



Partnership News

3 March 2013

Third Sunday in Lent

Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church



8.30am Holy Communion every Sunday

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

Today 3 March

9.30 St Marks – Family Worship

Preacher – The Reverend Charles Royden
Leadership - Mrs Morag Stewart
Intercessions – Ministers

11.00 am Putnoe - Family Worship

Preacher – The Reverend Charles Royden
Leadership – Mrs Linda Hoar
Intercessions - YPG

Sunday 10 March — Mothering Sunday

9.30 St Marks – Morning Worship

Preacher – Mr Richard Ledger
Leadership – Mrs Elizabeth Bean
Intercessions – Mrs Delia Shephard

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher – Mr Richard Ledger
Leadership – Mrs Jean Kirk
Intercessions – YPG

Readings 1 Exodus 2:1-10. 2. Colossians 3: 12-17
3 John 19: 25b-27

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

Thank You

The flowers at St Mark's this week have been given
by Margaret and Geoff Appleton in loving memory of
their parents Millie and Richard Meads and Mary
and James Appleton.

Welcome

Welcome to our worship today. A special welcome
to the family and friends of Tatyana and James
Stockwell who have been brought for baptism

Prayer for Sunday

Preserve us with your grace, O God, our whole
journey through; that we may live by faith, die in
your favour, rest in your peace, rise in your power
and reign in your glory, in the joy of Christ and in
the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, with whom you live
and reign for ever and ever. Amen.

Nicholas Ferrar (1592-1637)

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

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

Deacon Jane Mills

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

The Reverend Charles Royden

The Vicarage, Calder Rise. MK41 7UY
309175 Mobile 07973 113861 vicar@thisischurch.com

Partnership News is sent out by email every Saturday
in a colour edition. If you would like to receive a copy
please send an email entitled 'Partnership News' to
vicar@thisischurch.com. Please note that any items submitted
for inclusion in Partnership News will automatically be posted on
our website and may appear in other local media sources.

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

Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator

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

Churchyards Administrator

Mrs Avril Williams 01234 342613

Putnoe Heights Church Centre

Open Monday to Thursday 9am - 5pm, Friday 9am - 1pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Mr Geoff Gypps 365630 mob 07947 902846
Leadership Team Mrs. Jean Kirk 317699
Treasurer Mr John Hitt 404186 treasurerph@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Mr Lawrence Wyatt 350188
Youth Team Leader Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com

St. Mark's Church Centre

Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5.00pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 342613 office@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613
Leadership Team - Morag Stewart 360103
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892
treasurer@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Jim Williams 360605

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

9.15 –3.45 pm Mon and Wed/ 9.15-12.15pm Tues/ Thurs/Fri. Hazeldene Heights Pre-school. See website for more details www.ThisChurch.com
Head teacher Mrs Laura Leggett 326685
8.30-5.30pm Pre-school Mon-Fri St Mark's
9.-3.45pm Top Marks Mon-Fri St Mark's
Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin **312634**
(See website for more details)
.9.45am - Body Control Pilates –Putnoe Heights
Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430
10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group. St Mark's Mrs Berry 211955
10.30am U3A Play reading St Mark's (see contact details below)
2.00pm U3A Calligraphy at St Mark's 2nd week (see contact details below)
2.00pm U3A Relaxation & Meditation at St Mark's 1st & 3rd week starting 1st October (see contact details below)
12.15pm Story box Putnoe Heights We welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12.15 and 1.15 for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Contact Carolyn Morris youth@thischurch.com 365630
1.30-2.45pm Chat & Make For babies and toddlers 0-5. Crafts, toys,songs,story and refreshments £1. More details email– chatandplay@hotmail.co.uk .
2pm U3A Music Appreciation (see contact details below)
4.15pm Kumon Maths Putnoe Heights. Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698
6.00pm Brownies St Mark's. Mrs C Mathew 826190
6.15 pm Brownies Putnoe. Sharon Tanner 01767699399 or 07720713738.
6.15 Pilates at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859
6.15pm-8.15pm Fit for Life Yoga - Putnoe Heights Contact Jane Butcher 07891879571
6.30pm Boot Camp Putnoe Heights – Laura Amor 341152 / 07976259081
7.00pm Sugarcraft Guild St Mark's 1st week Pat Nicholson 353518
7.00pm Cancer Care Society. St Mark's. 1st Week. Mr J Dewhurst 01908 377020
7.15pm Guides. St Mark's. Mrs Gill Lake 218091
7.30pm Whist Drive. St Mark's 3rd & 5th week . Next meeting– 18 March Judith Stanton. 823313
7.30pm House group 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck 267567
7.45pm Opus Choir at St Mark's Mrs Sutherland 269100
8pm 'Get Fit, Stay Fit' at Putnoe Diane Field 404976

Tuesday

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

2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 St Mark's (3rd Wk) (see contact details below)
2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 St Mark's (2nd Wk) (see contact details)
2.00pm Library Walk W.I. Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Morag Tomkins 356895
2pm U3A Photography Group 3 St. Mark's (1st Wk) (contact details below).
2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group. St Mark's Fortnightly . Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225
2.15pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. St Mark's Fortnightly. Mary Stubbs 406784.
4.00pm-6.15pm Stars School of Dance. Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468
6.15pm Pilates St Mark's Church Jane Butcher 0789187957
7pm—8.30pm Daisy Birthing Putnoe Heights Susie 07980447390
6.00-7.00pm Zumba at St Mark's. Contact Denise Worker 07900 232648
6.30pm MT Karate (all ages) Karen King 07941264885
7pm Keep Fit. St. Mark's Jan Gregory 328455
7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club (Meets fortnightly). Next meeting '5 March Members evening. Details Janet King 313946
8.15pm - 10.15pm Bedford Advanced Dancers Workshop St. Mark's 3rd Tuesday in month. Next meeting 26 February Shirley Sadler 01767 651767

Wednesday

9am -1pm Machine Knitting group at Putnoe Heights, fortnightly. Contact Marion Sutton 217647
9.30am Body Control Pilates. Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430.
9.30am Discovery & Do (Childminders) St. Mark's. Clare Simmons 328380 or 07788824666
10am-2pm Open House at St Mark's for those with learning disabilities., their friends, family , carers and supporters 342613.
10am U3A Gardening Group 3 St Marks. (contact below)
10.00am Holy Communion. St. Mark's Chapel. A half hour service followed by coffee. All welcome.
10am U3A Card Making, St Marks (see contact details below)
10am U3A Diet and Nutrition- Putnoe (contact below)
11.15am U3A Keep Fit
12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe fortnightly. Next meeting 13 March at Putnoe Heights Office 365630
1.00-3pm Police Surgery at Putnoe Heights (Fortnightly)
1.15pm Bridge Club for the Retired. St. Mark's. Mr Barnes 261811
2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft St Marks.(see contact details below)
2.00pm Fifty Plus Keep Fit Mrs Webster 856966
2pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan
2.15pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit. Putnoe Heights Mrs Webster 856966
3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church. St Mark's (3rd Wk). for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 20th February Wendy Waters /401834
4.15pm Kumon Maths. Putnoe Heights Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698
6.00 pm Brownies. St Mark's. Mrs C Warden 219731
6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation Putnoe Heights Racheall

Monton 01234 297138 or 07910835994.

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

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

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

7.00pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe monthly Mrs O Holt 266004

7.00pm Line Dancing Putnoe Mike Del-Boyer 348378

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

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club at St Mark's 1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next meeting will be 6 March. Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Rosemary 405594 or Graham 406359 for more details.

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

Thursday

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

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

9.45am Yoga Putnoe Heights Denise Green 244970

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

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

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

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

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

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

2pm U3A Current Affairs - Putnoe Heights

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

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

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

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins .

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Nina Ovenden 825059

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

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale 406094

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

8 -10pm Bedford Folk dancers (formerly Barn dancers) Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights Different guest callers each week. All welcome, cost £2 Including refreshments. More details Ron 825574 or Shirley 01767 651767

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

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

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

Friday

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

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

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

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

2pm U3A Gardening - Putnoe Heights

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

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

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

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

Saturday

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

Young Embroiderers bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher 357198

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

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

Sunday

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

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

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

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

Messy Church Dates

Weds 20 March; Weds17 April; Weds 17 May; Weds 19 June; Weds 18 Sept; Weds 16 Oct; Weds 20 Nov, Weds



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

Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council – 10 April, 11 June

St Mark's Leadership Team -

Annual Congregational Meetings 28 April 2013

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 3 June

Putnoe Heights Management Meeting 24 January

Putnoe Church Council - 19 February, 10 June, 24 Oct

Pastoral Group Meeting -

Churchyard Committee -

Brickhill Parish Council Meetings -

Commemoration Service Sunday 3 November 6.30pm

Circuit meeting -

Deanery Meeting - 28 February

Woodland Burial Trustees— AGM —Sunday 9 June

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting –

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

Third Sunday in Lent

Introductory Sentence - Psalm 51:17

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

Collect Prayer

Eternal God, give us insight to discern your will for us, to give up what harms us and to seek the perfection we are promised in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Common Worship Shorter Collect

First Reading — Isaiah Chapter 55:1-9

"Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labour on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live. I will make an everlasting covenant with you, my faithful love promised to David. See, I have made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander of the peoples. Surely you will summon nations you know not, and nations that do not know you will hasten to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has endowed you with splendour." Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways," declares the LORD. "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.

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

Second Reading - 1 Corinthians Chapter 10:1-13

For I do not want you to be ignorant of the fact, brothers, that our forefathers were all under the cloud and that they all passed through the sea. They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. They all ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert. Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written: "The people sat down to eat and drink and got up to indulge in pagan revelry." We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did--and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died. We should not test the Lord, as some of them did--and were killed by snakes. And do not grumble, as some of them did--and were killed by the destroying angel. These things happened to them as examples and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfilment of the ages has come. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

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

Gospel Reading - Luke Chapter 13:1-9

Now there were some present at that time who told Jesus about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. Jesus answered, "Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered this way? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them--do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish." Then he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree, planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit on it, but did not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' "'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down.'" (This is the Word of the Lord-**Thanks be to God**)

Post Communion Prayer

Lord God, you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven; by it you nourish our faith, increase our hope, and strengthen our love: teach us always to hunger for him who is the true and living bread, and enable us to live by every word that proceeds from out of your mouth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



Hymns (Please distribute Family Worship and hymn sheets)

1. Christ our Redeemer knew temptation's hour *Tune: Ellers*
2. As the deer pants for the water
3. The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want
4. Take up thy cross, the Saviour said *Tune: Breslau*
5. Be thou our guardian and our guide

Commentary

In the reading from Matthew today there are two clear parts. In the first part Jesus is told about Galilean worshippers who had been killed by Pilate. The blood thirsty scene is described by the words that their blood had been mixed with the blood of their sacrifices. It is a gruesome story and one which would have caused the people to think that in some way God was judging these poor folks and punishing them in this cruel manner of death. That was the way that people thought, and some people still do ! In part of the Old Testament the message is given that if you behave yourself, and if Israel behaves itself, then all will be well. Good things happen if you are good, and bad things happen if you are naughty. If only it was so simple.

Thankfully Jesus is forthright and explicit in saying that this was not the case, they were no worse than anybody else. Jesus reminds the people of another incident in which 18 people had been killed when a tower in Siloam fell on them. This is the kind of incident which we still read about all the time. A corrupt construction company builds a tower block and uses faulty concrete and the whole building falls down and kills people. The idea that the innocent folks who were in the building were judged by God in absurd, if anybody should be judged it would be the builder !

These are cases of being in the wrong place at the wrong time and Jesus is eager to make that point. Events like this should remind us of the uncertainty and frailty of human life, they should not cause us to jump to judgement on the poor people who suffer. Jesus uses the episode to remind his hearers that life is precarious and as such we must all be ready for a time when life comes to an end and we are faced with judgement. Instead of being self righteous when we witness the unfortunate death of others, we should learn from such things the importance of putting our own house in order, whilst there is still time.

Last week we heard the story of Jesus and his lament over Jerusalem. In the second part of our reading this week, we read another story in which Jesus shows his remorse over Jerusalem. Jesus uses the illustration of a fig tree. Figs and fig trees are used several times in connection with Israel (Hos 9:10, Jer 24:1-10, Mic 7:1) Fig trees and vines were mentioned together (Ps 105:33, Jer 8:13, Joel 1:7). They were associated with peace and prosperity and their absence was a curse and a punishment (2 Kings 18:31, Num 20:5, Deut 8:8). The symbol of sitting under your own vine and fig tree was a symbol of the messianic age. However unproductive plants were frequent symbols of unfaithfulness (Is 5:1-7, Jer 8:13, Hos 9:16) and destruction of figs and vines is a metaphor for judgement (Jer 29:17, Ez 17:9, Amos 4:9).

The fig tree in the parable today is planted in the vineyard and it should be a cause of blessing and joy. However it has been barren for years and the owner tells the gardener to cut it down. The gardener appeals for clemency, a stay of execution for a year during which time it will be given special treatment to make it fertile. There is a reminder here of the words of John the Baptist, who had told that the axe of judgement was ready to fall. However here Jesus speaks of leniency, there will be a suspension of the sentence. It is like Abraham interceding for Sodom, mercy being proclaimed on the edge of judgement.

It is difficult not to see the words of Jesus as a proclamation that Israel was living on borrowed time. Israel should have been a fruitful fig tree, a blessing to all, instead it was found barren. There was to be a judgement, however there would be a delay to ensure that every effort had been made to make her fertile again. Is God meant to be the owner and Jesus the gardener? Or is Jesus the owner, warning Jerusalem of her fate as he approaches? We will never know and we can only guess. The reality was that Jerusalem discovered judgement and destruction very soon afterwards.

However, the words of Jesus are not just a warning to Israel and Jerusalem, they are a warning to us all that we should live productive lives. Our actions are important and have consequences. If we are barren in our good works, devoid of kindness and mercy, self righteous and self absorbed, then we will stand condemned. The chilling nature of the parable is reinforced by the context of those words of Jesus at the start of our reading, 'unless you repent, you too will all perish'. This is the season of Lent, the season for repentance, now is the perfect time to seek God's strength to live fruitful lives.

One of the really nice touches in the passage comes from the words of the gardener. When asked to chop the tree down the gardener says 'Lord, let it alone"--kyrie aphe auten. The Greek word Aphas also means "forgive." It is a word Jesus will subsequently use from the cross--"Father, forgive them (aphes autois, 23:34).

We could change the translation, the gardener would say, "Lord, forgive the fig tree'. This kind of thing is to be expected in a story told by Jesus and there's a final point, there is no mention anywhere in the Old Testament of anybody of putting manure on trees, that kind of mercy is pure Jesus. *Charles Royden*



Meditation From Deacon Jane

Hello everyone! Most of you are aware that I am on sabbatical at the moment. As a minister in the Methodist church I am entitled to a three month sabbatical in my tenth year of ministry, and then every seven years after that. My first appointment was in Colchester, where I was for six years doing ecumenical outreach to new housing developments and, believe it or not, I have been in Bedford for over three years now!

A sabbatical is intended as a realistic break from the 'routine' of circuit ministry to enable us to spend time nourishing our own faith and spirituality, while doing something that meets our own interests and meets some need within the church to explore something we feel would benefit our own ministry, which we do not usually have time to do while in the 'full flow' of ministerial life across several churches.

Mine started on January 28th, and Maurice and I took two weeks off together, which was a rare treat! Although we did not go away we took the opportunity to spend quality time with each other and our families, while also doing a few jobs at home that had been 'pending' for some time!

In the weeks since then I have been researching the history of the deacons in the Caribbean, from the time the first Wesley deaconesses were sent to start ministry among Women there in the early 1900's, through the Methodist Churches independence from British Methodism in the 1960's to the 'home grown' deacon ministry that exists there today.

It has been fascinating to see how the two have developed in different directions, with the Deacons there now apparently being equal to other ministers, even more so than here, as they are also given the title Reverend now, so all that distinguishes them is the way they carry out their ministry in the places they are sent. Like here, a Deacons' ministry tends to be more community based than church centred and, even where deacons are serving in church settings, they seem to be in those places who are striving to meet local needs.

Next week I fly to Jamaica, which has been at the heart of the Deacons work in the Caribbean since the start, to visit for myself some of the places and projects I have read about. I am looking forward to meeting some of the Deacons there to find out how the reality of ministry there actually meets the ideals stated by the church.

I will spend my first couple of weeks in Kingston, where I hope to visit the training college, two projects, some churches and the sites of the original Deaconess house, which grew to be a community training facility. I hope to be able to explore the heritage remaining from the works undertaken by those first deaconesses, and to seek any ideas for work in the UK.

The Methodist Diaconal order in Britain has also asked me to explore ways of re-invigorating links between the Order and Deacons serving in Caribbean Methodism today. These links used to be strong, but as the two ministries have developed, and those deaconesses who worked together in the last century are passing, the link has all but disappeared.

For the rest of the time I'm there I will travel around the island, visiting some of the other sites, meeting a couple of deacons and also spending time with my Mother in Law, Gloria, who lives in the North, near Ocho Rios. I am also looking forward to experiencing Easter in another culture, I'm sure there will be things to learn, and share with you in the future. I return to the UK in early April and Maurice, who will not be joining me in Jamaica, is planning us holiday for two weeks before I start back on April 29th.

We both thank you for all your concern and support over recent months, if you are interested you can follow Maurice's latest health updates at <http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/mauricemills>.

Wishing you all a Happy Easter! Yours in Faith, *Jane*

Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

Draw us, O Christ, by grace irresistible, to the centre of all faith and to the heart of all sacrifice; to the deepest of all wells and to a work that is not our own; even your holy Cross, to which we cling and by which we are held; for your own name's sake. Amen. *Dora Greenwell (1821-1882)*

O most gracious Jesus, our Lord and our God, who bore our sins in your own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sin, might live unto righteousness: have mercy upon us we pray, and grant that we may live a Godly and peaceful life in this present world, and through your grace, in the world to come. Amen

Father God, we ask that you would give the nations of the world a thirst for righteousness and justice, that they would not waste the riches you have given to the earth, and that they would strive for peace and harmony with all people. Amen

Storybox at Putnoe Heights Church will be 10 years old this May. If you would like to celebrate this milestone on Saturday 11 May 2013 please can you let me know. Carolyn email Youth@thisischurch.com

Telecare - It is of enormous value for us to be able to keep in touch with Church members by Telecare. If you are elderly, especially if you live alone, please register for Telecare. We will just ensure that somebody calls you every fortnight to make sure that all is ok. Please advise the ministers.

Hilda Hicks cordially invites everyone from Putnoe Heights and St Marks churches to join her in the celebration of her 90th birthday party on Saturday 9 March from 4-7pm at Putnoe Heights church. RSVP by Thursday 28th February please, to daughter Linda at lindatongue@yahoo.co.uk, telephone 01480 350345 or reply direct to Hilda on 01234 354289.

St. Mark's Craft Stall Easter novelties will be on sale today at £1 each, after the morning service and then from the office.

Electric Sewing Machine available for a donation to St. Mark's. Please contact the office. 342613

Children's Easter Arrangements 2013

At Putnoe Heights Church
Friday 29 March Children's & Youth Good Friday Special Putnoe Heights Church. 12.15pm to 1.30pm
£1.00 Donation per child Easter Story, Crafts & Light Refreshments

St Mark's Church Council This will now take place on Wednesday 10 April at 7.30pm in the Chapel.

Footprints Walking Group Next walk Sunday March 3. Park near Stevington Church (Church Rd.) to start walk from church at 2pm.(note early start)
Leaders Sue and Wendy.

Putnoe Heights Beavers/Cubs/Scouts news:

Beavers for 6yrs+ have spaces and no waiting list. Contact Colin Perkins 07563635952.

The Scout group are looking for a new leader[s] contact Tom Oldershaw 07974566509

The Cubs are interested in the history of the Scouting movement within Putnoe over the years.

Count Your Blessings 2013 –Christian Aid Lent Calendars. Many people think of Lent in the fairly negative way of giving up things. Christian Aid gives us the opportunity to look at Lent from a positive point of view by giving to those who are less fortunate. The brochures will be available at both churches today. At the end of the Lent period any contributions you would like to make should be sent directly to the address shown on the printed form in the brochure.

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

A Circuit Quiet Day will be held on 20 March from 10.30 to 3.30 at Priory Methodist Church. Cost £3. Everyone welcome. Please see noticeboard in foyer for more details.

On behalf of Kisiizi Partners I am writing to thank Putnoe Heights Church for your kind and generous donation given in support of Kisiizi Hospital from your annual mission appeal. We very much appreciate your support and know that Ian Spillman will ensure the money is put to very good use. Many thanks. God Bless. Helen Smith Chair, Kisiizi Partners.

Kempston Musical Society present a Passiontide Meditation based on the gospel of St Mark, with music, at Priory Methodist Church on Saturday 16 March at 7.30pm. Admission £4.00.

Open House Coffee Morning to raise funds for Comic Relief, Wednesday 13 March at St Mark's 10.30 - 11.30am. We would welcome your support. Cheryl

Partnership Passover Remembrance Meal with Holy Communion. Maundy Thursday 28th March 7.30pm at Putnoe Heights. A worship service which combines the festival of Passover with a two course meal and Holy Communion. A collection will be taken to cover catering costs. Please add your name to the list (in welcome area at either church) if you would like to come.

The family of Jennie Cooper have left a few items of Jennie's handiwork with us. They include lace work needlework and wood carving, also prayer chair and coffee table/fire-screen that Jennie made.

The smaller items will be displayed after church on Sunday 3rd March 2013 a small donation can be given to Putnoe Heights Church for items taken. We would like to hold a silent auction [i.e. bids in sealed envelope] for the two larger items. For further details speak to *Jenny Snelson*

Congratulations. We congratulate Charlie on his appointment as an Honorary Canon of the Cathedral and Abbey Church of St. Alban. This is a great honour, but one which is richly deserved. Through his work in the partnership, the diocese and the wider community Charlie has given willingly of his time and energy and will continue to do so. In his letter the Bishop of St. Albans says:

"Great importance is put on the role of Honorary Canon, especially as a way of linking the Abbey and the Diocese". Right Revd Dr Alan Smith.

So this is an extension of the work which Charlie already does and we offer our best wishes to him Charlie's Installation will take place at Cathedral Evensong on Saturday 27th April at 4.00 pm

Note: Charlie will not be leaving the Partnership this is in addition to his normal ministry

Thank You to everybody who completed a form last week, especially for the email addresses which will be so valuable for enabling us to keep in touch and send out Partnership News—great if you ever miss a week in church ! Please do fill in a form this week.

Please complete a Church Membership Form

Our Annual General Church Meeting takes place on 28 April after the church service. It is really helpful and sometimes quite important for us to have accurate membership information for this meeting. Our churches pay a financial contribution to the Church of England or the Methodist Church for every member over 16 years of age. It is therefore important to have an accurate record of membership to enable us to pay our church share to the Church of England and the Methodist Church. It is also helpful to have up to date details if we need to make contact with you, perhaps when a pastoral situation arises.

If you consider yourself to be a member of this church, please would you kindly complete this form and return it to the church office, a minister or a member of the Leadership Team. You can also fax or Email your details. Please be assured we do not release your details to any other organisations.

It is becoming increasingly helpful to have a record of email addresses so please would you complete this. It is helpful and cost effective to communicate in this way and we will can send you copy of Partnership News each week which is helpful if you are unable to come to church for any reason. We will not share your details with anybody else.

Name	<i>Please tell us the name by which you would like to be known, i.e. Fred, Betty etc.)</i>
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Postcode	
Denomination	<i>Please simply say which denomination if any you have an attachment to, this might be the church in which you were baptised or grew up.)</i> C of E, Methodist, Other (please state)
Which Church you attend	<i>(Cross out which does not apply)</i> St Mark's, Putnoe Heights

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.

Reginald Herbert Victor Wesley

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



Forthcoming Funerals

Please remember these families and friends in your prayers.



The funeral of Mr Ernest Bevan will take place at St Mark's Church at 3.30pm on Monday 11 March followed by burial at St Albans Woodland Burial Ground