



Methodist  
Church

# Partnership News

27 March 2011

3rd Sunday in Lent



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

### St Mark's - Morning Worship

Preacher - Mr Chris Izzard  
Leadership – Mrs Laura Farthing  
Intercessions – Deacon Jane Mason

### 11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher - Mr Chris Izzard  
Leadership - Mrs Sam Ware  
Intercessions - Dr Tim Wilkes

### 3 April – Mothering Sunday

### 9.30 am St Mark's - Family Worship with Baptism

Preacher – Mr Richard Ledger  
Leadership – Mrs Margaret Appleton  
Intercessions – Ministers

### 11.00 am Putnoe - Family Worship

Preacher - Mr Richard Ledger  
Leadership - Mr Gordon Evans  
Intercessions – YPF

**Readings** 1. Isaiah 43: 1-7  
2. Colossians 3: 12-17  
3. John 3: 13-17

**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 Dorothy Billingham in loving memory of her husband Ridley, and by Jenny Blakely in loving memory of her mum, Phyl Bland and friend Ettie Cobley

The flowers at St Mark's last week were given by Judith and Cliff Stanton to celebrate their 48th 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 foyers.*

## Prayer for This Week

Lord Jesus, we pray that in all our relationships you will make us effective channels of your love and forgiveness. Make us awash with your living water so that our home and places of work, our shopping and our leisure centres, our conversations and our actions, are always in touch with the renewing power of our God. Amen

### 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](http://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 Samantha Ware 304058  
**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** - Avril Williams 360605  
**Treasurer** - Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com  
**Gift Aid Administrator** Jim Williams 360605

# Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

## Monday

- 9.15 –3.45 pm Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school.** See website for more details [www.ThisChurch.com](http://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—18 April Judith Stanton. ☎823313
- 7.30pm House group** 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck ☎267567.
- 8pm 'Get Fit, Stay Fit'** Putnoe Heights. Mrs Diane Field ☎404976

## Tuesday

- 9.30am Jo Jingles.** St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Renu Elston ☎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.** No Meeting on March 29. 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](http://www.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk)
- 7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club** - Meets fortnightly. Next meeting 5 April Age Concern. 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 - 30 March 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  
March 30 2011 Everyone welcome. All dances called, only  
£1 including refreshments. Ring Graham 406359 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. Jo Garner 400071 or 07719670624

**10.30-11.30 U3A Tai Chi** St. Mark's

**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. Contact Jaana Swaby ☎ 363283

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

**1.30pm Toddler Playtime.** Putnoe Majella Atkinson  
☎325293

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

**2pm Putnoe Bridge Club.** Gerald Palmer ☎345991

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

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

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

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

**6.15pm Brownies.** Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins

**7.00pm Club 2000** Putnoe Heights Nina Ovenden  
☎825059

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

**7.15pm Putnoe Art Group** Bob Wardale ☎406094

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

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

More details Ron Law 825574.

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

**8.00pm Magpies Women's Group** St Mark's 2nd & 4th  
week Jean Birks ☎219607

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

### Friday

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

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

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

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

**2.00pm U3A Gardening Group** Putnoe Heights Eve  
Whitehead ☎356875

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

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

**7.45 - 10.45pm Bedford Astrology Club.** St. Mark's.  
Carol Brown ☎01438 233385

### Saturday

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

**Young Embroiderers** bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry  
Fletcher ☎357198

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

**7.00pm Duplicate Bridge.** St Mark's Mrs Pillinger  
☎212066

### Sunday

**9.30 - 10.30 Church and Sunday School** at St Mark's  
with crèche for under 3's

**11.00 - 12.00 Church and Junior** at Putnoe Heights for  
the under 9's and Young Peoples Fellowship (Y.P.F) for  
our young adults. A crèche is also available.

**1pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Revd.  
Tarr ☎360188 or ☎07866775515

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



## Diary Dates

**St Mark's Church Council –**

**Annual General Meeting** 10 April 2011

**St Mark's Leadership Team**

**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team** - 6 June

**Putnoe Heights Management Meeting** - .26 May

**St Mark's Forum Meeting** - 10 May, 13 July

**Putnoe Church Council** - 13 June –7.30pm

**Pastoral Group Meeting** - 14th June

**Churchyard Committee** - 19th May –11.15am

**Brickhill Parish Council Meetings** -

**Circuit meeting** -

**Deanery Meeting** - .

**Woodland Burial Trustees** – 15th May 12.30pm

**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth** – 4th April, 1.30pm

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

## Third Sunday in Lent

### Opening Sentence from Scripture — Psalm 95:6

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

### Collect Prayer *(Before we read we pray)*

Almighty God, whose most dear Son went not up to joy but first he suffered pain, and entered not into glory before He was

crucified: mercifully grant that we, walking in the way of the cross, may find it none other than the way of life and peace; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen *Common Worship*



### First Bible Reading — Exodus 17: 1-7

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, travelling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. So they quarrelled with Moses and said, "Give us water to drink." Moses replied, "Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?" But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, "Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?"

Then Moses cried out to the LORD, "What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me." The LORD answered Moses, "Walk on ahead of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink." So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. And he called the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarrelled and because they tested the LORD saying, "Is the LORD among us or not?"

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

### Second Reading - Romans 5: 1-11

Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

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

### Gospel Reading - John 4: 5-42

So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said

to her, "Will you give me a drink?" (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, "You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?" (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans.) Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water." "Sir," the woman said, "you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?"

Jesus answered, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water." He told her, "Go, call your husband and come back." "I have no husband," she replied. Jesus said to her, "You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true." "Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." The woman said, "I know that Messiah" (called Christ) "is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us." Then Jesus declared, "I who speak to you am he."

Just then his disciples returned and were surprised to find him talking with a woman. But no one asked, "What do you want?" or "Why are you talking with her?" Then, leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people, "Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?" They came out of the town and made their way toward him. Meanwhile his disciples urged him, "Rabbi, eat something."

But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about." Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?" "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work. Do you not say, 'Four months more and then the harvest'? I tell you, open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest. Even now the reaper draws his wages, even now he harvests the crop for eternal life, so that the sower and the reaper may be glad together. Thus the saying 'One sows and another reaps' is true. I sent you to reap what you have not worked for. Others have done the hard work, and you have reaped the benefits of their labour." Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me everything I ever did." So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers. They said to the woman, "We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world (This is the Word of the Lord —**Thanks be to God**)

### **Hymns** (*Please distribute Morning Worship and Hymns and Psalms* )

1. Hills of the north, rejoice 237 *Little Cornard*
2. Lord of all hopefulness 552 *Slane*
3. To the name of our salvation 80 *Regent Square*
4. Thanks to God whose word was spoken 483 *St Helens*
5. I will sing the wondrous story 223 *Hyfrodol*

### **Commentary**

We know that the Jews from Jerusalem despised the Jews from Samaria. They told stories about how the Samaritan Jews were racially impure, that they came from inter marriage with foreigners. That some Jews did not get on well with other Jews should not surprise us, the history of the tribes of Judaism, the Northern and Southern Kingdom of Judaism, is all one of conflict and falling out. At the time of Jesus there was a continuing hatred between these two distinctly Jewish groups. The Samaritan people still survive to this day, preserving their ancient religious rites near the ancient site of Shechem, and the modern city of Nablus.

The Samaritans are Jews, who regard the Pentateuch and observe the Sabbath strictly. They claim Mount Gerazim as their holy mountain because it is mentioned in the Pentateuch. (Deut 11:29, 27:12). They regard Jerusalem as less significant because it was a later development from the time of King David who wanted to establish his kingdom there. Much of what we know about the Samaritans comes from later Jewish writings which tell us that the Samaritans were descended from interracial relations with foreigners who repopulated this part of the Northern Kingdom after the Assyrian invasion. This is probably not a fair representation, but it gives us an idea of the bitterness which characterised their relations. Other Jews held them in contempt, clearly considering themselves to be better.

It is against this background of conflict that we have the longest discourse in the whole of the Book of John, between Jesus, a Jewish Rabbi, and somebody from another Jewish groups that he was supposed to despise. The writer of the Gospel must clearly attach some importance to this episode and he wants us to know that it is important, it has a fundamental role in helping us to understand Jesus and his ministry.

We know that the woman was Samaritan and the history of these two groups was such that it was unlikely that Jesus would have anything to do with her. The fact that the Samaritan was a woman didn't help either, this is why the woman asks, "how can you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" For a man to speak with a woman in this way was extraordinary, men just didn't speak with women in this way. But there is more, not only was this a Samaritan, and a woman, this woman had another distinguishing feature which made her an unlikely subject for Jesus to have a meeting. We are also told that she had five husbands!

It is helpful for us to remember some of the other details of this story. We are told that the time of the day was noon. It was in the heat of the day, and the last time that most women would have wanted to do the heavy lifting and hard walk back to the village involved in getting water from the well. The other women went early in the morning or in the cool of the evening, when the work wouldn't be quite as hard, and the drudgery of hauling water would be broken by the fellowship shared by the women around the well. A woman who chose instead to go to the well at noon must have been seeking specifically to avoid that company. It is apparent that this woman was an outcast - even among Samaritans. I would guess that she was used to whispering in the village wherever she went, having been used and discarded by so many men of the village, and in a culture in which there was little if any privacy, and gossip spread news quickly. As oppressive as the noonday sun is, it doesn't burn like the stares of the others in the village. So she goes to the well at noon, when she can be sure to be alone. So we see Jesus meeting a woman who simply could not have been much more of an outsider. She belonged to a group which was despised and she was despised by that group!

It is interesting that we do not know the name of the woman. We have a huge discourse but no name. Perhaps that is helpful, for in so many ways the exchange of words is not just a personal encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan, the words which Jesus speaks are for all people. The woman is in a solitary place, she has little to make herself feel proud, little to help her see herself of value. Yet in her meeting with Jesus, She comes as a person outside society, and Jesus shows her that she is inside God's love.

Jesus knows what this woman is like, there are no secrets, Jesus is able to look deep inside her heart, as he looks inside the hearts of all of us. Jesus looks and is able to see the things which everybody in the village has gossiped about. Jesus does not criticise or condemn. Where others look with the eyes of condemnation and see sin, Jesus looks with the eyes of compassion and recognises the value of this woman as a child of God. Jesus is not put off by her sin because he knows that there is more grace in God than there is sin in us. *Charles Royden*

### **Post Communion Prayer**

Holy God, we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ: may we who are partakers at his table reflect his life in word and deed, that all the world may know his power to change and save. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead**

### **Meditation**

**Christian Basics.** There will be a series of three Lent talks at Putnoe Heights Church thinking about the basics of the Christian faith as expressed in the Apostles Creed. I believe in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Refreshments will be served from 7.30pm with each session starting at 8.00pm and lasting one hour. Since the series will look at the foundation of Christian belief it would be particularly helpful for anybody who is considering confirmation. Please speak with one of the ministers if you would like to consider this.

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

Thursday 31 March by Rev Dr Sam Cappleman

**I believe in the Holy Spirit**

Thursday 7 April by Deacon Jane Mason

**St. Mark's Craft Stall** will have Easter novelties for sale after morning service. All profit goes to St. Mark's Christmas Fair.

### **Bedford Arts Society**

There will be an exhibition and sale of paintings at Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street. Open to the public Wednesday 30 March 10 - 4pm

Thursday 31 March 10 - 8pm

Friday 1 April 10 - 4pm

Daytime parking is available in the Borough Car Park in Prebend Street, exit code can be obtained from reception. After 5pm park in front of Borough Hall

**Footprints Walking Group.** Sunday 10 April. 2.30pm start. Meet at the war memorial in the centre of Olney for 3 mile circular walk along the water meadows to Clifton Reynes. leaders - Margaret and Eddy.

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

**Putnoe Mission Committee** We welcome Carolyn Morris as our Mission Secretary, and once again thank Sylvia for the work which she has done. Carolyn would like to form a small committee and is looking for volunteers. This is an opportunity to consolidate our work both at Kisiizi and through Faith in Action; but also to begin new Mission ventures. Please consider this carefully and, if you are able to help, give your name to Carolyn or myself. Jean Kirk

**Kempston Musical Society** presents Faure's Requiem 'Bring and Sing' on Saturday 9 April at Priory Methodist Church Newnham Avenue

Bedford. Choir rehearsal 4.30pm. Tea 6pm. Performance 7.30pm. Soloists Jeni Melia and Mark Wisson. Admission: Singers and Audience £5.00 each. Anyone wishing to sing should contact 01234 781010 or 01234 354183 for details. (In aid of Cancer Research UK)

### **Maundy Thursday Service April 21 7.30pm**

Our Maundy Thursday Service at Putnoe this year will incorporate a simple meal in the context of a Holy Communion Service to echo the Passover. We will not be selling tickets but it would be useful to have some idea of numbers so that the catering team can plan accordingly. If you would like to come to this service please could you let the office know at either Putnoe or St Mark's so that we can ascertain catering requirements.

**Switching to digital TV** - If you are aged 75 or over the Help Scheme is here to assist you switch to digital TV by providing equipment and practical support. Call free on 0800 40 85 900 or go to [helpscheme.co.uk](http://helpscheme.co.uk)

**St. Mark's Card/Bookstall.** The selection of cards available at present is limited due to the closure of the Living Oasis shop in St. Loyes (formerly Wesley Owen). Alternative sources are being explored and a new selection will be made available as soon as possible.

**Mothering Sunday Posies..**If anyone has some spring flowers in their garden, such as grape hyacinths, that could be included in posies for Mothering Sunday at Putnoe the flower arrangers would be pleased to receive them at the church before 11.00a.m. on Friday, 1st April. Alternatively please contact Ann Hitt on 404186.

### **Church Annual Congregational Meetings**

These will be held on April 10 after church services once everybody has had their coffee. Everybody is welcome to attend

St Mark's Church 10.30am  
Putnoe Heights Church 12 Noon

Nomination forms for Church Councils are available at each church office.

**We have had a lovely note from Pat Kesley,** the Scottish lady who came to Putnoe who recently moved back 'home'. Her sister told her about Maurice, so she wanted to send her love to us, but she also sent greetings to all at Putnoe, as follows; "I think of you all at Putnoe Heights so many times during the week. I miss the church and the hugs and the warmth. The Church of Scotland doesn't seem to 'do hugs'!"



## St Albans Woodland Burial Trust Open Day

Saturday 14 May 2011  
2.00pm - 5.00pm

You are invited by the Trustees to a special open day at our woodland, set in 60 acres of beautiful countryside in Keysoe. All the family, including dogs, are welcome to come and refreshments will be provided.

Follow signs to The College Equestrian Centre, Keysoe.

Directions on our website  
[www.woodlandburialtrust.com](http://www.woodlandburialtrust.com)

St Albans Woodland Burial Trust  
c/o St Mark's Church Community Centre,  
Calder Rise, Bedford. MK41 7UY Tel: 01234  
342613 [office@woodlandburialtrust.com](mailto:office@woodlandburialtrust.com)

We provide for environmentally friendly burials or interments of ashes in a beautiful woodland countryside setting. Arrangements also made for reservation of grave space or dedication of trees.

A non-profit making charity No 1118216

### King's Arms Hike for the Homeless

Saturday 14th May 2011

We are organising a charity walk. You can do the whole 17.5 miles or just one of the stages. For more details & online registration visit: [www.hikeforthehomeless.org.uk](http://www.hikeforthehomeless.org.uk) or call 01234 350900

Working in Bedford since 1989 we provide a range of services for the homeless including an 18-bed Nightshelter, a 14-bed hostel, Onward Floating Support, a Rough Sleepers Outreach Service and a weekly drop-in meal. We support approx 350 homeless and disadvantaged people each year and our vision is to 'see lives transform'

#### Stage One 4.5 Miles

Priory Country Park, Bedford to  
Barford Bridge

The route passes Danish Camp (2.75 miles), an ideal short stage for families with young children (5.5 miles there & back cycle & pushchair friendly)

#### Stage Two 6.5 Miles

Barford Bridge to Wilden Village Hall. Lunch stop at Wilden with free tea coffee & cold drinks available.

#### Stage Three 6.5 Miles

Wilden Village Hall to Priory Country Park. The last lap back to Bedford through Renhold and across Castle Mill Lock.

### 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.'*



Please remember to shop at Amazon.com by clicking on the link on ThisChurch.com for just about anything you need. You can also sign up to Easyfunding. You will receive special offers and promo codes to buy everything you ever need online at discount prices! Remember, never click on Amazon direct, always click on Amazon via the link at [thischurch.com](http://thischurch.com), then we obtain 5%

### Forthcoming Funerals

There are no funerals this week

