



Partnership News

Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church

27 July 2014

Ordinary 17



Sunday Services

8.30am Holy Communion every Sunday

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

27 July - Ordinary 17

9.30 St Marks - Morning Worship

Preacher - Revd. Canon Charles Royden
Leadership - Mr. Edward Parry
Intercessions - Deacon Jane Mills
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher Revd. Canon Charles Royden
Leadership Team - Mr Martin Fannon
Intercessions - Mr. Alan Bayliss
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

3 August - Ordinary 18

30 St Marks - Morning Family Worship with Baptism

Preacher - Mrs. Wendy Waters
Leadership - Mr. Mick Ovenden
Intercessions - Mrs. Delia Shephard
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Family Worship

Preacher Mrs. Wendy Waters
Leadership Team - Mrs. Jenny Snelson
Intercessions - Ministers
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

Readings 1. Genesis 32: 22-31 2. Romans 9:1-5
3. Matthew 14: 13-21

Midweek Holy communion at St. Mark's Chapel every
Wednesday at 10am and at Sir William Harpur House on
first Monday of every month at 10.00am.

Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights this week have been given by Pam Crouch in memory of her husband Jack to celebrate their 65 wedding anniversary and his birthday and Lawrence and Betty Wyatt to celebrate their wedding anniversary.

The flowers at St. Mark's have been given by Barbara Gates in memory of her mother Vera Tippet.

Banns

We publish the banns and pray for the marriage of Matthew John Izzard and Alicia Elizabeth Rickards Ottevanger. To be married at St Mark's Church 2 August 2014

.Prayer for Sunday

Give us patience, O God, in the hour of trouble;
humility in the hour of success
and constancy in the hour of temptation.
Grant us thankfulness for your benefits,
fear of your judgement
and hope in your enduring mercy;
now and for ever. Amen.

John Cosin (1594-1672)

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR
Tel: 266952 nsm@thisischurch.com

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 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

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Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinators

Mrs Wendy Waters 342613 office@thisischurch.com
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 Friday 9am -12pm,
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Managers Barry & Jenny Snelson 344417
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 - Mrs Jean Bank 355698
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892
treasurer@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Mr Jim Williams 360605

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

Hazeldene Heights Pre-school. Sessional and Full Day care available—open Mon.—Fri. Full Day Care 8.30am to 5pm Sessional times 9am—12noon and 12.45pm - 3.45pm

For more info please contact Laura Leggett 01234 326685 or www.hazeldeneheights.com

8.30-12.30pm St Mark's Pre-School Nursery

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

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

9.00-3.45pm 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 M. Berry 211955

10.30am U3A Play reading Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

1.30pm Chat & Make. Term time for babies and toddlers 0-5. Crafts, toys, songs, story and refreshments £1. More details contact St Mark's Church Office on 01234 342613 or Janine 01234 297481 Restarts 8 September

12.00 noon Story box Putnoe Heights We welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Contact Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com 365630

2pm U3A Music Appreciation Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

2.00pm U3A Italian Putnoe Heights— fortnightly

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

5.30 - 8.30 NHS Eat Smart Think Active at Putnoe Heights. For more details contact Emily Taverner 01234 792013

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 in month) Pat Nicholson 353518

7.00pm Cancer Care Society. St Mark's. (1st week in month) Mr J Dewhurst 01908 377020.

7.00-8.00pm Laughter Club at St. Mark's 2nd week each month) Cheryl Green 07729187399

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

7.30pm Whist Drive. St Mark's (Weeks 3 & 5 in the month).. Next meeting— 18 August Judith Stanton. 823313

7.30pm No Fear Bridge Club St. Mark's Mrs. Susan Ford 300218.

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

7.45-9.15 Get Fit Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights Diane Field 01234 404976

Tuesday

9 –1pm Bedford Stop Smoking at Putnoe Heights. For more details please contact Olivia Tornyie 01234 276826

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 Contact Janet King 313946

1.15pm U3A Cinema Group. St Mark's Contact Janet King 313946

1.30pm U3A Choir. St Mark's Contact Janet King 313946

2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 St Mark's (3rd Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 St Mark's (2nd Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

2.00pm Library Walk W.I. Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Morag Tomkins 356895

2pm U3A Photography Group 3 St. Mark's (1st Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group. St Mark's (1st & 3rd week in month). Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225

2.15pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. St Mark's (2nd & 4th week in month) 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

7.00pm Keep Fit. St. Mark's Jan Gregory 328455 (Unfortunately Jan has had to cancel her sessions at the moment, but hopes to re-start in January 2015.

7.30pm Ladies Tuesday Club at Putnoe Heights (Meets fortnightl 2 September Afternoon Tea at 2.30pm Details Janet King 313946

8.00pm Hearts in Beds Committee St Mark's (week 4 in month) Mrs N Aspey 309816

Wednesday

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

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 Janet King 313946

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

10am U3A Card Making, St Marks Contact Janet King 313946

10am U3A Diet and Nutrition- Putnoe Contact Janet King 313946

11.15am U3A Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights

12.30pm –4pm St Mark's Nursery Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe fortnightly. Next meeting 10 September Putnoe Heights Office 365630

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

2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft at St Marks.Contact Janet King 313946

2pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

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

3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church. St Mark's (3rd Week in month). for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 17 Sept 2014 Wendy Waters 401834 Jean Bank 355698

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

6-7pm ATSK Karate at Putnoe Height Kevin Stark Tel. 01234 353865

7.00pm Bunyan Bridge. St. Mark's Colin Jackson 363398 or Brian Sallows 407725.

7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society Putnoe Heights monthly. Sylvia Woods 365095

7.00pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe 3rd Wednesday in every month except August Mrs Jo Street 344600

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 30 July 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 (Week 1 in the month) Greta Cansfield 215016

Thursday

8.30am—12.30pm St. Mark's Pre School Nursery Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

9.30am Thursday Prayer Group. Putnoe Heights. Valerie Capon 356306. Request for prayer can be written in the prayer diary on the information table. Will not meet on July 31 and August 7

9.15am Spanish for beginners Plus at Putnoe Heights

10.30pm Spanish Holiday Survival at Putnoe Heights. Elena 01234 266968

9.45am Chat and Play St. Mark's. A term time group for Mums & toddlers.0-5 Contact St Mark's Church Office 01234 342613 or Janine 01234 297481 Restarts September 11

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 342613 Restarts 4 September

1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic at St Mark's (Weeks 1 & 3 in the month)Contact 897401

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 Contact Janet King 313946

2-4pm U3A Indoor Games. St. Mark's Contact Janet King 313946

2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society St Mark's Jean Paterson 307210

3.15-5.15pm Social Care Solutions Drama Group Claire Creek 262650

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

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Brenna. 07919402797.

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Nina Ovenden 825059

7pm U3A Folk & Poetry St Marks (2nd and 4th week in month)Contact Janet King 313946

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale 406094

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

Bedford Folk Dancers (formerly Barn dancers) Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights Different guest callers each week. Except August. All welcome, cost £2.50 Including refreshments. More details Ron 825574 or

Shirley 01767 651767

8.00pm Bedford Writers Circle. St Mark's (1st week in month). John Broadhouse 01525 404014

8.00pm Magpies Women's Group St Mark's (2nd & 4th week in month) Mrs Marie Cotchin 402089

8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group St Mark's (1st and 3rd week in month) Susan Perugi 300219

Friday

8.30am—12.30pm St. Mark's Nursery Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

8.30am Diabetic Centre St Mark's (1st week in month) Deborah Hennessey 792013

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

10am -12.00 U3A Photography St Marks.(4th week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French St. Marks Contact Janet King 313946

2.00-4.00 pm U3A Whist St Marks. (2nd week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

2pm U3A Gardening - Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

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

7.00pm-9.00pm Meditation St Mark's. Cheryl Green 07729187399

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

Saturday

9.00am Faith Temple Ministries St Mark's (1st week in month) Dawn Kelly 07863762593

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

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

Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council – 14 October

St Mark's Leadership Team - 9 September

Annual Congregational Meetings—

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 1 October

Putnoe Heights Management Meeting -25 September

Putnoe Church Council - 16 October

Pastoral Group Meeting -

Churchyard Committee -

Commemoration Service - 2nd November

Circuit meeting – 15 September

Deanery meeting -

Woodland Burial Trustees—

Putnoe Heights Children

& Youth Meeting - 29 September at 2.00pm

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

Ordinary 17

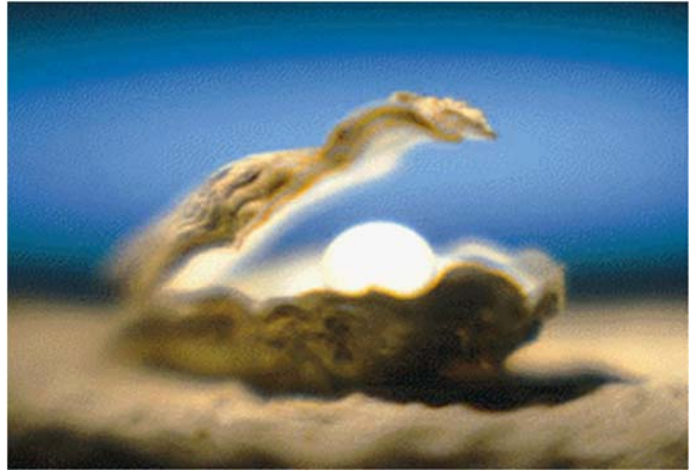
Sentence of Scripture Romans 8:38-39

Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Collect Prayer for the Day

Before we read we pray

God, you have poured the Spirit of your Son into our hearts so that we call you father. Give us grace to devote our freedom to your service that we and all creation may be brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For the kingdom the power and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.



First Bible Reading Genesis 29: 15-28

Laban said to him, 'Just because you are a relative of mine, should you work for me for nothing? Tell me what your wages should be.'

Now Laban had two daughters; the name of the elder one was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah had weak eyes, but Rachel, had a lovely figure and was beautiful. Jacob was in love with Rachel and said, 'I'll work for you seven years in return for your youngest daughter Rachel.'

Laban said, 'It's better that I give her to you than to some other man. Stay here with me.' So Jacob served seven years to get Rachel, but they seemed like only a few days to him because of his love for her. Then Jacob said to Laban, 'Give me my wife. My time is completed, and I want to make love to her.' So Laban brought together all the people of the place and gave a feast. But when evening came, he took his daughter Leah and brought her to Jacob, and Jacob made love to her. And Laban gave his servant Zilpah to his daughter as her attendant.

When morning came, there was Leah! So Jacob said to Laban, 'What is this you have done to me? I served you for Rachel, didn't I? Why have you deceived me?'

Laban replied, 'It is not our custom here to give the younger daughter in marriage before the elder one. Finish this daughter's bridal week; then we will give you the younger one also, in return for another seven years of work.' And Jacob did so. He finished the week with Leah, and then Laban gave him his daughter Rachel to be his wife.

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

Second Bible Reading - Romans Chapter 8: 26-39

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will. And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified. What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything

else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
(This is the word of the Lord-- **Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - Matthew Chapter 13: 31-33, 44-52

He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches." He told them still another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour until it worked all through the dough."

The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it. "Once again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was let down into the lake and caught all kinds of fish. When it was full, the fishermen pulled it up on the shore. Then they sat down and collected the good fish in baskets, but threw the bad away. This is how it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come and separate the wicked from the righteous and throw them into the fiery furnace, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. "Have you understood all these things?" Jesus asked. "Yes," they replied. He said to them, "Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old."

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

Post Communion Prayer

Holy Father, who gathered us here around the table of your Son to share this meal with the whole household of God: in that new world where you reveal the fullness of your peace, gather people of every race and language to share in the eternal banquet of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

1. **Hymns** (*Please distribute Morning Worship Booklet and Hymn Sheets*)
2. Sing of a God in majestic divinity, *Tune was lebet*
3. Tell out my soul *Tune: Woodlands*
4. Seek ye first the kingdom of god
5. Listening God, you hear us when we cannot speak, *Tune Noel Nouvelet*
6. Thine be the glory, risen conquering Son; *Tune:Maccabeus*

Commentary

This morning we have a series of pictures of what the kingdom is like. No picture is the entire story, but they are helpful glimpses which help us to understand important features of God's Kingdom and small insights into what God is really like.

The parable of the Mustard seed and the Parable of the Leaven each teach us about smallness and how the kingdom can appear to be insignificant, especially to those who judge by size and magnificence. There is a caution here that we must not despise that which is not grand and likewise perhaps we should be careful not to adore something simply because it appears inconsequential. Throughout the entire teaching of Jesus we see the principle of reversal of human standards and this is another. Something which appears small should not be despised because it does not mean that is trivial or meaningless. God creates small things and sometimes they are the most valuable things.

The fact that Jesus calls the mustard seed the smallest of seeds does not mean that he made a mistake, he was preaching and not conducting a biology lesson. There is a point here, just because Jesus mentions something doesn't mean that we have to buy into the whole package. The size of the mustard seed is proverbial and speaks of great outcomes from small beginnings. We should recognise that small things matter and God's power is not restricted by human offerings.

Surely the disciples would have been encouraged recounting these words of Jesus when they first set out on their mission and ministry. They faced astonishing odds and at times they must have felt daunted, yet Jesus had encouraged them to believe that the work of the Kingdom was judged by a very different measure than that of the world around them. God's work was not restricted by human strength, since God's power makes all things possible. The same encouragement should

be ours as we face immeasurable odds and look at the enormity of the tasks before us. In human weakness is discovered God's strength and no gift of ours is to be despised. That the Son of God was born in the humility of the manger and died on the cursed cross is a warning to any who would judge success by human dimension or appearance. The disciple today sometimes needs to be reminded that we who live under the rule of Christ can make a significant difference, even though it is hard to recognise what that difference is. When we look at a loaf of bread we seldom admire the yeast. In the parable of the hidden treasure and the parable of the pearl we turn our thoughts to other considerations. These are parables of discovery, joy and action. The merchant is somebody who looks for pearls, the man who discovers the treasures stumbles upon it by chance. The common things between them is that they both recognise the value of that they have found and willingly sell all of what they have to enable themselves to acquire it. It is important to see that there is sacrifice required here. Both men must lose a lot of things in order to be able to acquire what they wanted. However they see that the value of the prize is makes it worth disposing of that which is of lesser value.

For the disciples it is reminder about priorities, there is much which is around which can distract us and which can claim our attention, however our best efforts should be directed towards that which is of true value, everything else is worth losing. Whilst this speaks of sacrifice we should remember that this is a parable about joy! It is joy and not duty which causes both of these men to act, they did not let go of their stuff because they felt that they had to. They were compelled to act because they wanted to.

Finally we have the parable of the net, a parable of judgement such as we had last week about the parable of the wheat growing with the weeds. In this parable the net scoops up fish, both the ones that were wanted and those with little value. Once again judgement is something which occurs at the end of time. There is a caution here for us all, not to rush to judgement either on failure or success, the final reckoning will not take place until the future, and there we must suspend judgement on what is and what is not part of God's kingdom. These somewhat odd little parables are an encouragement to those who will wait in faith and hope. *Charles Royden*

Meditation

How can I explain the riches and treasures and delights found when the soul is united to God in prayer? Since in some way we can enjoy heaven on earth, be brave in begging the Lord to give us his grace in that he show us the way and strengthen the soul that it may dig until it finds this hidden treasure. The truth is that the treasure lies within our very selves.

Teresa of Avila 1515-1582 The Interior Castle

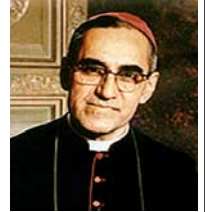
Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

Listen deeply to God. Let God alone lead you. Make yourself available to God as an instrument of righteousness, and know that even as you let go of your life you receive life.

-Steve Garnaas-Holmes

Most gracious God, you are mindful of us through all the years of our life. Pardon our sins and fashion in us those virtues which are acceptable to you. Grant that in serenity and we may serve you faithfully in the days to come, that our lives may be a reflection of your infinite love.

Oscar Romero



was a priest and bishop in El Salvador. His love for his people who were suffering violence and oppression led him to take their side and to denounce their oppressors. And so he was killed, whilst saying Mass, on 24th March 1980.

The world does not say: "blessed are the poor." The world says: "Blessed are the rich. You are worth as much as you have." But Christ says: "Wrong. Blessed are the poor, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven, because they do not put their trust in what is so transitory." Blessed are the poor, for they know that their riches are in the One who being rich made himself poor in order to enrich us with his poverty, teaching us the Christian's true wisdom. -Oscar Romero 1917-1980 *The Violence of Love*



Meriam Ibrahim the Sudanese Christian who was pardoned last month after being sentenced to death for apostasy, has finally left Sudan and flown to Italy.

The 27-year-old mother of two had been stranded at the United States embassy in the capital, Khartoum, for weeks, while legal wrangling with her relatives and the authorities continued.

Mrs Ibrahim and her family were met in Rome by the Prime Minister, Matteo Renzi, who said: "Today is a day of celebration." She then met with Pope Francis at the Vatican. A spokesman said that the pope thanked Mrs Ibrahim for her "courageous witness to perseverance in the faith". In return, she thanked him for his prayers while she had been in prison.

Mrs Ibrahim had been staying at the US embassy with her two children and husband ever since her release from police custody, after her arrest at Khartoum airport by 40 agents from the Sudanese security service on 24 June.

Thank you to everyone who signed the petition for her release from the death sentence *Ian Farthing*

Putnoe Heights Church will be welcoming the **Great Gappo** entertainer to visit on Monday 28 July at 12 noon to 1pm, followed by a sandwich lunch in the small hall from 1pm to 2pm. Tickets £2, available from the church office or Carolyn Morris, email Youth@thisischurch.com Raffle in aid of church funds, raffle prize donations welcome.

St Mark's Chat and Make / Play Holiday meetings will be August 7 and August 21 from 9.30 to 11.30am. Chat and Make/Play start again on Monday 8 September at 1.30pm and Thursday 11 at 9.30am Please contact Janine 01234 297481 for more details. **Storybox** starts again on 4 September at 12 noon.

Partners in Sacrifice The new prayer handbook of the Methodist Church will soon be available. It is regarded as a source of inspiration and support in prayer and a spiritual gem for use throughout the year. If interested please contact Vera Pearson on Bedford 270737 for more information.

Summer Fete at St. John's Hospice on Sunday 10 August, 11am-4.30pm. Held in the grounds of the hospice in Moggerhanger MK44 3RJ, and the field behind. Something for all the family - trade stalls, steam engine rides, birds of prey, paintball, games, fun dog show - all this and much more. Admission £2.50, children £1, under 5s free. Free parking. Further information 01767 642424 or email fay.boissieux@sueryder.org

Bedford Hospital at Risk. Are you concerned about the possible loss of services at Bedford Hospital ? Especially A & E. Are you horrified at the thought of going to Luton and Dunstable or Milton Keynes to access these vital services which are needed here in our own town. If you go to www.savebedfordhospital.org.uk and sign the on line petition or download it and get neighbours, friends and family to sign, or sign the petitions at Putnoe Heights or St. Mark's. Don't lose the services without a fight. *Margaret Massey.*

Update Two proposals for a massive, permanent downgrading of Bedford Hospital have now been identified by NHS Commissioners as preferred options under their ongoing health review. The two models for future care both involve major cuts across all services including an end to all maternity and dedicated children's services in Bedford. The move comes in spite of the hospital's high safety rating and the growing local population.

Both options would mean no more births in Bedford, while one of the two would mean the removal of all beds from Bedford Hospital, with no in-patient care.

Last week saw the short listing of five options for service cuts across Bedford and Milton Keynes, including two models representing a massive downgrade for Bedford.

In slides presented to a 'Stakeholder Forum' this week, those two models were identified as far and away the Commissioners' highest scoring options following an evaluation process. The proposal for Bedford to become an 'urgent care centre' scored 6 points, with an 'integrated care centre' scoring 7 points. None of the other three shortlisted options are awarded any more than 3 points.

The two models would see services at Milton Keynes continue largely unchanged, with the proposals based on the idea that local patients could travel to access them there or elsewhere. This is despite the fact that this will delay Bedford borough residents' access to emergency services by up to 30 minutes or more, and the fact that hospitals regulator the CQC rates services at Milton Keynes lower than at Bedford and at greater risk of not being safe, effective and high quality.

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Putnoe Heights Strawberry Tea

In spite of the soft, refreshing rain, the afternoon tea was a great success and raised £246.00 for Putnoe church funds. Many thanks for the generous donations of delicious home baking and loans of precious china tableware. Look out for the next fundraising events after the summer break - a steeple drive in October, the Partnership Quiz on 1st November and Coffee Morning with Table Top Sale on 15th November.

Footprints Walk on Sunday 3 August. Meet at 2.30pm at St Leonards Church, Old Warden for a pleasant circular walk through fields and woodland.

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 in Britain today. 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 September. St. Mark's Church is allocated the Brickhill collecting area and last year we raised £572 (inc. Gift Aid). If you could spare a few hours during September to distribute and 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)



On August 25 there will be a fabulous festival of fun, worship and praise at the College Equestrian Centre in Keysoe, to celebrate 100 years of the St Albans Diocese. We hope that you will all join us for this day from 10am onwards. There will be so much to do and it's all free. Expect to see the best international dog display team, flying birds of prey, a fairground, classic car display and a central outdoor stage with music and a special celebration service. (Plus - Lots More !)

One of the things which we are hoping to do is organise a team from each church to take part in 'It's a knockout.' If you would like to take part in a team and you are over 16 then please speak to Ian Farthing at St Mark's or Sam Ware at Putnoe.

Supporting Putnoe Heights and St Mark's Church

How can you show your support for the work and mission of our churches?

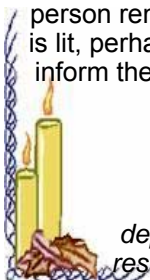
1. Set up a regular donation
2. Make a one-off donation or gift for the work of the church
3. Leave a gift in your will
4. Offer some time as a volunteer

Indoor Short Mat Bowls

For some time we have been collecting together the resources which we need to start an indoor bowling facility at St Mark's Church. We would like to provide an opportunity on Sunday afternoons for people to enjoy getting together and being able to meet all year round whilst perhaps also enjoying some light physical activity. It is also perfectly acceptable just to watch ! We are grateful to Ray Seymour who has kindly agreed to get things going with a bowls taster session on Sunday 17 August 2 - 4.30pm. Now is a great time to think about a new activity, if you would like to come to watch or play, then please let St Mark's office know so that we can ensure we have enough refreshments and equipment on the day.

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



Mary Dickie

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

Thanks Lena and Alan Cooper would like to thank all of those who made contact with them during their recent long spell away from Church. Many thanks to Charlie for his visits, also the lovely flowers Wendy Waters brought from St Mark's.



Forthcoming Funerals

None this week