



Partnership News

14th April 2013
Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church
Easter 3



8.30am Holy Communion every Sunday
1st, 3rd and 5th Sunday at Putnoe Heights
2nd and 4th Sunday at St. Mark's Church

Today Easter 3

9.30 St Marks – Morning Worship

Preacher – Mrs. Liz Little
Leadership - Mrs Elizabeth Bean
Intercessions – Mr Mike Elliott

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher – Mrs Liz Little
Leadership - Mrs. Vita Hudson-Rae
Intercessions - Mrs. Sylvia Cohen

Sunday 21st April Easter 4

9.30 St Marks – Holy Communion

Preacher – Mrs Wendy Waters
Leadership – Mr Mick Ovenden
Intercessions – Mrs Mary Stubbs

11.00 am Putnoe – Holy Communion

Preacher – Mrs Wendy Waters
Leadership – Mrs Linda Hoar
Intercessions – Dr Tim Wilkes

Readings 1 Acts 9: 36-43 2 Revelation 7: 9-17
3. John 10: 22-30

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

Thank You

The flowers at St Mark's Church this week have been given by Milly Rollinson in memory of her parents, Hilda and Raymond.

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 on the foyers

Prayer for Sunday

In the rush and noise of life,
help us to wait upon you,
O Lord.
Within ourselves
may we be still
and know you
to be our God.
Day by day let us rejoice
in the light of your presence;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

William Penn (1644-1718)

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR
Tel: 266952 nsm@thisischurch.com
(Sam also works full time as a Vice
President for Hewlett Packard)

Deacon Jane Mills

c/o Putnoe Heights Church Centre 365630
jane@thisischurch.com

The Reverend 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.ThisIsChurch.com

Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator

Mrs Mary Stubbs 406784 Mary@Thisischurch.com
Please inform us if you know of anyone who is ill, bereaved, housebound, requires a visit, home communion or counselling services. Please also ask us if you would like a home visit for any reason.

Churchyards Administrator

Mrs Avril Williams 01234 342613

Putnoe Heights Church Centre

Open Monday to Thursday 9am - 5pm, Friday 9am - 1pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Mr Geoff Gypps 365630 mob 07947 902846
Leadership Team Mrs. Jean Kirk 317699
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 - Morag Stewart 360103
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 and Wed/ 9.15-12.15pm Tues/ Thurs/Fri. Hazeldene Heights Pre-school. See website for more details www.ThisChurch.com
Head teacher Mrs Laura Leggett 326685
8.30-5.30pm Pre-school Mon-Fri St Mark's
9.-3.45pm Top Marks Mon-Fri St Mark's
Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin **312634**
(See website for more details)
.9.45am - Body Control Pilates –Putnoe Heights
Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430
10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group. St Mark's Mrs Berry 211955
10.30am U3A Play reading St Mark's (see contact details below)
2.00pm U3A Calligraphy at St Mark's 2nd week (see contact details below)
2.00pm U3A Relaxation & Meditation at St Mark's 1st & 3rd week starting 1st October (see contact details below)
12.15pm Story box Putnoe Heights We welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12.15 and 1.15 for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Contact Carolyn Morris youth@thischurch.com 365630
1.30-2.45pm Chat & Make For babies and toddlers 0-5. Crafts, toys,songs,story and refreshments £1. More details email– chatandplay@hotmail.co.uk .
2pm U3A Music Appreciation (see contact details below)
4.15pm Kumon Maths Putnoe Heights. Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698
6.00pm Brownies St Mark's. Mrs C Mathew 826190
6.15 pm Brownies Putnoe. Sharon Tanner 01767699399 or 07720713738.
6.15 Pilates at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859
6.15pm-8.15pm Fit for Life Yoga - Putnoe Heights Contact Jane Butcher 07891879571
6.30pm Boot Camp Putnoe Heights – Laura Amor 341152 / 07976259081
7.00pm Sugarcraft Guild St Mark's 1st week Pat Nicholson 353518
7.00pm Cancer Care Society. St Mark's. 1st Week. Mr J Dewhurst 01908 377020
7.15pm Guides. St Mark's. Mrs Gill Lake 218091
7.30pm Whist Drive. St Mark's 3rd & 5th week . Next meeting– 15 April Judith Stanton. 823313
7.30pm House group 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck 267567

Tuesday

9.30am Jo Jingles. St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Renu Elston 07790206016
9.30am Candlewicking (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Pat McCart 365507
9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World St. Mark's. Helen Skinner 07989080389
10am Autism Beds Adult Support Group. St Mark's. Sally Cripsley 350704
11.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights (see contact details below)
1pm –2.30pm Drop in Wiggles and Jiggles 0-5 years, Putnoe Children's Centre. Please call Trudy Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information 340552
1.15pm U3A Cinema Grp. St Mark's (contacts details below)
1—3pm U3A Choir. St Mark's (contacts details below)
2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 St Mark's (3rd Wk) (see contact details below)

2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 St Mark's (2nd Wk) (see contact details)
2.00pm Library Walk W.I. Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Morag Tomkins 356895
2pm U3A Photography Group 3 St. Mark's (1st Wk) (contact details below).
2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group. St Mark's Fortnightly . Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225
2.15pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. St Mark's Fortnightly. Mary Stubbs 406784.
4.00pm-6.15pm Stars School of Dance. Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468
6.15pm Pilates St Mark's Church Jane Butcher 0789187957
7pm—8.30pm Daisy Birthing Putnoe Heights Susie 07980447390
6.00-7.00pm Zumba at St Mark's. Contact Denise Worker 07900 232648
6.30pm MT Karate (all ages) Karen King 07941264885
7pm Keep Fit. St. Mark's Jan Gregory 328455
7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club (Meets fortnightly). Next meeting '16 April Life as a Nanny in the 1980's Pam Crouch. Details Janet King 313946

Wednesday

9am -1pm Machine Knitting group at Putnoe Heights, fortnightly Changing to Fridays from 5 April (Same time an place.. Contact Marion Sutton 217647
9.30am Body Control Pilates. Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430.
9.30am Discover & Do (Childminders) St. Mark's. Clare Simmons 328380 or 07788824666
10am-2pm Open House at St Mark's for those with learning disabilities., their friends, family , carers and supporters 342613.
10am U3A Gardening Group 3 St Marks. (contact below)
10.00am Holy Communion. St. Mark's Chapel. A half hour service followed by coffee. All welcome.
10am U3A Card Making, St Marks (see contact details below)
10am U3A Diet and Nutrition- Putnoe (contact below)
11.15am U3A Keep Fit
12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe fortnightly. Next meeting 24 April at Putnoe Heights Office 365630
1.00-3pm Police Surgery at Putnoe Heights (Fortnightly)
1.15pm Bridge Club for the Retired. St. Mark's. Mr Barnes 261811
2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft St Marks.(see contact details below)
2pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan Putnoe Heights
2.15pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit. Putnoe Heights Mrs Webster 856966
3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church. St Mark's (3rd Wk). for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 20th March Wendy Waters 401834
4.15pm Kumon Maths. Putnoe Heights Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698
6.00 pm Brownies. St Mark's. Mrs C Warden 219731
6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation Putnoe Heights Racheall Monton 01234 297138 or 07910835994.
6-8pm Karate. St Mark's Karen King 079412 64885
7.00pm Bunyan Bridge. St. Mark's Brian Sallows 407725
7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society Putnoe Heights monthly. Sylvia Woods 365095

7.00pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe monthly Mrs O Holt 266004

7.00pm Line Dancing Putnoe Mike Del-Boyer 348378

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

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club at St Mark's 1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next meeting will be 17 April Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Rosemary 405594 or Graham 406359 for more details.

8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club St Mark's 1st week in the month. Jean Ross 771870

Thursday

9.30am Thursday Prayer Group. Putnoe Heights. Valerie Capon 356306

Request for prayer can be written in the prayer diary on the information table.

9.45am Yoga Putnoe Heights Denise Green 244970

9.45am Chat and Play St.Mark's. A term time group for Mums & toddlers.0-5 Jo Garner 400071 or 07719670624

110-11.30am Gentle Yoga For more details contact Helen Nicholson Tel.03003004305

12pm Storybox . St Mark's welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12 noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Lots of fun. Contact Jaana Swaby 363283

1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic 1st and 3rd Thursdays St. Mark's 267444

1pm—2.30pm Drop in (small hall) Next Steps 9-24months Putnoe Children's Centre.Please call Trudy Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information 340552.

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

2pm U3A Current Affairs - Putnoe Heights

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

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

5.00pm Weightwatchers. St. Mark's. Clare Martin 07805408811.

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins .

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Nina Ovenden 825059

7pm U3A Folk & Poetry St Marks (2nd and 4th week) (see contact details below)

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale 406094

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

7.30pm Gentle Birthing St Mark's. Pat Wood 07946 847231 (as from 4th April)

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 825574 or Shirley 01767 651767

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

8.00pm Magpies Women's Group St Mark's 2nd & 4th week Pat Cass 294220

8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group St Mark's 1st and 3rd week in month Kay Logan 01234 309105.

Friday

10am -12.00 U3A Photography St Marks.(4th week) (see contact details below)

10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French St. Marks (see contact details below)

2.00-4.00 pm U3A Whist St Marks. (contact details

below)

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

2pm U3A Gardening - Putnoe Heights

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

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

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

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

Saturday

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

Young Embroiderers bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher 357198

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

6.45pm Duplicate Bridge. St Mark's Mrs Pillinger 212066

Sunday

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

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

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

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

Messy Church Dates

Weds 17 May; Weds 19 June; Weds 18 Sept; Weds 16 Oct; Weds 20 Nov,



U3A For information on the U3A groups meeting at St Mark's and Putnoe Heights Church please contact Yvonne Francis ☎ 405119

Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council – 11 June, 8 October

St Mark's Leadership Team -

Annual Congregational Meetings 28 April 2013

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 3 June

Putnoe Heights Management Meeting

Putnoe Church Council - 10 June, 24 Oct

Pastoral Group Meeting -

Churchyard Committee -

Brickhill Parish Council Meetings -

Commemoration Service Sunday 3 November 3 pm

Circuit meeting -

Deanery Meeting -

Woodland Burial Trustees– AGM –Sunday 9 June

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting –

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

Easter 3

Introductory Sentence - Psalm 33:20

We wait in hope for the LORD; he is our help and our shield. In him our hearts rejoice, for we trust in his holy name. May your unfailing love rest upon us, O LORD, even as we put our hope in you.

Collect Prayer for the Day— Before we read we pray

God of life and love, your Son made himself known to his disciples in the breaking of the bread. Open our eyes that we may see him in his redeeming work; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. *Methodist Worship*



First Reading — Acts 9:1-6

Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" "Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

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

Second Reading - Revelation 5:11-14

Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and praise!" Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honour and glory and power, for ever and ever!" The four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

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

Gospel Reading –John 21: 1-19

Afterward Jesus appeared again to his disciples, by the Sea of Tiberias. It happened this way: Simon Peter, Thomas (called Didymus), Nathanael from Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples were together. "I'm going out to fish," Simon Peter told them, and they said, "We'll go with you." So they went out and got into the boat, but that night they caught nothing. Early in the morning, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not realize that it was Jesus. He called out to them, "Friends, haven't you any fish?" "No," they answered. He said, "Throw your net on the right side of the boat and you will find some." When they did, they were unable to haul the net in because of the large number of fish. Then the disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, "It is the Lord!" As soon as Simon Peter heard him say, "It is the Lord," he wrapped his outer garment around him (for he had taken it off) and jumped into the water. The other disciples followed in the boat, towing the net full of fish, for they were not far from shore, about a hundred yards. When they landed, they saw a fire of burning coals there with fish on it, and some bread. Jesus said to them, "Bring some of the fish you have just caught." Simon Peter climbed aboard and dragged the net ashore. It was full of large fish, 153, but even with so many the net was not torn. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast." None of the disciples dared ask him, "Who are you?" They knew it was the Lord. Jesus came, took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. This was now the third time Jesus appeared to his disciples after he was raised from the dead. When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love

you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs." Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you truly love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep." The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. I tell you the truth, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me. (This is the word of the Lord - **Thanks be to God.**)

Post Communion Prayer

Lord God our Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ you have assured your children of eternal life and in baptism have made us one with him: deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life in your love, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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

1. Alleluia, alleluia 250
2. Christ is alive 190
3. Now the green blade rises 204
4. Open our eyes Lord (to follow sermon) 181 Mission Praise
5. I know that my redeemer lives. 196

Commentary Peter's Charge

Making mistakes does not mean we cannot continue to share with Christ in his work. We know this from our story from John's Gospel this morning. Peter has made a phenomenal mistake. He was the one guaranteed not to let Jesus down. All the others would fail, but not Peter – or so he thought. Then it was Peter who denied Jesus three times. Fear took over, fear of losing his life, fear of being associated with somebody who claimed to be God. Fear of standing up for what he knew to be true.

So Peter goes fishing, good idea! Get away from it all, catch food, make money – but more importantly try and hide away from the failure. Peter could never come to terms with letting Jesus down and failing to be the rock which Jesus wanted him to be.

It was at this time of despondency that Jesus comes to Peter and greets him whilst he is fishing. Peter might have expected that Jesus would choose somebody else, somebody less impulsive and more reliable. But Jesus doesn't, he chooses Peter, with all of his failings and disappointments. You see Jesus was never actually let down by Peter. Jesus knew that Peter was asking too much of himself. Jesus knew that it was only if Peter relied upon and trusted him that he could ever succeed. He could never achieve what Jesus wanted of him in his own strength.

So here is Peter fishing all night and Jesus teaches him another lesson. Do as I say and you will catch the fish - and he does 153 of them. How many fish there are is probably irrelevant, but the fact that Peter only catches them when he follows the directions of Jesus is most certainly not. The point is that what matters is that we heed the voice of Christ. Past failure is not an indication of future performance in the Christian life, not unless we decide that to be the case.

So Jesus asks Peter three times if he loves him.

'Three times you have denied me Peter, three times will I affirm your love.'

The love of Peter was never in doubt by Jesus, but Jesus did understand the frailty of Peter. The frailty which brought about his denial and the frailty which no doubt prevented him from sleeping at nights as his words of betrayal echoed in his ears. So Jesus shows Peter that no record is kept of past wrongs, Jesus shows Peter that he trusts him, - yes, in spite of failure and there is important work that he wants to share with him.

There has been much speculation about the significance of the number of fish caught, and the different Greek words used when Peter and Jesus speak about love, what is of significance however is that Peter realises that Jesus forgives, that after all is why the crucifixion took place. Peter does nothing to earn the forgiveness of Jesus, it is just there and he needs to recognise it to enable him to heal the hurts and failures of the past and discover the new life and ministry which Jesus has for him.

The passage is about faithfulness and God's trust and Jesus being there to help us pick up the pieces of our lives when everything is a mess. Peter let Jesus down, but even such a humbling experience did not preclude him from ministry. On the contrary it equipped him for it. Such a humbling experience would have established Peter far better for service in Christ's name. It is a simple case of gratitude, if we know our own lack of worth then we are not subject to illusions of self-worth and pride which inevitably causes us to think ourselves better than others. Those who are aware of their own sin and have felt God's forgiveness are inevitably the most tender, compassionate, and understanding of others who are bruised

or weak. It is the self-righteous who are not suited to God's purpose. St. Isaac the Syrian taught, *"He who has seen himself as he is, and has seen his sin, is greater than the one who raises the dead"* When we are face up to and recognise our faults, then the opportunity comes for the spirit to change our practice of scorning, punishing and loathing weakness. St. Isaac went on, *"Purity of heart is love for those who fall"*.

This is a timely reminder to the church and for us when we think that purity is thinking our behaviour somewhat better in character than those around us. "Purity of heart is love for those who fall". Peter is asked to love Jesus, so are we. That love is understood by Jesus, not in terms of a feeling, rather we display that love for Christ in how we love other people. This is what we are called to do. It is surely true that such a humbling experience of failure would have established Peter far better for service in Christ's name. So too those of us who are aware of our own sin and have felt God's forgiveness are inevitably the most tender, compassionate, and understanding of others who are bruised or weak. Do not allow personal fear and weakness, or past failure ever to hold you a prisoner to the past. Instead see it as a qualification, for you will never be 'holier than thou.' Christ uses Peter's history of failure to equip him for the role of ministry and that ministry is to love. It is this command to love which must lie at the heart of the Christian life and without it there will be no Christian life. *Charles Royden*

Meditation by Liz Little

When we read about the occasions when Jesus appeared after the resurrection, one thing which is striking is that often Jesus was not recognised at first, even by those who had been closest to him and had heard him assert that he would indeed rise from death on the third day. It is easy with the benefit of hindsight to wonder why the disciples were not a little faster on the uptake, but if we recall the horror of Jesus' death and the devastation they must have felt at the apparent destruction of all their hopes, it is understandable.

If we are in danger of feeling smug and convincing ourselves that, of course, we would have immediately recognised Jesus on the Emmaus Road or on the seashore, perhaps we should ask ourselves whether we recognise Jesus when he appears to us today. Our living Saviour appears in our world in many guises and in many ways, but it is so easy for us to miss his presence in our busyness and our self-centredness. As we celebrate our risen Lord, our challenge is to look for him in the most unlikely of places and with the unlikeliest of people; after all, that is where he was often to be found in life. This meditation was inspired by Jesus' appearance to Mary Magdalene at the tomb (John chapter 20, 10 – 18) and invites us to consider how we might recognise Jesus in our daily lives.

She did not recognise you; She thought you were the gardener.
Lord Jesus, you turn up in the most unexpected places,
at the most unexpected times. What do you look like? How do we recognise you?

It's not so much what you look like as what you ARE like, that's how we can recognise you:
the compassion, the love, the tenderness. You reach out toward us, so gently.
You come to us in the guise of the gardener, the care worker,
the cleaner, the businessman, the prostitute. You surprise us, Lord Jesus – will we recognise you?

You called her by name. THAT was when Mary knew you, that was when she fell down at your feet
in joy, confusion, hope.

When you call US by name, are we listening? Will we respond as Mary did?
You call us through others, through our thoughts and prayers,
You call us through the still, small voice within.
You call us by name, Lord Jesus – will we hear you and respond?

You said, "Touch me not." Mary reached out for you, she longed to touch you,
the friend she thought was dead. But you were changed.
Mary could not touch you, but she knew your presence.

We cannot touch you, Lord, not as Thomas did. We cannot see your body standing before us.
But we can touch your presence, your love, we can know you near us.
You invite us to reach out for you, Lord Jesus – will we trust you and know your presence?
You told her that you were returning to the Father. You had been Mary's friend,
You believed in her, you transformed her life.
She knew you as a human friend, sharing in her daily life,
Sharing in her emotions and experiences.

But she knew that you were special too. In the garden, she caught a glimpse of your mystery,
she saw you, fully human and yet divine, a bridge between heaven and earth.
You show us yourself, God made man, Lord Jesus – we worship you.

Church Annual Congregational Meeting will take place after church services on Sunday 28 April. 10.30am St Mark's and 12 noon Putnoe. All are invited to attend.

St Mark's Preschool are saving Sainsbury tokens. If anyone has unwanted tokens they would be delighted to have them. There is a box out during Pre-school hours or you can give them to Janet Day or hand them in at the office. Thank you very much.

Methodist Women in Britain. District Craft Day on Saturday 18th May at Priory Methodist Church, Bedford from 9.45am to 4.30pm. There are 13 different workshops and everyone is welcome to attend. Hot and cold drinks are provided but please bring your own lunch. The cost is £4 per half day session and please book early as places are limited. Closing date for bookings is 9th May. Booking form and details of workshops are available from Pam Seymour 01234 305695 email-pams@tgis.co.uk or Ruth Watkins 01296 485087

Putnoe Heights Church Storybox and Storyboxplus are meeting on Monday 15 April 12noon to 2pm. Please bring packed lunch, drinks provided. For further details email youth@thisischurch.com

Chat and Play at St.Mark's starts again on Thursday 18 April

Story Box at St. Mark's starts again on Thursday 18 April at 12 noon.

Chat and Make starts again on Monday 22 April

Putnoe Heights Church will be holding a Table top sale on Saturday 20th April 10am to 12.30. setting up at 9am. Tea, coffee, light refreshments. There will be a Church cake stall; a Church table and a Missions table, all donations welcome. Tables £6 booked in advance, £8 on the day. Entrance 50p. For further details pls email youth@thisischurch.com or speak to Carolyn Morris

Kempston Musical Society. The music of Karl Jenkins. Choral Suite: The Armed Man - A Mass for Peace and Stabat Mater. At Kempston East Methodist Church on Saturday 27th April at 7.30pm. Admission £7.00. For further details telephone Bedford 781010 or e-mail kempstonmusicalsociety@hotmail.com

Hazeldene Heights Preschool are looking for an Early Years Assistant for the April - July term to work with children with additional needs. Level 2 or 3 in Childcare or equivalent is required. Please contact Mrs Laura Leggett on 01234 326685 for further details.

Community Concert The Eagle Choir at St. Andrew's Church 7.30pm Saturday 11 May to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the coronation. All profits to Swaziland Schools Project. Tickets £8, concessions £7, student 16-21 £3 available from St. Andrew's Church Office 216881 or central box office 718112.

Home for Good Some of you will know that my wife and I have been foster carers for many years, or does it just feel like many years :-). I am especially happy to forward the information below from Churches Together in England and to encourage you to share it as widely as possible. I would be delighted to speak to anyone in your fellowships that is considering adoption or fostering. Blessings, Andrew County Ecumenical Development Officer.

Every day more than 50 children are taken into care in the UK. They are removed from chaotic, traumatic, abusive, neglectful or desperate situations. Some of them need a home in an emergency. Some of them need a temporary home until they can return to their families. Some of them need an occasional home to give their families a break. Some of them need a permanent home with a new forever family. The Church is uniquely placed to offer its help to meet this need. As a large social network with involvement of large numbers of families, the Church is fertile soil for recruitment. Once carers have been through the full process of assessment, the Church could also provide an excellent community of support to wrap around families who are adopting or fostering children.

After a year of extensive consultation, with foster carers, adoptive parents, church leaders, social work professionals and fostering and adoption agencies, Care for the Family, CCPAS (The Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service) and the Evangelical Alliance have launched the Home for Good initiative. Home for Good aims to change the culture in local churches throughout the UK, to make adopting and fostering a significant part of their life and ministry. It is a fantastic opportunity for the Church to be good news in society, change our communities and transform the lives of some of the most vulnerable children in the UK. <http://www.homeforgood.org.uk/> Rev Andrew Gale (*Ecumenical Officer*)

Bicycle stands completed. Provision has now been made for an extra ten cycles to be parked at St Mark's Church



Telecare

From time to time people go into hospital, or are not able to come to church because they are poorly and we don't get to know about it. Please help us keep in touch by registering for Telecare. One of our pastoral team will call every fortnight to just make sure all is well. This is an important part of pastoral care and it is especially important if you are one of our 'senior' church members. We can then ensure that you get a visit if you want one and copies of Partnership News etc.

Prayers for Sunday

Lord Jesus you took the broken hearts of your disciples, dispirited and afraid and you gave them hope and power to proclaim your resurrection truth. Give us boldness to be your disciples and share the good news of your kingdom.

Lord Jesus you restored Simon Peter when he was a broken man. You gave him your blessing to serve you, in spite of his awareness of his own failure and weaknesses. Help us to know the restoring love which you give to each one of us to enable us to serve you. As we know your forgiveness in our weakness, so may we be led by your grace to share with others the knowledge of your compassionate love.

Lord Jesus on the road to Damascus you turned the heart of Saul away from murder and hatred. You gave him a willingness to see others in a new way and not to be afraid of those who were different. Turn the hearts of all those who oppress others, give peace to troubled hearts and lives. Send your liberating Spirit on all who are troubled and strengthen them with your redeeming love. Risen Lord Jesus may your light of life shine in the hearts of all those who have died and those who grieve for them. Give us grace to trust in your promise of salvation. Amen.

Statement from the Methodist Church on the death of Margaret Thatcher

From the President of the Methodist Conference, the Revd Dr Mark Wakelin:

"Margaret Thatcher was a hugely significant, complex and yet divisive figure in post-war British politics. She achieved a major breakthrough as Britain's first woman Prime Minister, and her time in office fundamentally changed the nature of British society, especially the relationship between individuals and the state. For many people she was a courageous and committed leader, and one of the best known British politicians around the world - her roots in a personally responsible Methodist tradition were greatly admired by many. Perhaps one of her greater achievements was to change the post-war political consensus, forcing her political rivals to campaign far more on her terms."



A Hymn for Sunday

Open our eyes, Lord,
we want to see Jesus
to reach out and touch Him
and say that we love Him.
Open our ears, Lord,
and help us to listen:
O open our eyes, Lord,
we want to see Jesus!

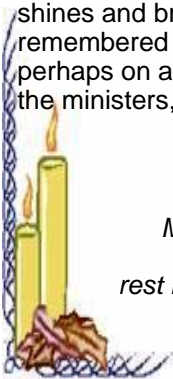
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[www. ThisChurch.com](http://www.ThisChurch.com)**

Thank you for shopping using the links on thischurch.com. Please always use the link on ThisChurch.com to shop through Amazon. Please be careful to make sure that you never access Amazon direct but always use the link on ThisChurch.com, this ensures we get a donation every time you make a purchase. Please also remember the Easyfundraising link. This is really a very good way to shop as it has lots of voucher codes which can save you a fortune on purchases and help raise money.

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.



Jacqueline Daniels

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

Forthcoming Funerals



Please remember these families
and friends in your prayers.

The funeral of Jill Kathleen Harbinson will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Friday 19 April at 4.00pm