 September 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
2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft St Marks.(see contact details below)
2pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan Putnoe Heights
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 18 September. Wendy Waters 401834
4.15pm Kumon Maths. Putnoe Heights Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698
6.00 pm Brownies. St Mark's. Mrs C 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 Yvonne Blain 350241 or Brian Sallows 407725
7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society Putnoe Heights monthly. Sylvia Woods 365095
7.00pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe monthly Mrs O Holt

266004

7.00pm Line Dancing Putnoe Mike Del-Boyer
348378

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

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club at St Mark's
1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next meeting will be
4 September. Everyone welcome. All dances called, only
£1 including refreshments. 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.0-5 Jo Garner 400071 or 07932616468

10.00-11.30am Gentle Yoga For more details contact
Helen Nicholson Tel.03003004305

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 (small hall) Next Steps 9-
24months Putnoe Children's Centre.Please call Trudy
Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information 340552.
2pm -Friendly Chicago Bridge at Putnoe Heights £2 per
session inc. refreshments. New members welcome.
Contact Pat 01234 294220.

2pm U3A Current Affairs - Putnoe Heights

2-4pm U3A Indoor Games. St.Mark's (contact below)

2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society St Mark's Mary Rich
272470

5.45pm Weightwatchers. St. Mark's. Clare Martin
07805408811.

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins .

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe 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

7.30pm Gentle Birthing St Mark's. Pat Wood 07946
847231

8 -10pm Bedford Folk Dancers (formerly Barn
dancers)

Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights Different guest callers
each week.Except August. Next meeting 5 September. All
welcome, cost £2 Including refreshments. More details
Ron 825574 or Shirley 01767 651767

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

9am -1pm Machine Knitting group at Putnoe Heights,
fortnightly . Contact Marion Sutton 217647

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 U3A Whist St Marks. (contact details
below)

2pm U3A Italian-Putnoe Heights (contact details
below)

2pm U3A Gardening - Putnoe Heights

4.50pm-8.15pm Stars School of Dance Esther
Richardson 295862 or 07917582468

6.00-7.00pm Zumba at St Mark's. Contact Denise
Worker (07900 232648

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

10 - 5.30pm Bedford Stamp Fayre. 1st Sunday Feb/
Apr/Jun/Aug /Oct/Dec. Contact P Harris 01623 621143

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.

7-9pm Tae Kwon Do St Mark's Adrian Felice
www.bedfordtkd.com 07964356355

Messy Church Dates

Weds 18 Sept; Weds 16 Oct; Weds 20 Nov,



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 – 8 October

St Mark's Leadership Team - 10 September

Annual Congregational Meetings

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 10 October

Putnoe Heights Management Meeting 1st October

Putnoe Church Council - 14 Oct

Pastoral Group Meeting - 4.15pm 17th September

Churchyard Committee -

Commemoration Service Sunday 3 November 3pm

Circuit meeting - 10th September Wilstead Methodist
Church

Deanery Meeting - 14 November

Woodland Burial Trustees–

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting –1.30pm
23rd September

New Year Lunch 19 January at Putnoe

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

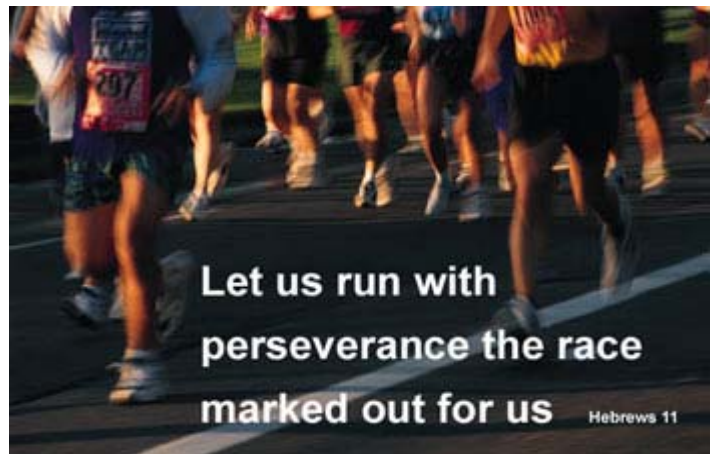
Ordinary 20

Sentence of Scripture — Keep me safe, O God, for in you I take refuge. **Ps 16 v 1**

Collect Prayer for the Day

God of glory, the end of our searching, help us to lay aside all that prevents us from seeking your kingdom, and to give all that we have to gain the pearl beyond all price, through our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Common Worship Shorter Collect



Ever loving God, your Son Jesus Christ gave Himself as living bread for the life of the world; give us such a knowledge of His presence that we may be strengthened and sustained by His risen life to serve you continually; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen** *New Zealand Prayer Book*

First Reading— Isaiah 5: 1-7 *The Song of the Vineyard*

I will sing for the one I love a song about his vineyard:

My loved one had a vineyard on a fertile hillside. He dug it up and cleared it of stones and planted it with the choicest vines.

He built a watchtower in it and cut out a winepress as well.

Then he looked for a crop of good grapes, but it yielded only bad fruit.

“Now you dwellers in Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more could have been done for my vineyard than I have done for it? When I looked for good grapes, why did it yield only bad?”

Now I will tell you what I am going to do to my vineyard:

I will take away its hedge, and it will be destroyed;

I will break down its wall, and it will be trampled. I will make it a wasteland, neither pruned nor cultivated, and briars and thorns will grow there.

I will command the clouds not to rain on it.”

The vineyard of the Lord Almighty is the nation of Israel and the people of Judah are the vines he delighted in.

And he looked for justice, but saw bloodshed; for righteousness, but heard cries of distress

(This is the word of the Lord -- **Thanks be to God**)

Second Reading — Hebrews 11:29-12:2

By faith the people passed through the Red Sea as on dry land; but when the Egyptians tried to do so, they were drowned. By faith the walls of Jericho fell, after the people had marched around them for seven days. By faith the prostitute Rahab, because she welcomed the spies, was not killed with those who were disobedient. And what more shall I say? I do not have time to tell about Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephthah, David, Samuel and the prophets, who through faith conquered kingdoms, administered justice, and gained what was promised; who shut the mouths of lions quenched the fury of the flames, and escaped the edge of the sword; whose weakness was turned to strength; and who became powerful in battle and routed foreign armies. Women received back their dead, raised to life again. Others were tortured and refused to be released, so that they might gain a better resurrection. Some faced jeers and flogging, while still others were chained and put in prison. They were stoned; they were sawed in two; they were put to death by the sword. They went about in sheepskins and goatskins, destitute, persecuted and mistreated-- the world was not worthy of them. They wandered in deserts and mountains, and in caves and holes in the ground. These were all commended for their faith, yet none of them received what had been promised. God had planned something better for us so that only together with us would they be made perfect. Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God

(This is the word of the Lord - **Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading – Luke 12: 49 –56 (*When announced* **Glory to Christ our Saviour**)

"I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled! But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is completed! Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." He said to the crowd: "When you see a cloud rising in the west, immediately you say, 'It's going to rain,' and it does. And when the south wind blows, you say, 'It's going to be hot,' and it is. Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky. How is it that you don't know how to interpret this present time? (This is the Gospel of Christ—**Praise to Christ our Lord**)

Post Communion Prayer

God of our pilgrimage, you have willed that the gates of mercy should stand open for those who trust in you: look upon us with your favour that we who follow the path of your will may never wander from the way of life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Hymns (*Please distribute Holy Communion Booklet and Mission Praise*)

1. Hallelujah! sing to Jesus, **207**
2. To Him we come, **709**
3. Come to me and I shall give you rest, (*In Partnership News*)
4. The Kingdom of God, **65**

Mediation

In both the Old and New Testament passages the thrust is on God's people acting in a way which is real and true to their faith, not something which looks close on the outside but in reality is a long way from the real thing. The peace which Jesus speaks about in Luke is real peace, not something that just papers over the cracks in the name of unity. This quest for real peace stems from our walking with God and wanting to do His will. It is built on a passion and compassion for change, justice, and renewal, themes which Isaiah implicitly challenges the Israelites with in the Song of the Vineyard, the title of today's Old Testament passage. It's not a 'peace at any price', a peace which fails to place God's will at the very centre of its existence. For the Israelites and for us the message is clear. Put the Kingdom of God first, and everything else falls into place. Putting the Kingdom first does not guarantee peace and harmony; it will involve personal and societal change and will almost certainly encounter resistance (all change does) and possibly rejection. Seen in its proper context this passage is subversive stuff! But it's what we are called to do and be as Christians. To take our place and fulfil our role in bringing about God's kingdom on earth.

A Question of Faith

The book of Hebrews was almost certainly written to a group of readers thoroughly familiar with the Old Covenant, probably mainly Jewish Christians, perhaps even a group of Jewish priests, as there is a big focus on ceremony of Jewish worship throughout the book. Whether priests or not, having become Christians they have now left Jerusalem to find a place to live and worship, possibly Antioch or Caesarea but still have hankering for the splendour of Temple worship and the place they played in it. They are beginning to get persecuted for their faith and things are beginning to be a bit tough for them. So, given that the book in part at least is dealing with the threat of apostasy back to Judaism it's not surprising that it addresses the question of how it is possible to approach God. It does so by presenting the Christian life in the context of a story which is fundamental to Judaism, the Exodus and the importance of faith from the Red Sea encounter forwards. And for the writer of the book of Hebrews, the destination is again the Promised Land, only this time it the Promised Land of Heaven and the Passover of the Jews has become the Passover of Christ. Importantly the letter shows how the early Christians understood the harmony between the Old and New Testaments and how they understood the redemptive work of Jesus in terms of God's whole plan of salvation. The writer highlights that Jesus brings a new and living way of entering into a true and spiritual relationship with God. It is for this reason that he states the importance of 'Let us keep our eyes fixed on Jesus', rather than reverting back to their old ways of engaging with God with its material trappings and ceremonies. We too can sometimes get carried away with the material things that surround our faith, our churches, our organisations our structures, rather than on having a spiritual relationship with God. How much time do we, for example, spend alone with God, reading His word and praying as opposed to coming to church or doing church activities. Clearly there is an overlap but we need to make sure the focus and centre of our faith is in the right place and we keep our eyes fixed on Jesus. Similarly, the law, with which the Jews were so familiar, was only a means to an end, not an end in itself. Over the years they lost sight of that reality. We can do the same, when the structures of our religion become the end in themselves not the means to an end, a deeper and more spiritual walk with God. Hebrews, perhaps more

than any other book in the bible reminds us of the importance of our spiritual heritage. It also reminds us too that our faith needs to be firmly fixed on Jesus, on our spiritual relationship with God through His ultimate sacrifice. He is the beginning and the end of our faith, the leads us in our faith and brings it to perfection, the author and finisher, the alpha and the omega, the beginning and the end. Sometimes it's easy for us to get distracted by our doubts, distracted by the minutiae of our faith, the things that are not really that important, the things from our heritage, and not on Jesus Himself. Through their perseverance and radical faith the Hebrew Christians laid the basis and foundation of a church that was to last an eternal lifetime. The theme of true, non-hypocritical faith is also seen in Luke's gospel. Through hypocrisy and their slavish adherence to their own ways and the unwillingness to hear a new message of salvation, the Pharisees have rejected Jesus. Similarly, in today's gospel reading, the crowds, because of their hypocrisy, refuse, or are unable to see the key moment of salvation history unfolding before their very eyes. Jesus' ministry reveals God's plan and purpose to the world but the crowds do not see this. They seem able to interpret the material world but not the spiritual one, the present time. Sometimes we too find it hard to see God at work in our own world when if we see things from God's perspective, perhaps miracles are happening all the time. We just don't recognise them because we are so used to seeing life from our own world view, rather than that of the creator. *Sam Cappleman*

Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

Creator God, your world longs to live in peace. We pray for your healing peace; for countries at war with one another, for communities where there is conflict, for victims of past and present wars. Your world longs to live in peace, but not peace at any price. We pray for those who stir up dissension; by campaigning for justice, by championing the poor and oppressed, and by challenging the wealthy and the powerful. **Amen**

Saviour God, humanity longs to live in peace. We pray for your healing peace; for those racked by guilt or regret, for those caught up in turbulent relationships, for those burdened by illness or sorrow. Humanity longs to live in peace, but not peace at any price. We pray for those who stir up dissension; by questioning the ways of society, by being open and honest, and by searching for the truth. **Amen**

Spirit of God, your church longs to live in peace. We pray for your healing peace; between denominations, within individual churches, in our own hearts. Your church longs to live in peace, but not peace at any price. We pray for those who stir up dissension; disturbing us with new visions and ideas, criticising our apathy and complacency, and provoking us to think afresh about our calling. **Amen**

[From Companion to the Revised Common Lectionary, Intercessions, Christine Odell]

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the eternal covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

You have cast a spell of longing over me, O Christ, and changed me with your divine yearning; but burn up my sins in immaterial fire, and make me worthy to be filled with delight in you, that, dancing, I may magnify your two comings, O Good One. *St John Damascene (676-749)*



Jesus Christ Appears to St John of the Cross by Domenico Piola

St John of the Cross (1542-91) was a Spanish Carmelite friar and mystic. A lifetime of contemplation led him to a paradoxical truth, it is only through darkness and sometimes despair that we can draw near to the divine presence. His efforts to reform his Order and to establish a strict rule of discalced or barefoot monks and nuns backfired. The Carmelite authorities were outraged, and imprisoned him in a tiny, damp cell, fed him bread and sardine scraps off the floor, and scourged his bare back daily. His dramatic escape by prising off the hinges of his cell door and lowering himself from a balcony with a cloth-and-blanket rope is the genesis of one of John's profoundest poems: "Dark Night": "On a dark secret night, starving for love and deep in flame . . . unseen I slipped away." His most famous poem, "The Spiritual Canticle", speaks to anybody whose faith is wavering. "Where have you hidden away? You left me whimpering, my love. Wounding me you vanished like the stag. I rushed out shouting for you - but you were gone." The writings of St John of the Cross are a beacon to all who are struggling to find a deeper spirituality in a brutally secular world. It is when we feel most distant from God, beset by emptiness and darkness, that we are closest to his glory and light. He ends with a line of verse that has the power to reinvigorate our spiritual journey:

"If a man wishes to be sure of the road he travels on,
he must close his eyes, and walk in the dark."

St Mark's

Junior Church meets again 8 September.

Story Box starts again on 12 September.

Chat and Make starts again on 16 September.

Chat and Play has a meeting on 22 August and starts again weekly on 12 Sept

Action for Children September House to House

Collection Action for Children has a 140 year history of working with children, young people and parents living in tough circumstances. Today it does this through its family centres located throughout the UK including North Bedfordshire. It is an independent charity working with other groups in partnership including Social Services and the Methodist Church where it has its roots.

Our annual house-to-house Collection to support this vital work will take place as usual in the first 2 weeks in September. St. Mark's Church is responsible for covering the Brickhill area and last year our 13 collectors raised £572 (inc. Gift Aid). If you could spare a few hours during early September to distribute and then collect envelopes in the Brickhill area, perhaps near to where you live, or you would like some more information then please contact me. Mike Elliott (Tel. 342507)

The Bedford and District Christian Aid

Committee are looking for someone who could act as Secretary for two meetings per year, plus responding to mail coming from Christian Aid Oxford. Computer skills and internet access would be an advantage. Anyone who may be interested please speak to Carolyn Morris.

Summer holidays at Putnoe Heights Church:

Storybox, Storybox plus and Junior church children and their friends aged 0 to 13 years from both churches are invited to meet on Monday 19 August. We will meet together for lunch from 12.00 to 12.30pm; everyone please will you bring a packed lunch as our Storybox teams will be having a break. Drinks will be provided.

Various themed activities and games from 1pm to 2.30pm. All children must be accompanied by an adult. If anyone is available to help with these sessions that would be really helpful. Please can you let me know. Carolyn Morris.

Harvest Festival this year is on Sunday 29 September. This is a great time to invite along friends and we also welcome uniformed organisations and church groups

Samaritans Purse Shoe Box Appeal 2013

Following the success of last year's donation of 38 boxes by Messy Church and the wider congregation, we will be packing boxes at our Messy Church session on 16 October.

We will be happy to accept donated items from now on. Please see the Messy Church notice board for details of what can and cannot be put in the boxes. If you require further information please speak to

Wendy Waters or Jean Bank.

Bedfordshire Essex and Hertfordshire District Methodist Women in Britain Service of induction for Margaret Torkildsen as District MWiB President and Launch of the President's Project "Zimbabwe Victims Support Fund" will be held at St Andrew's Methodist Church, The Stow, Harlow CM20 3AF on Saturday 7 September. Refreshments from 10.am, please bring a packed lunch. See poster in foyer for more details.

Wanted 2 volunteers to join the lawn cutting rota at Putnoe Heights. If you have approx 1¼ hours to spare once a month I would like to hear from you. The rota runs from March to the end of October. If you are able to help please contact Veta Hudson-Rae, Leadership Team on 360507.

Circuit Welcome Service for Rev. Gill Baalham and Rev. Graham Claydon-Knights at 3pm on Saturday 31 August at Priory Methodist Church, Newnham Avenue. The Chair of the District, Rev. Anne Browne is preaching.

Putnoe Heights Harvest Lunch Sunday 29 September 2013 1.00pm Tickets are now available from the Putnoe Office on weekdays or after Sunday Services. Two courses, soft drink and coffee. £6.00 or £3.00 for children. Please bring your own wine.

Footprints Walk Sunday 1 September at 2.30pm. Meet in Biggleswade at the Dan Albone Car Park (turn left at Sainsbury's roundabout on A1, continue to car park by Meccano bridge). Circular walk on Biggleswade Common and along River Ivel. Details from Margaret and Eddy.

Barry and Sue Southam would like to thank you for your prayers, love and support over the past few months. The good news is that Matthew is now in remission.

The Magna Carta arrived at St Albans Abbey in time for the exact 800th anniversary, on 4 August, of the first meeting in St Albans of King John and his barons which led to the signing of the Magna Carta two years later. The first draft of that momentous document was drawn up in St Albans, although the final Great Charter has never before been inside the Abbey. Now it can be seen there, in a high-security display cabinet, until the end of this month. It is proving very popular.

The Mayor of St Albans, Cllr Annie Brewster said that she was surprised how small and perfect the script was. She could not see a single spelling mistake or attempt at a cover-up.

Highland Fling

We were delighted to hear that John and Janet day have successfully completed their journey to Aviemore in the 1929 MG

Methodist Church investment decisions are now being guided by a new policy on human rights which focuses on companies operating in areas of conflict around the world. The policy has been adopted by the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church, which manages £1 billion of Methodist Church investments. Bill Seddon, Chief Executive of the Central Finance Board of the Methodist Church, said: "This new policy will help us engage with companies operating in areas where human rights are being ignored, often due to armed conflict. It will help us structure our on-going human rights engagement with companies." The new policy sets out what the CFB expects from companies. This includes the publication of human rights policies and an assessment of risk in areas of poor human rights.

Christian denominations including Baptists, Methodist and Church of England have passed greetings to the Muslim Community on the feast of 'Id ul-Fitr (Eid) as part of the continuing work to encourage positive inter faith relations. The Revd Gareth Hill, Head of Mission and Advocacy for the Methodist Church said 'Id ul-Fitr (Eid) is a good opportunity to greet our Muslim neighbours as they mark the end of Ramadan.' "As Methodist Christians, we are committed to pray for our communities and to assure our Muslim friends of our goodwill and our commitment to peace and justice in the society that we share together." The greeting is supported by the Christian Muslim Forum and has been facilitated by Churches Together in Britain & Ireland and Churches Together in England.

It reads as follows:

"The Christian churches send greetings of peace and prayers for God's blessing on our Muslim neighbours on the occasion of 'Id ul-Fitr (Eid). We recognise this as a day of good news and celebration - the fast has been completed and the feast begins! As representatives of the main Christian traditions in the UK we assure you of our goodwill towards you, and our commitment to peace and justice in the society that we share together. Aware of the recent attacks on mosques and Muslims, we want to stand with you against any discrimination or violence targeting any community or person because of their faith. Instead, we want to work for more positive

interaction between Christians and Muslims, demonstrating the love for God and neighbour to which we are called."

Groups developing new ways of attracting people into the Church in Cornwall are being asked to compete for funding in "Bishop's Den" - a BBC TV Dragons' Den-style competition, chaired by the Bishop of Truro. Successful schemes will receive grants of up to £100,000 from £250,000 earmarked for the project, from the sale of redundant parsonages. The idea is to solicit funding-bids for innovative and exciting ideas. The kind of criteria is imaginative, collaborative, and maybe a bit risky, an evangelistic project that gets the gospel in word out to the people or projects that really demonstrate the Church serving its community.

Hymn for Sunday

Antiphon:

Come to me and I shall give you rest.

From the depth I call to you.
Listen, Lord, and hear my pleading.

Love and mercy flow from you,
Lord of life and kind redeemer.

In the dark I hope for you,
You are light of new day dawning.

Weak and frail we come to you,
God of love and new beginning.

Contemporary version of Psalm 130
(Repeat the antiphon after each verse)

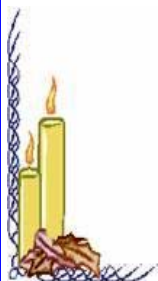
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Rest In Peace

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.



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



Forthcoming Funerals

The funeral of Herbert John Luscombe will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Tuesday 27th August at 4.00pm