



Methodist
Church

Partnership News

23 April 2006

Second Sunday of Easter

Methodist Church & the Church of England in Partnership at both
Putnoe Heights Church & St. Mark's Church



Church of
England

Church Services Today

8.30 Holy Communion both churches
9.30am St Mark's Church - Morning Worship
 Preacher - Revd Charles Royden
 Leadership Team - Mr Mike Cooper
 Intercessions - Mr Mike Elliott
11.00am Putnoe Heights - Morning Worship
 Preacher - Revd Charles Royden
 Leadership Team - Mrs Sue Allen
 Intercessions - Mr s Sue Allen

30 April—Third Sunday of Easter

8.30 Service of Holy Communion
9.30am St Mark's Church - Holy Communion with Prayer for Christian Healing.
 Preacher - Revd Neil Bramble-Chapman
 Leadership - Mrs Janet Day
 Intercessions - Mr Warwick Holden
11.00am Putnoe Heights - Holy Communion with Prayer for Christian Healing
 Preacher – Revd Neil Bramble-Chapman
 Leadership Team - Mrs Wendy Nash
 Intercessions - Mr Alan Bayliss

Reading 1 : Acts 3: 12-19

Reading 2 : 1 John 3: 1-7

Reading 3 : Luke 24: 36b—48

Thank You

The flowers at St Mark's this week are in celebration of the marriage of Lisa Fuller and Robert Oakley.

The flowers at Putnoe Heights have been given by Vita Hudson-Rae in memory of her father and to celebrate the birthdays of Christopher and Samuel

Prayer for Sunday

A Collect for the Queen

Almighty and everlasting God, we are taught by thy holy Word, that the hearts of kings are in thy rule and governance, and that thou dost dispose and turn them as it seemeth best to thy godly wisdom: we humbly beseech thee so to dispose and govern the heart of Elizabeth thy Servant, our Queen and Governor, that, in all her thoughts, words, and works, she may ever seek thy honour and glory, and study to preserve thy people committed to her charge, in wealth, peace, and godliness: grant this, O merciful Father, for thy dear Son's sake, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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 Neil Bramble-Chapman BA, CTM

(Day off Friday)
 12 Hartop Close, Putnoe. MK41 8HE
 326643 Mobile -07917 356062 Minister@ThisisChurch.com

The Reverend Dr. Joan Crossley (Day off Friday)

30 Cutcliffe Grove, Bedford. MK40 4DD.
 Home 344536 Crossley@Thisischurch.com

The Reverend Charles Royden (Day off Thursday)

The Vicarage, Calder Rise. MK41 7UY
 309175 Mobile 07973 113861 Vicar@ThisisChurch.com

Partnership Youth and Children's Worker

Mrs Liz Spavins 302349 youth@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 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 9am - 12 noon Monday & Friday
9am - 5pm Tuesday/Wednesday & Thursday
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Mr Barry Snelson 365630
Leadership Team - Mrs Sue Allen 407264
Treasurer Mrs Kathryn Morse 216428
 Treasurerph@Thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator - Mr John Hitt 404186
Junior Church Co-ordinator - Mrs Liz Spavins 302349

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 - Mr Ian Farthing 210892
Treasurer - Mr John Day 295592 treasurer@Thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Mr Jim Williams 360605

Partnership News is also archived on our church website
www.ThisisChurch.com

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

9.30 - 12.00 pm Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school Mrs Janet Smith 326685

9.30 - 5.30 pm Mon-Fri St Mark's Pre-school Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

(See website for more details)

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

Mini-Strikers Sport for Children at Putnoe aged 2-4 years. Contact Andy Carey 01908 313751 or 07766 142754, or www.ministrikers.co.uk

12.00pm - 1.00pm Story box Putnoe Heights church welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible story, singing and activities. Lots of fun, donations. Contact Liz on 01234 302349

4pm Story Box Plus at St. Marks for 4 -11 year olds meet at 3.30. for refreshments & games, then till 5pm make props, sing & rehearse a short play to perform in church the 1st Sunday of each month. Lots of fun. Free. Contact Liz 302349

4.15pm - Rosemary Conley Diet & Fitness. Putnoe Heights. Miriam Adcock 01908 565044

4.15 - 5.45pm Kumon Maths at Putnoe Heights. Contact Ms Raksha Mistry 01908 392698

6.00pm Brownies St Mark's. Mrs C Mathew 826190

6.15 pm Brownies Putnoe. Penny Fulham 406045

7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild meets first Monday every month at St. Mark's Mrs Pauline Parrott 768419

7.15 m Guides -St. Mark's. Mrs Gill Lake 218091

7.15pm Yoga at Putnoe Heights Church. Contact Karen Simpson 244970

7.30pm Creative Needles at Putnoe Heights. Jacky Hayward 307648. New members welcome.

7.30pm Whist Drive - At St Mark's each month the next 15 May Mrs. Judith Stanton. 823313

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

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

Tuesday

9.30am Candlewicking (Needlework) at Putnoe Heights. Mrs Olive Shotbolt 267203

10.00am Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights. Mrs Stileman 822230

1.30-3pm Toddlers Playtime at Putnoe Heights. Geraldine Skeel 406828

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

2.00pm Library Walk W.I. at Putnoe Heights meets monthly. Contact Morag Tompkins 356895

2 - 5pm Police Surgery. St Mark's Foyer.

2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship - Next meeting 25 April ' How Times Have Changed' No meeting on the 18 April. Contact Betty Wyatt 350188.

2.15pm Putnoe Heights Men's Fellowship. Next meeting 25 April with Members afternoon. Bible Study, Acts 13, Breaking New Ground. contact Lawrence Wyatt 350188.

2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group. Meets fortnightly at St. Mark's. Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225

2.30pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. Meets fortnightly at St. Mark's. Mary Stubbs 406784.

3.45 - 5.30pm Stars School of Dance at Putnoe Heights. Esther Sancto 272517 or 07917 0582468.

6.30 - 7.30pm Yoga at Putnoe Heights. Rachel Leontyne 783129

6.45pm Guides at Putnoe Heights. Emma Holloway 293792

7.00 - 8.00 pm Keep Fit at St. Mark's. Mrs Jan Gregory 214107.

7.00 - 10pm Card Makers Club meets fortnightly at St Mark's. Carol Houghton 346718

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

7.30pm Dog and Puppy Training at Putnoe Heights. Contact Lynn Southwell 07974 743240

7.45 pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club - Meets fortnightly. Next meeting May 2nd Patchwork -Valerie Morgan. Contact Madge Walsh 359088

8.30pm St Mark's Church Qi Gong. Contact Mrs D Steele 356384

Wednesday

9.30am Childminding Support Group at Putnoe Heights. Mrs S Longman 313949

9.30am - Body Control Pilates at Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith 357787.

9.00 a.m. Clubhouse at St Mark's for those with Learning Disabilities. Contact Karen Bywater 315460.

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

10am Sewing & Chat Putnoe Heights Contact Valerie Russell 01462 815966

Luncheon Club at Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next meeting 3 May Putnoe 365630

1 - 3pm Police Surgery at Putnoe Heights .

1.30 - 4.00pm. Bridge Club for the Retired at St. Mark's. Mrs Truss Boyce 781133

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

4.15pm - Kumon Maths at Putnoe Heights Ms Raksha Mistry 01908 392698

6.00pm Self Defence at Putnoe Mr James 07711 687449

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

7.00pm Bunyan Bridge at St. Mark's. Brian Sallows 407725

7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society meets monthly at Putnoe Heights. Next meeting . Sylvia Woods 365095
7pm Putnoe Guild meets monthly at Putnoe Heights. Janice Loxley 347073
7.45pm Kick Boxing Junior classes at St Mark's. Contact Mr James 07711687449 or 07810234890
7.45pm Badminton Club at Putnoe Heights - all welcome. Ken Marriott 214867

Thursday

9.30am Thursday Prayer Group at Putnoe Heights in the quiet room. Sylvia Cohen 343424 *Request for prayer can be written in the prayer diary on the information table.*

9.30am Jo Jingles at St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Jayne Phillips 01582 485333

9.45am Yoga at Putnoe Heights. Karen Simpson 244970

1.00pm - 3.00pm Clinic at St. Mark's 267444

12pm Story box St Mark's Church welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12 noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible story, singing and activities. Lots of fun, donations. Contact Liz Spavins on 1234 302349

1.30-3pm Toddler Playtime at Putnoe. Geraldine Skeel 406828

1.30pm St. Mark's Church Toddler Group. Debbie Coppenhall 356828.

2pm - Putnoe Bridge Club. Gerald Palmer 345991

2pm U3A Indoor Games at Putnoe Radmila Dancer 404811

4.00 Story box Plus at Putnoe Heights for 4-11 year old. Meet at 3.30 for refreshments & games. Then till 5pm make props, sing & rehearse a short play to perform in church on the 1st Sunday of each month Lots of fun And it's free! Liz Spavins 302349

5.30 - 7.30pm Police Surgery. St Mark's Foyer.

6.15 pm Weightwatchers at St. Mark's.

Mrs Margaret Ralph 01767 224978.

6.15pm Brownies at Putnoe Helga Nash 218521

6.15pm Bedford Junior Chess Club. St. Mark's Mr & Mrs Pike 823795

7pm Street Dance at Putnoe Heights. Contact Curtis Ritchie 349255 or 07984 525147

7.00pm Club 2000 at Putnoe Mrs M White 404992

7.30pm - 11.00pm Bedford Senior Chess Club at St Mark's Mr P Housden 376597

7.30 - 9.30pm Embroiderer's Guild at St Mark's 3rd Thursday of the month. Mrs E Rigby 344442

7.30 - 9.30 Tabernacle of Truth Church at Putnoe Bible Studies every 2 Thursday- Pastor Tarr 360188

7.45pm. Housegroup- Meets fortnightly at 3 Little Headlands. Newcomers always welcome. Betty Wyatt 350188

8.00 - 10pm Bedford Writers Circle at St Mark's 1st Thursday each month. Mr John Broadhouse 740271

Friday

9.30am U3A Exercise at Putnoe Heights. Carole Maunder 301325

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

1.30 - 2pm Stars School of Dance at Putnoe. Contact Esther Sancto 272517 or 07917 582468

2pm U3A Gardening Group at Putnoe Heights.

6pm Self Defence at Putnoe. Mr James 0771 687449 or 07810 234890

7.30pm Youth Club for age 13-18 at St Mark's Church. Contact PCSO Rowland Gilbey 349179

Saturday

9.30 - 11.30am Stars School of Dance at Putnoe. Contact Esther Sancto 272517 or 07917 582468

10.00am - 1.00pm Theatre Train at St Mark's - dancing acting, singing. - Kate Randle 01234 782414

2.30pm Calligraphy Group at Putnoe. Meets monthly next meeting. Philip Jones 350295

7.15pm - 10.30pm Duplicate Bridge at St Mark's Contact Ann or Peter 212066

Sunday

Junior Church with crèche for under 3's

9.30 - 10.30 at St.Mark's

11-12 at Putnoe Heights.

1 - 4pm Tabernacle of Truth Church at Putnoe Heights - Worship. Contact Revd. Tarr 360188 Mob. 07866775515

6.00pm TNT (The Nearly Teens) meet fortnightly at Putnoe Heights for various fun activities. Contact Putnoe Office 365630

Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council 14 June, 11 Oct
Circuit Meeting

St Mark's Leadership Team - 24 Apr, 6 June, 12 Sept

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 2 May

St Mark's Church Management Meeting

Putnoe Heights Management - 15 May,

Putnoe Church Council 12 June, 9 Oct

Pastoral Group Meeting -

Churchyard Committee -

Putnoe Heights Mission Group Meeting- at 7.30 on 26 April at 14 Flint Way.

Partnership Council - 19 Sept

Brickhill Parish Council - 27 Apr,

Deanery Meeting St Mary's Eucharist 22 June, 14 September, 16 November

Annual Congregational Meeting 7 May 2006

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth - 26 Apr, 28 June

Calendar dates appear on our church website www.ThisChurch.com. Please advise St Mark's Church Office of the dates of your meetings.

Second Sunday of Easter

Verse of Scripture John 6 : 40

Jesus said to his disciples, 'This is the will of my Father, that whoever sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and that I shall raise him up on the last day.

A Collect Prayer - Before we read we pray

Faithful God, the strength of all who believe and the hope of those who doubt; may we, who have not seen, have faith and receive the fullness of Christ's blessing; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen

First Reading - Acts 4: 32-35

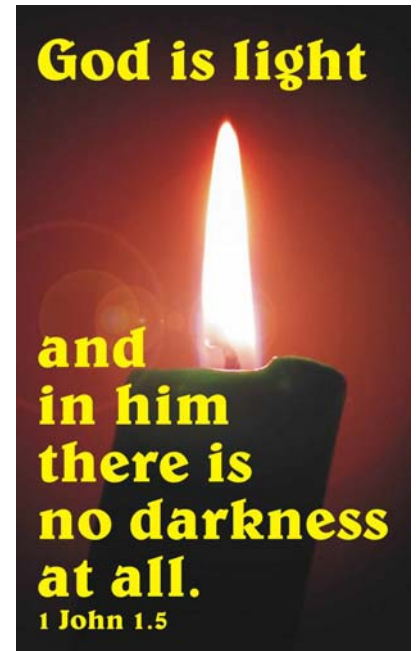
All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was upon them all. There were no needy persons among them. For from time to time those who owned lands or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to anyone as he had need. (Reader: This is the word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**)

Second Reading - 1 John 1: 1-2:2

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. We write this to make our joy complete. This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives. My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. (Reader : This is the word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**)

Third Reading - John 20: 19-31

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." Now Thomas (called Didymus), one of the Twelve, was not with the disciples when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands and put my finger where the nails were, and put my hand into his side, I will not believe it." A week later his disciples were in the house again, and Thomas was with them. Though the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." Thomas said to him, "My Lord and my God!" Then Jesus told him, "Because you have



seen me, you have believed; blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed." Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

(Reader: This is the word of the Lord. **All: 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. Amen

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

1. Christ is alive 190
2. The spirit lives (on partnership News)
3. Low in the grave he lay 202
4. It is a thing most wonderful 224
5. I know that my Redeemer lives 196

Commentary

Word association is an interesting game, you give somebody a word and they have to say the first thing that comes into their head. 'Steak' = 'chips', and so on. If the word was 'Thomas', most Christians would probably say 'doubt.' This is true to such an extent that we call him 'Doubting Thomas.' This is not meant to be a compliment! Thomas has always had a bad press, he was the one who doubted, and we assume that he was therefore a naughty disciple. In some ways it is true, that doubt is not a great thing, it troubles and upsets us, we want to do as Jesus said, 'stop doubting and believe.' Yet in another way doubt can also be quite good. Paul Tillich saw doubt not as the opposite of faith but as an element of faith itself. Or as Frederick Beuchner put it in his book *Wishful Thinking*,

*"Whether your faith is that there is a God or that there is not a God,
if you don't have any doubts you are either kidding yourself or asleep.*

Doubts are the ants in the pants of faith. They keep it awake and moving."

Doubt is one of those taboo subjects. People feel that they should not doubt. We are afraid that people will feel less of us, that we will look stupid. Yet doubt need not be a particularly unhealthy thing. We must always seek to work with our doubts and move onwards in our belief and yet doubt is something which helps move us forward, a step on the road to belief. Doubts is not the opposite of faith—it is an integral part of it. Doubt is not scepticism, the decision to doubt as a matter of principle. Neither is it unbelief, the decision not to have faith in God. Unbelief is an act of will, rather than a difficulty with understanding. If a child in class has difficulty understanding, finds a subject difficult or not to make sense, we don't even begin to call that doubt. Doubt often means asking questions, or voicing uncertainties from the standpoint of faith. You believe but you have difficulty with that faith. Doubt is probably a permanent feature of the Christian faith. As life is a permanent battle against disease, so a life of faith is a permanent battle against doubt.

Many people come to faith with doubts. We don't have to understand everything, indeed it would be strange if we did. This is what all relationships are like, we don't know the half of people before we get involved with them, how could we! When we embark upon any relationship we take a risk. Our doubt reminds us that we are in need of growth and development in our relationship with God and from that perspective it is a good thing.

We know that God is bigger than our minds, we know that we have to use analogies and images. Doubt is a spiritual reminder that we don't know it all and that we have a limitation as a result of our humanity.

We long for absolute security and certain proof. Yet we do well to remind ourselves that what we can know with absolute certainty is likely to be not that important

Tennyson said

*'For nothing worthy proving can be proven
Nor yet disproven: wherefore thou be wise,
Cleave ever to the sunnier side of doubt.'*

This is not to say that Christianity is intellectual suicide. It is not like the emperor's new clothes, we are not afraid of questions and analysis. If we have serious questions we should ask them and think them through. Christianity is about encounter with the living God and yet there is also a challenge to the mind to begin to

understand and grasp our faith. Experience should be reinforced with understanding. But we have to realise that life will be filled with much we do not understand.

An interesting passage from Romans 13:11-12.

*'The night is nearly over, the day is almost here'
Gives the idea that the Christian life is as walking in the dark.*

Paul also uses the classic illustration in 1 Corinthians 13:12

'Now we see but a poor reflection in a mirror.'

He is acknowledging that there are many things which we can expect to be unclear to us.

It is in this acknowledgment that true faith comes into its own. In James 1:6, it says that

'he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind.'

Yet it is faith which enables us to trust in the midst of the turbulence which surrounds us. We have not let God down if we doubt. Indeed our faithfulness is proved when we persevere through our doubts and uncertainties.

The Bible is full of people who doubt, think of Moses or Jeremiah or the Psalms. Psalm 42 may be helpful for it shows the Psalmist talking to God about his doubts and difficulties. He is brutally honest with God.

The Psalms often speak about waiting faithfully for God. (27:14, 33:20, 130:5-6.) The Psalmist at these moments is aware of the feeling of absence of God, yet he knows that this feeling will pass. It is through these times that we must trust on the promises of God.

In Joshua 1:9 God promises to be with Joshua wherever he went. The promise of God's presence is unconditional. And yet God does not promise that Joshua will feel God's presence at all times, and because we are human that can lead to doubts.

So God promises us his love, assures of his presence with us, even when we find it difficult to comprehend. In John 10:28, Matthew 28:20 God promises to be with us, we need to know these promises are true. We live in a culture in which faith is hard - accept that fact and do not concentrate on your doubts. That is to focus on ourselves - 'my doubt'. We must see doubt rather as an opportunity to grow, for faith does grow like a muscle by stretching. Doubt encourages us to pray more, to seek God more, to worship more, to read our bibles more.

Meditation

Today, the 1st Sunday after Easter is often known as Low Sunday. It marks the end of Easter week—the period called by St. Augustine "Octo dies neophytorum" referred to as 8 days of rebirth or renewal. At one time Easter was so pre-eminent in the life of the Church that some traditions even restricted the time when baptism could take place to this 8 day period between Easter Day and Low Sunday. The name Low Sunday indicates a feeling of anti-climax—the sense of getting back to normal after a very lively party. So Easter has happened and now what?—back to the old routine, the humdrum.

But Low Sunday is a Festival Day, a lower Festival than Easter (sometimes called High Sunday to demonstrate its significance as the high point of the Christian Year) but a Festival nevertheless. Anti-climax is the antithesis of what is really meant.

For the Christian the Resurrection story means that it is not back to the old routine, it is forward to the start of a new one. Life is not going to be the same. *John Bassil*

Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

O Lord our heavenly Father, high and mighty, King of kings, Lord of lords, the only Ruler of princes, who dost from thy throne behold all the dwellers upon earth; most heartily we beseech thee with thy favour to behold our most gracious Sovereign Lady, Queen Elizabeth; and so replenish her with the grace of thy Holy Spirit, that she may always incline to thy will, and walk in thy way: endue her plenteously with heavenly gifts; grant her in health and wealth long to live; strengthen her that she may vanquish and overcome all her enemies; and finally, after this life, she may attain everlasting joy and felicity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Prayer for the Royal Family Almighty God, the fountain of all goodness, we humbly beseech thee to bless, Philip Duke of Edinburgh, Charles Prince of Wales, and all the Royal Family. Endue them with thy Holy Spirit; enrich them with thy heavenly grace; prosper them with all happiness; and bring them to thine everlasting kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Disabling darkness of the night magnifies aches and tortures thought; disarms sense, increases fears, reduces comfort into nought. But comes the dawn and warming light and all the horrors melt away. Faith returns - and confidence that God is in this glorious day. For Resurrection lives in me; I rise - assured by holy sight. All darkness is impermanent, defeated by eternal light. *Wesley Blake*

News, Views and Information

Kempston Musical Society outing to Peterborough Saturday 13 May 2006. A few seats remain on the coaches if interested. Contact Alan Bayliss 268101

James and Sophie Beswick will be competing in the first Junior Aquathon on 30th April to raise money for Putnoe Heights Church and St. John's Hospice. This will involve running in Bedford Park and swimming in Robinson Pool. If you would like to support them by being a sponsor, please see James and Sophie at church or Gwen and Peter as they will have sponsor forms. Alternatively please ring James and Sophie at home on Bedford 269887 or Gwen and Peter on Bedford 365652. Thank you in anticipation of your support,

MethodistChildren has re-launched Rainbow, the magazine for 4 to 13 year-olds. Produced by Junior Mission for All (JMA), it has a fantastic new look with stunning images illustrating the lives of children all over the world.

It can be used in Junior Church, mid-week groups or in worship to help children understand how Christians in other countries live and celebrate their faith. Additional background material in the Follow Up Notes (FUN) help make the most of it as an educational resource.

The latest issue includes prayers written by children from Guantanamo Bay in Cuba and pictures from the World Council of Churches in Brazil. It is also launching an appeal to help the thousands of people in Pakistan who are suffering after the massive October 2005 earthquake. Rainbow is a fantastic resource and, thanks to Audrey Facey of the design team at Methodist Church House, its new look makes it even more accessible for children and adults alike. Raising the money for survivors of the earthquake seems like an enormous task, but we know that we can do it with the help of our supporters."

Examine your vocation. May 7 is Vocations Sunday. It is a chance to consider the issue of vocation in general and to focus on specific forms of vocation through accredited and authorised ministry within the church such as the ministry of Reader, evangelist, deacon or priest, whether in a traditional setting or in 'fresh expressions'. Resources are available on the Diocesan website: www.stalbans.anglican.org/xtiandevlopment/vocation.html

Feel the springtime breath of God The Easter Message of Bishop Christopher

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb ... Those words carry you into the heart of the story; you want to know what happened next. They come from

St John's account of the Resurrection of Jesus. You can imagine him writing them, crouched over his desk, scratching away at a piece of parchment, the Mediterranean sunshine pouring in through the window near his left shoulder.

John had a fondness for sunshine. He was entranced by it and frequently used it in his Gospel as an image of God. By contrast (was it the sharpness of the coastal light at Ephesus that influenced him?), he also talked of darkness as an image of concealment. You'll remember the story he wrote at the beginning of his gospel about Nicodemus who came to Jesus under cover of darkness. It is interesting, then, that in the words he has chosen to introduce the story of the Resurrection, he has one of his main characters, Mary Magdalene, coming to the tomb 'while it was still dark'. The other gospel writers had been quite specific in their descriptions that it was at sunrise, the dawning of the day.

Who knows? - but no amount of meteorological probing about times of sunrise, or the quality of early morning darkness before the dawn, will be any help in trying to decide which of the gospel writers was most factually accurate. What each of them conveys, however, is the sense of expectation - and John, in particular, plays with our imagination as we picture a solitary female figure, Mary Magdalene, making her way through the dark streets of Jerusalem on her own, on her tearful journey towards the tomb. You must read for yourself how the story in John's gospel continues: Mary rushing back to the disciples, then Peter and John hurrying up the steep slope to Calvary, their breath catching in the cold morning air, only to find that, as they had been told, the tomb was empty.

The truth that John captures in his story of that morning was that in the very darkness, God had stirred. The sunrise had not yet painted the golden stone of Jerusalem's houses. Most people were still deeply asleep. Yet in the quietness, in a place set apart for death, God had brought Christ into newness of life.

In all our lives, spiritually, mentally and physically, there are times of intense and inchoate darkness. Yet it is there, in those very depths, that God in His self-effacing power stirs and waits to bring us into the light. Easter happened two thousand years ago; it happens in our own lives now - and by Christ's power it will also happen when we enter our own time of absolute darkness at death, when we shall feel the springtime breath of God bringing us into the light of eternity.

+Christopher St Albans

London NW District Women’s Network

Celebration Service Saturday 20 May at 2.30 pm at West London Mission, Hinde Street, London.

Putnoe Heights Mission Group Coffee Morning at the home of Eddy and Margaret Peck 30 The Ridgeway on Saturday 29th April 10.00am - 12 noon. Cakes, Raffle. Proceeds to Faith In Action to raise family business loans to set up mat and basket making businesses in Malawi.

Swedish Evening Saturday 6 May at 7.30 at St.Mark’s. Tickets selling fast book them with Janet or Ian now.

Bedford Town Band celebrate St George’s Day at Putnoe Height’s Church with a concert at 3pm. Guest baritone Geoffrey Horton will sing four well loved pieces. Tickets cost £6 (£4 concessions) at the door or from Roger Nicholls (Bedford 357268)

Kempston Musical Society present Karl Jenkins Requiem and Hayden Nelson Mass at Kempston East Methodist Church. Saturday 29 April at 7.30pm.Tickets from Society members or at the door £7. Further details 01234 261072

British Cardiac Patients Association (Zipper Club) Meets at 7.30pm on the 4th Thursday every 2nd month at Putnoe. Next meeting 27 April with a concert of WW11 songs performed by the ‘Melodians’. All welcome .Further information Eileen Marriott 303834.

Footprints. The next walk will be on Sunday 30th April. Meet at Old Warden Church at 2.30pm. Further details from Margaret & Eddy Peck T: 267267

NCH –A social evening for NCH with music by “Sounds Instrumental” will be held at Kempston East Methodist Church on Saturday 13th May at 7.30pm. There will be songs from the 60’s to the 90’s and refreshments, a gift stall, competitions and a sing-a-long. Tickets £3.00 available from Margaret Standley or Vera Pearson.

A Hymn for Sunday

The Spirit lives to set us free, walk, walk in the light.
He binds us all in unity, walk, walk in the light.

*Walk in the light, walk in the light,
walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord*

Jesus promised life to all, walk, walk in the light.
The dead were awakened by his call,
walk, walk in the light. *Chorus*

He died in pain on Calvary, walk, walk in the light,
to save the lost like you and me,
walk, walk in the light. *Chorus*

We know his death was not the end,
walk, walk in the light.
He gave his Spirit to be our friend,
walk, walk in the light. *Chorus*

By Jesus' love our wounds are healed,
walk, walk in the light.
The Father's kindness is revealed,
walk, walk in the light. *Chorus*

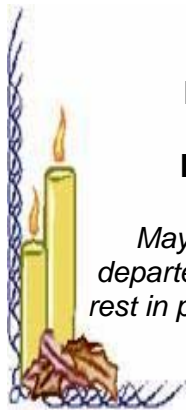
The Spirit lives in you and me, walk, walk in the light.
His light will shine for all to see,
walk, walk in the light. *Chorus*

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.

**Elizabeth Alice Dutt
Dick Kempston
Florence May Auton**

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



Rest in Peace

**There are no funerals
this week**

