



Partnership News

Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church
8 April 2018
Second Sunday of Easter



Sunday Services

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

8 April 2018 - Second Sunday of Easter

9.30am St Mark's - Morning Family Worship
Preacher – Mr Richard Ledger
Leadership - Mrs Liz Jackson
Intercessions - Mr Warwick Holden
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds
11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship
Preacher - The Reverend Wendy Evans-Wood
Leadership - Mr Barry Southam
Intercessions - Mrs Sylvia Cohen
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

15 April 2018 - Third Sunday of Easter

9.30am St Mark's - Holy Communion
Preacher – The Revd Dr Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mrs Wendy Waters
Intercessions - Mr Ian Farthing
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds
11.00 am Putnoe - Holy Communion
Preacher - The Revd Dr Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mrs Maureen Watling and Mrs Val Morgan
Intercessions - Mrs Sue Allen
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds
Lectionary Readings:
1 Acts 3: 12-19 **2** 1 John 3: 1-7
3 Luke 24 : 36b - 48
Mid Week Holy Communion at 10.00am at St Mark's Chapel every Wednesday and at Sir William Harpur House first Monday of every month

Thank You

The flowers at St Mark's Church this week have been given by Mary Denny in memory of her parents.

We are always pleased 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.

Prayer for Sunday

Loving Lord,
we need the power
of your Spirit in our lives
to build on what is good,
and to help change
what needs to be changed.
We pray that we may be faithful
in responding to your call
to grow as the people
you have called us to be,
that we may ring out your praises
through the way we live each day. **Amen.**

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman
Assistant Rural Dean of Bedford
107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41
Tel: 266952 nsm@thisischurch.com

The Reverend Wendy Evans-Wood
c/o Putnoe Heights Church Centre
Tel: 348091
wendyevanswood@yahoo.co.uk

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

Reader: Mrs Wendy Waters
Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator
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.

Partnership News is sent out by email every Saturday in a colour edition. To subscribe visit our Partnership News archive at www.thisischurch.com. Any items submitted for inclusion in Partnership News will automatically be posted weekly on our website and may appear in other local media sources.

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

St Mark's Churchyard Administrator
Mrs Avril Williams 01234 342613

Putnoe Heights Church Centre
www.putnoechurch.org.uk

Open Mon-Thur 9-4pm, Friday 9-1pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager: Krystyna Oborn 365630
Leadership Team Mrs Sue Allen 407264
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 1164416
www.stmarkschurch.com

Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5.00pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 342613 office@stmarkschurch.com
Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613
Leadership Team - Mrs Wendy Waters
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892
treasurer@stmarkschurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Mr Jim Williams 360605
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Regular Weekly Activities - Putnoe Heights Church

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

9.30-10.30am - Body Control Pilates –Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430

12.00 noon Storybox Welcomes under 5's and carers to between 12noon and 1pm. Sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Contact Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com 365630

2.00pm U3A Music Appreciation Chris Fordham 217396

2.00pm U3A Italian – fortnightly Chris Fordham 217396

4.15pm Kumon Maths Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698

6.15 pm Brownies . Sharon Tanner 01767 699399 email firstputnoebrownies@hotmail.co.uk

6.15-7.15pm Pilates Jane Butcher 07891879571

7.15pm-8.15pm Fit for Life Yoga Jane Butcher 07891879571

6.30pm-8pm Cubs Ages 8 –10.5 Michelle Davis 07711916870 email: michelle@putnoescouts.org

6.30pm Fit For All – Laura Amor 341152 / 07976259081

7.30pm House group 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck 267567

7.45-9.15 Get Fit Keep Fit Diane Field 01234 404976

Tuesday

9.30am Candlewicking (Needlework). Jenny Snelson 344417

11-12.15am U3A Keep Fit Chris Fordham 217396

2.00pm Library Walk W.I. meets monthly.

Jo Fordham (President) 01234 217396

Margaret Bull (President) 01234 267866

Cheryl Gardner (President) 01234 261584

2.30pm. Ladies Tuesday Club (meets monthly) Next Meeting Tuesday 17 April - Putnoe 'Details Diane Bayliss 268101

2.30-4.30 U3A Play Reading Chris Fordham 217396

6.30pm– 8.00pm Cubs 6.30pm—8.00pm Ages 8-10.5 michelle@putnoescouts.org

Wednesday

9.30am Body Control Pilates. Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430.

11.00am U3A Keep Fit. Chris Fordham 217396

12.30pm Luncheon Club. Fortnightly. Next meeting 4 April 2018. Contact Putnoe Office 365630

2-4pm U3A Ukulele Group. Beginners welcome. Contact Chris Fordham 217396

2.00pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit. Mrs Webster 856966

4.15pm Kumon Maths. Mrs Rakha Mistry 01908 392698

5.00–6.00pm Rainbows Gayle email : 1stputnoerainbows@gmail.com

6.15-7.15pm ATSK Karate Kevin Stark 01234 353865

6.15-7.45pm GKR Karate Daniel Freer 07931 504 712

7.00pm-9.00pm Scouts ages 10.5-14; Michelle Davis 07711916870 email:michelle@putnoescouts.org

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

7.15pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe 3rd Wednesday in every month except August Mrs Jo Street 344600

Thursday

8.15-2.15pm Sing & Sign. Julie Warriner **01767 691488**

9.30am Thursday Prayer Group. Valerie Capon 356306. Request for prayer can be written in the prayer diary on the information table.

10.00-12pm U3A Painting & Sketching Chris Fordham 217396

2.00pm-3.00p.m Play and Learn(Dropin) Contact Trudy 341977

2pm –4pm U3A Current Affairs Chris Fordham 217396

2.30pm-3.30pm U3A Spanish (Weekly) Chris Fordham 217396

5.15-8.15pm NHS Eat Smart Think Active contact : Laura Rocket 355122

6.00pm-7.30pm Beavers Ages 6-8 michelle@putnoescouts.org

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Brennan. 07919402797.

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Monthly second Thursday in the month. Sandra White 313645

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale 406094

8.00pm Bedford Folk Dancers (formerly Barn dancers) Meet weekly with different guest callers each week.Except August. All welcome, cost £2. Including refreshments. More details Ron 825574 or Shirley 01767 651767

Friday

9.30pm Spanish Holiday Survival Elena 01234 266968

9.30am –12. 30pm Machine Knitting group 1st and second weeks per month. Contact Marion Sutton 217647

10am-12 U3A French Conversation Chris Fordham 217396

2pm U3A Gardening Chris Fordham 217396

6.30pm-8.00pm Beavers Ages 6-8 Michelle Davis 07711916870 email: michelle@putnoescouts.org

Saturday

2.15pm Society of Recorder Players G. Parry 01462 674792

Sunday

11.00 - 12.00 Church and Junior for the under 9's . A crêche is also available.

Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council - 22 May, 11 September, 13 November

St Mark's Leadership Team - 8 May, 4 September, 6 November

St Mark's Church AGM - 15 April 2018

Putnoe Leadership Team – June 12, October 9

Putnoe Management Meeting – May 31, October 4

Putnoe Church Council - , June 19, October 16.

Pastoral Group Meeting –

Churchyard Committee -

Circuit Meeting -

Deanery meeting - June 21

Woodland Burial Trustees –

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting -

St Marks Messy Church - 18 April

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

Regular Weekly Activities - St Mark's Church

Monday

7.30am-6.00pm Pre-school Mon-Fri St Mark's

7.30am-6.00pm 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

10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group. Mrs M. Berry 211955

10.00am U3A Playreading Chris Fordham 07940072202

9.45am - 10.45am & 11.00am-12noon Pilates Liz Mason
07816522200

2-4pm U3A Meditation & Wellbeing Chris Fordham
07940072202

6.00pm Brownies Mrs C Mathew 826190

7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild St Mark's (1st week in month)

Mary Daly 217127

7.00-8.00pm Laughter Club on 2nd week each month Cheryl

Green 07729187399

7-9pm Rangers. Nikki Lake 07584028653

7.15pm Guides. Mrs Gill Lake 218091

7.30pm Whist Drive. Weeks 3 & 5 in the month. Next
meeting 15 January 2018 Judith Stanton. 823313

Tuesday

9.15am-11.15. Chat & Make A term time group for Mums
and toddlers 0-5. For more details ring St Mark's Church
Office 01234 342613 or Janine 01234 297481

9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World

9.30, 11.30, 3.30, 5.30, 7.30. Lorrie Pearson 340473

1.15pm U3A Cinema Group. Chris Fordham 07940072202

1.30pm U3A Choir. Contact Chris Fordham 07940072202

2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 (3rd Week in month) Contact
Chris Fordham 07940072202

2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 (2nd Week in month) Contact
Chris Fordham 07940072202

2.00pm U3A Photography Group 3 (1st Week in month)
Contact Chris Fordham 07940072202

2.30pm Knit & Natter Group. (Alternate Tuesdays) Wool and
knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225

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

6-7pm Supple Strength Yoga Amanda Alcock
07769747393

7.15-8.15pm Pilates Jane Butcher 07891879571

7.30-9pm Faith Community Church Audua Ogilvie 01234
308644

8.00pm Hearts in Beds Committee (4th week in month) Mrs
N Aspey 309816

8.25-9.25pm Restoration Pilates Johanna Debnam
07753418170

Wednesday

10.00-2pm Open House for those with learning disabilities.,
their friends, family, carers and supporters 342613.

10.00am U3A Gardening Group 3 Chris Fordham
07940072202

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

10am U3A Card Making, Chris Fordham 07940072202

10-4pm Sewing group 4th week of the month. Contact Sue
Sewell 07979797747

1.15pm Social Bridge Club Mr Barnes 261811

2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft 1st week of the month Chris Fordham
07940072202

3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church. (3rd Week in month). for
children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based
story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 18 April
Wendy Waters 401834

6.00pm Brownies. Mrs C Warden 219731

7.00pm Bunyan Bridge. Yvonne Blain 350241 or Brian
Sallows 407725.

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club at St Mark's
(1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next meeting 18 April
2018. Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1
including refreshments. Call Rosemary 405594 or Graham
406359 for more details or come and join our friendly group
and have a try.

8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club (Week 1 in the
month) Jill Cooper 357960

Thursday

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

12pm Storybox . Welcomes 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.. Contact Jaana
Swaby 342613

2-4pm U3A Indoor Games. Chris Fordham 07940072202

2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society Jean Patterson 307210

5.15-6.45pm Weightwatchers Jodi Henderson 07449890830

6-7pm Supple Strength Yoga Amanda Alcock
07769747393

7.00pm U3A Singing for Fun (1st & 3rd week in month) Chris
Fordham 07940072202

7.00pm Bedford Embroiderers' Guild

(3rd week in month). Carol Plant 01832710504

7.30pm JMaggies. Meet on 2nd & 4 Thursday Next meeting
12 April Charity Bring and Buy Sale Call Rosemary 405594
for more details.

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

Friday

10am -12.00 U3A Photography (4th week in month)
Contact Chris Fordham 07940072202

10.45am - 12 U3A Poetry & Literature St. Marks Contact
Chris Fordham 07940072202

2.00-4.00 pm U3A Whist (2nd week in month) Contact
Chris Fordham 07940072202

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

6.30 -8.30pm Pakua Martial Arts John Waugh 07802755914

Saturday

9.00am Faith Community Church (1st week in month)
Audua Ogilvie 01234 308644

10.00am-1pm Theatretrain Dancing acting, singing. Kate
Howard 01234 782414

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 April P Harris 01623 621143

11.30-2.30pm Faith Inspired Ministry. Pastor James
Mudokwani 07411154809

Second Sunday of Easter

Opening Verse of Scripture - John 6: 40

Jesus said to his disciples, 'This is the will of my Father, that whoever sees the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and that I shall raise him up on the last day.

Collect Prayer for the Day - *Before we read, we pray*

Almighty Father, you have given your only Son to die for our sins and to rise again for our justification: grant us so to put away the leaven of malice and wickedness that we may always serve you in pureness of living and truth; through the merits of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

First Bible Reading - Acts 4:32-35

The whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles' feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.

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

Second Bible Reading - 1John 1: 1-2:2

We declare to you what was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we have looked at and touched with our hands, concerning the word of life – this life was revealed, and we have seen it and testify to it, and declare to you the eternal life that



Christ shows himself to Thomas, Resurrection Chapel, Washington

was with the Father and was revealed to us – we declare to you what we have seen and heard so that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that our joy may be complete. This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light and in him there is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him while we are walking in darkness, we lie and do not do what is true; but if we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

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

Gospel Reading - John 20:19-31

When it was evening on the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.' When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.' But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, 'We have seen the Lord.' But he said to them, 'Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.' A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, 'Peace be with you.' Then he said to Thomas, 'Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.' Thomas answered him, 'My Lord and my God!' Jesus said to him, 'Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.' Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. 31 But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

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

Post Communion Prayer

Lord God our Father, through our Saviour Jesus Christ you have assured your children of eternal life and in baptism have made us one with him: deliver us from the death of sin and raise us to new life in your love, in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

Hymns at St Mark's

1. Alleluia, alleluia, give thanks to the risen Lord.
2. All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord
3. This joyful Eastertide.
4. Christ is alive! Let Christians sing.
5. I know that my Redeemer lives (Tune: Torquay)

Hymns at Putnoe Heights

1. Thine be the glory 313
2. Praise to the holiest in the height 334
3. Put peace into each others hands 712
4. could be new—sing a song, sing a joyful song (with instruments) 310
5. I danced in the morning 247

Commentary

One of the recent story lines in the Australian soap "Home and Away" concerned Kat a Senior Constable in Summer Bay. She fell hopelessly head-over-heels in love with Robbo who had lost his memory. He turned out to be a hit man, a serial killer, a really bad lot. But Kat still loved him (he had changed, she said!) enough to spring him from a police cell. They drove off to start a new life together but had a car crash and Kat was killed. It prompted me to think whether God is "head-over-heels" in love with me and you and the whole world-bad lots and all. Can he love us more than he does? Is his love conditional? Or is it freely showered on us?

These are big questions. The New Testament as a whole suggests that God is as John says, love. And that he loved the world so much that he sent his only Son to die for us and rise again to overcome darkness and sin- to bring us to new life. If this is true then it should change us and the way we live. We are, Jesus says, to “love one another as I have loved you”.

Fine to say, something else to put into practice in our everyday lives. The reading from Acts 4 shows the early believers as “one in heart and mind” as they “continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus”. The first chapter of John's first letter declares God to be “light” so we should “walk in the light” too. The first half of chapter 2 is worth study as well: it talks about light and love two transforming words. The song says “And they'll see we are Christians by our love.” Well do they when they look at us?

The Gospel reading has the disciples behind locked doors for fear of the Jews. They are overjoyed when they see Jesus who says “Peace be with you.” Then there is Thomas. He has previous as they say! Have a look at John 11:1-16 and John 14:1-7. His character not overly optimistic but honest – is seen in today's gospel reading. The Very Rev Dr Ian Bradley writing in “The Times” in April 2016 under the title “Doubting Thomas was a witness to authentic belief” stated that Thomas's doubts were pretty straightforward. He wouldn't believe what the other disciples told him about meeting the risen Lord until he had hard evidence – until he saw Jesus for himself and could touch him. And Jesus doesn't condemn Thomas for any lack of faith. He encourages him to look and touch, so that he has proof and when Thomas responds “My Lord and my God” Jesus says that he has found faith by seeing him. “Happy are those who find faith without seeing me.” He is making the point that doubt is not the opposite of faith – because they both involve acting honestly on trust and hope without proof or evidence.

Ian Bradley says that certainty is the opposite of faith. Now, we may not all agree, but this is what Guy Collins, a priest in the Episcopal Church of the USA, wrote in a book: “Christianity's worst enemies are not intelligent questioners but those who produce the most noise in proclaiming their trust in Christ. Religious fundamentalism and militant atheism have a number of compelling similarities. Admitting that we do not know much about God should be one of the tenets of orthodox Christian belief. Faith needs to have looked doubt in the eyes and seen its own reflection. I'm sure we would like to emphasise, though, that in Jesus we see God in a way we can understand. He reveals God's nature to us – love that is overflowing, though we can never fully understand it. Jesus tended to preach in parables and stories rather than in dogma, encouraging his hearers to come to their own conclusions. And in how he responds to “doubting Thomas” Jesus doesn't condemn open doubt. He points as Ian Bradley writes “to that highest form of faith that trusts even in the dark and proceeds in hope and expectation” Romans 8:24-25 say “For it is by hope that we were saved; but if we see what we hope for, then it is not really hope. For who hopes for something he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.” Mind you, in verse 38 we read “For I am certain that nothing can separate us from his love”. And I reckon that that is where Thomas's journey to faith took him too! So where are we in all of this as we live our lives in the light of Easter. It makes you think!

Richard Ledger

Meditation

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy we have been born anew to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Christ has been raised from the dead. In Christ shall all be made alive. Alleluia! Praise the Lord!

Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead.

Risen Lord and Master: we ask you to meet us on the road we travel. Meet us in conversation that opens up the scriptures; meet us in the supplying of our needs: meet us in those people whose needs we can supply: be made know to us in the breaking of bread.

When days or moods are dark, and the one in whom we had hoped seems far away, meet and walk with us for your name's sake.

When we are despairing; when the world is full of grief; when we see no way ahead, and hope has gone away: Roll back the stone.

Although we fear change; although we are not ready: although we'd rather weep and run away: Roll back the stone.

O God, grant us in all our doubts and uncertainties the grace to ask what you would have us do; that the spirit of wisdom may save us from all false choices, and that in your light we may see light, and in your straight path may not stumble, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

William Bright (1824-1901)

It is Easter and we celebrate hope. If Christ has been raised, anything can happen and no good thing is impossible. Alleluia!

Psalm 133, the Psalm for today, a Song of Ascents.

¹ How very good and pleasant it is when kindred live together in unity!

² It is like the precious oil on the head, running down upon the beard, on the beard of Aaron, running down over the collar of his robes.

³ It is like the dew of Hermon, which falls on the mountains of Zion.

For there the Lord ordained his blessing, life for evermore.

Psalm 133, which was probably sung on the way to, or in the course of celebrating Jewish festivals in Jerusalem, speaks of the great blessing it is when a people of faith live together in unity. Its as if the oil running down on the beard of Aaron is a symbol of the blessing which flows down from God when there is unity and harmony among His people. Like many psalms it has a distinct structure, centring on this blessing, which is the outcome of Godly living together. It speaks of the outcomes of a people bound together by their faith and by their covenant relationship with God. It is not something which people work for, blessing happens as they live out the life of unity in the faith to which we are all called. Contained in this short psalm are two key images which underpin this faith even today. The first is of the oil on Aaron's beard. It image comes from the time when Aaron is consecrated as High Priest. It was a symbolic and sacramental act of divine anointing and commissioning so that Aaron might be God's ambassador and mediator in the place where God's people gathered. As we, in our times, are called to be ambassador's for Christ in our world, so we are anointed with God's Holy Spirit that we might be His mediators too, through our relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ, the mediator of our faith. It is through Christ (our mediator, the one who brings two parties together) we have our relationship with God restored. The second image is the dew of Hermon, a sign and symbol of divine refreshment and abundant life. It falls on the mountains of Zion, the place where God was understood to be centred, where His grace came down in a special way, and why the people would journey to that place on pilgrimage. We too are pilgrims on a journey, and where we are, so too is God's grace which is given to all people who accept His divine invitation to follow Him. An invitation ratified in the Easter story of death and resurrection. An invitation to the blessings flowing down from a God who loves us and wants to shower and drench us with the dew of His love as we live out the unity which is already within us, even is sometimes we seem not to see it.

Sam Cappleman

Church Annual Congregational Meetings

These will be held after the morning services on Sunday 15 April 2018. All are welcome to attend. If you have not yet completed a church membership form and would like to do so then please speak with one of the ministers before the AGM



Putnoe Heights Fairtrade stall 'Come on in to Fairtrade.' Future dates May 6 and July 1.

Lunch Club desperately need drivers to transport diners to and from Putnoe Heights once a fortnight. Any permanent or temporary offers please contact Pam Kinselley 354480 Thank you.

Bedford Foodbank, are running low on the following items: Tinned Pasta (Spaghetti Hoops, Macaroni Cheese, Ravioli etc.) UHT Fruit Juice, Long Life Sponge Puddings, Small bags of Rice (up to 500g) Bags of Sugar, Jars of Pasta Sauce. You may be interested to know that in the first 2 months of 2018 we have helped 1304 people, 442 of them were children. Thank you for your support, Mrs Chris Hubbard Admin Support

Mission Events There are two important mission events at St Mark's this summer. We will have a marquee at the River Festival on 15 and 16 July to promote preschool, woodland burial and the church. On September 15 and 16 we will have Adrian and Bridget Plass join us for a mission weekend. Please keep these dates free and we give for future updates

Chat and make at St. Mark's Restarts on April 17 .

Chat and Play at St. Mark's restarts on Thursday 19 April.

Story Box at St. Mark's restarts on 19 April.

St Mark's Church Preschool Do you have any spare time when you could volunteer to help with the preschool. With increasing numbers of children and a shortage of staff we would

welcome some extra helping hands. No qualifications necessary. This might also be useful experience for anybody considering preschool teaching.

Putnoe Heights 11.00 am service at on 22nd April will be "Local Worship" style led by Sue and Margaret with a guest speaker, Bernard Hicks from The Gideons. Local Worship is a relatively new concept for the Putnoe Heights congregation although it is well established and enjoyed in other churches. Please come and support Sue and Margaret at this service. It is not about a shortage of ministers but more about enabling lay people to plan and lead worship.

Morning and Evening Prayer If you liked and appreciated the Morning and Evening prayer we did in holy week, or would have liked to have come along but were not able, there is a very good app available for mobile devices called 'Daily Prayer' from Aimer, which gives the words and readings for morning, evening and night prayer each day which you can then do at home or wherever you are. It also contains a simple structure for our own prayer as part of the format which can be very helpful. Morning and Evening Prayer are also available online for those with internet connections but no mobile device. And, for those who prefer not to use technology at all, they are available in booklet form too!

Banns of Marriage

We publish the banns and pray for the marriages of

Hannah Peacey and Paul Freeman both of the Parish of Ravensden and on the electoral roll of this parish

Kirsty Louise Baines and Paul Robert Wakefield both of the parish of the Transfiguration Kempston with a qualifying connection to this church
Both of these are for the second time of asking and we look forward to their weddings at St Mark's Church in May.

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.



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

Forthcoming Funerals



The funeral of Charles Barker will take place at 1.00pm on Friday 13 April 2018

All funerals at Bedford Crematorium can be found @ www.bedford.gov.uk/obituaries