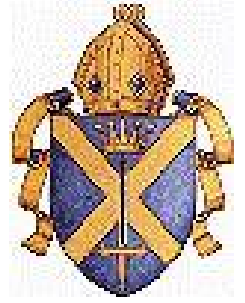




Partnership News

25 April 2010

Fourth Sunday of Easter



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 – Morning Worship

Preacher - Mr John Ayers

Leadership – Mrs Morag Stewart

Intercessions – Mrs Mary Stubbs

11.00am Putnoe Heights– Morning Worship

Preacher – Mr John Ayers

Leadership – Mrs Wendy Nash

Intercessions – Mrs Claire Peck

2nd May Fourth Sunday of Easter

9.30am St. Mark's – Family Worship

Preacher - Revd. Charles Royden

Leadership – Mrs Avril Williams

Intercessions – Mr Warwick Holden

11.00am Putnoe Heights–

Preacher – Revd. Charles Royden

Leadership - Mrs Sam Ware

Intercessions - Dr Tim Wilkes

Readings 1. Acts 11: 1-8. 2. Rev 21: 1-6.
3. John 13: 31-35

Midweek Worship

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

Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Alan and Diane Bayliss to celebrate their Wedding Anniversary and with loving memories of their parents.

The flowers at St. Mark's Church this week have been given by Penny & Mike Puttock to celebrate their wedding anniversary.

Prayer for Sunday

O Lord Jesus Christ,
Thou Good Shepherd of the sheep,
who camest to seek the lost,
and to gather them into Thy fold,
have compassion upon those
who have wandered from Thee,
feed those who hunger,
cause the weary to lie in Thy pastures,
bind up those who are with broken heart,
and strengthen those who are weak,
that we, relying on Thy care
and being comforted by Thy love,
may abide in Thy guidance to our lives' end.
Amen

Fifth Century Prayer:

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR

266952 Fax- 402624 nsm@thisischurch.com

(Sam also works full time as a General Manager for Hewlett Packard)

Deacon Jane Mason

12 Hartop Close, Bedford MK41 8HE

348091 Mobile 07807 146535

jane@thisischurch.com

The Reverend Charles Royden

The Vicarage, Calder Rise. MK41 7UY

309175 Mobile 07973 113861

vicar@thisischurch.com

For Data Protection Purposes

Please note that any items submitted for inclusion in
Partnership News will automatically be posted on our website
and may appear in other local media sources.

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

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

Youth & children's worker - Mrs 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 - Mrs Delia Shephard 273628

Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

9.15 -11.45 am Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school

Head teacher Mrs Janet Smith ☎326685

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

9.30-3.15pm Top Marks Mon-Fri St Mark's

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin ☎312634

(See website for more details)

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

9.45am - Body Control Pilates –Putnoe Heights
Stephanie Smith ☎ 357787 or 07973174430

10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group. St Mark's Mrs Berry
☎211955

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

12.00pm 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

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 May 17 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

9.30am Jo Jingles. St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Renu Elston ☎07790296016

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

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

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

11.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights 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 April 27. Mrs Ruth Gill "History of the W.I." 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. Brian Ibberson ☎403497

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

7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club - Meets fortnightly. Next meeting May 4, Anthea Stark - Work of a Librarian. Janet King 313946

8.15pm - 10.15pm Bedford Advanced Dancers St. Mark's 1st Tuesday in month. Shirley Sadler ☎01767 651767

Wednesday

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

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

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

10am Sewing & Chat. Putnoe Heights Valerie Russell ☎01462 815966

10am U3A Card Making, St Mark's Church. 4th week in the month.

12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next - 28 April Putnoe Heights Office ☎365630

1.00-3pm Police Surgery at Putnoe Heights .

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

1.45 Scots Society Whist Putnoe monthly .All welcome Nancy Barr ☎268147

2-5pm Police Surgery. St Mark's Foyer. ☎349179

1.30-4.30pm U3A Craft St Mark's 1st & 3rd week. Pat Holland ☎262823

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

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 or 07910835994.

6-8pm Karate. St Mark's Karen King ☎079412 64885

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

7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society Putnoe

Heights monthly. Vanessa Aykac 268098 or 07917385987

7.00pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe Heights monthly Janice Loxley ☎ 347073

7.00pm Line Dancing Putnoe Heights Mike Del-Boyer ☎348378

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

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club meet at St Mark's 1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next meeting 5 May. Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Ring 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.

9.45am Yoga Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎244970

9.45am Chat and Play St.Mark's. A group for Mums & toddlers. Emma Strangwick ☎211070

11am-12noon Citizens Advice Bureau at Putnoe Heights.

12pm Storybox . St Mark's welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12 noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing . Lots of fun. Contact Jaana Swaby 01234 363283

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. Malcolm Smith ☎400741

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

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

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Caroline Morgan ☎07786508351

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Heights Nina Ovenden ☎825059

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

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale ☎406094

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

8.00pm 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. Julie Nicholson ☎353642

Friday

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

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

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

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

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

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

Saturday

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

Young Embroiderers bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher ☎357198

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

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

Sunday

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

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

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

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, 8 November.

St Mark's Leadership Team –

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team – 7 June at the Manse, 18 October

Putnoe Heights Management Meeting ; 24 May

St Mark's Church Forum Meeting -

Putnoe Church Council - 21 June, 25 October.

Pastoral Group Meeting -

Churchyard Committee - 26 May at 11am.

Putnoe Heights Mission Group—9th June 7.30 14 Flint Way

Partnership Council—TBA

Brickhill Parish Council Meetings

Deanery Meeting - 5 May, 17 June.

Circuit Property/Treasurers Meeting

Circuit Meeting

Woodland Burial Trustees – Sunday 16th May AGM

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth –

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

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Opening Verse of Scripture -

Psalm 23

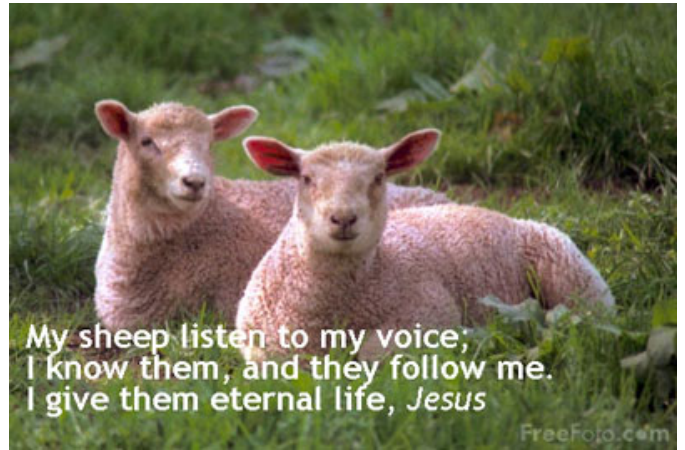
The Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not be in want.

Collect Prayer for the Day -

Before we read we pray:

Risen Christ, faithful shepherd of your Father's sheep: teach us to hear your voice and to follow your command, that all your people may be gathered into one flock, to the glory of God the Father.

Common Worship Shorter Collect.



First Reading – Acts 9: 36-43

In Joppa there was a disciple named Tabitha (which, when translated, is Dorcas), who was always doing good and helping the poor. About that time she became sick and died, and her body was washed and placed in an upstairs room. Lydda was near Joppa; so when the disciples heard that Peter was in Lydda, they sent two men to him and urged him, "Please come at once!" Peter went with them, and when he arrived he was taken upstairs to the room. All the widows stood around him, crying and showing him the robes and other clothing that Dorcas had made while she was still with them. Peter sent them all out of the room; then he got down on his knees and prayed. Turning toward the dead woman, he said, "Tabitha, get up." She opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up. He took her by the hand and helped her to her feet. Then he called the believers and the widows and presented her to them alive. This became known all over Joppa, and many people believed in the Lord. Peter stayed in Joppa for some time with a tanner named Simon.

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

Second Reading – Rev 7: 9-17

After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands.

And they cried out in a loud voice: "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying: "Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and honour and power and strength be to our God for ever and ever. Amen!" Then one of the elders asked me, "These in white robes--who are they, and where did they come from?" I answered, "Sir, you know." And he said, "These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, "they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the centre of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

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

Gospel Reading – John 10: 22-30

Then came the Feast of Dedication at Jerusalem. It was winter, and Jesus was in the temple area walking in Solomon's Colonnade. The Jews gathered around him, saying, "How long will you keep us in suspense? If you are the Christ, tell us plainly." Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you do not believe. The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me, but you do not believe because you are not my sheep. My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they

follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all ; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. I and the Father are one."

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

Post Communion Prayer

Merciful Father, you gave your Son Jesus Christ to be the good shepherd, and in his love for us to lay down his life and rise again: keep us always under his protection, and give us grace to follow in his steps; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hymns - (Please distribute Mission Praise and Morning Worship)

1. Fill your hearts 147 Tune Regent Square
2. As the deer 37
3. Father I place 133
4. The King of love, 649 Tune *Dominus Regit Me*
5. In heavenly love abiding Tune *Penlan*

Commentary

The whole of chapter 10 of John's gospel is replete with imagery of sheep and shepherds. In this one chapter, Jesus compares himself to a shepherd watching over his sheep, as well as the gate of the sheepfold through which the sheep enter. Eventually, of course, John will compare Jesus explicitly to a lamb being slaughtered during the crucifixion. The sheep/shepherd imagery is perhaps John's favourite metaphor, and likely would have been understood by his early readers. Shepherding was a common occupation during the time of Jesus, though a lowly and undesirable one. Shepherds were typically those who had no property or obligation to family. They turned to the itinerant life of herding sheep in the wilderness as a last resort to making a living. That Jesus would compare himself at all to one of society's best-known outcasts is striking, but becomes even more so when in the same breath he declares "the Father and I are one".

There is something about the life of a shepherd that tells us about who Jesus is. There is something about shepherding that reveals God. Those of us living in the twenty-first century, however, don't do so well with shepherd imagery. We don't see many shepherds these days, do we? What was once commonplace has become obsolete, and our unfamiliarity with the task of herding sheep makes it difficult to fully appreciate the meaning behind John's metaphor. We tend to reduce the image of shepherds and sheep to one of pastoral tranquility, something akin to a reaffirmation that God "maketh me lie down in green pastures" and "leadeth me beside still waters". While such a connection may be appropriate and necessary for those needing to be comforted, it nevertheless overlooks the dangers and difficulties that shepherds faced. Consider, for instance, that the primary task of a shepherd was protecting the sheep. There were constant threats of predators or thieves wherever the shepherd happened to be. Jesus alludes to this reality in the first eighteen verses of chapter 10, where he speaks of both thieves and wolves. It falls to the shepherd to defend the sheep from these constant threats. In comparing himself to a shepherd and his followers to sheep, Jesus means to invoke this kind of image – the sheep living under constant threat (though blissfully ignorant most of the time) while the shepherd constantly protects, oftentimes putting his own life in danger for the sake of his flock. In fact, this very willingness to confront the danger and "lay down his life for his sheep" is what makes a shepherd "good" (see John 10:11-14). Once again John's gospel tells us in no uncertain terms that Jesus' life is in danger. It is no coincidence that the "good shepherd chapter" of John ends with Jesus' nearly being stoned. That's not exactly pastoral or tranquil, is it?

Of course, no one ever said that the Christian life should be tranquil. We may at times fall into the trap of assuming that we Christians should somehow enjoy benefits that others do not by virtue of our belief. To the contrary, Jesus himself teaches us that following him means just the opposite. Time and time again our lives will be tested. Time and time again we will come face-to-face with the threats and evils of the world. Time and time again we will be called to respond with the selfsame love, grace, and sacrifice as our Lord Jesus did. Claimed as his sheep, Jesus means for us to be his shepherds in the world.

As we minister in his name it can be difficult to keep him at the centre of all that we do. There are countless voices in our world competing for our time and attention, vying for our allegiance. In this day and age of twenty-four hour cable news and "infotainment", we are constantly bombarded with voices on top of other

voices, one talking head after another. A great deal of consideration is given to how and where we get our information about the world, and the media presents us with particular slants and spins designed to convince listeners that this or that voice is to be trusted above all others. Sometimes it can be difficult to hear the voice of our shepherd above the cacophony of words.

Jesus tells us that his sheep know his voice and follow him. If this is true, then it means a primary task of following Jesus is listening. We must train ourselves to hear his voice above all the other voices in our world, to daily connect with that voice that says, "This way! You belong here with me!" But we must understand that following the voice of Jesus brings us face-to-face with the "teeth" of life, so to speak. We are called to encounter and resist the threats of the world, threats such as oppression, poverty, injustice, and dehumanization.

When we do so, we do so under the watchful eye of our compassionate shepherd, the guard who lays down his life that we might live. He is our Lord, who claims us and calls to us as we move from one wilderness to the next. He leads us to confront the threatening evils of this world knowing that they have no real power over us. Though they may assail us and cling to us, they cannot pry us from the grasp of our Saviour. Though they may kill us, they cannot extinguish our life in Jesus Christ. Though they may sever us from our earthly life, they cannot separate us from the love of our eternal shepherd. That, simply stated, is who God is.

Meditation

In 1861 Abraham Lincoln was elected 16th President of the United States, just as the country was about to break up in Civil War for four years between the States of the North and those of the South. One of the reasons for the start of the Civil War lay in the fact that the South had slavery. Of the 9 million people in the South, 4 million were slaves. Lincoln said: " 'A house divided against itself cannot stand.' I believe this government cannot endure permanently, half slave and half free." He abolished slavery, declaring all people to be free. During the Civil War, 4 out of every 100 Americans were either killed or seriously wounded. Of every 100 soldiers, 5 died in battle and 20 died of illness and disease. The American Civil War ended in 1865. Abraham Lincoln wrote a prayer about injustice and war and all who suffer in war. We use Lincoln's words today, as we pray for those who need justice and healing and peace in their lives:

Prayer Grant, O merciful God, that with malice toward none, with charity to all, with firmness in the right as you give us to see the right, we may strive to finish the work we are in: to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for those who have borne the battle and for their widows and orphans, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations. Amen.

Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

I thank you, O God, for the relief and satisfaction of mind that come with the firm assurance that you govern the world; for the patience and resignation to your providence that are afforded as I reflect that even the tumultuous and irregular actions of the sinful are, nevertheless, under your direction, who are wise, good and omnipotent, and have promised to make all things work together for good to those who love you. Susanna Wesley (1669-1742)

Dear Lord God - I thank you for seeking me out as a shepherd seeks for his sheep. I thank you for keeping me safe, for standing with me in adversity and for blessing me with all that I have. Help me to listen more to you than I do right now and give me the faith to follow you more perfectly. I ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

Lord Jesus we hold before you the special concerns that are upon our hearts this day the seriously ill, those who have no faith to help them in their time of trouble, the couple who have been separated by age and disease. Great shepherd of the sheep, may we all know your presence with us may we listen and follow. Amen

Wonderful God - stretch our understanding of your love - expand the size of our hearts - help us embrace your purpose for us - grant that we may grow beyond ourselves - and enter the fullness of your grace. We ask it in Jesus' name. - Amen

Storybox at St. Mark's on Thursdays between 12 and 1,(term time only), would appreciate some more volunteers to help with preparing the food or to tell a story based on the Bible. It will probably only be every 8 or 9 weeks. For further details please see Jaana or ring her on 363283.

BEH Women's Network Spring Craft Day will be held on Saturday 15 May 9.45am to 4.30pm at Priory Methodist Church. A chance to learn a new skill to discover hidden talents and to share together creatively. For details of workshops and a booking form please contact Pam Seymour (305695) or Ann Hitt (404186). Closing date of booking 8 May 2110

The Partnership Lunch Club, fortnightly, Wednesdays at Putnoe, urgently needs an additional regular driver to bring less mobile folk to the lunch (a previous appeal did yield a reserve driver thankyou). If you can help it would greatly ease the load on the existing team, please contact Peta Pearson tel 356878).

House Group to meet at 13 Farnham Way Putnoe on Mondays at 7.45pm on 14, 21 June and 12 July. We will be using the York Course 'When I survey .. Christ's cross and ours'. For more information please contact Wendy Waters 01234 401834.

Footprints Sunday 2nd May 2010 2.30pm start. Drive to Clapham and follow the signs to Yarlswood Detention Centre. At the far end of Clapham at the roundabout turn right up Twinwoods Road and on the left hand side top of hill (Browns Wood) stop and park on grass verge. There are lovely views of the last vestiges of the Chilterns and the Ouse Valley but this interesting figure-of-eight walk is a little steep in a couple of places and has one stile.. Further information from Pam and Ray Seymour Tel. 305695.

Coffee Morning Saturday 8th May 10-12noon at the home of Gwen Beswick, 6 Repton Close. Raffle. Proceeds to Mission projects. All Welcome.

Election Forum and Prayer At such a significant time for us locally and nationally it is a great time to join forces and pray and fast. With this in mind I am asking Christians across Bedford to spend a day fasting for the elections on Wednesday 28th April. In the evening of Wed 28th all three candidates; Patrick Hall, Henry Vann and Richard Fuller will come to an election forum at The Ent Shed on Castle Road at 7.30pm. We will ask them questions for an hour and a half then take a break for 20 minutes for drinks/toilet and then the 2nd half of the meeting will start at 9pm we will pray for God to break in on our local election and the choice of

our nation's leader.

The cost on entry is £2 per person to cover the hall cost. To have a question put forward please email kristyadams@ntlworld.com (I will collate the most similar questions together, we will have time for approx 6 questions so we want to use the time wisely) It would be great to have a real cross section of peoples questions, so please put out the email address in any church newsheets. There is another election forum taking place at churches together on Sun 2nd at the Methodist Church, please still attend this as priority but if you could spare the time to come along to the Ent Shed on Castle Road, Bedford at 9pm to pray together we would love to have you. Kristy Adams 313919

Annual Congregational Meetings 2010

To take place at St. Mark's & Putnoe Heights Church after morning worship

Opening Prayers

Preliminary

Appointment of minute secretary to the Annual Congregational Meeting.

Record of number of persons present

(Please note that no record is required of names of those present or apologies from the congregation for absence)

Minutes of last meeting

Presentations

1. Presentation of Terrier and Inventory
2. Presentation of current church policy documents
3. Presentation of August church accounts
4. Presentation of membership lists (Electoral roll etc.)

Giving Thanks

Expressions of thanks to any leaving office

Elections to Office

Election of Church Leadership Team
Election of Deanery Synod representative
Election of Church Council representatives

Annual Review

Church Leadership Team and presented in written document form

London Community Gospel Choir Saturday 1 May 7.30pm at Letchworth Garden City Church, Icknield Way East, Letchworth. Tickets £12.50 on door, £10 in advance. £5 under 14s concession. Tel. 01462 480126 www.lgcitychurch.net.

Children's work at Putnoe. Temporary leadership has been found for both Storybox plus and the older group of Junior Church, until next half term! Carolyn Morris has taken on doing all related rotas and we also have the offer of someone to act as treasurer, all in all a very positive meeting! It was noted that we could do with another 'able bodied' person to go on the rota (once a month) to set up/ clear away tables etc for Storybox on a Monday morning. It was also mentioned that there may be occasions when an extra person may be needed to run junior church if both groups are present, please could people indicate to Carolyn or myself if they may be willing to do this? It should not happen very often as there are quite a few services that the children will be staying in for in the next few months.

Storybox plus meets again at Putnoe on Monday April 26 at 3.30pm

Christian Aid Week 9th - 15th May. If you are able to help with collecting please see John Harrison after church on Sunday or call in at the office. Thank you.

Car Boot Sale –Monday 3rd May. We would be very grateful for bric-a-brac, tools, china, books, CD's, puzzles etc for the church stall. Tray bakes also welcome for the refreshments. Thank you

Trouble getting to church ?

St Mark's Leadership team are concerned about the transport difficulties some people have getting to church.. Over the years we have considered getting a mini-bus etc. The L Team have now agreed that for a test period we will provide a lift service using a local commercial driver who will contract his services to the church for Sunday mornings. The service will be free of charge. Please advise the Leadership team if this service would be of interest to you.

A chance to make your voice heard on climate change

British Methodists are being offered the opportunity to make their views heard on climate change, as part of a new Church-wide consultation.

The consultation concerns the draft Methodist Conference Statement on climate change, entitled 'Hope in God's Future' and is now live online at www.methodist.org.uk/higf.

Once adopted, a Methodist Conference Statement is the official view of the Church on a particular matter. It is also referred to by key Church committees, such as the Faith and Order Committee, when deciding on related areas of doctrine.

"Climate change is an issue that affects all of us and is increasingly becoming a concern for many people around the world," said David Webster, Internet Communications Coordinator, who is leading the consultation process. "We hope as many Methodists as possible put forward their opinions, as we need a Conference Statement that reflects as much as possible the view of the entire Church on this important issue."

The results will determine recommendations to the Methodist Conference in 2011 on what shape the Statement should take, and is open to all Methodist church members and regular attendees.

Note: St Mark's Leadership are currently considering proposals to install photovoltaic (PV) panels on the roof of the church. The government have recently announced feed in tariffs (a grant) of 41p for every unit of electricity generated for 25 years. The cost of the PV's will be £15,000 and it will take 8 years to pay back the installation cost from the savings. Planning permission has now been obtained.

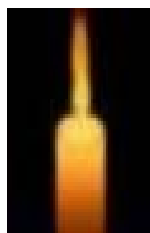
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Rest In Peace

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.

**Joyce Florence Bell
Gwendoline Sylvia Warren
Claribel Jenny Cole/Elder**

May the souls of all the faithful



Visit our online chapel, Light a Candle of Remembrance. We have now provided the opportunity to visit our online chapel and light a prayer candle. Please visit www.thisischurch.com and click on the



Forthcoming Funerals

There are no funerals this week