



Partnership News

**Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church
26 April 2015
Fourth Sunday of Easter**



Sunday Services

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

26 April - Fourth Sunday of Easter

9.30am St Mark's - Morning Worship and Baptism

Preacher - Revd. Dr. Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mrs. Margaret Appleton
Intercessions - Mrs. Margaret Appleton
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher - Revd. Dr. Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mr. Martin Fannon
Intercessions - Mr. Alan Bayliss
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

3rd May - Fifth Sunday of Easter

9.30am St Mark's - Morning Worship and Baptism

Preacher - Revd. Canon Charles Royden
Leadership -
Intercessions - Mr. Richard Ledger
Organist - Mr Bill Fudge

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Family Worship

Preacher - Revd. Canon Charles Royden
Leadership - Mr. Barry Southam
Intercessions - Young People
Organist - Miss Marion Prior

Readings 1. Acts 8: 26-40 2. 1 John 4: 7-21
3. John 15: 1-8
Mid Week Holy Communion at 10.00am at St Mark's
Chapel every Wednesday and at Sir William Harpur
House on first Monday of every month.

Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church have been given by Janet Smith (pre school) in celebration of a special birthday.

Welcome

You are all most welcome to our services today. At St Mark's we make a special welcome to the friends and family of Dylan Piazza who has been brought for baptism.

Prayer for Sunday

O uncreated one, bless those whom you have made in your image. O untouchable one, draw near to us in the Word made flesh. O ineffable one, disclose yourself to us in the wisdom of the Cross. O immortal one, bring us through death to eternal life; through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.
Angela of Foligno (1248-1309)

Banns of Marriage

We publish the banns and pray for the marriage of Dale Jeremy Jones and Kelly Samantha Knott to be married at St Edmunds St James Church Blunham

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman
107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR
Tel: 266952 nsm@thisischurch.com

Deacon Jane Mills
c/o Putnoe Heights Church Centre
Tel. 348091 Mobile 07807 146535
jane@thisischurch.com

The Reverend Canon 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.ThisChurch.com

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Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-ordinators

Mrs Wendy Waters 342613 office@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 Mon-Thur 9-5.30pm, Friday 9-1pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Geoff Gypps 365630
Leadership Team Mrs Jenny Snelson 344417
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
Charity No Charity No 1160981.

Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5.00pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 342613 office@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613
Leadership Team - Mrs Jean Bank 355698
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892
treasurer@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Mr Jim Williams 360605

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

Hazeldene Heights Pre-school. Sessional and Full Day care available—open Mon.—Fri. Full Day Care 8.30am to 5pm Sessional times 9am—12noon and 12.45pm -
3.45pm For more info please contact Laura Leggett 01234 326685 or www.hazeldeneheights.com
8.00am-5.30pm Pre-school Mon-Fri St Mark's
8.00am-5.30pm Top Marks Mon-Fri St Mark's Manager Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634
(See website for more details)
9.00am-12noon St Mark's Pre-School Nursery Manager Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634
9.30-10.30am - Body Control Pilates –Putnoe Heights Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430
10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group. St Mark's Mrs M. Berry 211955
10.00am-12 U3A Play reading Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946
11.00am-12noon Pilates St. Mark's Liz Mason 07816522200
12.00 noon Storybox 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. Contact Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com 365630
1.30pm Chat & Make. Term time for babies and toddlers 0-5. Crafts, toys, songs, story and refreshments £1. More details contact St Mark's Church Office on 01234 342613 or Janine 01234 297481 Restarts On April 20
2.00pm U3A Music Appreciation Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946
2.00pm U3A Italian Putnoe Heights– fortnightly
4.15pm Kumon Maths Putnoe Heights. Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698
5.30 - 8.30 NHS Eat Smart Think Active at Putnoe Heights. For more details contact Zoe Wilcox 07767311424
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-8pm Cubs at Putnoe Ages 8 –10.5 Email:phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509
6.30pm Fit For All Putnoe Heights – Laura Amor 341152 / 07976259081
7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild St Mark's (1st week in month) Mary Daly 217127
7.00pm Cancer Care Society. St Mark's. (1st week in month) Mr J Dewhurst 01908 377020.
7.00-8.00pm Laughter Club at St. Mark's 2nd week each month) Cheryl Green 07729187399
7.15pm Guides. St Mark's. Mrs Gill Lake 218091
7.30pm Whist Drive. St Mark's (Weeks 3 & 5 in the month).. Next meeting– 18 May Judith Stanton. 823313
7.30pm No Fear Bridge Club St. Mark's Mrs. Susan Ford 300218.
7.30pm House group 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck 267567
7.45-9.15 Get Fit Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights Diane Field 01234 404976

Tuesday

9.30am Candlewicking (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Pat McCart 365507
9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World St. Mark's. Lorrie Pearson 01234 340473

11-12.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946
1.15pm U3A Cinema Group. St Mark's Contact Janet King 313946
1.30pm U3A Choir. St Mark's Contact Janet King 313946
2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 St Mark's (3rd Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946
2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 St Mark's (2nd Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946
2.00pm Library Walk W.I. Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Morag Tomkins 356895
2.00pm U3A Photography Group 3 St. Mark's (1st Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946
2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group. St Mark's (1st & 3rd week in month). Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225
2.15pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. St Mark's (2nd & 4th week in month) Mary Stubbs 406784.
3.30-6.30pm Stars School of Dance at Putnoe Heights. Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468
6-7pm Supple Strength Yoga St Mark's Amanda Alcock 07769747393
7.15-8.15pm Pilates St Mark's Church Jane Butcher 07891879571
7.00pm - 8.30pm Daisy Birthing Putnoe Heights Susie 07980447390
7.30pm Ladies Tuesday Club at Putnoe Heights (Meets monthly Next meeting 19 May Flower Event Details Diane Bayliss 268101
8.00pm Hearts in Beds Committee St Mark's (week 4 in month) Mrs N Aspey 309816

Wednesday

9.30am Body Control Pilates. Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430.
10.00-2pm Open House at St Mark's for those with learning disabilities., their friends, family , carers and supporters 342613.
10.00am U3A Gardening Group 3 St Marks. Contact Janet King 313946
10.00am Holy Communion. St. Mark's Chapel. A half hour service followed by coffee. All welcome.
10am U3A Card Making, St Marks Contact Janet King 313946
11.15am U3A Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights
12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe fortnightly. Next meeting 6 May Contact Putnoe Office 365630
1.15pm Social Bridge Club St. Mark's. Mr Barnes 261811
2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft at St Marks.Contact 1st week of the month. Janet King 313946
2.00pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946
2.00pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit. Putnoe Heights Mrs Webster 856966
3.30-4.30pm Vita Fit St Mark's starting 29 April for 6 weeks Liz Roe 07901684538
3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church. St Mark's (3rd Week in month). for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 20 May 2015 Wendy Waters 401834 Jean Bank 355698
4.15pm Kumon Maths. Putnoe Heights Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698
5.00–6.00pm Rainbows at Putnoe Heights Mrs Gill Lake 218091
6.00pm Brownies. St Mark's. Mrs C Warden 219731
6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation Putnoe Heights Racheall Monton 01234 297138 or 07910835994

6.00-7.00pm ATSK Karate at Putnoe Height Kevin Stark Tel.01234 353865

7.00pm-9.00pm Scouts at Putnoe ages 10.5-14; Email:phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509

7.00pm Bunyan Bridge. St. Mark's Colin Jackson 363398 or Brian Sallows 407725.

7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society Putnoe Heights monthly. Sylvia Woods 365095

7.15pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe 3rd Wednesday in every month except August Mrs Jo Street 3446008.

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 29 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 (Week 1 in the month) Jill Cooper 357960

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.

10.30pm Spanish Holiday Survival at Putnoe Heights. Elena 01234 266968

9.45am Chat and Play St.Mark's. A term time group for Mums & toddlers.0-5 Contact St Mark's Church Office 01234 342613 or Janine 01234 297481

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 342613

1.00-2.30pm Wiggles & Jiggles Putnoe Heights. Drop in.

1.00 - 2.30pm NHS Baby Clinic at St Mark's (Weeks 1 & 3 in the month) Contact 897401

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 Contact Janet King 313946

2-4pm U3A Indoor Games. St.Mark's Contact Janet King 313946

2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society St Mark's Jean Paterson 307210

3.15-5.15pm Social Care Solutions Drama Group Claire Creek 262650

5.45pm Weightwatchers. St. Mark's. Clare Martin 07768481499

6-7pm Supple Strength Yoga St Mark's Amanda Alcock 07769747393

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Brenna. 07919402797.

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Audrey Halford 407284

7.00pm U3A Folk & Poetry St Marks (2nd and 4th week in month)Contact Janet King 313946

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

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale 406094

7.30pm Magpies Women's Group St Mark's (2nd & 4th week in month) Mrs Marie Cotchin 402089

7.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group St Mark's (1st and 3rd week in month) Linda Stephen 409493

8.00pm Bedford Folk Dancers (formerly Barn dancers) Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights Different guest callers each week.Except August. All welcome, cost £2.50

Including refreshments. More details Ron 825574 or Shirley 01767 651767

8.00pm Bedford Writers Circle. St Mark's (1st week in month). John Broadhouse 01525 404014

Friday

9.30am -3.30pm Machine Knitting group at Putnoe Heights, 2nd week per month.. Contact Marion Sutton 217647

10am -12.00 U3A Photography St Marks.(4th week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French St. Marks Contact Janet King 313946

2.00-4.00 pm U3A Whist St Marks. (2nd week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

2pm U3A Gardening - Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

4.50pm-7.00pm Stars School of Dance at Putnoe. Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468

6.30pm-8.00pm Beavers at Putnoe Ages 6-8 Email: phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509

7.00pm-9.00pm Meditation St Mark's.Cheryl Green 07729187399

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

Saturday

9.00am Faith Temple Ministries St Mark's (1st week in month) Dawn Kelly 07863762593

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

Sunday

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

10 - 5.30pm Bedford Stamp Fayre at St. Mark's. 1st Sunday Jun/Aug /Oct/Dec. Contact P Harris 01623 621143

11.00 - 12.00 Church and Junior at Putnoe Heights for the under 9's . A crèche is also available.

2- 4.30pm Indoor Bowls at St. Mark's 2nd & 4th Sunday. Ray Seymour 305695 or church office.

Diary Dates



St Mark's Church Council – tba

St Mark's Leadership Team -

Annual Congregational Meetings - 26 April 2015

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team – 2nd June

Putnoe Heights Management Meeting – 28 May

Putnoe Church Council - 11 June

Pastoral Group Meeting– 15 September 2015 4.00pm

Churchyard Committee - TBA

Circuit meeting – 16 June at Putnoe Heights

Deanery meeting -

Woodland Burial Trustees –

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting - 1 June 2015 2pm

St Mark's Car Boot Sales 2015, 4 May, 25 May and 31 August.

Harvest Festival service will be on Sunday 27 September.

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

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Sentence of Scripture Psalm 23 v 1

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall lack nothing.

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 Bible Reading - Acts 4: 5 - 12

The next day the rulers, elders and teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and the other men of the high priest's family. They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?" Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit,

said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a cripple and are asked how he was healed, then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. He is "'the stone you builders rejected, which has become the capstone.' Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."

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

Second Bible Reading - 1 John 3: 16 - 24

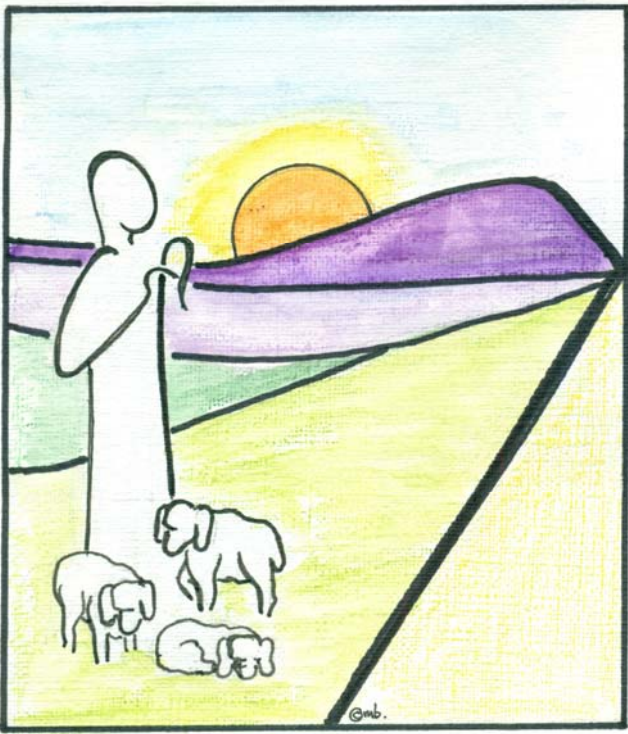
This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth. This then is how we know that we belong to the truth, and how we set our hearts at rest in his presence whenever our hearts condemn us. For God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything. Dear friends, if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God and receive from him anything we ask, because we obey his commands and do what pleases him. And this is his command: to believe in the name of his Son, Jesus Christ, and to love one another as he commanded us. Those who obey his commands live in him, and he in them. And this is how we know that he lives in us: We know it by the Spirit he gave us. (This is the word of the Lord – **Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - John 10: 11 - 18

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand is not the shepherd who owns the sheep. So when he sees the wolf coming, he abandons the sheep and runs away. Then the wolf attacks the flock and scatters it. The man runs away because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. "I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me-- just as the Father knows me and I know the Father--and I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that are not of this sheep pen. I must bring them also. They too will listen to my voice, and there shall be one flock and one shepherd. The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life--only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again. This command I received from my Father." (This is the word of the Lord – **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. Amen



Hymns for Sunday (*Please distribute Morning Worship booklet & Baptism Booklet*)

1. Now is Christ risen from the dead (Lasst uns erfreuen)
2. All shall be well
3. All things bright and beautiful
4. Blessed assurance
5. And did those feet (Jerusalem)

Commentary

Given the readings set for today it's perhaps not surprising that the Psalm of the day is Psalm 23. In the Gospel reading Jesus says twice "I am the good shepherd." The context is the continuation of the discussions Jesus is having with the Pharisees, people who would know Psalm 23 well, after He has healed a man who was born blind. This man, who was blind, first heard the voice of Jesus and through believing in that voice came to believe and that was his sight. The implication is clear: the Pharisees are blinded by what they see and so are impaired of hearing and therefore do not believe. Hearing and believing becomes the central message of Jesus' saying that he is the "Good Shepherd." And, as the good shepherd He will stay faithful, whilst the "hired," or the Pharisees, turn away and have turned away from their vocation of tending and leading their "flock." In identifying Jesus as a "good shepherd" John also sets up the contrast not just between Jesus and the present day Pharisees but between Jesus and the self-serving and corrupt "shepherds" of Israel's past, the wicked kings and leaders whose lack of concern for their people resulted in internal decay and external ruin. The ministry of the shepherd is threefold: to protect the sheep, preserve the flock as a whole, and to lead them. The shepherd does whatever he can to protect the sheep from harm and from being scattered. The response of the sheep to such a shepherd is to hear his voice and to follow where he leads. As Christians we should be responsible and take care of the community in which we live and to be the sheep that faithfully follow the voice of Christ. It is not enough to go through the motions of being a Christian, Christ wants more than lip service, He wants our hearts and our actions too.

One Shepherd, One Sheep Herd

John's gospel illustrates that the role of the true shepherd is not only to be inward looking and care for the flock already in their charge, but to be outward looking and bring in sheep who are not already part of the flock. Sheep who might be very different from ourselves. We have one shepherd, we should be one sheep herd. Jesus' way of winning people was to be attractive to them and to care and provide for them, whatever their background or heritage. To lay aside by choice any self ego, and become a door through which they could be nurtured, find their true selves, reach their full God given potential and enter into fellowship with God and each other. The apostle Peter was called by Jesus to feed and nurture His sheep and so are we. And in Jesus we have a model which He invites us to follow. To be leaders and shepherds, caring, feeding and nurturing for those in our community whatever flock they may come from. Sometimes this can be challenging. In Acts, Peter and John have been arrested for what has been happening, healing a lame man and preaching an incredible message to the astonished crowds. They are very clearly asked what they are up to, how they did the things they did, and ultimately whose side are they on. The Temple people are very concerned about this new embryonic movement but as the healing took place on Temple property, in the Temple itself, they don't want to miss an opportunity to make religious capital out of the situation if that's proves to be possible. All Peter and John have to do is to spot the signals they may think and an amenable solution can be worked out as a compromise and all will be well. Could they perhaps say that they worked and preached in the name and power of God and honour could be satisfied on both sides. But Peter and John, nor God Himself, is in the business of compromise. The world has changed and fudged solutions and weasel words will no longer work or be appropriate in the new world order. Their reply is very clear, unambiguous and unequivocal. God's power had indeed been at work, but not in the way the ruling authorities may have imagined, or been happy to accept. God's power had raised Jesus from the dead. It was in the name and power of Jesus that the healing occurred. And as if to underline the fact that they would not be manipulated Peter goes on to explicitly say that it was this Jesus that they had crucified. There could be no way that any sort of compromise could be reached, they had rejected the person and power of the one in whose name the healing (and the events all around it) had happened. There could be no way back for either side after this exchange. But, emboldened by the Holy Spirit Peter and John are clear and forthright. In the gospel reading the themes of love, cost and purpose are all elements in the description of the Good Shepherd. The same characteristics showed by Peter and John a short while later. When times get tough, in a crisis, in times of danger the sheep trust the shepherd because he has proved himself to be trustworthy. It is in this shepherd that Peter and James trust. They do not know all the answers to the questions they may face, they may not know what the future will hold. But they do know in the good shepherd who has proved Himself to be trustworthy, unlike the Jewish authorities before which they now stand. Words are easy, actions much harder and more costly. For Peter and James to say to the rest of the disciples, who were entirely sympathetic to the cause, that the man was healed in the name and power of Jesus would be one thing, even an

encouragement to the believers. To make the same statement before the ruling authorities, who had perhaps held out an olive branch of compromise and had it firmly pushed back in their faces was another. We too are called to speak out, not just when we are surrounded by friends and fellow believers, but sometimes when the environment is not as friendly. We have to live in the world in a way in which our faith is real and tangible to those around us, not conformed to the world and its ways, but distinct and clear, marked out by our faith and the Christ in which we profess our belief. We are called to live with the shepherd looking after us, together as one flock because it is for this very reason we are created. There is nowhere else to go or anyone else to look to for wholeness. Our salvation is in Christ. To deny this is to deny the reality that the builders of Judaism rejected, in Jesus' time particularly the Chief Priests. No one else would lay down their life for us. In today's world there are many others who would profess to 'have the truth', people who seek to help us improve ourselves, find our true selves, free us from the things that hold us back. The hired hands as Jesus would call them. They have no real interest in ourselves (or our souls) and quickly move on to the next self-help programme, philosophy or social ideal. But it is the power of love and the healing and wholeness offered by Christ alone which enable all of us and the church to speak the truth with boldness about Jesus, just as did Peter and John, and to come to know Him too as the Good Shepherd. Through Him and Him alone to experience the reality of a life renewed by one who lay down His own life so that we could have our back, to the full.

Sam Cappleman

Meditation

A winged lion, swift immediate

The 25th of April is the feast day of St. Mark the Evangelist, so I am posting again my sonnet on St. Mark's Gospel, one of a set of four sonnets on each of the four evangelists. For each of these sonnets I have meditated on the way the traditional association of each of the evangelists with one of the 'four living creatures' round the throne helps us to focus on the particular gifts and emphasis of that Gospel writer. For a good account of this tradition [click here](#). Mark is the lion. There is a power, a dynamic a swiftness of pace in Mark's Gospel, his favourite word is 'immediately!' and that suits the lion. His Gospel starts in the wilderness and that suits it too.

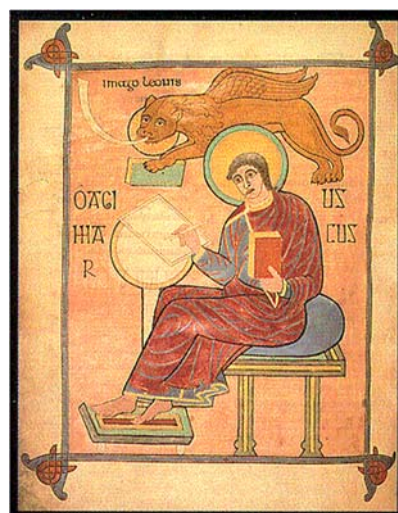
But the great paradox in Mark is that the Gospel writer who shows us Christ at his most decisive, powerful, startling and leonine is also the one who shows us how our conquering lion, our true Aslan, deliberately entered into suffering and passion, the great 'doer' letting things be done unto him. In this sonnet, I am especially indebted to WH Vanstone's brilliant reading of this aspect of Mark in his wonderful book *The Stature of Waiting*.

For all four 'Gospel' sonnets I have also drawn on the visual imagery of the Lindesfarne Gospels, as in the one illustrated above. Margot Krebs Neale has given me the beautiful image below taken in Galilee in Beth Shean,

This sonnet is drawn from my collection *Sounding the Seasons*, published by Canterbury Press here in England. The book is now back in stock on both Amazon UK and USA and physical copies are also available in Canada via Steve Bell. The book is now also out on Kindle. Please feel free to make use of these sonnets in church services and to copy and share them. If you can mention the book from which they are taken that would be great.

A Sonnet for St Mark's Day

A winged lion, swift, immediate
Mark is the gospel of the sudden shift
From first to last, from grand to intimate,
From strength to weakness, and from debt to gift,
From a wide deserts haunted emptiness
To a close city's fervid atmosphere,
From a voice crying in the wilderness
To angels in an empty sepulcher.
And Christ makes the most sudden shift of all;
From swift action as a strong Messiah
Casting the very demons back to hell
To slow pain, and death as a pariah.
We see our Saviour's life and death unmade
And flee his tomb dumbfounded and afraid.



BELIEF'S Spring course entitled "Reading the Hebrew Scriptures (Old Testament) Today" will run on Wednesday Evenings at St Andrews Church Kimbolton Road Bedford from 8pm to 9.30pm as follows

Week 1 13th May 2015: A General Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures/Old Testament: David Dean and Peter West 9of BELIEF

Week 2 20th May 2015: A Jewish Perspective on the Hebrew Scriptures: Aga Cahn, of the Woolf Institute, Cambridge

Week 3 27th May 2015: The Value and Importance of the Hebrew Scriptures to Christians today: Janet Tollington, of Westminster College, Cambridge

Week 4 3rd June 2015: The Psalms: Brother John, of Turvey Abbey

Week 5 10th June 2015: The Old Testament: Brother William, of Turvey Abbey

This course will cost £4 per session (including refreshments) payable at each session

We do not want anyone to be deterred from attending any of BELIEF events for financial reasons. If you find the fees prohibitive, please contact us. Stephanie Field BELIEF Coordinator Tel 01234 330314 belief@standrewsbedford.org

Details of Hustings organised by Hope, Bedford Sunday 3 of May, 8pm at Bedford Pentecostal Church, The Hustings will be run under the leadership of the Bishop of Bedford, Bishop Richard. The plan would be for folk to gather at or after 7:30pm, to have tea or coffee, then start promptly at 8pm. Bishop Richard would have the questions before hand, and would allocate a fair amount of time to each candidate. Please send your questions

simon.mushonga@threeriversbedford.uk glayne.worgan@methodist.org.uk by Friday 1 May.

Putnoe Heights "Missions knitting and crochet group". Knit-a-square for KasCare, providing comfort for orphans and vulnerable children in South Africa. <http://www.knit-a-square.com> a mission project for everyone. We could meet once a month; knit at home; donate wool or postage to send the items we have made. KasCare likes knitted and crochet 8 inch squares sent to them to make blankets to keep children warm. For more details speak to Carolyn Morris or visit their website for patterns and instructions.

Mother Teresa Support Group meet at St Mark's on 1st and 3rd Tuesday at 2.30pm to knit and natter. (Wool and needles provided.) Please call Maureen Watling. New people always welcome.

Action for Children An invitation to all to join box holders for tea and cake at Ladyslaude, Bramley Way, Woodlands on May 13 at 2—4 p.m. Either give Margaret Standley your box beforehand or bring it on the day. We shall be opening the boxes, and help with counting the money will be welcome. Last year box holders raised £429.95. Thank you to all who help this worthy cause.

Open Day at St. Mark's Church Pre-school and All day Childcare. Saturday 9 May 2pm - 4pm. Activities for the children, face painting. Coffee and cakes. Families welcome. Ofsted 2015 "Good" We now welcome 2 year olds.

Whist Drive Thank you to Judith Stanton and her group for the very generous donation of £101 to St Mark's Church.

Putnoe Men's Group I have arranged a meal at the Pheasant Public House on Wednesday the 13 May at 7:30pm. Please see Barry Southam for booking forms & Menu details.

Brownies. Holly is a Brownie Leader at St Andrews Church, she has been selected to represent the Anglia region on a service project to Romania. Our Putnoe Brownies are trying to help her with her fundraising (she needs to raise \$2,500) by making friendship bracelet kits for her to sell. Each kit needs 7 strands of wool 50cm long. We are looking for as much pretty coloured wool as we can so that our Putnoe Brownies can make the kits. Thank you. Carolyn Morris.

Annual Congregation Meeting

To take place after Sunday worship 28 April
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)

Giving Thanks

Expressions of thanks to any leaving office

Elections to Office

1. Election of Church Leadership Team
 2. Election of Deanery Synod representatives
- Election of Church Council representatives

Presentations

Presentation of Terrier and Inventory
Presentation of church policy documents
Presentation of August church accounts
Presentation of membership lists (Electoral roll etc.)
Presentation of review usually by Church Leadership Team and presented in written document form

Closing Prayers

Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead

God of glory, by the raising of your Son you have broken the chains of death and hell: fill your Church with faith and hope; for a new day has dawned and the way to life stands open in our Saviour Jesus Christ. **Amen**

Father God, we are thankful for Jesus. We know Him and He knows us. Thank you for all those who have been our shepherds. We ask that you would help us to be your good shepherds. **Amen**.

Living God, you have given us a living hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead: grant that we, being risen with Him, may fix our hearts on heavenly things and share eternal life. **Amen**

The God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, make you perfect in every good work to do His will; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

Christian Aid Week: 10 – 16 May. Both the St. Mark's and Putnoe Heights Leadership teams have made decisions not to have a house to house collection in the areas of Brickhill and Putnoe. In recent years it has become increasingly difficult to recruit volunteer collectors from our congregations and the general public are much more wary about giving money to unfamiliar charity collectors. We will put out the collection envelopes in the churches on the 3 Sundays of 3, 10 and 17 May for those who wish to use them. You may wish to take extra envelopes for friends or relatives to raise money that way. Your Christian Aid contributions can be placed in the offertory at the Sunday services or be handed in to either St Mark's or Putnoe Heights offices during the week. Please Gift Aid your gift if you are entitled to do so, as this adds 25% to the value of the donation. In addition, there is to be a sponsored abseil at Elstow Abbey on Saturday 2 May, which is being organised by the Christian Aid regional office at Oxford. If you'd like to have a go, please see the displayed poster and contact 01865 246818 for details. It's not too late! Thank you.

Every year, Christian Aid organise 'Count Your Blessings' during the whole of Lent, where the challenge is for us to consider people in other parts of the world by, for example, giving small daily donations, praying for them, petitioning our MP, or some other positive action. Carolyn and I know that quite a number of people from our two congregations took away the brochures at the

beginning of Lent and have since sent their donations to Christian Aid head office. Thank you very much for faithfully counting your blessings for six weeks. As soon as we have a total amount collected sent to us, we'll publish it in Partnership News. Jean Bank, St. Mark's & Carolyn Morris, Putnoe Heights



St Albans Woodland Burial Ground Open Day will be on Saturday 16th May from 2-5pm. Do come along and join us for tea and cake and a chat. Offers of cake would be gratefully received. Many thanks. Linda.



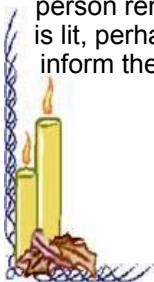
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www.easyfundraising.com. This works exactly the same when you shop with John Lewis, M&S and a whole host of other shops. This has an added benefit that you will also get some special offers - you can't lose! Please click the link on the church website go online and sign up now

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



Robin Roy Fox

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



Forthcoming Funerals

There are no funerals this week.