



Partnership News

**Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church
4 October 2015
Ordinary 27**



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

4 October– Ordinary 27

9.30am St Mark's – Family Worship & Baptism

Preacher - Deacon Jane Mills
Leadership - Mrs. Margaret Appleton
Intercessions - Mr. Richard Ledger/Young People
Organist - Mr. Bill Fudge
11.00 am Putnoe - Family Worship
Preacher - Deacon Jane Mills
Leadership - Mrs. Sue Allen
Intercessions - Young People
Organist - Mr. Ben Mason

11 October - Ordinary 28

9.30am St Mark's – Morning Worship

Preacher - Rev. Dr. Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mr. Mike Cooper
Intercessions - Mr Warwick Holden
Organist - Mr. Martin Thompson
11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship
Preacher - Rev. Dr. Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mrs. Jenny Snelson
Intercessions - Mr. Alan Bayliss
Organist - Mr. Peter Twitchin

Readings 1. Amos 5: 6-7 2. Hebrews 4: 12-16
3. Mark 10: 17-31
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.

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman
Assistant Rural Dean of Bedford
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
itsjanemills@gmail.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.ThisIsChurch.com**
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Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights this week have been
given by Anne and Roger Platt in celebration of family
anniversaries and birthdays.

*We are grateful when people make donations towards
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 Ann
Hitt 404186 (Putnoe Heights) or add your name to the
rota in the Foyers.*

Welcome

You are all welcome to our wor-
ship this morning. At St. Mark's
Church we welcome especially
the family and friends of Aerith
Rebekah Bowers who has been
brought for baptism.



Prayer for Sunday

Today, O God, let us know your power to make us
strong, your counsel to make us wise, your grace to
make us holy and your glory to bring us into your
presence. Amen. *Martin Luther (1483-1546)*

Banns of Marriage

We publish the banns and pray for the marriage of Lisa-
Marie Ellis and Shaun Colin Brennan to be
married at St. Mark's Church on 24 October. (2nd time)

Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator
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 Mr Barry Southam 219714
barrysoutham@aol.com
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 1160981.

Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5.00pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 342613 office@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613
Leadership Team - Mrs Margaret Appleton 354708
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

9.45am - 10.45am & 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 14 September

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 07928483418 email firstputnoebrownies@hotmail.co.uk

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–21 September 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.

9.30, 11.30, 3.30, 5.30, 7.30. Lorrie Pearson 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 (Alternate Tuesdays) Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225

2.00-3.30pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. St Mark's. A social and Bible Study group. Meets alternate Tuesdays. Mrs Jean Bank 355698

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 13 October - Shoe Boxes. 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 7 October Contact Putnoe Office 365630

1.15pm Social Bridge Club St. Mark's. Mr Barnes 261811

2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft at St Marks. 1st week of the month. Contact 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 21 October 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 344600
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
 7 October. 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 Restarts 17 September 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.Restarts 10 September Contact Jaana
 Swaby 342613
1.00-2.30pm Wiggles & Jiggles Putnoe Heights. Drop
 in.
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) Rosemary McNeilage 405594
7.30pm 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 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 -
St Mark's Leadership Team -
Annual Congregational Meetings -
Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 6 October 2015
Putnoe Heights Management Meeting - Putnoe
Church Council - 15 October 2015
Pastoral Group Meeting-
Churchyard Committee - TBA
Circuit meeting -
Deanery meeting -
Woodland Burial Trustees -
Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting -
Messy Church Wednesday 21 October, Wednesday
 18 November, Wednesday 9 December 3.45pm

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

Ordinary 27

Sentence of Scripture

He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Mark 10

Collect Prayer for the Day

Before we read we pray

Gracious God, you call us to fullness of life: deliver us from unbelief and banish our anxieties with the liberating love of Jesus Christ our Lord. Common Worship Shorter Collect

First Bible Reading - Genesis 2: 18-24

The LORD God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him." Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. So the man gave names to all the livestock,

the birds of the air and all the beasts of the field. But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh.

Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man. The man said, "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called 'woman,' for she was taken out of man." For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

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

Second Bible Reading - Hebrews Chapter 1:1-4, 2:5-12

In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven. So he became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs.

It is not to angels that he has subjected the world to come, about which we are speaking. But there is a place where someone has testified: "What is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the angels; you crowned him with glory and honour and put everything under his feet." In putting everything under him, God left nothing that is not subject to him. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honour because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting that God, for whom and through whom everything exists, should make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering. Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers. He says, "I will declare your name to my brothers; in the presence of the congregation I will sing your praises." (This is the word of the Lord – **Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - Mark 10:2-16

Some Pharisees came and tested him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" "What did Moses command you?" he replied. They said, "Moses permitted a man to write a certificate of divorce and send her away." "It was because your hearts were hard that Moses wrote you this law," Jesus replied. "But at the beginning of creation God 'made them male and female.' For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.' So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate." When they were in the house again, the disciples asked Jesus about this. He answered, "Anyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery against her. And if she divorces her husband and marries another man, she commits adultery." People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples



Let the children
come unto me

rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it." And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.
(This is the word of the Lord —**Thanks be to God**)

Post Communion Prayer

Lord we pray that your grace may always precede and follow us, and make us continually to be given to all good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Hymns for Sunday (*Please distribute Family Morning Worship booklet, hymn sheets where required and Baptism Booklet at St. Mark's.*)

1. Come to us Creative spirit H&P 377(tune Angel voices)
2. We really want to thank you Lord (as set) MP 734
3. Through all the changing scenes of life MP 702, H&P 73 (tune Wiltshire)
4. In Christ Alone MP 702 (as set)
5. Lord for the Years MP 428 (tune as set)

Commentary

There is a lot to think about in our readings today, Job reminds us that we should accept and bear the suffering we face if we are to accept the blessings, or as I often put it, we should give thanks for our hardships, because they help us appreciate life when it is good. The reading from Hebrews reminds just how much God loves us, and in Matthew we have a potentially tricky bit of teaching Jesus gives in response to a question about marriage. Yet it all ends with the familiar account of children being brought to Jesus, and the response that provoked. Given that this is family worship, and we have the Joy of a Baptism at St Marks, I hope you will forgive me if I focus on the latter!

A friend of mine who is a Methodist Minister collects old theological books, he has shelves and shelves of them and he has actually read most of them! Some are delightful and inspiring, while others provide a sociological history of how views have changed over the years, then there are some that he keeps just to ensure they are 'out of circulation'!

One book that he would place in the latter category is a Victorian book of 'sermons for children', which seem 'way off the mark' for what would be appropriate now, so much so that they are almost funny. Let me give you one example, according to that book the message of Easter and the disciples finding the folded grave-clothes in an empty tomb is that Christian children should be like Christ and make their bed, oh joy!

Whilst the church may once have been seen as the champion of such values as 'Children should be seen and not heard', or even 'spare the rod and spoil the child', I hope we find ourselves in a very different place today. Some may grumble that society as a whole seems, at times, to have gone too far in considering the rights of children, or that they do not know how to behave 'these days'. But I wonder what Jesus was actually trying to express to the disciples when he said

"Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."

In the society he lived in children would have had little, if any, social status but they perhaps did not know that, not yet anyway. In the time that the book of sermons for children was written the message may have been something like this; 'Children accept what adults tell them as true, just as we should humbly accept what Christ tells us'.

I have to say that this is a sermon I have heard myself a few times and I find myself wondering if the preacher has actually met any children! If there is one thing I have learnt about children, it is that they always ask questions, even when you give an answer, the response is very often 'but why?' 'how?', or 'when?' it can be truly exasperating! I have also observed, however, that children seldom question a gift saying 'no thanks, I don't deserve it', or 'you shouldn't have'! They simply accept the gift and, although it may be very clear if it is not something they want, if it is what they want they express their wonder and gratitude (though some may end up playing in the box it came in)!

Another observation is that children do not have long memories, I have often noticed that a crying child, once comforted, soon forgets what it was that made them cry in the first place. The Dalai Lama once said; "Look at children. Of course they may quarrel, but generally speaking they do not harbour ill feelings as much or as long as adults do. Most adults have the advantage of education over children, but what is the use of an education if they show a big smile while hiding negative feelings deep inside? Children do not usually act in such a manner. If they feel angry with someone, they express it, and then it is finished. They can still play with that person the following day."

So children have the power to forgive and start again and, while they may have active imaginations and pretend to be a knight, princess, or even a dragon, you seldom see an unhappy child pretending to enjoy themselves. There is an elusive honesty in that behaviour which we too often learn to mask as we get older, along with our ability to believe in the miraculous (magic some might call it). As Mike Yaconelli (author of 'Dangerous Wonder: The adventure of a childlike faith') puts it; "Children live in a world of dreams and imagination, a world of aliveness... There is a voice of wonder and amazement inside all of us; but we grow to realize we can no longer hear it, and we live in silence. It isn't that God stopped speaking; it is that our lives became louder."

Jesus does not want us to be 'childish', rather I believe we are required to retain the 'childlike' wonder in and enjoyment of creation. The trick is to not let our necessary day to day 'trivialities' and 'tasks' grab our attention more easily than God's voice and our enjoyment of all we are gifted. To accept the kingdom as a child is to not question if we deserve it, rather to give thanks and start enjoying it right away!

I will end with some wise words from Austrian poet and Novelist Rainer Maria Rilke, who said: "May what I do flow from me like a river, no forcing and no holding back, the way it is with children." May we all learn to do the same. *Deacon Jane Mills*

Meditation October 4 The Feast of St Francis of Assisi

It was the year 1205 in the town of Assisi, in northern Italy. Francis was the son of a cloth merchant, and he was thought of as rather "wild", seeming to have more money than was good for him. He had fought in two wars, spent over a year in prison, and almost died of an illness that had lasted for months. Now, trying to sort out his life, he was spending a few moments in quiet prayer in a small stone church with a low curved roof. Suddenly, with no-one else in the very small church, he heard himself being addressed by name. Three times the voice spoke the same words to him, and he was convinced that he heard the words being spoken from the cross itself: "Francis - go and build up my church which is falling down." Francis presumed that Jesus meant the run-down church-building in which he was at that moment. In the following days he set about repairing the stonework of that church. He sold his horse and some of his father's cloth goods to give money to the priest. His father disowned him and Francis was left poor and took up a life of poverty, love and repentance.

He began to realise that to "build up the Church" wasn't referring to a building, but to the strengthening of the community of God's people. Deep within himself, Francis was being re-built as a person. The re-formed Francis - now more clearly formed in God's own likeness - was able to help lead people to "open themselves" to God's Spirit working in their lives. It wasn't by force of his own efforts that Francis became a better person, but by "allowing God to be God" in his life. Many people followed Francis and returned to the simplicity of the Gospel.

Francis is often portrayed as a bit of a wimp who was afraid of war and played with animals. In truth he lived a life of adventure. He travelled to the Middle East in the middle of the 5th crusade and preached to the sultan Kameel, the nephew of the great Muslim warrior Saladin. The sultan was so impressed it is said that he considered converting to Christianity but decided that such action would get them both killed. However such peaceful dialogue between men of different religion is an example we need to follow today.

It may have been written earlier, but one prayer associated with St Francis is sometimes called "The Peace Prayer". Before we use that prayer we can think of some other words of Francis:

"While you are proclaiming peace with your lips, be careful to have it even more fully in your heart."

Let us pray:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:

where there is hatred, let me sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love. For it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Prayers used by St Francis for Sunday and the week ahead

The Prayer before the Crucifix - Francis prayed this prayer before the crucifix in the little church of San Damiano in 1205/6, in the early days of his conversion.

Most High, glorious God, enlighten the darkness of my heart and give me true faith, certain hope, and perfect charity, sense and knowledge, Lord, that I may carry out Your holy and true command

May the power of your love, Lord Christ, fiery and sweet as honey, so absorb our hearts as to withdraw them from all that is under heaven. Grant that we may be ready to die for love of your love, as you died for love of our love. Amen

We adore you, most holy Lord Jesus Christ, here, and in all your churches throughout all the world; and we bless you, because, by your holy cross, you have redeemed the world.

Tuesday Housegroup St. Mark's Church is home to a mid-week social and Bible study group which has been running for many years. A small group of like-minded members of St. Mark's and of Putnoe Heights, meet on alternate Tuesday afternoons from 2.00pm -3.30pm. The group's next meeting is on Tuesday 20 October and we would like to invite a few more people to join us. More information from Jean Bank, St. Mark's and from Sue and Martin Fannon, Putnoe Heights.

The bowls sessions at St. Marks will now continue throughout the winter months on 2nd and 4th Sundays in the month 2pm -4.30pm. Contact Ray Seymour 305695 or church office.

**Messy Church Samaritans
Purse Shoe Box Appeal
2015**

Following the success of previous years, by Messy Church and the wider congregation, we will be packing boxes at our Messy Church session on 18 November. We will be happy to accept donated items from now on. All items must be new. These include Toys, Educational supplies, Hygiene items, Other: Sweets sell by date at least March 2016. Gloves, scarves, sunglasses, hats, bangles, necklaces. Please do not donate: food (especially chocolate), no hand knitted stuffed toys, medicine, no war related items, no clothing other than those above, no fragile items, no liquids. No sharp objects, no novels. We do not need any empty shoeboxes this year. Please see the Messy Church notice board for further details of what can and cannot be put in the boxes. If you require further information please speak to Wendy Waters or Jean Bank.



Partnership Prayer Group meets every Thursday from 9.30 - 10am at Putnoe. We are always pleased to welcome new members. Prayer cards are now available at both churches and we include all prayer requests in our meeting.

Lenten Cathedral Pilgrimage 2016

We are organising an evening pilgrimage to St Albans cathedral on Wednesday 16 March 2016. Depart Bedford at 5.00pm. Cost is £7.50
Arrival at cathedral and buffet 7.00pm
Pilgrimage and tour 7.45pm
Compline and procession to shrine 9.00pm
Depart St Albans 9.30pm
Arrive back in Bedford 11.00pm
If you would like to take part then please speak with Charlie so that we can book numbers and arrange transport.

28, November 11 and 25, with the final one this year on December 9.

Footprints Walk on Sunday October 4 A 4 mile level walk on field paths and quiet roads, no stiles, and possibility of lots of blackberries half way round! Meet at Cople Parish Church 2.30pm where there is off road parking. Alan & Jean Kirk.

Putnoe Heights Office If anyone is able to assist working in our Church Office on a Friday morning from 9am to 11am it would be most appreciated. If you are interested please contact Geoff Gypps or Barry Southam. Thank you. Church Office 01234 365630.

Partnership Quiz to be held at St Mark's Church on Saturday 28 November at 7.30pm. Do come and bring/make up a team. Tickets £7 includes Fish and Chip Supper. Please put this date in your diary.

Putnoe Men's Group Our next fellowship meal will be at the Pheasant Public House on Wednesday 21 October at 7:30pm. Details of the menu options will be available shortly. Please let Barry Southam know if you wish to join us.

Thank you to all who contributed to our successful Harvest Festival at Putnoe Heights. The donations of food have been taken to the Food Bank and, in due course, they will contact us with a figure of how many meals can be prepared from our donations. The lunch raised over £300.00 and thankyou to those who donated desserts and helped in many ways to make it an enjoyable occasion.

Pre-School at St Mark's If you buy Flora spread can you please collect the foil on the tubs for Pre-School towards purchasing a tablet. Please hand into Pre-School or the Church Office. Thank you.



Remembering the loved ones we have lost There will be a special service at St Mark's Church, Brickhill, Bedford Sunday 1 November 2015 at 3.00pm (Doves of Remembrance will be released from the Church at 2.50pm). Our address this year will be given by Mrs Delia Shephard, Civil Celebrant. If you know of anybody who would like a special invitation then please let one of the ministers know.

Bedfordshire Fire Service will carry out a Home Fire Safety Check and fit smoke alarms if required if you would like any further information please contact them on 0800 043 5042 and leave them your name, address including postcode and a contact number.

Coffee Morning

Everyone Welcome



Community Coffee Mornings at Putnoe Heights Church restarts at 10 a.m. on Wednesdays October 14 and



Helping Children from the streets and slums in Kenya

Partnership Autumn Mission Project 2015

For our Autumn Harvest Mission project this year we will be supporting Karibuni, which is the project Mike Carr spoke to us about when he preached in the partnership earlier this summer. The aim of the charity is to help the most disadvantaged children in Kenya by providing an education and a future.

The Karibuni Trust is a UK Registered Charity. Karibuni support approximately 1400 children in 14 projects based in and around Nairobi, and to the north and East of the city towards the country's borders. All of these have their own needs and challenges which Karibuni seeks to meet through its mission and ministry. All the schools they support are owned by The Methodist Church of Kenya and to mark their 20th Anniversary this year they have committed in faith to educating an additional 50 children. The Trustees visit the largest projects each year and for all projects ensure proper budgets and management are in place to maximise the impact and benefit from the funding and support given. Look out for further details next week as we give our support to this worthwhile and important work.

'When we stand and look over the massive slums of Nairobi we know that the scale of the need is huge and this could make us question what difference we can make. But we also know that for each and every child we support we can and do make a difference.'

It has also been agreed by the Leadership Teams of both churches that we should donate £250 from each church to the Syrian Refugee crisis.

St Mark's Christmas Craft Fayre 21 November 2015

It is hard to believe that our Craft is only 8 weeks away on Saturday 21st November 2015 We will be having the usual Church stalls again and donated items will be greatly appreciated.

New Tombola

New and unused items needed so please look in your cupboards etc.

Homemade cake Stall

Secondhand Bookstall

Books in good condition plus any jigsaws (with all the pieces) please.

Indoor/Outdoor Plant Stall

Now is the time to plant cuttings and bulbs etc.

Refreshments

Donations of tray bakes to sell with our teas and coffees.

And of course the Christmas Prize Draw

Any new items suitable for raffle prizes would be really welcome. Raffle tickets are on sale and will be available from the table in the foyer. Please take a few home to sell to family and friends.

We will need a lot of help nearer the time with leaflet delivering, selling of raffle tickets distributing posters etc. Please let me know of any locations where you think a poster would go.

If you are able to help us with manning a stall, on the 21st November, helping in the kitchen or in any other way, we would love to hear from you. As always your help is very much appreciated and we could not run this large fundraising event without your help. Please contact Avril Williams.



Forthcoming Funerals

There are no funerals this week

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

John Sutherland Lester

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

CHURCH LEGACY

A lasting gift to your church

Christian Legacy Week October 2015

Once you have made provision for your loved ones, you have the opportunity to make a lasting gift by leaving a legacy to God's church. Leaving a gift in your will to your local church is one of the most valuable and lasting ways you can continue to support the mission and ministry in your community.

A gift can be an expression of your gratitude and thanksgiving towards God, and can help keep your local church alive, and help transform its future.

Please speak to Church Treasurers Ian Farthing or John Hitt if you would like to know more. We can also provide a solicitor to help prepare your will and cover the cost if this is difficult for you.