



Methodist
Church

Partnership News

22 May 2011 5th 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 - Morning Worship

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

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship

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

6.30pm Wesley Service at Putnoe Heights Church

29 May - 6th Sunday of Easter

9.30 am St Mark's - Holy Communion with PCH

Preacher – Mrs Wendy Waters
Leadership – Mrs Jean Bank
Intercessions – Mrs Margaret Appleton

11.00 am Putnoe - Holy Communion with PCH

Preacher– Revd Dr Sam Cappleman
Leadership – Mrs Linda Hoar
Intercessions – Mrs Sue Allen

Bible Readings 1. Acts 17: 22-31 2. 1 Peter 3: 13-22
3. John 14: 15-21

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 Val Peacock in celebration of her
birthday.

*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

Risen Christ,
your wounds declare your love
for the world
and the wonders
of your risen life:
give us compassion
and courage
to risk ourselves
for those we serve,
to the glory of God the Father.

Common Worship Shorter Collect

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—30 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. Next meeting June 7—Richard Ledger.** 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 31 - Outside visit to Garden Centre (by car) No evening meeting. " 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 - 25 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 June 1 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

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 -

Brickhill Parish Council Meetings -

Circuit meeting -

Deanery Meeting - .

Woodland Burial Trustees –

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth –

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

5th Sunday of Easter

Opening Sentence from Scripture – 1 Peter 2

You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light

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

Eternal God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the way the truth and the life: grant us to walk in his way, to rejoice in his truth, and to share his risen life; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. *Methodist Worship*



First Bible Reading- Acts 7: 55-60

But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. "Look," he said, "I see heaven open and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." At this they covered their ears and, yelling at the top of their voices, they all rushed at him, dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. Meanwhile, the witnesses laid their clothes at the feet of a young man named Saul. While they were stoning him, Stephen prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Then he fell on his knees and cried out, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them." When he had said this, he fell asleep.

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

Second Reading - 1 Peter 2: 2-10

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good. As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by men but chosen by God and precious to him—you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For in Scripture it says: "See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and precious cornerstone, and the one who trusts in him will never be put to shame." Now to you who believe, this stone is precious. But to those who do not believe, "The stone the builders rejected has become the capstone, and, "A stone that causes men to stumble and a rock that makes them fall." They stumble because they disobey the message—which is also what they were destined for. But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. **(This is the Word of the Lord — Thanks be to God)**

Gospel Reading - John 14: 1 –14

Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going." Thomas said to him, "Lord, we don't know where you are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the

Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the father. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. (This is the word of the Lord. - **Thanks be to God**)

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 (*Morning Worship and Mission Praise, baptism cards at Putnoe*)

1. All I once held dear (On Partnership News)
2. He who would valiant be 224 (*Tune Monks Gate*)
3. Lord of creation 440 (*Tune Slane*)
4. Safe in the shadow 583 (*Tune Creator God*)
5. God is our strength and refuge 189 (*Tune dam Buster's March*)

Commentary 'In my Father's House'

The words which Jesus speaks today in John 14 come in the context of a meal just before the Passover. We are told that Jesus knew that the time for him to die was fast approaching (13:1). Jesus has started the evening by washing the disciples feet (13:4). Then he goes on to predict that he will be betrayed and he tells Judas to 'do it quickly' and Judas leaves the gathered disciples (13:30). Jesus tells the faithful ones left that they must love each other and by their love people will come to know that they are disciples of his (13:35). Effectively Jesus is saying that he will live on through the lives which his followers live as an example of his teaching. Jesus then has the sad task of telling Peter that he will disown him no less than three times (13:38).

Imagine perhaps you are Peter, you have just heard Jesus tell of his impending betrayal, and you have been told that you will deny Jesus three times in the early morning even before a cock has crowed. How do you feel? Undoubtedly this was a low point for the disciples, they are on the verge of catastrophic failure, their hopes and dreams lie shattered. The scene is one of anxiety, indeed Jesus himself uses the word 'orphans' to describe them. The disciples had expected that they would be following Jesus until he established his reign and they would share in that. A future without Jesus was now a shattering thought. It is to these despairing disciples when they are profoundly upset that Jesus says the words we read this morning in which he seeks to move the disciples from their fear to faith.

'Let not your hearts be troubled, believe in God, believe also in me'

So Jesus is heading for the agony of the cross, we know that he is deeply troubled in heart (12:27) and spirit (13:21). Yet in this time of enormous personal trouble we find Jesus not thinking of himself and his own woes, but rather giving emotional and spiritual support and comfort to the disciples. They are in a state of confusion and fearful, so he is seeking to give them truths which will help them overcome their grief and despair in the days ahead.

We use these words at funerals because the way that the disciples felt that evening is how we feel when we lose somebody at death. Like them our hopes and dreams feel shattered and there seems utter despair at the separation from our loved ones. We too feel angry, guilty and hopeless all at the same time. Jesus makes it clear that the answer to such anxiety and troubled spirit, is to trust. Worry loses its power when we are in the presence of Jesus. To the disciples, what is about to unfold is a disaster and there is no future worth living for. Jesus realises that the events which will take place will end ultimately in a magnificent future.

That future is described in simple, although not simplistic terms. Jesus goes on to say

'In my Father's house there are many rooms, if it were not so I would have told you, I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and take you to be with me'

The reading in the AV uses the phrase. 'In my Father's house there many mansions' Mansions is a lovely word, it comes to us from Tyndale's translation of monai, the word which Jesus uses means dwelling places. It is always difficult for us to read scripture because we do so through layers and layers of interpretation which have conditioned us to understand certain things about what we read. This is true in the passage today. We hear the words of Jesus *'In my Father's house'* and most of us jump immediately to thinking that Jesus is speaking about heaven. It is important for us to try and put ourselves right back to the occasion when Jesus spoke those words. Can you think when was the first time in John's Gospel when Jesus used the words 'Father's house'? I will let you think about that before you turn over the page

The answer is in Chapter 2:16, Jesus attacks the traders in the Temple and he says 'How dare you turn my Father's house into a market!'

The disciples would have heard the phrase "God's House" used over and over again in the Scriptures to refer to the Temple in Jerusalem. The words would have brought to mind the place where God's name is to be worshiped and praised. God's House was the place where God's Presence dwells among His People. It's the place where the Heavenly Realm and the Earthly realm (the heavens and the earth) meet together. The point to be made here is that Jesus is doing more than just promising his disciples that there will be space for them in heaven. Jesus is speaking about a new order, a new world, a time and place when there will be room for everyone.

So Jesus prepares the disciples for the fact that he will be going away, yet he makes it clear that it is all a part of God's wider purpose to change things for the good. His death will be something which brings clear benefits, he is not abandoning them, rather he is going to prepare a place for them. Quite explicitly, there is no reason to give up hope at all, even when the world seems hopeless, Jesus is preparing a new order of things.

As a result of the questioning of Thomas Jesus goes on to say
'I am the way, the truth and life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'

These are words of comfort and reassurance to desperate disciples. However, they have become the source of much disagreement in the church. The point made is that if Jesus is the only way to come to the father, then all other ways must lead to destruction! The words of reassurance to the disciples therefore become a statement of exclusivity and exclusion intended to strike fear into the hearts of followers of other religions. Unless we follow Jesus we are not following the way. Whilst we all recognise that Christians can learn much from other religions it would be foolish for us to pretend that Jesus is just a way to God like many others. The idea that all faiths are just different roads up the mountain to reach the summit is contrary to the very special claims made by Jesus about himself. In calling himself God, Jesus is as much the mountain himself!

However condemning all who do not ascribe to faith in Jesus to the tortures of hell is not a necessary conclusion. Universalists believe that everyone is "saved." Christian history is punctuated with the names of many who such a theological position, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Clement of Alexandria, Basil the Great, St. Gregory of Nazianus, on down to Teilhard de Chardin, Jacques Ellul, Jurgen Moltmann, and Paul Tillich in the modern age. There is some breadth of Biblical support for the idea which gives hope that the new order of things which Jesus seeks to bring about is more successful in the breadth of its embrace. It is worth looking at some of these passages which some believe demonstrate that Jesus and his disciples believed salvation was something brought to all creation

1. Through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things. (Colossians 1: 19)
2. When I am lifted up from the earth I will draw all men to myself (John 12:32)
3. To bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ. (Ephesians 1:10)
4. God so loved the world (cosmos) that he gave his only Son (John 3: 16)
5. This is good, and pleases God our Saviour, who wants all people to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. (1 Timothy 2:3-6)
6. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. (2 Peter 3:9)
7. If anybody does sin, we have an advocate with the Father—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. (1 John 2:2)
8. Heaven must receive him until the time comes for God to restore everything, as he promised long ago through his holy prophets. *Peter* (Acts 3:21).
9. You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. It is written: "As surely as I live," says the Lord, "every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God." (Romans 14:11)
10. Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:10)

Exactly how the universal love of God and the particularity of Jesus fit together isn't clear. Christians struggle with such things as whether Gandhi in hell because he wasn't Christian.

C.S Lewis said *It is clearly unfair that this new life should be confined to people who have heard of Christ and been able to believe in Him. But the truth is God has not told us what His arrangements about the other people are. We do know that no man can be saved except through Christ; we do not know that only those who know Him can be saved through Him.*"

This point is often invoked when appealing to the salvation of people who lived before the time of Christ, adults with severely limited cognitive abilities, babies and children who die young, and people today who have no reasonable opportunity to hear the Gospel — they are saved by Christ even though they can't call upon Christ.

There is much that we simply do not understand and I prefer to leave God to decide how to exercise judgement. Saint Augustine advised that we should do our best to seek answers to difficult questions. Having done that, he said we should "rest patiently in unknowing." However what is clear to us is that in the passage today Jesus seeks to reassure his disciples of his ability to save. Jesus is speaking in terms of reassurance not doctrinal exclusivity. He is not telling his disciples what will happen to faithful Muslims, Hindus, Bhuddists or indeed to the majority of people who have never heard the Christian Gospel. Jesus is talking to his Jewish followers and re-assuring these faithful disciples. We too are saved by Jesus, not by ourselves and our beliefs. Jesus Christ is the way – his path is the way to wholeness, salvation, and shalom—and this graceful and forgiving path may surprise all of us.

Hear the passage today and hear the words of comfort that Jesus speaks. His words are meant to reach out to us in whatever kind of distress we might find ourselves and speak reassurance. When Jesus says, I am the way the truth and the life and nobody comes to the Father but by me, he is effectively saying that he has the authority to let in whoever he likes. Jesus is not making a statement about who cannot get in, he is rather making a commitment that he is able to pull off what he is promising to dispirited disciples who have a terrible couple of weeks ahead of them. There is nothing of which we need be afraid. Just like the disciples we can find that our fears and disappointments can be trusted to Jesus. *Charles Royden*

Meditation Follow thou me. I am the way and the truth and the life. Without the way there is no going, without the truth there is no knowing; without the life there is no living. I am the way which thou must follow; the truth which thou must believe; the life for which thou must hope. I am the inviolable way; the infallible truth, the never-ending life. I am the straightest way; the sovereign truth; life true, life blessed, life uncreated. *Thomas a Kempis*

Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead

Blessed are you, God our Father, who calls us to dwell with you in heaven. Hear the prayers we offer this day, and draw your holy people to your side. Glory to you for ever and ever. Amen

Eternal god, in whom is all our hope in life, in death and in all eternity; grant that, rejoicing in the eternal life which is ours in Christ, we may face whatever the future holds in store for us calm and unafraid, always confident that nether death nor life can part us from your love in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

We pray for those involved in the industrial and commercial life of our nation. Remove barriers of mistrust, bitterness, prejudice which sometimes exist. Help us not to undermine and belittle others by speaking badly of them or criticising them in an unjust manner. Give to all a spirit of tolerance and understanding, and an earnest desire to seek after you, that all may work for the common good. Amen

A Hymn for Sunday

1 All I once held dear, built my life upon,
All this world reveres, and wars to own,
All I once thought gain, I have counted loss;
Spent and worthless now, compared to this.

*Knowing you, Jesus, knowing you,
there is no greater thing.
you're my all, you're the best,
you're my joy, my righteousness,
and I love you, Lord.*

2 Now my heart's desire, is to know you more,
To be found in you and known as yours.
To possess by faith, what I could not earn,
All-surpassing gift, of righteousness.

3 Oh, to know the power, of your risen life,
And to know you in your sufferings.
To become like you, in your death, my Lord,
So with you to live, and never die.

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.

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

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, Women's Network—A District Day will be held on Thursday 26th May at High Street Methodist Church, Sisk Lane, Stevenage. SG1 3LS from 10am to 3.30pm. Speaker: Nicola Vidamour (formerly a Mission Partner in Russia)

Please see notice in Foyer for more details. —Pam Seymour

St Marks Church Pre-School Open Day. We had a really good turnout of people. Lots of interest.

Thank you. Deborah Wallace sends her appreciation for the beautiful bouquet of flowers from Putnoe Heights Church. Also much gratitude for all the get well cards and numerous prayers from the partnership during Deborah's long illness. God Bless you all.

Brickhill Scout Group are holding a Family Quiz Night and Fish and Chip Supper at St Mark's Church on Friday 17 June, 7pm for 7.30pm start. Teams of up to 6 people. Adults £6 (inc supper). Children £4 (inc supper) Contact Caroline Romans on 07732 467823 or rcromans@btinternet.com

Clubhouse. The Clubhouse group at St Mark's provides a day care centre for people with learning disabilities. We would very much value offers of help from people who will volunteer on an occasional basis when we are short staffed. Clubhouse meets Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 9.00am until 2.00pm If this is something which you might be able to offer help then please speak with Charles Royden

Putnoe Heights Church is committed to providing a short act of worship at Puttenhoe care home every Thursday morning at 11am. 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..

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.

**John Murray
Mary Singleton**

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



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Forthcoming Funerals

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

