



Methodist
Church

Partnership News

3rd May 2009

4th Sunday of Easter



Church of
England

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 – Family Worship

Preacher - Mr Chris Izzard
Leadership - Mrs Avril Williams
Intercessions - Mr John Stubbs

11.00am Putnoe Heights – Family Worship

Preacher - Mr Chris Izzard
Leadership - Mrs Linda Hoar
Intercessions - Ministers

Sunday 10 May

9.30am St Mark's - Morning Worship

Preacher– Revd Charles Royden
Leadership - Mrs Laura Farthing
Intercessions – Mr Chris Izzard

11.00am Putnoe Heights – Morning Worship

Preacher – Revd Charles Royden
Leadership – Mrs Jean Kirk
Intercessions - Mrs Sylvia Cohen

Readings 1 Acts 8:26-40 2. 1 John 4: 7-21
3. John 15: 1-8

Thank You

We are always grateful for any donations for flowers perhaps to celebrate a special occasion such as an anniversary or in memory of a loved one. Please contact Miss Marion Prior 303254 (St Mark's) or Jennie Cooper 404950(Putnoe Heights) or add your name to the rota in the foyers.

Prayers for Sunday

Heavenly Father,
giver of life and health:
comfort and restore those who are sick,
that they may be strengthened in their weakness
and have confidence in your unfailing love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

For those infected by swine flu
May our Lord Jesus Christ,
who healed the sick and brought comfort
to those in need,
by his risen presence be with all who have
contracted this virus,
take from them all that harms and hinders them,
and fill them with his healing and his peace.
Amen.

Contact Details

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR
266952 Fax- 402624 nsm@thisischurch.com
(Sam also works full time as a General Manager for Hewlett Packard)

The Reverend 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.

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
Gift Aid Administrator - Mr John Hitt 404186
Youth & children's worker - Mrs Spavins 302349
youth@thisischurch.com

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
Gift Aid Administrator Jim Williams 360605

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

- 9.30-12.00pm Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school**
Headteacher 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 Mr Kellie ☎ 721063
- 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
- 1.30pm U3A History Group** St Mark's ☎ David Fowler 824474
- 2pm U3A Drama** St Mark's 1st & 2nd week. Mr Ovenden ☎ 825059
- 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 18 May 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

- 9.30 12.30 Jo Jingles.** St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Renu Elston ☎01908 587299
- 9.30am Candlewicking** (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Judi Staughton ☎341821
- 9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World** St. Mark's. Helen Folbigg ☎351223
- 10am -Bedford Arts Society** starting at St Mark's Mrs Brown☎771676
- 10am Autism Beds Adult Support Group.** St Mark's. Sally Cripsley ☎350704
- 11.15am U3A Keep Fit** 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 May 5 Minister. Revd Jacqueline Owen. 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 Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Bible study & prayers. Revd. Tarr ☎360188 or 07866775515
- 7.30pm Chartered Management Institute** St Marks 3rd week. Mrs Dimmock ☎01525 862374
- 7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club** - Meets fortnightly. Meeting 5 May Canine Partners. Sheila Phillips. Details from Audrey Wilkins☎365068 or Margaret Gentle ☎309043

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
- 12.30pm Luncheon Club.** Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next - 6 May 2009 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
- 2pm 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
- 6-8pm Karate.** St Mark's Karen ☎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

7.00pm U3A Sky at Night 2nd Week. Mr Farish ☎ 824984

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

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club St Mark's, 1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next Meeting 6 May Everyone welcome. Ring Graham ☎ 406359 or 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. (No meeting on 9th April)

9.45am Yoga Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎ 244970

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

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 Emma Strangwick ☎ 211070

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. Mary Rich ☎ 272470 Next meeting 24 September

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 Group. St Mark's 2nd & 4th 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. Nadeen Salmon ☎ 301550

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. Pat Foulks ☎ 346505

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 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

6.30pm Line Dancing. St Mark's Christine Rushton ☎ 782360

7pm Bedford Art Society monthly Putnoe Heights. Next meeting 1st May Mary Rich ☎ 272470

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

Saturday

9.45am Bedford Stamp Auction at Putnoe Heights Next Auction 30th May. Contact Stuart or Anne 01327 876438

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

Young Embroiders bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher Tel 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

4pm B.A.M.A.A. at St Mark's. Chinese soft martial arts. Mr Chris Butcher ☎ 07886894922

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, 9 Nov

St Mark's Leadership Team – 11 May

2009

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team – 8 June at Linda's, 12 Oct, 8 Feb 2010

Putnoe Heights Management Meeting 20 July

St Mark's Church Forum Meeting - 12 May, 15 July, 8 Sept, 11 Nov, 12 Jan 2010

Putnoe Church Council - 15 Jun, 5 Oct

Pastoral Group Meeting - 5th May 4.30pm

Annual Congregational Meetings

Churchyard Committee -

Putnoe Heights Mission Group

Partnership Council -

Brickhill Parish Council Meetings -

Deanery Meeting 18 Jun, 17 Sep, 19 Nov,

Circuit/Deanery Meeting

Woodland Burial Trustees –AGM 16th May

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth –11 May at 1.15pm

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

Easter 4

Opening Verse Psalm 23 v 1

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not 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. Amen

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." Reader: This is the word of the Lord – **Thanks be to God**)



Second 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."

(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. Amen

Commentary

There are many picture images which we have for Jesus, from the baby Jesus with Mary his mother, to images of Christ the King seated in glory. One of the earliest images is that of Jesus as a shepherd and early drawings of Jesus show him carrying a lamb on his shoulders. These can be seen on the walls of the catacombs and on ancient gravestones. In these images we see Jesus holding a sheep over his shoulders, holding the legs of the sheep in his right hands. This image appeals to us because it shows the tenderness of Jesus, his care for the sheep and his compassion. It is reassuring because we see in ourselves that there are times when we need to be supported in our lives. This picture gives us a glimpse of what the heart of God is like, a saviour who recognises when we are in need of care. When problems or some personal disasters overtake us, this image of Jesus the Good Shepherd reassures us that we are not abandoned, that Jesus is supporting and holding us up. Jesus reassures us that as a Good Shepherd he will never desert us or consider us as expendable. Each one of us is entrusted to his care and he will lay down his life for us.

However this picture of Jesus as the Good Shepherd is not the whole story. Jesus was quite specific that his followers should follow his example of service themselves, so that his care and compassion could be expressed through them. Christians are loved by Christ, but that love is to be found in tangible expression through mutual care of his sheep for each other. We are all called to behave like Christ, and copy his behaviour. Jesus tried to help his disciples understand that they were not to be ambitious for themselves, but considerate of one another. Jesus did not use his authority to take a position of power, but rather sought to behave in ways of humility, even washing the feet of his disciples.

This is the lesson which we need to learn if we are to behave like Christ to each other. There are times when we can share the burden of another who is in need, help them to carry on and support them as much as we can. A burden shared is a burden more able to be carried. Each one of us has a mission and ministry of service and we are called to faithfully model ourselves on Jesus. There are times when we can be tempted to sit back and expect Jesus to take care of us, or some other specific caring person. However with a maturing Christian faith comes the awareness that this is not the life to which the Christian is called, every single member has a duty of service to brothers and sisters. The image of the Good Shepherd is one which we should all treasure, but it is not there to cause us to be reduced to passengers in the life of God's family. We are not given the Holy Spirit to make us dependent, rather to energize us to fulfill our God given task of caring for others.

Thankfully we all know those people who are fine examples of good shepherds; ordinary men and women who give of themselves to offer their time and talents. Doreen and Joan are walking to raise money and draw attention to the homeless people of Bedford. We often think of those in desperate need as living in countries far away, it is much more challenging to be confronted by the needs in our own community, the forgotten ones who have no roof over their heads and sleep in our parks and derelict buildings. We can all support them as they do this good work and be a part of serving others, please support them this week as they are walking on the 9 May. Sponsorship forms are available in the office, or you can telephone the church office or send an email to office@thisischurch.com to pledge your support. Charles Royden

Hymns (*Please distribute Hymns and Psalms and service sheets*)

- 721 Stand up, stand up for Jesus (Morning Light)
- 746 One more step along the world I go
- 69 The King of Love my shepherd is (Dominus Regit Me)
- 315 I will sing the wondrous story
- 211 The Saviour, when to heaven he rose (Gonfalon Royal)

Meditation **Swine flu and the churches**

The Methodist Church has circulated guidance among Church leaders in the event of a swine flu pandemic in the UK. The Revd Dr Martyn Atkins, General Secretary of the Methodist Church, sent a message to deacons, presbyters, district local preachers' secretaries, district staff, superintendents and district chairs asking them to consider ways to avoid the risk of catching and spreading the virus.

The circulated document, 'Swine Flu: Risks and Precautions' is intended for all who have a responsibility in a Church context, whether leading worship, running groups or visiting. It also gives details of websites and helplines which offer up-to-date advice.

Tom Quenet, Partnership Coordinator for South America and the Caribbean, has been in contact with the Methodist Church in Mexico.

He said: "Swine flu has affected Church life quite dramatically since all churches have been closed. There is concern for the marginalised people – especially the oldest and the youngest – that they should not be forgotten. Everybody has been called to look out for each other."

The Methodist Church in Mexico has informed the Civil and State Authorities Office that Methodist Churches and congregations are willing and able to be at the disposition of the authorities to care for others.

Bishop Moisés Valdarrema Gomez, President of the Council of Bishops at The Methodist Church in Mexico, said: "We have a responsibility of stewardship for, not only our lives, but also for the lives of others, which means in situations like this, we take responsibility for how our actions may affect others. "Let us continue to pray for our families, our brothers and sisters in the faith, for our city and for the authorities. Let us turn this into an opportunity to unite in prayer for one another, having faith that God is the one leading our lives."

Advice from The Methodist Church Swine Flu: Risks and Precautions

Why is this important to the Church? Those who work for the Church often come into contact with a wide variety of people, including the sick and the elderly. They are not only at risk from infection but can also unwittingly act as carriers of the virus.

Using government advice, an understanding of how the virus is spread, and common sense, it is possible to reduce the risk of spreading the disease.

What is swine flu? Swine flu is a disease with symptoms similar to seasonal flu, but may be more severe and lead to further complications. Swine flu is particularly dangerous because it is a new virus to which no one has immunity. Although it is called swine flu, it is spread from human to human by droplets which come from the nose and mouth when a person sneezes. These droplets stick to surfaces and can remain infectious for some time.

How can I reduce the risk of spreading flu? You can reduce the risk of transferring virus droplets by paying special attention to hygiene. Normal good practice, such as frequent hand washing, is now even more important. Look at the government campaign to CATCH IT, BIN IT, KILL IT. This means sneezing and coughing into disposable tissues, immediately throwing the tissues away and washing your hands frequently. Keep up to date with other government advice. Try to be aware of how you could pass on virus-containing droplets:

Think about objects you carry from one visit to another (eg Bibles, mobile phones, pens, Holy Communion sets and their containers). Can you clean them thoroughly between visits? If not, do you really need to take them? Is the risk of a personal visit necessary? Would a phone call be more appropriate? Are tissues and bins easily accessible in your church? How good are the hand washing facilities? Could you switch to sanitising gel instead of soap? How could you reduce the risk of spread during Holy Communion? Think about not sharing a single Communion cup, or reducing the number of people who touch the bread.

Group gatherings Group gatherings are central to the life of the Church, but also provide an opportunity to spread the virus. - pastoral visits - coffee mornings - worship (including Holy Communion) - post-service tea and coffee - house group meetings. There is no need to cease these now, but you will need to assess the risk according to government advice and local conditions, while taking into account the needs of your congregation.

Last but not least - look after yourself If you feel ill stay at home. Carry out a symptom check if you are feeling unwell (www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk). Even if your illness is not flu, passing on other infections to flu sufferers can have severe consequences. Let your minister or a friend know if you become ill.

For updates and practical help.

Directgov: www.direct.gov.uk/swineflu Tel: 0800 1 513 513

NHS England: www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk Tel: 0845 4647

Download the Department for Communities and Local Government's leaflet offering guidance for faith communities at: www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/influzapandemic

Prayers for Sunday and week ahead

Prayers for the people of Mexico

Sovereign God, the defence of those who trust in you and the strength of those who suffer: look with mercy on the people of Mexico: bring healing to those infected with the virus, give wisdom and insight to doctors, nurses and health professionals, and bring calm and peace to all within the nation, through our mighty Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

House Group April 2009 Wendy Waters will be holding a house group at 13 Farnham Way, Putnoe at 7.45 pm on Mondays 11 and 18 May. We will use a 'York Course' entitled "Faith, Hope and Love". The course comprises of a CD which provides thought provoking input from well-known Christians such as Bishop Tom Wright and Anne Atkins, and a booklet which forms the basis of informal exploration and discussion. There is space for a few more people, so if you are interested in being part of the group or for more details please contact Wendy Waters on 401834.

Footprints Sunday 3 May at 2.30pm. A pleasant, easy walk of approx. 3.5 miles, with a few stiles. Meet outside Melchbourne Church. Parking in the road leading up to the church. Further details from Margaret and Alan. Tel. 3272191.

Easter Offering Dedication Service at Priory Methodist Church on Tuesday 12 May at 2.30pm. The theme for this years service is "The Way" and will be given by Sylvia Thomas from Ampthill, who is the current Network President. Members from the various Circuit churches will be taking part. All are welcome. Margaret Standley

Need help with your ironing? For a quick and reliable service call Julie on 07780805590 for more details. Pick up and delivery service available.

Christian Aid Week 10th-16th May Please contact the office at St. Mark's if you are able to help. Thank you.

Brickhill Annual Parish Meeting 7 May, 7.30pm at St. Mark's. Everyone welcome to attend. Reports from the Parish Council, Bedford Borough Councillors, local policing team and community groups. A presentation about footpaths, the "Green Wheel" and the potential for more play facilities in our local open spaces.

Car For Sale - Mitsubishi Lancer GLXI 1994 Auto Offers to Jennie Cooper 404950

The Annual Bedford Ecumenical Forum will be held on 14 May at the Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Flitwick. Please tell the ministers if you would like to come along.

Footprints Weekend.— Booking is now open for the walking weekend from September 25-27th 2009. Bed, breakfast and dinner at The Four Pillars Hotel, Witney, Oxfordshire. £52.00 per person per night sharing a double room. Walks daily or non-walking options to visit Blenheim, Burford etc. Further details from Barry Snelson at the Putnoe Church Office. Sue Allen

St. Mark's Church Office. Lunchtimes

The office will be closed from 1 - 1.30pm each day as from 1 June to allow the volunteers time for lunch. Wendy

Christian Aid Week 10—16 May. Envelope packs can be collected in the Putnoe Heights Welcome Area from today. Help from new collectors would be very welcome. Thank you, Beryl (266780)and Lawrence (350188)



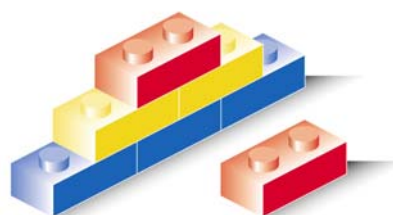
Woodland Friends —

Copies of the latest Friends Newsletter for the St Albans Woodland Burial Trust are now available from the churches, or can be downloaded from www.woodlandburialtrust.com

St Albans Woodland Burial Ground Open Day

Come and visit the woodland on Saturday 27 June from 2.00pm—5.00pm Refreshments served throughout

Building for the future....



Hazeldene Heights
PRE-SCHOOL
AT PUTNOE HEIGHTS CHURCH

Congratulations to Putnoe Pre-school 'Hazeldene Heights.'

This week the pre-school had a 'surprise' visit from OFSTED to check and report on the quality of the educational provision and standards of the pre-school. The report grades 14 areas of performance and identified that the pre-school has achieved 11 officially 'good' categories and 3 'outstanding areas'. For those not frequented with these marking systems this represents an excellent outcome and places the pre-school among the very best providers of pre-school education. Our congratulations to Janet the headteacher and all of the preschool teachers for this tremendous achievement.

Brickhill Community Safety Forum

This Forum is your voice and the way forward for Brickhill in tackling crime and anti-social behaviour. This Forum selects the 3 top priorities to be worked on by all Agencies for the next 3 Months. The next meeting is 7.30pm Thursday 16th July 2009 at Sir William Harpur House. The new chair of the group is Ray Seymour a member of St Mark's Church.

Partnership Annual Congregational Meetings

Thank you to all of those who attended our Annual Congregational meetings last week. There was an excellent turnout at both churches. The meetings expressed their thanks to those leaving office. This included Linda Parry and Mike Cooper leaving the Leadership Team at St Mark's and Jennie Emsley leaving at Putnoe Heights. Audrey Elliott also left her position as Deanery Synod representative. The meeting welcomed Michael Ovenden and Jean Bank to the Leadership Team at St Mark's and Margaret Appleton as a new Deanery Synod representative.

The following membership figures were recorded

St Marks

Anglican 78, Methodist 17, Other 15, Joint 8

Putnoe

Anglican 80, Methodist 72, Other 12, Joint 8

The meetings received annual reports on behalf of the Leadership Teams and we thanked Mike Cooper and Wendy Nash for these. The new senior members of the Leadership Team are Delia Shephard (St Mark's) and Lawrence Wyatt (Putnoe). Annual reports can be found on our church website.



Please help Doreen and Joan as they 'Hike for the Homeless'

Doreen Denny from Putnoe Heights Church and Joan Eatwell from St Mark's are representing our churches on the sponsored walk for the King's Arms Project on 9 May. If anyone from either Church would be prepared to sponsor them we would be very grateful. They are hoping to complete the 20 miles but that might depend on what the weather is like on the day!! So sponsor them for turning up and see how far they get Doreen's telephone number is 405840 and Joan's is 771156. There are sponsor forms on the board in the foyer at St Mark's and each church office.

Car Boot sale

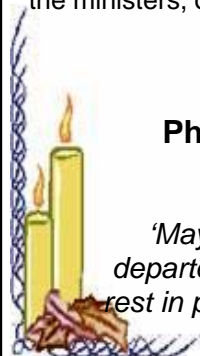
There will be a car boot sale at St Mark's on bank Holiday Monday and once again we would be grateful for your support. We are especially in need of things to sell, so please raid your cupboards and turn out those hidden gems which will help us raise money for church funds. Tray bakes always gratefully received.

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.

Stella Brooks
Phyllis Marjorie Chibnell
Joyce Sheila Marsh

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



Holy Communion

There will be a service of Holy Communion at Sir William Harpur House on Monday 4 May at 10.00am. This monthly service on the first Sunday of the month is open to all members of the public.

Forthcoming Funerals

There are no funerals scheduled in the coming weeks

