# Partnership News

## 12 December 2010

## Third Sunday of Advent

### 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

**9.30 am St. Mark's – Morning Worship**
Preacher - Rev Charles Royden
Leadership - Mrs Avril Williams
Intercessions - Richard Ledger
**11am Putnoe – Morning Worship**
Preacher - Rev Charles Royden
Leadership - Mrs Sam Ware
Intercessions - Dr Tim Wilkes

**19 December**
**9.30 am St. Mark's - Holy Communion**
Preacher - Mr Barry Owen
Leadership – Mrs Morag Stewart
Intercessions – Mr Warwick Holden
**11.00 am Putnoe - Holy Communion**
Preacher - Mr Barry Owen
Leadership - Mr Lawrence Wyatt
Intercessions - Mrs Sylvia Cohen
**Readings** 1. Isaiah 7:10-16 2. Romans 1: 1-7
3.Luke 2: 1-20

### Midweek Worship

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

### Thank You

The flowers at St. Mark's Church this week have been given by Joyce and George Burton to celebrate their 67th Wedding Anniversary.

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Pearl and Vin James on their wedding anniversary, and by Sylvia Cohen in memory of her husband Ken.

### Prayer for This Week

Grant unto me, O Lord, to know what I ought to know, to love what I ought to love, to praise what delights Thee most, to value what is precious in thy sight, to hate what is offensive to Thee.

Do not suffer me to judge according to the sight of my eyes, nor to pass sentence according to the hearing of the ears of ignorant men, but to discern with true judgement between things visible and spiritual, and above all things to enquire what is the good pleasure of thy will.
*Thomas à Kempis, 1380-1471.*


**The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman**
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266952 Fax- 402624 nsm@thisischurch.com
(Sam also works full time as a General Manager for Hewlett Packard)

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**For Data Protection Purposes**
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**

**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** Mrs Samantha Ware 304058
**Treasurer** Mr Ian Morse 216428 treasurerph@thisischurch.com
**Gift Aid Administrator** John Hitt 404186
**Youth Worker** Emma Gordon email - 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 -** Avril Williams 360605
**Treasurer -** Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com
**Gift Aid Administrator** Jim Williams 360605

# Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

## Monday

**9.15 -11.45 am Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school** Head teacher 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 Mrs Berry ☎211955
**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 12.15 and 1.15 for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing.
**3.30pm Storybox Plus** Putnoe Heights for 4-9 year olds. Meet at 3.30 for refreshments & games. Then until 5pm stories, drama, singing & craft activities.
**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—20 December St. Mark's 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

**9.30am Jo Jingles.** St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre -school children. Renu Elston ☎07790296016
**9.30am Candlewicking** (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Judi Staughton ☎341821
**9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World** St. Mark's. Helen Folbigg ☎351223
**10am Autism Beds Adult Support Group.** St Mark's. Sally Cripsley ☎350704
**11.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights** Sally Banks ☎ 870357
**1.15pm Sing and Stomp.** For toddlers & their carers. Run by the Putnoe Children's Centre. 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.
**2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship**. Next meeting 11 January 2011 For more details contact 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-6.15pm Stars School of Dance.** Putnoe Heights**.** Esther Richardson ☎295862 or 07917582468.
**6.30pmCreative 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 Hearts in Beds. Cardiac Support Group** 1st Tuesday in the month at St Mark's. Brian Ibberson ☎ 403497
**7.30pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Bible study & prayers. Revd. Tarr ☎360188 or 07866775515
**7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club -** Meets fortnightly. Next meeting January 4 afternoon tea.For more details call Janet King 313946
**8.15pm - 10.15pm Bedford Advanced Dancers** St. Mark's 1st Tuesday in month. Shirley Sadler ☎01767 651767

## 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
**10am U3A Card Making**, St Mark's Church. 4th week in the month. Janet Fitch 838689
**12.30pm Luncheon Club.** Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next -8 December 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
**1.30-4.30pm U3A Craft St Mark's** 1st & 3rd week. Pat Holland ☎262823
**2.15pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit.** Putnoe Heights Mrs Webster ☎856966
3**.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church.** St Mark's for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Monthly. Next meetings 8 December. Wendy Waters 401834
**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 or 07910835994.

**6-8pm Karate.** St Mark's Karen King ☎079412 64885
**7.00pm Bunyan Bridge.** St. Mark's Brian Sallows ☎ 407725
**7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society** Putnoe Heights monthly. 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
**8.00pm Badminton Club** Putnoe Heights All welcome. Ken Marriott ☎214867
**8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club** meet at St Mark's 1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next meeting 15 December Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Ring Graham 406359 or Rosemary 405594 for more details.
**8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club** St Mark's 1st week in the month. Mrs Gansfield ☎215016

## Thursday

**9.30am Thursday Prayer Group.** Putnoe Heights in the quiet room. Valerie Capon ☎356306 .
*Request for prayer can be written in the prayer diary on the information table*.
**9.45am Yoga** Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎244970
**9.45am Chat and Play** St.Mark's. A group for Mums & toddlers. Emma Strangwick ☎211070
**11am-12noon Citizens Advice Bureau** Putnoe Heights.
**12pm Storybox .** St Mark's welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12 noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing . Lots of fun. Contact Jaana Swaby ☎ 363283
**1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic** St. Mark's ☎267444
**1.30pmToddler Playtime.** Putnoe Majella Atkinson ☎325293.
**2pm Putnoe Bridge Club.** Gerald Palmer ☎345991
**2-4pm U3A Indoor Games** St Mark's Contact Radmila Dancer ☎404811
**2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society** at St Mark's. Malcolm Smith ☎400741
**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 Lou Watkins 07919402797
**6.30-7.30pm Hatha Yoga** at St Mark's Church. Contact Soile Carroll ☎378853 Mob:07523489077
**7.00pm Club 2000** Putnoe Heights Nina Ovenden ☎825059
**7pm U3A Folk & Poetry** 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. Pauline Lynham ☎01525 714517
**8 –10pm Bedford Folk dancers (**formerly Barn dancers) Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights . Different guest callers each week. All welcome, cost £2 Including refreshments. More details Ron Law 825574**.**
**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. Julia Nicholson ☎353642

## 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 & 1.15 - 3.15pm 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
**5-8pmStars School of Dance** Putnoe Heights Contact Esther Richardson ☎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
**7-9pm Tae Kwon Do** St Mark's Contact Adrian Felice 07964 356355☎
**7.45 - 10.45pm Bedford Astrology Club**. St. Mark's. Carol Brown ☎01438 233385

## Saturday

**10.00am Theatretrain** St Mark's. Dancing acting, singing. Kate Howard ☎01234 782414
**Young Embroiderers** bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher ☎357198
**2.15pm Society of Recorder Players** at Putnoe Heights. G Parry ☎ 01462 674792
**7.00pm Duplicate Bridge.** St Mark's Mrs Pillinger ☎212066

## Sunday

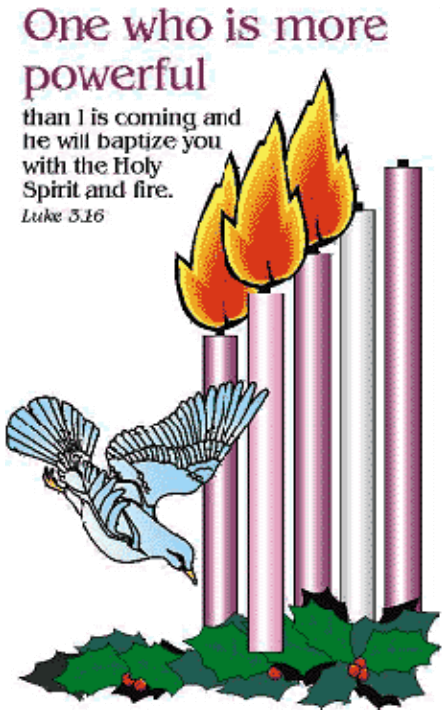
**9.30 - 10.30 Church and Sunday School** at St Mark's with crèche for under 3's
**11.00 - 12.00 Church and Junior** at Putnoe Heights for the under 9's and Young Peoples Fellowship (Y.P.F) for our young adults. A crèche is also available.
**1pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Revd. Tarr ☎360188 or ☎07866775515
**6pm T.N.T.** Putnoe. For 9-12 year olds (fortnightly) join us for fellowship & fun.
**7-9pm Tae Kwon Do** St Mark's Contact Adrian Felice 07964 356355☎

# Diary Dates

**St Mark's Church Council –**
**Annual General Meeting** 10 April 2011
**St Mark's Leadership Team** 31 January
**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team -** 7 February
**Putnoe Heights Management Meeting** - .
**St Mark's Forum Meeting** -
**Putnoe Church Council** - 14 February
**Pastoral Group Meeting** - 8 February 4.15pm
**Churchyard Committee - 26 January at 11.00am**
**Putnoe Heights Mission Group**
**Brickhill Parish Council Meetings**
**Deanery Meeting** - .
**Woodland Burial Trustees** – 13 February 2011
**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth** –

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

# Third Sunday of Advent




**Opening Sentence from Scripture** - **Luke Chapter 1:46**
My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord.
My Spirit rejoices in God my Saviour

**Collect** *(Before we read we pray)*
God for whom we watch and wait, you sent John the Baptist to prepare the way of your Son: give us courage to speak the truth, to hunger for justice, and to suffer for the cause of right, with Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *Common Worship Shorter*

**Old Testament Reading – Isaiah 35: 1-10**
The desert and the parched land will be glad; the wilderness will rejoice and blossom. Like the crocus, it will burst into bloom; it will rejoice greatly and shout for joy. The glory of Lebanon will be given to it, the splendour of Carmel and Sharon; they will see the glory of the LORD , the splendour of our God. Strengthen the feeble hands, steady the knees that give way; say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you." Then will the eyes of the blind be opened and the ears of the deaf unstopped. Then will the lame leap like a deer, and the mute tongue shout for joy. Water will gush forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert. The burning sand will become a pool, the thirsty ground bubbling springs. in the haunts where jackals once lay, grass and reeds and papyrus will grow. And a highway will be there; it will be called the Way of Holiness. The unclean will not journey on it; it will be for those who walk in that Way; wicked fools will not go about on it. No lion will be there, nor will any ferocious beast get up on it; they will not be found there. But only the redeemed will walk there, and the ransomed of the LORD will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.
(This is the word of the Lord -- **All: Thanks be to God)**

**Second Reading - James 5: 7-10**
Be patient, then, brothers, until the Lord's coming. See how the farmer waits for the land to yield its valuable crop and how patient he is for the autumn and spring rains. You too, be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near. Don't grumble against each other, brothers, or you will be judged. The Judge is standing at the door! Brothers, as an example of patience in the face of suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord.
(This is the word of the Lord **— All: Thanks be to God)**

**Gospel Reading – Matthew 11: 2-11**
When John heard in prison what Christ was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, "Are you the one who was to come, or should we expect someone else?" Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me." As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began to speak to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who wear fine clothes are in kings' palaces. Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: " 'I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you. I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. (This is the word of the Lord – **All: Thanks be to God)**

## Post Communion Prayer

Father in heaven, who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

## Hymns for Sunday *(Please distribute Morning Worship, hymns sheet and Mission Praise)*

1. Joy to the world 393
2. The trumpets sound 667
3. Darkness like a cloud *(On hymn sheet)*
4. Christ be our light *(On hymn sheet)*
5. All earth was dark 8

## Commentary What do we do when God is a disappointment ?

In Acts Chapter 16 Paul and Silas are in prison. But not for long! By the super powerful work of the Holy Spirit an earthquake opened the prison doors and they walked free! So - is that what we can expect from God, someone who will always rescue and protect us? Well in the reading from Matthew Chapter 11 today, John the Baptist is in prison and he find Jesus a disappointment. A Messiah who failed to perform a rescue of his people and mighty deeds was something of a let down. Josephus (Ant.18.5.2) tells us that John was imprisoned at Machaerus, Herod's wilderness palace, East of the Dead Sea. It is from this remote prison that John begins to question within himself who Jesus is. Verse 3: "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?"

We need to understand what was behind this loss of faith which in John had in Jesus. John the Baptist was a good man. He had no time for the wicked and he cared little for his personal safety. He was unafraid to take on the bad guys, even if that meant going head to head with King Herod himself. He would not bow to intimidation, threat or force. John was a special man, Luke's Gospel tells us that even before John and Jesus were born, Mary visited her relative Elizabeth, John's mother. Matthew tells us that when John preached, Jesus presented himself to John for baptism, and that after the baptism, the heavens opened, the Spirit of God descended like a dove, and a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased" (3:17). But after the baptism of Jesus, John must have been devastated. He had called people to repent telling them that imminent judgement was at hand. "Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees." He saw bad people and believed that God was about to burn them with "unquenchable fire." This is good old traditional fire-and-brimstone stuff. But, instead of God swinging the axe, John finds himself locked up in prison. Surely if Jesus was the Messiah, then why was John behind bars? Ultimately John would be beheaded by Herod, did that mean that Jesus was a complete and utter failure? John wanted and expected a God of fire and brimstone and what he got was Jesus, who preached full and endless forgiveness to the very “chaff” John expected to see burned. Jesus had spectacularly failed to live up to expectations. Instead of calling down fire and brimstone, Jesus had been all too forgiving. He pronounced blessings on the poor in spirit, the meek, and peacemakers (5:1-11). He called his disciples to love their enemies (5:42-48). He warned disciples not to judge others (7:1-5). Jesus was more interested in healing than using that axe.
People like John wanted a powerful leader, a Messiah, who would restore the image of Israel. Jesus did show anger at some things, like hypocrisy, but his ministry was much more to be characterised by binding up the weak. Bringing the poor good news sounds quite dull compared to axe swinging justice, but Jesus was convinced, it was the poor, the oppressed, the broken-hearted, who really mattered to Jesus. Captives and prisoners were important but not necessarily the ones behind physical iron bars.

There are powerful lessons for us to learn today. The first and most obvious truth is that we can be really sincere in serving God and still get our heads chopped off. Loyal service and faithfulness to God does not make us immune from wickedness in the world. Yes, the Kingdom of Jesus is with us, but we still live in a very nasty world where dreadful things happen.

This brings us to the second truth. We can feel really badly let down by God when we come face to face with the reality of suffering and death. John the Baptist had to try and understand this paradox, the existence of a Saviour God and yet the ongoing presence of evil. John wanted Jesus to explain why he had not done something to stop the rot. Today we might ask the same kind of question, if God exists then why does he allow good people to suffer? Jesus tells John that his power has a different way of working. The response of Jesus is to draw attention to the characteristics of his ministry "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them."

The ministry of Jesus is less about judgement and more about forgiveness. The implication is clear, if we put our trust in Jesus hoping for someone who will make bad things go away, we are sure to have our hopes dashed. Jesus is the leader who ended up on the cross. This might have implications for the kinds of things we prayer for. *Charles Royden*

**Meditation**
On the 10th of December 1948 the United Nations adopted the "Universal Declaration of Human Rights". These excerpts show some of those rights, and we can think of people in different parts of the world who do not share our own experience of human rights being respected.

+ All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
+ No-one shall be held in slavery.
+ No-one shall be subjected to torture.
+ Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.
+ Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty
+ Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion.

**Let us pray:**
Lord, it's good to be actively concerned about the abuses of human rights in other countries, but I must not lose sight of the mis-treatment of others closer to me. Most particularly, Lord, point out to me my own failings in lacking respect for those who come into my daily life. I readily condemn slavery, but help me to liberate those I know who are overburdened.
I condemn torture, but lead me to discourage the use of cruel words and actions to those I will meet today. Remind me that those who degrade others are themselves diminished. Enlighten me so that I do not jump to conclusions about people, or be judgmental. Lead me always to respect individuals for who they are, realising that their experiences may be different from my own, as each follows paths in life that are particular to them. May I grow in appreciation that those who think differently from me can hold equally valid views. In these and other ways, Lord, may I grow in respect for all people. This day, may others respect me as much as I respect them. Amen

**Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead**
We think of ordinary people, Lord, caught up in war in man-made divisions between people of different race or belief, or background or culture. We pray for justice and peace for all who feel threatened. We pray, too, for greater love and acceptance for those experiencing difficulties in family life. In praying for these things, we are praying, too, that you inspire and enable us to be instruments of your justice and peace today

We remember, Lord, those who are experiencing the hell of poverty, drugs, alcoholism, abuse, homelessness, persecution, and the other forms of hell that are to be found in our world today. We bring before you, Lord, those who feel unloved and all who have little joy and little hope in their lives. Amen

Pour upon us, O Holy Spirit, your sevenfold gifts: of understanding that we may be enlightened; of counsel that we may follow in your footsteps; of courage that we may face the enemy; of knowledge that we may discern the good; of piety that we may be compassionate; of fear that we may draw back from evil, and of wisdom that we may taste the sweetness of your love. Amen *St Bonaventure, 1217-1274*

Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, O Promised One: Once again we come to this time of Advent and await your presence. Give us patience to seek the meaning of these busy days. Give us courage to wait in times of pain and trouble. Give us the compassion to wait for one another. Give us the faith to wait for the Messiah when we are threatened by the Herods of this world. Give us the hope to wait for the Saviour even when we cannot hear the angels singing. Give us the love that does not wait when it meets Christ in our neighbour . Amen.

O God to those who have hunger give bread. And to us who have bread give the hunger for justice.

Lord teach me to forgive with real forgiveness, which forgets even where the hatchet was buried.

All-powerful God, increase our strength of will for doing good that Christ may find an eager welcome at his coming and call us to his side in the kingdom of heaven, where he lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

**Third Candle - The Candle of Love (Purple Candle)**

John the Baptist

**Leader:** May your hearts be filled with God's love towards all people as you consider the life of sacrifice and encouragement of John the Baptist.
**All: Thanks be to God**

Leader: Last Sunday we lit the Candles of Hope and Peace.
(*A person lights the candles of Hope and Peace )*

Today is the Third Sunday of Advent and we light the Candle of Love and remember John the Baptist.

*Matthew Chapter 3*
*In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and Saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: 'A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him*.'

In their old age God gave to Zechariah and Elizabeth a son called John. John spoke to the people bravely in the desert denying his own comforts and was prepared to die for what he believed. John taught that we should share what we have with others, treat each other kindly and show God's love. He did this because he cared for people and wanted them to repent and find God's forgiveness.
(A person now lights the third candle)

Leader: Let us pray:
**All: Lord God, help us to follow the example of your servant John the Baptist we would be witnesses and spread the good news of your love. We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus our Saviour, the babe of Bethlehem Amen**

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**The Christmas Posting Box is** in position for you to post your cards to friends who come to Putnoe Church. As always, it will be 10p per card or 12 cards for £1. Please leave the money in the wooden box near by. Please put surnames and addresses on the envelopes. .Cards which are left on Christmas day will have to collected afterwards, unfortunately. Thank you **Joy** and Peter Parker

**Church Christmas Cards** are now on sale at both church with proceeds for Kissizi. Or place an order by phone from St Mar'k's Church Office. card are 25p each or a pack of 5 for £1

**Putnoe Height's Ladies Tuesday Club** invite you to join them for their Christmas Event at Putnoe Heights on Tuesday 14 December at 7.30pm cost £2 including refreshments and raffle ticket.

**Footprints New Year's Day Walk**
Sat 1st January 2011. Meet at 10.30 am at Mowsbury Park (Kimbolton Rd car park- on RHS after 'Pheasant' roundabout) for short circular walk followed by lunch at Putnoe Heights. Further details from Sue Allen

**St Mark's Christmas Card Screen** The Christmas card board for members of the congregation to place their Christmas Cards on is now available. Please leave cards at the Office to be placed on the board. Please do not attempt to put them on the board yourself. If you would like to leave a donation for the Kisiizi Hospital it would be very much appreciated.

**Carols For All** Kempston Musical Society sing Carols for All on Saturday, 18 December at 7.30pm in aid of Cancer Research UK. Venue Kempston East Methodist Church, Bedford Road, Kempston and guest artists will be "Muse & Music" who performed for us 2 years ago and are back by popular request. Come and join in with your favourite carols, and enjoy this evening of festive entertainment while supporting a very good cause. Phone 01234 354183 or email us for tickets at kempstonmusicalsociety@hotmail.com . £6 for adults and £3 for under 15's.

**English Music at Christmas** at St. Mary's Church, Goldington on Wednesday 15 December at 7.30pm.Stephen Liley (tenor), Alan Haughton Piano, Justin Waters (organ) & Modernian Singers conducted by Geoff Lavery. Retiring Collection in aid of St. Mary's Charities

**Church Chairs**. St Marks Church have ordered new chairs which we hope will arrive just after christmas. We would be very grateful to any members of the congregation who felt able to contribute towards the cost of the chairs which will cost £50 each. Please make cheques payable to St Mark's Church and remember to gift aid.

**Carol Singing for Bechar.** Putnoe Heights Church will be singing carols at Library Walk in Putnoe on Saturday 18 December, 11 to 12noon. Meet at Putnoe Heights Church at 10.30am for tea/coffee beforehand. All are welcome to come and sing in aid of BECHAR, a charity for the Homeless & Rootless helping people take the next step towards reintegration into the local community. They do this through a drop-in Centre which is available to vulnerable men & women aged 16 and over 365 days a year.

**St Mark's Church Community Centre Christmas Closure**. St Mark's church office will be closed from Thursday evening 23 December and will re-open on Wednesday 5 January 2011.

**Printer Cartridge Recycling** St Mark's are collecting printer cartridges from home or office printers for recycling. If you would like to help with this please bring them to St Mark's and place in the box in the foyer or hand in to the church office. We would appreciate your support as this raises funds and also helps the environment.

**Thursday Prayer Group** will not be meeting on December 23 or 30.

**St. Mark's Church Craft Stall** would like to thank everyone for their support. We are pleased to say we made almost £600 for the church. If anyone would like to join us in the New Year or has any new ideas please contact Maureen 262225 or Rosemary 405594 or hand them in to Wendy in the office. Thank you.

**Deborah Wallace** would like to thank Putnoe Heights for the lovely bouquet of flowers which were a real blessing to her. God bless you all.

**Flower Donors.** Anyone wishing to contribute towards the cost of flowers at Putnoe for any Sunday in the first six months of 2011, is invited to enter their name on the rota on the board in the welcome area.

**Thanks to Sue and Gerry Allen** who organised Words and Music for Christmas at Putnoe on Friday £200 was raised for Kisizzi.

### Traditional Carols by Candlelight

**St Mark's Church** will hold their carols by candlelight service on Saturday 18 December at 6.30pm. We will be joined for the service by Bedford Brass Band.

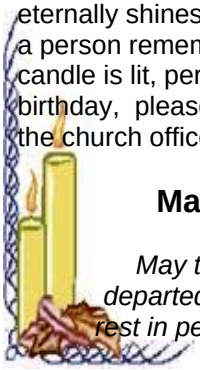
**Putnoe Heights Church** will hold their carols by candlelight service on Sunday 19 December at 6.30pm

## Christmas Presents

You will find the link above on the homepage for www.thisischurch.com. Please click on it to access Amazon.com and just about anything you need for presents this year, with free delivery. You can also sign up to Easyfunding. You will receive special offers and promo codes to buy everything you ever need online!
Remember, never click on Amazon direct, always click on Amazon via the link at thisischurch.com, then we obtain 5%

## 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.



### Marion Hilda Watkins

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

**Cold Weather preventing you from coming to church?** Tell St Mark's Church office (Tel: 342613) and we will arrange for a taxi to include you on its route to the 9.30am service.

## Forthcoming Funerals

**The funeral of John Tatman** will take place at St. Mark's Church on Friday 17th December at 3.15pm.