



Methodist  
Church

# Partnership News

17 May 2009

6th 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

### 9.30am St. Mark's - Holy Communion

Preacher - Revd Eric Royden  
Leadership - Mrs Delia Shephard  
Intercessions - Mr Richard Ledger

### 11.00am Putnoe Heights – Holy Communion

Preacher - Revd Eric Royden  
Leadership - Mr Lawrence Wyatt  
Intercessions - Mr Eddy Peck

## Sunday 24 May

### 9.30am St Mark's - Morning Worship

Preacher– Revd Dr Sam Cappleman  
Leadership - Mrs Jean Bank  
Intercessions – Mrs Morag Stewart

### 11.00am Putnoe Heights – Morning Worship

Preacher – Revd Dr Sam Cappleman  
Leadership – Mrs Wendy Nash  
Intercessions - Dr Tim Wilkes

**Readings** 1. Acts 1:15-17, 21-26  
2.1 John 5: 9-13 3. John 17: 6-19

## Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights last week were given by Joan York in loving memory of her husband Edgar.

The flowers at St. Mark's this week are given by Mary Hall to celebrate the birth of her first granddaughter.

*We are always grateful for any donations for 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 Jennie Cooper 404950(Putnoe Heights) or add your name to the rota in the foyers.*

## Prayer for Sunday

O Lord our God,  
let your gracious hand be our protection;  
your mercy in Jesus Christ,  
your Son, our salvation;  
and the grace of the life-giving Spirit  
our strength;  
both now and for ever. Amen.

*John Knox, 1505-72*

## Contact Details

### 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)

### The Reverend Charles Royden

The Vicarage, Calder Rise. MK41 7UY  
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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.

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 Barry Snelson 365630 & 344417  
Leadership Team Mr. Lawrence Wyatt 350188  
Treasurer Mr Ian Morse 216428 treasurerph@thisischurch.com  
Gift Aid Administrator - Mr John Hitt 404186  
Youth & children's worker - Mrs Spavins 302349  
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 - Mrs Delia Shephard 273628  
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com  
Gift Aid Administrator Jim Williams 360605

# Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

## Monday

**9.30-12.00pm Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school**  
Headteacher 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 Mr Kellie ☎ 721063

**10.30am U3A Play reading** St Mark's J Birks ☎219607

**12.00pm 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. ☎Liz 302349

**1.30pm U3A History Group** St Mark's ☎ David Fowler 824474

**2pm U3A Drama** St Mark's 1st & 2nd week. Mr Ovenden ☎ 825059

**4.00pm Storybox Plus** Putnoe Heights for 4-9 year Old. Meet at 3.30 for refreshments & games. Then till 5pm 'follow the year' through stories, drama, singing & craft activities. We then make a short presentation in church on first Sunday in each month. ☎Liz Spavins 302349

**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 ☎ 07720713738.

**6.15 Pilates** at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859

**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

**7.15pm Yoga.** Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎244970

**7.30pm Whist Drive.** St Mark's 3rd & 5th week . Next meeting 18 May Judith Stanton. ☎823313

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

**8.00pm 'Get Fit, Stay Fit'** Putnoe Heights. Mrs Diane Field ☎404976

## Tuesday

**9.30 12.30 Jo Jingles.** St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Renu Elston ☎01908 587299

**9.30am Candlewicking** (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Judi Staughton ☎341821

**9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World** St. Mark's. Helen Folbigg ☎351223

**10am -Bedford Arts Society** starting at St Mark's Mrs Brown☎771676

**10am Autism Beds Adult Support Group.** St Mark's. Sally Cripsley ☎350704

**11.15am U3A Keep Fit** Sally Banks ☎ 870357

**1.30pm Toddlers Playtime.** Putnoe Heights Majella Atkinson ☎325293.

**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

**2pm U3A Photography** (Group 3) St Mark's 1st Week. Janet King ☎313946

**2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship.** Next meeting May 19. Education. Parkinson's Disease Society. 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 Stars School of Dance.** Putnoe Heights. Esther Sancto ☎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 & Beds. Cardiac Support Group** 1st Tuesday in the month

**7.30pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Bible study & prayers. Revd. Tarr ☎360188 or 07866775515

**7.30pm Chartered Management Institute** St Marks 3rd week. Mrs Dimmock ☎01525 862374

**7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club** - Meets fortnightly. Meeting 19 May. Mission Aviation Fellowship. Rosa Stocking. Details from Audrey Wilkins☎365068 or Margaret Gentle ☎309043

## 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 Sewing & Chat.** Putnoe Heights Valerie Russell ☎01462 815966

**12.30pm Luncheon Club.** Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next - 20 May 2009 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

**2pm U3A Craft St Mark's** 1st & 3rd week. Pat Holland ☎ 262823

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

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

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

**6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation** Putnoe Heights Racheall Monton ☎01234 297138

**6-8pm Karate.** St Mark's Karen ☎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  
**7.00pm U3A Sky at Night** 2nd Week. Mr Farish ☎824984  
**8.00pm Badminton Club** Putnoe Heights All welcome. Ken Marriott ☎214867  
**8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club** St Mark's, 1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next Meeting 20 May Everyone welcome. Ring Graham ☎406359 or Alan 345312. or Rosemary 405594 for more details  
**8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club** St Mark's 1st week in the month. Mrs Gansfield ☎215016  
**7.45 for 8pm God talk** - women's group monthly meeting for worship and friendly chat at Wendy Nash's Contact Majella Atkinson ☎325293

#### Thursday

**9.30am Thursday Prayer Group.** Putnoe Heights in the quiet room. Sylvia Cohen ☎343424  
*Request for prayer can be written in the prayer diary on the information table. (No meeting on 9th April)*  
**9.45am Yoga** Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎244970  
**9.45am Chat and Play** St. Mark's. A group for Mums & toddlers. Emma Strangwick ☎211070  
**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 Emma Strangwick ☎211070  
**1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic** St. Mark's ☎267444  
**1.30pm Toddler Playtime.** Putnoe Majella Atkinson ☎325293.  
**2pm Putnoe Bridge Club.** Gerald Palmer ☎345991  
**2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society** at St Mark's. Mary Rich ☎272470 Next meeting 24 September  
**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 Caroline Morgan ☎07786508351  
**7.00pm Club 2000** Putnoe Heights Nina Ovenden ☎825059  
**7pm U3A Folk & Poetry Group.** 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. Nadeen Salmon ☎301550  
**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. Pat Foulks ☎346505

#### 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 U3A Beginners French** St Mark's Joyce Fields ☎353086

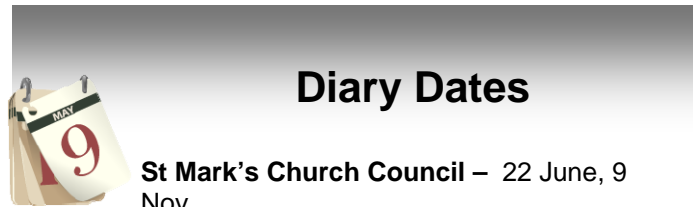
**12.15pm U3A Photography (Group 2).** St Mark's 4th week in month. Sue Butler ☎354183  
**5pm Stars School of Dance** Putnoe Heights Contact Esther Sancto ☎295862 or ☎07917 582468  
**2.00pm U3A Gardening Group** Putnoe Heights Eve Whitehead ☎356875  
**6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation** Putnoe Heights. Racheall Monton 297138 or 07910835994  
**6.30pm Line Dancing.** St Mark's Christine Rushton ☎782360  
**7pm Bedford Art Society** monthly Putnoe Heights. Next meeting 1st May Mary Rich ☎272470  
**7.45 - 10.45pm Bedford Astrology Club.** St. Mark's. Carol Brown ☎01438 233385

#### Saturday

**9.45am Bedford Stamp Auction** at Putnoe Heights Next Auction 30th May. Contact Stuart or Anne 01327 876438  
**10.00am Theatretrain** St Mark's. Dancing acting, singing. Kate Howard ☎01234 782414  
**Young Embroiders** bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher Tel 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  
**6pm T.N.T.** Putnoe. For 9-12 year olds (fortnightly) join us for fellowship & fun. Please see Liz ☎302349 .



## Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council – 22 June, 9 Nov

**St Mark's Leadership Team –**  
**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team** – 8 June at Linda's, 12 Oct, 8 Feb 2010  
**Putnoe Heights Management Meeting** 20 July  
**St Mark's Church Forum Meeting** - 15 July, 8 Sept , 11 Nov, 12 Jan 2010  
**Putnoe Church Council** - 15 Jun, 5 Oct  
**Pastoral Group Meeting** -  
**Churchyard Committee** -  
**Putnoe Heights Mission Group** - Wednesday 3 June, 7.30pm 14 Flint Way.  
**Partnership Council** -  
**Brickhill Parish Council Meetings** -  
**Deanery Meeting** 18 Jun, 17 Sep, 19 Nov,  
**Circuit/Deanery Meeting**  
**Woodland Burial Trustees** –AGM 16th May  
**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth** –

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

# Easter 6

## Opening Verse Psalm 51:17

The sacrifice of God is a broken spirit: a broken and contrite heart He will not despise.

## Collect Prayer for the Day — *Before we read we pray*

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear that we to pray, and give more than either we desire or deserve. Pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask, save through the merits and mediation of 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. *Methodist Worship*

## First Bible Reading Acts 10:44-48

While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have." So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked Peter to stay with them for a few days.

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

## Second Reading - 1 John 5:1-6

Everyone who believes that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God, and everyone who loves the father loves his child as well. This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands. This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome, for everyone born of God overcomes the world. This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith. Who is it that overcomes the world? Only he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God. This is the one who came by water and blood--Jesus Christ. He did not come by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth. (Reader: This is the word of the Lord - **Thanks be to God**)

## Gospel Reading - John 15:9-17

"As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you. You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you to go and bear fruit--fruit that will last. Then the Father will give you whatever you ask in my name. This is my command: Love each other.

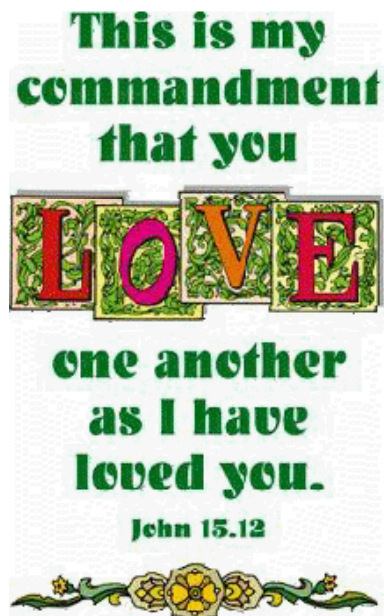
(Reader: This is the Word of the Lord – **All: Thanks be to God**)

## Post Communion Prayer

God our Father, whose Son Jesus Christ gives the water of eternal life: may we thirst for you, the spring of life and source of goodness, through him who is alive and reigns, now and for ever. . Amen

## Commentary

I have just been listening to Sky News and what a depressing experience. The content was of arson, murders committed by young boys, a woman killing a young boy when driving a car and running away



leaving him to die, a father battered to death, general lawlessness, and Parliament being revealed as a den of thieves. I am reminded of a verse in Psalm 11, 'when the foundations are being destroyed what can the righteous do?' There is so much evil. We read and hear of terrible, violent, abuse of children, women and many innocent men for little if any reason. We see pictures of drunken and disorderly young people staggering around our towns and cities, making the places unsafe for normal people, and we live in constant fear of terrorism by people who want to destroy our way of life. In addition to all this, we fear the effects of a recession, and a country out of financial control.

As we look at this country at the present time, we see a nation in moral and spiritual decline. Morally, we have become bankrupt, as the barriers of decency have been swept away so that there are no restraints. Telling lies has become endemic. All attributable to the fact people have abandoned Christian values and have no spiritual belief. The ensuing collapse of Christian values and morality has however, led to an unstable society in which the foundations are crumbling. There is so little respect shown.

The average person has no religious commitment, which is why they live as they do. The Church is considered out of date and the Christian message has no relevance to them. Consequently, you have this general lowering of standards; and in some places no standards at all.

What however should concern us very much as Christians, is the sustained and systematic attack on our faith from people who should be supporting the Church.

The country owes much to Christian influence, which has been the faith of the nation over the past 1500 years and the foundation for a stable nation. It brought and kept the country together, but now Christianity is being phased out of public life by politically motivated people, ideologues in the government and public service, who try to place every obstacle and restriction on Christian expression, and who betray the culture which nurtured them.

Let us consider some of those restrictions

Mentioning God in the workplace is strictly forbidden (unless it is a non Christian god), no Christian cross or symbol to denote a Christian commitment, legislation enacted which offends Christian teaching and belief, no comment allowed which suggests lifestyles are immoral, BBC appoints two non Christians to be in charge of religious programmes, marriage of man/woman to be of no importance or relevance, teaching of Christianity in schools not insisted upon, but sex education to children of tender age, embracing all manner of relationships, to be compulsory.

As Christians we must regret this. You may have noticed that no such restrictions or obstacles are put on other faiths, but to be fair, other faiths are embarrassed by the patronising of people who look for things to be offended by on behalf of non-Christians.

There are those who are out to destroy a stable society, destroy the country, destroy the faith, in order to establish their own moral, political and social agenda. When you go away from the founding principles which made this nation great, and take away the morality and biblical fundamentals, which are the basis for the freedom we enjoy; if you erode all these, there is no foundation for society, which is a dangerous thing. So what should the righteous do? If Britain is to defend its values successfully, it must rediscover the Christian faith in which those values are ultimately rooted. We are constantly being reminded by the press as to how people are turning away from the Church, with the blame being placed firmly on the Church.

Whilst to some small degree this may be true, the real responsibility rests upon those who fail to attend, and encourage children not to attend. Society was more stable and balanced when people did attend.

Both individually and as a church, there is need for repentance. Collectively the Church has not always spoken out on moral issues as it might, for fear of being accused of some kind of phobia or thought to be narrow-minded.

Ministers are however faced with a dilemma in faithfully teaching Biblical morality in these times. Apart from a lack of consensus within the Church, many of their congregations would find the strain on their consciences too severe.

How heartening to hear the next Roman Catholic Archbishop of Westminster saying 'I am not here to be popular. I'm here to be successful.'

In view of the lack of consensus within the Church at national level on the question of morality and Biblical authority, each local Church must take responsibility for both defending and promoting, the true Christian faith. We need to convince people we have something positive to offer them.

We must consider our priorities. Would Church come before the golf course, a garden centre, a lie in, or even Tesco, on a Sunday morning? What motivates you? There can be no compromise, no trying to accommodate society's ways. In every Church there are Christians whose relationship is only formal and outward, a case of being associated with Jesus without being united. Sometimes the faith goes cold.

There is only one way to remain on course and that is to be close to your Church, not to have a periodic attachment. We need to let God know we serve Him, which I believe, is what God wants to hear, and try to encourage others to join us. There is a need for examination of our lives to root out those ways which are not worthy of us as Christians. Things which the Bible clearly defines as wrong, yet which are still

practised by people who call themselves Christians

I visit several village Churches which would once be well attended. It is a pleasure and privilege to do so but I notice the congregations now consist mostly of people in the upper ages. It is a dreadful thought that a time may come when they can no longer maintain a presence. We must earnestly pray that inspiration may come which will turn the situation around.

Each year a Covenant is re-made by Methodists, which many other Churches have adopted. In this members pledge themselves to freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to God, and declare they are no longer their own but His. How faithfully is it kept?

Making a promise to God is a serious matter. It means obeying, fearing and faithfully following His Word. God is a jealous God who wants a complete loyalty. We have to take away from our lives all that is unworthy and against His teaching. He gave us guidance in Holy Scripture.

We are all gifted with a conscience, which warns us when we face temptation. An amber light comes on within ourselves, do we turn it to red or green? Ask yourself, 'what would Christ do?'

We need to be more positive, even aggressive, in giving people a clear vision of what it means to be a Christian and to have a Christian based society. We now have to proclaim it boldly and challenge those who try to put us down. To convince them we have a message worth hearing, and both the Church and its Ministers are not all as cynically portrayed on television.

So, what for the future of the Church? There is hope and confidence if all members realize there is no future if they are content to sit back and say ethereally, 'God will provide'. Christ did say 'I will build my Church', but He expects a little help. We urgently need to promote ourselves vigorously, advertise our presence. Let as many people know as we can where we are and what we have to offer, which we are doing here at St. Mark's and Putnoe Heights churches. The American Churches do, and they have substantial congregations. Why would major companies spend millions on advertisements if they didn't produce results? Above all, let us proclaim the truth however inconvenient. (Eric Royden)

**Hymns** (*Please distribute Mission Praise and Holy Communion service sheets* )

1. Come let us worship 96, 2. Father I place into your hands 133, 3. How shall they hear 250
4. Who is on the Lord's side 769

### **Meditation**

In Saint Paul's Cathedral in London, visitors can climb stairs so as to walk around the inside of the great dome, which is 60 metres (200 feet) across. This ledge (or balcony) is called the Whispering Gallery because the sound from someone's whisper bounces back from the smooth walls of the dome. Even someone whispering on the other side of the dome can be heard if people listen close to the wall. It was whilst on this Whispering Gallery just over a hundred years ago that a poor shoemaker whispered to his girlfriend that he didn't have enough money to buy leather to make shoes, and so didn't have enough money for them to get married. On the other side of the dome someone heard the whispering of the couple and decided he would help them. He followed the shoemaker from a distance to find out where he lived, and then he paid for some leather and arranged for it to be sent anonymously to the shoemaker's shop. Everything went well because the shoemaker was then able to make enough money from his shop, and so the couple were able to marry. It was a few years later that they found out who it was who had helped them. It was the Prime Minister, William Gladstone, Let us pray: Lord, most of us will not become well-known or be written about because of great achievements, but we will be known and loved for our attitude and the smaller ordinary things that we do that make our part of the world a better place. Inspire us, Lord, each day, to find joy in giving as well as in receiving, and lead us to act justly, love tenderly, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.

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

"O Fountain of Love, love Thou our friends and teach them to love thee with all their hearts, that they may think and speak and do only such things as are pleasing to thee. Though Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen *St Anselm*

Lord, I ask for the gifts of knowledge and wisdom and understanding. What I pray or I intend to work at, so that I may be someone with an open mind, a thirst for knowledge, and a wisdom that makes good use of my knowledge and experience. I know that any gifts are useless if I do not also have love and concern for others, and so I ask that you inspire me to live in such a way that I am caring and compassionate and promote understanding between people. May others respect me, Lord, as much as I respect them. Amen.

**All 'Open House' Storytellers**, past and present, are invited to the 10th Anniversary celebrations on Saturday 13 June from 10am to 4pm. Bob Hartman is the special guest and storytellers from other parts of the country are also coming for the event. We need a reply slip in advance plus £5 (lunch inc.) for catering & seating purposes. Please contact Dave Todd 364679 or Sheila Lawless 01234 359359 if you have not received an invitation.

**Thursford Christmas Spectacular.** Kempston Musical Society have a few seats left on a trip to this fantastic show on Tuesday 24th November. Coffee on the journey by coach, and a meal on the return journey are arranged. Anyone interested to contact Bob Burn in the first instance. 01234 854858

**Shake a Tin for Cancer Research UK** I am looking for people who could spare one hour during the morning of Saturday 20th June to 'shake a tin' in either the town centre or local shopping parade. It is probably true that there is not a family in the country who has not been affected by cancer in some form or other. By giving up one hour you could help fund the research and eradication of this dreadful disease. I have recently taken over the street collection Coordination and the list of collectors I have inherited needs more volunteers to help with this worthy cause. If you are willing to help, please phone John Lingings on 01234 306676 or call at 10 Irthing Close

**Action for Children.** On behalf of this charity a big thank you goes to all who collect through the year and to those who helped open boxes and count £189. With donations of £5. 50 for teas a total of £341. 42 was raised through the year. If anyone would like to have a collecting box please contact *Margaret Standley*.

**Footprints Weekend.**— Booking is now open for the walking weekend from September 25-27th 2009. Bed, breakfast and dinner at The Four Pillars Hotel, Witney, Oxfordshire. £52.00 per person per night sharing a double room. Walks daily or non-walking options to visit Blenheim, Burford etc. Further details from Barry Snelson at the Putnoe Church Office. *Sue Allen*

**St. Mark's Church Office. Lunchtimes** The office will be closed from 1 - 1.30pm each day as from 1 June to allow the volunteers time for lunch. *Wendy*

**Car Boot** A big thank you to all who contributed in anyway. We made an amazing £1087. The next one is Monday 25 May. All your support is very much appreciated.

**Methodist Homes for the Aged** are hosting an event to provide information on the opening of Anjulita Court in Brickhill. This will be held at St Mark's Church on Monday 8 June at 7.00pm. We are particularly pleased to be hosting the event especially as we have now confirmed that the chaplaincy for Anjulita Court will be linked to the Partnership.

**St Albans Woodland Burial Ground Open Day** Come and visit the woodland on Saturday 27 June from 2.00pm—5.00pm Refreshments served.

**Old Testament Characters and Christian Mission in Multi-Faith Britain.** Five creative bible studies led by The Rev Jay MacLeod. Tuesday evenings 7.30pm to 9.00pm, 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 June. More information call 290393 or email Jay on jay-macleod@mac.com

**The Abbeyfield Society in Bedford** founded as an initiative for the Mothers' Union of All Saint's Queens Park. Sheltered accommodation is provided for the elderly in two houses in Bedford. Details from website [www.absl.org.uk](http://www.absl.org.uk) or the Administrator, Abbeyfield Bedford Society, 18 Linden Road, Bedford MK40 2DA or 01234 219500.

**Footprints Weekend 2009** Friday 25 - Sunday 27 September. The chosen venue for this year's weekend away is The Witney Four Pillars Hotel, Ducklington Lane, Witney, Oxfordshire. This hotel is an ideal base for exploring the many picturesque villages and towns of the Cotswolds and Oxfordshire or for those not wishing to travel far, then take a short walk or bus ride into Witney to enjoy this delightful Market Town. Just a few miles from Witney, in the Oxfordshire town of Woodstock, you will find Blenheim Palace, home of the 11th Duke of Marlborough and birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill.

The hotel has recently been completely refurbished to a high standard, with spacious and comfortable public rooms. The bedrooms and en-suite bathrooms are to the same high standard throughout, comfortable and of a decent size. The hotel has an indoor swimming pool, jacuzzi and health club, and the staff are friendly and welcoming and we feel confident in recommending this hotel.

The all in price includes bed, breakfast and evening meal. For a double or twin room the price is £52.00 per person per night. For single occupancy the price is £72.00 per person per night. If you wish to stay on for Sunday night the rate will be £39 per person or £59 for single occupancy.

Please contact Barry Snelson at the Putnoe Church office [Tuesday to Thursday] on 01234 365630 or at home on 01234 344417 as soon as possible to register your interest.



### What on earth is a Reader?

As a Reader I quite understand the blank or puzzled expressions on people's faces when I tell people within and outside the church that much of my leisure time is taken up being a 'Reader'. I hastily go on to explain that it is a 'lay ministry role in the Church of England'. The response to this is frequently 'What does that mean you do? How is it different to being a vicar?' Or as was said to a fellow Reader, 'Now that they have taught you to read when will they teach you to write?' Wearing robes that to all intents and purposes look much that like of an ordained minister, apart from not having a dog collar and wearing a blue scarf, can add to the lack of understanding. I hope now to dispel some of this confusion!

The role of Reader, under a variety of titles, has been in existence from the very beginnings of Christianity. In Paul's letter to the Colossians 4:16 he encourages others to 'read his letter' to other Christian communities. A few hundred years later there are references to there being 'trouble with Readers', some saying they were not ordained so should not wear a stole as it was the symbol of a priest's authority. They were considered inferior to Deacons, thankfully this is not usually the case today. The role of Reader continued to develop as translators of letters and becoming experts in the understanding of scripture. Their role continued to grow until the Middle Ages when the Monastic Community became to dominate this type of ministry. In Elizabethan times Lectors or Deacons were appointed to 'read' services plainly, distinctly and orderly. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the office of Reader was revised with the increase in urbanisation Readers were used as a cheap solution to increase the working capacity of the church. Readers went to the places where people were.

Being in places where people are is at the heart of the role of a Reader today. The majority of us are not paid and many work in secular jobs where we can exercise our ministry alongside those who may or may not have a faith. Some Readers do have specific roles in the community such as Prison or Industrial Chaplains.

One of the most exciting and special days of my life was the 1 March 2003 when I was licensed and admitted as Reader to the Diocese of St Albans. This was some 20 years after I now realise God began calling to me to ministry and some 8 years after beginning the process of being selected and training as a Reader. Training itself is a challenge especially when working full time, running a home and family. However I thoroughly enjoyed all the training and I am sure this and the heartache that I went through at times all added to my ability to exercise my ministry. God promises to be along side us not to make it easy!

I exercised my ministry in the parishes of Carlton and Harrold for 3 years before marrying Chris and moving to Bedford nearly 3 years ago. I do have a 'working agreement' which sets out how I exercise my ministry locally. I frequently get asked to lead All Age Worship and Evensong in the villages of North Bedfordshire. I also have the Bishop's permission to take occasional services of Communion by Extension in the Parishes of Carlton and Harrold. Within The Partnership my role includes: preaching once a quarter; a member of the Pastoral Group, including Telecare and occasionally help with Junior Church. I regard all this as a privilege and a pleasure. In the past the role of Reader concentrated on preaching and teaching but is now much broader and many of us, including myself, consider pastoral care as very much part of our role. We can take funerals where pastoral care is so vital. We cannot however take baptisms or marriages or the Eucharist, in other words the sacraments.

Reader ministry has been described as the 'Heineken' ministry, reaching those parts ordained ministers cannot. We are also called to be visionary and perhaps, when felt directed by God through the Holy Spirit, daring to say and do things that others may not. My Biblical role model is Barnabus, the one who encourages others in their faith journey. I thank God for considering me worthy of this ministry and pray that I will exercise it prayerfully and diligently wherever He sends me. *Wendy Waters*

### Rest In Peace

On the Sunday following a funeral service we remember in church those who have died. We light a candle to symbolise the light of Christ which eternally shines and brings hope. If you would like a person remembered in our service when the candle is lit, perhaps on an anniversary or birthday, please inform the ministers, or telephone the church office.



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

### Forthcoming Funerals



The funeral of Mr John Allan Ross will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Wednesday 19 May at 10.45am

## Partnership News Extra



**Thank You to Doreen Denny and Joan Eatwell** who took part in the Hike for the Homeless Walk. This was to support The Kings Arms Project which has been working in Bedford since 1989 and provides a range of services for the homeless including an 18-bed Nightshelter, a 14-bed hostel, a 'floating support' service and a weekly outreach meal. Across all project areas we support approx 300 homeless and disadvantaged people each year. The walk was 22 miles in total and over 70 people took part. 24 completed the whole walk including our great team. If you were kind enough to sponsor Joan and Doreen please give your money in this morning or as soon as possible. If you would like to sponsor them it is not too late to show your support of their magnificent effort.

**Footprints Sunday 7 June at 2.30pm.** A pleasant, easy walk of approx. 3.5 miles, with a few stiles. Meet outside Pertenhall Village Hall which is 11 miles from Bedford just off the B660 Kimbolton Road. Further details from Jean and Alan Kirk 317699.

**Deacon Jane to Join Partnership.** We are pleased to tell you that we have invited Deacon Jane Mason to join the ministerial team in Bedford North Circuit as from 1st September 2009 and she has accepted. Deacon Jane will work primarily in the Partnership, with particular pastoral oversight for Putnoe Heights; she will also work 15 hours per week as chaplain to Anjulita Court, the new Methodist Homes for the Aged home in North Brickhill. Jane has been working for the past 6 years in Colchester, where she has established an ecumenical community project on a new housing estate. Prior to ordination, she spent time as a lay worker and as a university chaplain. She brings a variety of skills and experience and we are looking forward to welcoming her to the Circuit. Jane will write an article shortly to introduce herself more fully to us. *Liz Little*

**Church Refurbishments** We are currently in the process of pursuing the following additional works to our church premises.

**Putnoe Heights Church** is seeking funding for a CCTV and Fire alarm system to be fitted throughout the building. Until this is fitted we cannot open the new hall door, due to fire regulations. We are also seeking to install a canopy over the children's playground to provide shade from sun and cover from rain.

**St Mark's Church** will shortly extend the car park around the flag poles to clear up the untidy area at the entrance to the church. We are also seeking funding to enable us to fit our solar powered electricity. In a separate project we are also seeking to conclude the works to the foyer an extension to the front and the provision of new front doors.

**St Mark's Garden of Remembrance** Provision will be made in the near future of an area in which flowers can be left and collected outside the church. The new granite stones will be fitted with stainless steel vases and a tap will be provided. The area will be located on the right immediately after the lych gate under the chapel cross window.



### **Woodland Burial Trust**

St Albans Woodland Burial Ground Open Day

Come and visit the woodland on

Saturday 27 June from 2.00pm—5.00pm

Refreshments served throughout.

We would welcome offers of help with providing refreshments throughout the afternoon. If you are able to offer any help then please contact Janet Day 359529