



Partnership News

Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church
15 December 2013
3rd Sunday in Advent



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

Today – 15 December 2013

9.30 St Marks - Holy Communion

Preacher – Deacon Jane Mills
Leadership Team – Mrs Wendy Waters
Intercessions – Mrs Delia Shephard
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe — Holy Communion

Preacher – Deacon Jane Mills
Leadership Mrs Sam Ware
Intercessions — Mr Alan Baylis
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

22 December 2013 - Advent 4

9.30 St Marks – Morning Worship

Preacher – Mr David Jewitt
Leadership – Mrs Jean Bank
Intercessions – Mr Mike Elliott
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe – Morning Worship

Preacher – Mr David Jewitt
Leadership Team - Mrs Jean Kirk
Intercessions — Mrs Sylvia Cohen
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

Readings 1 Isaiah 7:10-16 2. Romans 1: 1-7
3. Matthew 1: 18-25

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



What a Christmas !

Putnoe Heights Church Christmas Services

Sunday 22 December

6.30pm Carols by Candlelight

Tuesday 24 December - Christmas Eve

4.00pm Children's Crib Service

11.30pm Midnight Mass by Candlelight

Wednesday 25 December - Christmas Day

11.00am Family Morning Worship

St Mark's Christmas Services

Saturday 21 December

6.30pm Carols in the Car Park

Tuesday 24 December - Christmas Eve

3.00pm Children's Crib Service

6.30pm Carols by Candlelight

11.30pm Midnight Mass by Candlelight

Wednesday 25 December - Christmas Day

9.30am Family Morning Worship

Thank You

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

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

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
jane@thisischurch.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.ThisChurch.com**

Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator

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

Churchyards Administrator

Mrs Avril Williams 01234 342613

Putnoe Heights Church Centre

Open Monday to Thursday 9am - 5pm, Friday 9am - 1pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Mr Geoff Gypps 365630 mob 07947 902846
Leadership Team Mrs Jenny Snelson 344417
Treasurer Mr John Hitt 404186 treasurerph@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Mr Lawrence Wyatt 350188
Youth Team Leader Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com

St. Mark's Church Centre

Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5.00pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 342613 office@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613
Leadership Team - Mr Michael Ovenden 826738
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892
treasurer@thisischurch.com

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

8.30-12.30pm St Mark's Pre-School Nursery

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

8.30-5.30pm Pre-school Mon-Fri St Mark's

9.00-3.45pm Top Marks Mon-Fri St Mark's

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

(See website for more details)

9.45am - Body Control Pilates –Putnoe Heights

Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430

10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group. St Mark's Mrs M. Berry 211955

10.30am U3A Play reading Putnoe Heights (see contact details below)

1.30pm Chat & Make. For babies and toddlers 0-5.

Crafts, toys, songs, story and refreshments £1. More details email-chatandplay@hotmail.co.uk

2.00pm U3A Calligraphy at St Mark's (2nd week in the month) Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119.

12.00 noon Story box Putnoe Heights We welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Contact Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com 365630

2pm U3A Music Appreciation Putnoe Heights(see contact details below)

2.00pm U3A Italian Putnoe Heights– fortnightly

4.15pm Kumon Maths Putnoe Heights. Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698

6.00pm Brownies St Mark's. Mrs C Mathew 826190

6.15 pm Brownies Putnoe. Sharon Tanner 01767699399 or 07720713738.

6.15 Pilates at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859

6.15pm-8.15pm Fit for Life Yoga - Putnoe Heights Contact Jane Butcher 07891879571

6.30pm Boot Camp Putnoe Heights – Laura Amor 341152 / 07976259081

7.00pm Sugarcraft Guild St Mark's (1st week in month) Pat Nicholson 353518

7.00pm Cancer Care Society. St Mark's. (1st week in month) Mr J Dewhurst 01908 377020.

7.00-8.00pm Laughter Club 92nd week each month) Cheryl Green 07729187399

7.15pm Guides. St Mark's. Mrs Gill Lake 218091

7.30pm Whist Drive. St Mark's (3rd & 5th week in the month).. Next meeting– 16 December 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

Tuesday

9.30am Jo Jingles. St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Charlotte Williams 07968207442

9.30am Candlewicking (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Pat McCart 365507

9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World St. Mark's. Helen Skinner 07989080389

10am Autism Beds Adult Support Group. St Mark's. Sally Cripsley 350704

11.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights (see contact details below)

1.15pm U3A Cinema Group. St Mark's Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

1.30pm U3A Choir. St Mark's Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 St Mark's (3rd Week in month) Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 St Mark's (2nd Week in month) Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

2.00pm Library Walk W.I. Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Morag Tomkins 356895

2pm U3A Photography Group 3 St. Mark's (1st Week in month) Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group. St Mark's (1st & 3rd week in month). Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225

2.15pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. St Mark's (2nd & 4th week in month) Mary Stubbs 406784.

4.00pm-6.15pm Stars School of Dance at Putnoe Heights. Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468

7.30-8.30pm Pilates St Mark's Church Jane Butcher 0789187957

7pm - 8.30pm Daisy Birthing Putnoe Heights Susie 07980447390

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

7.00pm Keep Fit. St. Mark's Jan Gregory 328455

7.30pm Ladies Tuesday Club at Putnoe Heights (Meets fortnightly). Afternoon meeting at 2.30pm Details Janet King 313946

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

Wednesday

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

10am-2pm Open House at St Mark's for those with learning disabilities., their friends, family , carers and supporters 342613.

10am U3A Gardening Group 3 St Marks. Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

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

10am U3A Card Making, St Marks Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

10am U3A Diet and Nutrition- Putnoe (contact below)

11.15am U3A Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights

12.30pm –4pm St Mark's Nursery

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe fortnightly. Next meeting 18 December Putnoe Heights Office 365630

1.00-3pm Police Surgery at Putnoe Heights (Fortnightly)

1.15pm Bridge Club for the Retired. St. Mark's. Mr Barnes 261811

2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft at St Marks.Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

2pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan Putnoe Heights

2.15pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit. Putnoe Heights Mrs Webster 856966

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 15 January 2014 Wendy Waters 401834 Jean Bank 355698

4.15pm Kumon Maths. Putnoe Heights Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698

6.00 pm Brownies. St Mark's. Mrs C Warden 219731

6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation Putnoe Heights Racheall Monton 01234 297138 or 07910835994.

7.00pm Bunyan Bridge. St. Mark's Colin Jackson 363398

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

7.00pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe 3rd Wednesday in every month except August Mrs Jo Street 344600

7.00pm Line Dancing Putnoe Mike Del-Boyer 348378

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

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club at St Mark's (1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month). Next meeting will be 18 December Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Rosemary 405594 or Graham 406359 for more details.

8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club St Mark's (1st week in the month) Greta Cansfield 215016

Thursday

8.30am—12.30pm St. Mark's Pre School Nursery Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

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

9.30am Spanish for total beginners.at Putnoe Heights. Elena 01234 266968

9.45am Chat and Play St.Mark's. A term time group for Mums & toddlers.0-5 Jo Garner 400071 or 07932616468

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 342613

1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic at St Mark's (1st and 3rd week in month)Contact 897401

1pm-2.30pm Drop in (small hall) Next Steps 9-24months Putnoe Children's Centre.Please call Trudy Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information 340552. 2pm -Friendly Chicago Bridge at Putnoe Heights £2 per session inc. refreshments. New members welcome. Contact Pat 01234 294220.

2pm U3A Current Affairs - Putnoe Heights

2-4pm U3A Indoor Games. St.Mark's Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

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 07805408811.

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins .

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Nina Ovenden 825059

7pm U3A Folk & Poetry St Marks (2nd and 4th week in month)Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale 406094

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

7.30pm Gentle Birthing St Mark's. Pat Wood 07946 847231

8 -10pm 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). Mr Newton 01525 378193

8.00pm Magpies Women's Group St Mark's (2nd & 4th week in month) Mrs Marie Cotchin 402089

8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group St Mark's (1st and 3rd week in month) Susan Perugi 300219

Friday

8.30am—12.30pm St. Mark's Nursery Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

8.30am Diabetic Centre St Mark's (1st week in month) Deborah Hennessey 792013

9am -1pm Machine Knitting group at Putnoe Heights, fortnightly . Contact Marion Sutton 217647

10am -12.00 U3A Photography St Marks.(4th week in month) Mrs Yvonne Francis

10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French St. Marks Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

2.00-4.00 pm U3A Whist St Marks. (2nd week in month) Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

2pm U3A Gardening - Putnoe Heights

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

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

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. 1st Sunday Feb/ Apr/Jun/Aug /Oct/Dec. Contact P Harris 01623 621143

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

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

Messy Church Dates Weds 20 Nov, 15th Jan., 12th Feb., 19th March, 16th April, 21st May, 18th June.

Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council –
St Mark's Leadership Team - 21 January 2014
Annual Congregational Meetings

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team -
Putnoe Heights Management Meeting
Putnoe Church Council -

Pastoral Group Meeting - 10 January at 10.00am
Churchyard Committee -

Commemoration Service
Circuit meeting - Deanery Meeting -

Woodland Burial Trustees– 15th December 12.30pm
Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting –10th

February 2014 1.30pm

New Year Lunch 19 January at Putnoe

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

Advent 3

Sentence of Scripture - Matthew 3:1

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah:

"A voice of one calling in the wilderness,
'Prepare the way for the Lord,
make straight paths for him.'"

Collect Prayer for the Day - **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 Collect*

First Bible 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— **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— **Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - **Matthew 11: 2-11**

(Please stand. When the reading is announced **'Glory to Christ our Saviour'**)

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 Gospel of Christ—**Praise to Christ our Lord**)



Post Communion Prayer

O Lord our God, make us watchful and keep us faithful as we await the coming of your Son our Lord; that, when he shall appear, he may not find us sleeping in sin but active in his service and joyful in his praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymns *(Please distribute special Holy Communion sheets and Hymns and Psalms)*

1. Hills of the north rejoice 237
2. Sing we the king who is coming to reign 244
3. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God 138
4. Now let us from this table rise 619

Commentary For Advent 3

The reading from James starts with the exhortation to 'wait patiently', as many of you will know this is an area I often struggle with! If I see that something needs doing I want it done, I get frustrated by the rounds of meetings and discussions that have to be carried out first, it could be said that I have very little patience! But then I guess that it depends what is meant by 'patience'.

While the word patience implies calmness, self-control, and the willingness or ability to tolerate delay, yet two synonyms that are often interchangeable with patience can mean almost entirely the opposite of each other.

Resignation implies a passive, if sometimes reluctant, acceptance of or submission to something, either out of despair, out of necessity, or because of a lack of personal confidence.

Forbearance, on the other hand includes the capacity to endure hardship or inconvenience without complaint. It includes a level of restraint, not forcibly demanding what is due or seeking retaliation, yet it does not deny the need for change. *"It is the mutual duty of all to practice Christian forbearance, love, and charity towards each other"* (Patrick Henry).

I take an example of resignation from popular literature, namely 'The Lion, the witch and the wardrobe', by C.S. Lewis. On entering the cold world of Narnia the children come across many people that have never known a world not ruled by the evil queen and have come to take the situation for granted, even finding the idea of challenging the cruel queen ludicrous. It takes the arrival of these children who do not know what happened to remind people of the promise of Aslan's return, that they have worth and the power to change things themselves, with some even learning to risk their own security for the sake of others.

A very relevant example of forbearance is taken from the life of Nelson Mandela. Most of us will have seen, heard or read some of the many tributes made about him in the recent weeks since his death.

For Mandela patience was more about persistence than submission, he himself said that "Prison itself is a tremendous education in the need for patience and perseverance. It is above all a test of one's commitment." Mandela did not waste his years on Robben Island, neither did he spend it plotting revenge, rather he lived out his beliefs on a daily basis, sometimes in the face of incredible hardship. His behaviour towards other people, both inmates and guards, while there was transformational to many, indeed it was in no small part due to the conviction of the guards that this was a good man, whose influence had the potential for inspiring change, that the campaign to release him took hold. In 1994, in the face of an attempt to veto democratic elections by a far-right coalition, Mandela addressed an ANC rally in Pietersburg, Northern Transvaal. He reassured the crowd that he remained prepared to go down on his knees to ensure peace in South Africa and that: 'We must develop absolute patience and the ability to understand the fears of others . . . These are temporary setbacks.' Whilst there is, undoubtedly, a special quality about waiting for something to happen, like reunions, holidays or the excitement many of us feel about giving gifts that we know the people we care about will love. Yet this focus on a future event, however near, should never wipe out the value of the present, even our impatience can be a good thing, if our frustrations cause us to hope, therefore strive, for better things (Romans 8).

As God's people we are called to live in the 'in-between' time, to recognise its value while looking forward to the day when the Kingdom comes, not allowing that hope to overpower our awareness of, and concern for, the present.

In the gospel reading we find a warning about complacency, yes John is a great teacher, but the people should still look for more. People with 'everything' by worldly standards often seem to think that they need do not look for more. We are called to recognise the value, needs and gifts of our fellow people, to recognise Christ both in them and in all the good work already being done around us. Most of all we are called to join in, to bring it to the attention of others, to commend those involved and support it by our prayers and actions. In such a way, by our patience and persistence, the kingdom is brought ever closer as we seek to be a people that Christ would be pleased to call his own. *Jane Mason*

Meditation

You are a good Christian person and you are finding things rough, perhaps you might be tempted to ask why God doesn't do something to help you out? If you did then perhaps you would understand the same feelings which John the Baptist had. He had lived a good life, done everything which God asked of him and now he is in prison. He had promised in his preaching that the Messiah would come and his appearance would be obvious because

His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

John also spoke of the Messiah as one having an axe laid to the root. The imagery would be familiar to his hearers who knew all about agriculture and life in the field, but he uses it in a violent way. The winnowing fork is not used to sift wheat, it is not weeds which are to be burned and destroyed - the Messiah is coming to destroy people!

So imagine how John would have felt, the Messiah was here and yet there was no winnowing fork, no axe, no unquenchable fire. John must have wondered what on earth was going on, in exactly the same way that people often rail against God when a young or a good person dies. So the doubts that we feel about God in the face of human suffering are those same doubts which John had when he expressed his disappointment at Jesus and asked whether he was a fraud and they should look elsewhere.

We, like John the Baptist, have to consider our idea of what Jesus is like and what we expect him to do for us. Like John we need to see that Jesus does not overturn evil by overpowering bad human beings and casting them into a fiery furnace. He does not establish a new kingdom on this earth by removing all the chaff into unquenchable fire. Those locked in prison like John, or those suffering from the inevitable pains of being locked in frail human flesh might be tempted to feel disappointed that Jesus never axed down all the bad people and redistributed wealth to his followers like in any good revolution. However Jesus wasn't just another leader of violent revolution, he came to change hearts and bring healing with words of forgiveness not violence. It's down to each one of us to share in making real change in our world as we work for justice and peace, for compassion and grace. It is as we do this joyfully that we find release for ourselves and others. *Charles Royden*

Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

Lord, I believe in Thee, help Thou mine unbelief. I love Thee, yet not with a perfect heart as I would. I long for Thee, yet not with my full strength. I trust in Thee, yet not with my whole mind. Accept my faith, my love, my longing to know and serve Thee, my trust in Thy power to keep me. I wait Thy blessing. Through Jesus Christ my Lord. *Malcolm Spencer*

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.

Father in heaven! When the thought of thee wakes in our hearts let it not awaken like a frightened bird that flies about in dismay, but like a child waking from its sleep with a heavenly smile. *Søren Kierkegaard, 1813-55*

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.

Putnoe large Christmas Card is ready for your messages from this Sunday and the post box is also available to post your cards at 10p each

Christmas closure at St. Mark's Church Office
The office will be closed from 1pm Tuesday 24 December and will reopen 9am Monday 6 January.

Christmas closure at Putnoe Heights Church Office. The office will be closed from 1.00pm Friday 20th December and reopen on Monday 6 January.

Carol Singing Putnoe Heights Church will be singing carols at Library Walk on Saturday 21 December 11am—12noon. All welcome to come and sing in aid of BeChar. Meet at Putnoe Heights Church at 10.30am for tea/coffee beforehand. Refreshments will be served in the small hall afterwards.

Putnoe Provender Last Sunday's sale raised the magnificent sum of £245 in aid of the Ethiopian Honey Appeal. Many thanks to all who contributed.
John & Sally Gunning.

Members of St Mark's Craft Stall would like to thank everyone for their support and are pleased to say they have made £860 for the Christmas Fayre.

Chat and Play at St. Mark's finishes on Thursday 12 December and restarts on 16 January 2014

Chat and Make at St. Mark's finishes on 9 December and restarts on Monday 13 January 2014

Story Box at St Mark's finishes on the 19 December and starts again on 9 January 2014

Bedford Town Band Internationally renowned soloist at Putnoe Heights: Bedford Town Band are holding their Christmas Concert at Putnoe Heights on Friday 20 December at 7.30. The concert will feature David Thornton, currently Principal Euphonium with The Brighthouse & Rastrick Band, as guest soloist. Tickets £8 & £6 at the door or at Frescoes Coffee House, Mill Street, Bedford.

Christmas Cards at St Mark's A board will be available at the back of Church for anyone who wishes to send Christmas Greetings to their friends at St Mark's.

Action for Children Thank you to all who sang Carols at the station last Friday and raised the sum of £233. Santa was in his grotto to the delight of several children and the station staff looked after the singers well. There was a real Christmassy buzz as the rail passengers appreciated our efforts and gave so generously to the Charity.

Footprints Walking Group. New Year's Day Walk. Wednesday 1 January, 2014. All welcome to join us at the start of the year. Meet at St. Mark's Church at 10.30am for gentle 2-3 mile walk via Anjulita Court and Clapham Wood. Lunch afterwards at Putnoe Heights Church. Sue Allen

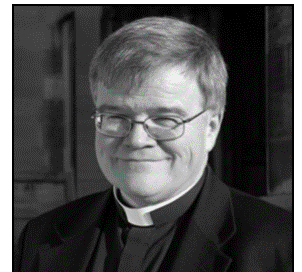
Putnoe Heights New Year Lunch Sunday 19 January 2014. Starter, roast, dessert, wines and coffee. Tickets now available from Putnoe Office or after Sunday services. £8.00 (£4.50 children under 10)

Nominations for High Sheriff's Awards Sought
Nominations for the High Sheriff's Citizenship Awards in Bedfordshire are now being sought. If you know of someone who has given their time freely to their community and who deserves to be recognised, nominate them now. For more information, <http://voluntaryworks.org/news/nominations-high-sheriff%E2%80%99s-awards-sought> here

Thank you to all who turned out to help deliver St Mark's Christmas newspaper we got out nearly 3,000 which is fantastic

Partnership Council are reminded that they are invited to The Vicarage Christmas Party next Sunday 22 December at 1.00pm - please tell Corinne if you are able to come corinneroyden@gmail.com

**The Very Reverend
Dr Jeffrey John
Dean of St Albans
Cathedral**



will be returning to
BELIEF to speak on

Means of Grace

Saturday, 22nd February, 2014
10.00am to 1.00pm
St Andrew's Church Centre,
Kimbolton Road,
Bedford MK40 2PF
£10 per person, payable on the day

To book and reserve a place, please use the slip below or register in the 'Contact' section of

www.beliefbeds.org, email
belief@standrewsbedford.org
or phone 01234 330314





£4,500

Autumn Mission Project

A huge thank you to everyone who has contributed to this year's Autumn Mission Project, 'A Sweeter Deal'. Across the Partnership we have raised £4500 which is a tremendous outcome and once again demonstrates the mission hearted generosity of everyone in the churches. In addition to the very substantial financial donations, thank you for your giving of time and talents to this project. As we know, sums such as the one raised by our Partnership make a significant and long lasting difference to the lives of those we are supporting, in Ethiopia this year, and over the years in many different parts of the world, including Bedford. Once again, thank you. *Sam Cappleman*



Lighting of the 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

Last Sunday we the lit the Candles of Hope and Peace.
(A person now 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.

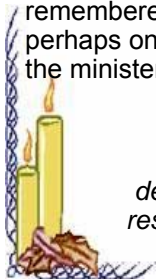
Bible Reading Matthew Chapter 3

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.'

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.'



Leader:

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, just and true: to you be praise and glory for ever. Your prophet John the Baptist was witness to the truth as a burning and shining light. May we your servants rejoice in his light, and so be led to witness to him who is the Lord of our coming kingdom, Jesus our Saviour and King of the ages. Blessed be God for ever.
(A person now lights the third candle)

Leader: Let us pray:

All: Lord Jesus, light of the world, John told the people to prepare, for you were very near. As Christmas grows closer day by day, help us to be ready to welcome you now.

New Noticeboard for Putnoe

Our church noticeboard at Putnoe was in a sorry state after a vehicle collided with it. We now a splendid new board and we are grateful to Barry Southam and those who have helped him arrange the replacement. There will be a short act of dedication after the service this morning.

If anybody feels moved to help contribute towards the new board then donations will be gratefully received by John Hitt.



**When you do your
Christmas shopping please
shop at [www.
ThisChurch.com](http://www.ThisChurch.com)**

Thank you for shopping using the link on ThisChurch.com to shop through Amazon. Please be careful to make sure that you never access Amazon direct but always use the link on ThisChurch.com, this ensures we get a donation every time you make a purchase.



Please also remember the Easyfundraising link. This is really a very good way to shop as it has lots of voucher codes which can save you a fortune on purchases and we receive a commission. You can

Forthcoming Funerals



The funeral of Christine Marie Pamment will take place at the Crematorium at 10-00am on Monday 16th December.