

Methodist  
Church

# Partnership News

## 15 January 2012

### Covenant and Renewal of Baptism



Church of  
England

#### Partnership Church Services Today

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

#### Today

**9.30 am St. Mark's - Holy Communion**  
Preacher - Mrs Liz Little  
Leadership – Mrs Laura Farthing  
Intercessions – Mrs Morag Stewart  
**11.00 am Putnoe - Holy Communion**  
Preacher – Mrs Liz Little  
Leadership - Mrs Jean Kirk  
Intercessions - Mrs Sue Allen

#### 22 January

**9.30am St Mark's - Morning Worship**  
Preacher - Revd Dr Sam Cappleman  
Leadership – Mrs Jean Bank  
Intercessions - Mr Chris Izzard  
**11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship**  
Preacher - Revd Dr Sam Cappleman  
Leadership - Mrs Veta Hudson Rae  
Intercessions –Mrs Sylvia Cohen

#### Bible Readings

1. Jonah 3: 1-5, 10 2.1 Corinthians 7: 29-31  
3. Mark 1: 14-20

**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 Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Derrick Wren in loving memory of his wife Betty.

The flowers at Putnoe last week were given by Gwen Beswick and family in loving memory of Peter, and by Irene McKenzie in loving memory of Eddie on his birthday.

The flowers in St Mark's Church this week are given by June Churm in memory of her husband Cecil Derek and in the Chapel by Barbara Joy and family in loving memory of Alan.

#### Prayer for the Week

O LORD, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, O LORD, you know it completely. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it. For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. *Psalm 139*

#### The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

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

#### Deacon Jane Mason

12 Hartop Close, Bedford MK41 8HE  
348091 Mobile 07807 146535  
jane@thisischurch.com

#### The Reverend Charles Royden

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

#### For Data Protection Purposes

Please note that any items submitted for inclusion in Partnership News will automatically be posted on our website and may appear in other local media sources.

Partnership News is also archived on our church website [www.ThisIsChurch.com](http://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 Geoff Gypps 365630 mob 07947 902846  
**Leadership Team** Mrs. Linda Hoare 782717  
**Treasurer** Mr Ian Morse 21428 treasurerph@thisischurch.com  
**Gift Aid Administrator** John Hitt 404186  
**Youth Worker** Emma Gordon email - 07593266091 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** - Laura Farthing 210892  
**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 –3.45 pm Mon and Wed/ 9.15-12.15pm Tues/Thurs/ Fri. Putnoe Heights Pre-school.** See website for more details [www.ThisChurch.com](http://www.ThisChurch.com)

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)

**.9.45am - 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 (see contact details below)

**12.15pm 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. Contact Emma Gordon ☎07593266091

**2.00pm U3A History Group** St Marks.(see contact details below)

**2pm U3A Music Appreciation** - (see contact details below)

**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

☎01767699399 or 07720713738.

**6.15 Pilates** at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859

6.15 - 8.15pm

**6.30pm Weightwatchers.** St. Mark's Sam Thompson

☎07766421000

**7.15pm Fit for Life Yoga** - Putnoe Heights Contact Jane Butcher ☎07891879571

**7.00pm Sugarcraft Guild** St Mark's 1st week Pat Nicholson ☎353518

**7.00pm Cancer Care Society.** St Mark's. 1st Week. Mr J Dewhurst ☎01908 377020

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

**7.30pm Whist Drive.** St Mark's 3rd & 5th week . Next meeting– 16th January Judith Stanton. ☎823313

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

**8pm '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 ☎07790206016

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

**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** (see contact details below)

**1.15pm Toddlers Playtime/Sing & Stomp** - Putnoe Heights for toddlers and their carers.Run by Putnoe Childre's Centre Trudy Hamilton ☎340552

**1.15pm U3A Cinema Group.** St Mark's (see contact

details below)

**2.00pm U3A Book Group 1** St Mark's (3rd Wk) (see contact details below)

**2.00pm U3A Book Group 2** St Mark's (2nd Wk) (see contact details

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

**2pm U3A Photography Group 3** St. Mark's (1st Wk) (see contact details below).

**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.

**6.30pm Creative Card making.** Putnoe Heights Church. Carol Houghton ☎346718

**6.15pm Pilates** St Mark's Church Jane Butcher ☎07891879571

**7pm Keep Fit.** St. Mark's Jan Gregory ☎328455

**7pm MT Karate** [all ages] Putnoe Heights. Karen King ☎07941 264885

**7pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Bible study & prayers. Sacha Ojo ☎07590597891 or [www.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk](http://www.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk)

**7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club** - Meets fortnightly. Next meeting January 24 Quiz and Chat Eileen Mariott at Putnoe. 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.

**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.(see contact details below)

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

**10am U3A Card Making,**St Marks (see contact details below)

**12.30pm Luncheon Club.** Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next meeting 18 January 2012 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

**1.45 Scots Society Whist** Putnoe monthly .All welcome Nancy Barr ☎268147

**2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft** St Marks.(see contact details below)

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

**3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church.** St Mark's (3rd Wk). for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 18th January Wendy Waters401834

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

**6.00 pm Brownies.** St Mark's. Mrs Carol Warden  
☎219731

**6.00pm Shooting Stars.** Youth Group for 9-13yrs at Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Contact Emma Gordon 365630.

**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 will be 18 January 2012. Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Ring Valmai 219555 Rosemary 405594 or Graham 406359 for more details.

**8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club** St Mark's 1st week in the month. Jean Ross ☎771870

### Thursday

**9.30am Thursday Prayer Group.** Putnoe Heights. Valerie Capon ☎356306 .

*Request for prayer can be written in the prayer diary on the information table.*

**9.45am Yoga** Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎244970

**8.00am Chat and Play** St.Mark's. A group for Mums & toddlers. Jo Garner 400071 or 07719670624 Restarts on 12 January 2012

**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 1st and 3rd Thursdays** St. Mark's ☎267444

**1.30pm Toddler Playtime.** Putnoe Majella Atkinson ☎325293

**1.45 Friendly Chicago Bridge at Putnoe Heights** £2 per session inc. refreshments. New members welcome. Contact Pat 01234 294220.

**2pm Putnoe Bridge Club.** Gerald Palmer ☎345991

**2-4pm U3A Indoor Games.** St.Marks.(see contact details below)

**2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society** St Marks Mary Rich ☎272470

**6.15 pm Weightwatchers.** St. Mark's. Clare Martin 07805408811.

**6.15pm Brownies.** Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins

**6.30-7.30pm Bootcamp/Circuits. (Fitness)** St Marks. Laura Amor.341152. 07976259081.

**7.00pm Club 2000** Putnoe Heights Nina Ovenden ☎825059

**7pm U3A Folk & Poetry** St Marks (2nd and 4th week) (see contact details below)

**7.15pm Putnoe Art Group** Bob Wardale ☎406094

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

**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 Pat Cass ☎294220

**8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group** St Mark's 1st and 3rd week in month. Ann Pallister ☎272906

### Friday

**10am -12.00 U3A Photography** St Marks.(4th week)((see contact details below)

**10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French** St.Marks (see contact details below)

**2.00-4.00 pm Whist** St Marks.Patricia Holland.☎262823

**5-8pm Stars School of Dance** Putnoe Heights Contact Esther Richardson ☎295862 or ☎07917 582468

**6.00-7.00pm Zumba at St Mark's.** Contact Laura Harrow ☎07834529833

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

**7.45 - 10.45pm Bedford Astrology Club.**St Marks(2nd week) 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

**6.45pm 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 Sacha Ojo ☎07590597891 or [www.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk](http://www.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk)

**U3A** For information on the U3A groups meeting at St Mark's and Putnoe Heights Church please contact Yvonne Francis ☎405119



## Diary Dates



**St Mark's Church Council** – 21 February 2012

**St Mark's Leadership Team** - 16 February 2012

**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team** - 25th Jan 2012

7.30pm at 24 Loring Rd. Sharnbrook.

**Putnoe Heights Management Meeting** - Mon. 23rd

Jan 2012 7.30 Putnoe Meeting Room

**St Mark's Forum Meeting** - NA

**Putnoe Church Council** - 13 February 2012

**Pastoral Group Meeting** -

**Churchyard Committee** -

**Brickhill Parish Council Meetings** -

**Circuit meeting** - 8 February 2012 @ Kempston East

**Deanery Meeting**

**Woodland Burial Trustees** – 5th February 12.30pm

**Putnoe Heights Children &**

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

## Covenant and Renewal of Baptismal Vows

### Opening Verse of Scripture -

*Deuteronomy Chapter 29 verse 12* You are standing here in order to enter into a covenant with the Lord your God



### Collect Prayer (*Before we read we pray*)

God of grace, through the mediation of your Son, you call us into a new covenant. Help us therefore to draw near with faith and join ourselves in a perpetual covenant with you, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### A Reading from the Law- Exodus 24: 3-11

When Moses went and told the people all the LORD's words and laws, they responded with one voice, "Everything the LORD has said we will do." Moses then wrote down everything the LORD had said. He got up early the next morning and built an altar at the foot of the mountain and set up twelve stone pillars representing the twelve tribes of Israel. Then he sent young Israelite men, and they offered burnt offerings and sacrificed young bulls as fellowship offerings to the LORD. Moses took half of the blood and put it in bowls, and the other half he splashed against the altar. Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read it to the people. They responded, "We will do everything the LORD has said; we will obey." Moses then took the blood, sprinkled it on the people and said, "This is the blood of the covenant that the LORD has made with you in accordance with all these words." Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and the seventy elders of Israel went up and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was something like a pavement made of lapis lazuli, as bright blue as the sky. But God did not raise his hand against these leaders of the Israelites; they saw God, and they ate and drank

(This is the Word of the Lord **All: Thanks be to God**)

### A Reading from the Prophets - Jeremiah 31: 31-33

"The days are coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and with the people of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their ancestors when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them, declares the LORD. "This is the covenant I will make with the people of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

(This is the Word of the Lord **All: Thanks be to God**)

### A Reading from the Epistles—Romans 12: 1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will

### A Reading from the Gospels - Mark 14: 22-25

While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and they all drank from it. "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them. "Truly I tell you, I will not drink again from the fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new in the kingdom of God."

(This is the Gospel of Christ **All: Praise to Christ our Lord**)

**Post Communion Prayer** Lord of all time and eternity, you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son: by the power of your Spirit complete the heavenly work of our rebirth through the waters of the new creation through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Hymns *(Please distribute Hymns and Psalms and Covenant booklets)*

1. Guide me O thou great Jehovah 432
2. Hail to the Lord's anointed 125 *(at St Mark's)*
2. Every star shall sing a carol *(Choir item at Putnoe)*
3. No longer Mine *(on Partnership News)*
4. O Jesus I have promised 704

## Commentary

Did you make any New Year resolutions, or were you just too busy even to think about it? Most peoples' resolutions seem to be about improving their bodies, things like cutting down on alcohol, stopping smoking. The magazines are full of diet articles. The car parks at the gyms are overcrowded, the streets are littered full of breathless people running for the first time in twenty years. It is "new year, new you" time. Every now and again it is helpful for us to stop and take stock of every aspect of our lives and I suppose that January the time of new beginnings, is as good as any other. Wesley, who was an astute judge of human nature, recognised that a regular spiritual health check was vital to the well-being of every member of the church. Accordingly he established an annual service of renewal of baptismal vows and Christian promises. The theme which underpinned Wesley's theological formulation of the service was the kind of relationship that the new Covenant implies between God and his people.

At one stage Wesley envisaged that the Covenant promise would develop the idea of a marriage between God and his people. It is a very ancient idea. As we heard in the Old Testament reading today, Jeremiah spoke of God as being "as a husband" to his chosen people. It was an idea which John Wesley found deeply appealing, setting up a model of a relationship which is at once intimate, responsible and permanent. But because it is a Covenant, a contract between God and humanity, it implies that there is responsibility on both sides. Humanity must acknowledge its need of God, obedience to his Law and God will not forsake his people. Wesley developed the ideas in Paul's letter to the Ephesians 5.21-33) in which the idea of Christ being wedded to the Church is intertwined with exhortations to married couples. Christ is mystically wedded to us, both as a community and as individuals, a bond which is indissoluble, constant and faithful. With this theme of God as the husband, Wesley looked to the Marriage Service in the Book of Common Prayer for inspiration. In this early version the person making the Covenant was to take Jesus as "my Head and Husband, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, for all times and conditions, to love, honour and obey thee before all others, and this to the death". This version was dropped in favour of the one we all know and love. But it is worth exploring the analogy of marriage (to a limited extent) with our relationship with God. In retrospect we can see why Wesley dropped the theme because it was too much intertwined with problems: men would have to vow to take Christ as their husband which would have dented their male pride; women would have felt that Christ was identified with a state in which they were less equal than men. Marriage then as now was a problematic institution and Wesley was wise to move away from it as the foundation for the Covenant service. But there are some aspects of the idea that the relationship between God and humanity is a marriage are worth considering. Wesley retained the central idea of the Covenant Service which was that our relationship with God is evolving, changing and developing. As in a close relationship with another person, changes in environment, circumstances or experience cause us to change. As we change we move to a slightly different place in our relationship with God. Wesley believed that God's grace and love constantly prompts and seeks to transform us, and chooses that the relationship should be a dynamic and changing one. The yearly renewal of Baptismal vows and renewing of the Covenant is an opportunity for appraisal of self and the relationship with God. This morning we will take a chance to reflect, how have I changed in my thinking about God, in my worshipping of God? Have I moved further from God? Do I feel closer to Him most of the time? Where would I like to stand with God?

In earlier times we might have been asked to publicly account for any "backsliding" that might have gone on in the last year. But this is not a phrase that we now hear and I am sure it would infringe peoples' privacy to ask them intrusive questions. But today is an occasion on which we can interrogate ourselves, be fearless in challenging ourselves and resolve to do better.

It was part of Wesley's design that we should make our Covenant at a service when there was a celebration of the Lord's Supper, so that honesty and renewal was set in the context of the act of Christ's loving sacrifice of himself for us, symbolised in the sacrament. When we reach out to God, in the covenant or in any other way, the loving response is immediate and all encompassing. So we pray that in this New Year we may find a deeper value for God's love and reflect it out into the world. Amen

## Meditation

*I am no longer my own but yours. Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will; put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you or laid aside for you, exalted for you or brought low for you; let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing; I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal. Glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it. Let this covenant now made on earth be fulfilled in heaven. Amen.*

**I am no longer my own but yours.** The first line is about letting go of control and acknowledging God's power over our lives. What that really means in practical terms is explored in the next sentence.

**Put me to what you will, rank me with whom you will,** these lines remind us of one of the preoccupations of the eighteenth century, with social rank, mixing in the right society. In our age we have other obsessions, more to do with wealth than class. But for Wesley's age, loss of rank was truly terrifying, and the willingness to be placed in the wrong order of society was a brave, heroic self-sacrifice.

**Put me to doing, put me to suffering; let me be employed for you or laid aside for you.** These lines further submit to God's will in how and where we serve him. It acknowledges the possibility that God might seem not to want our service! Somebody with a mental or physical illness may find these words very helpful, that inactivity might as much a part of God's plan as activity. God might just desire our willingness to be patient and wait upon Him.

**Let me be exalted for you or brought low for you** these few sparse words are rich in content, hinting at the whole issue of success and suggesting that they are not of any importance, that it is for God to decide what constitutes success not the admiration of the world. Obsessed as we all are by self-esteem and seeming in control, this phrase cuts us down to size.

**Let me be full, let me be empty, let me have all things, let me have nothing** These words are very clever because they could just be about having possessions, or life's blessings, they could also be about health, spiritual and mental. The last lines in this section of the passage pack the decisive punch

**I freely and wholeheartedly yield all things to your pleasure and disposal.** It marks a total giving over of self into God's hands, to be used or not as He chooses. It takes incredible courage to acknowledge that God has the power over us and courage to offer ourselves, not just as and when we feel like it, but as God requires. The final section is a kind of drawing together, reminding one almost of a marriage service, an exchange of selves.

**Glorious and blessed God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, you are mine and I am yours. So be it. Let this covenant now made on earth be fulfilled in heaven. Amen.** We don't just give in this service we also receive. We gain, in exchange for our self-giving, the presence of God. We gain far more than we are giving. The great conundrum of self-giving is that we gamble ourselves and always win. But giving over of power takes courage. In the words we say collectively, we promise again to make the leap of faith and to give ourselves without knowing the outcome, what it will mean, where it might take us. But we have our tradition, the experience of those who have gone before us, to encourage us to step out into the future.

## Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead

For me, prayer is a surge of the heart; it is a simple look turned toward heaven, it is a cry of recognition and of love, embracing both trial and joy. *Thérèse of Lisieux 1873-1897*

God of the Covenant, I place my life in your hands – for it to be yours to direct and not mine. May you decide what I should do and with whom I should do it; May you guide when I should be active and when I should rest; May you sustain me when I am well and when I suffer; May you be reflected in me when I am praised and when I am challenged; May I give thanks to you when I enjoy abundance, and when I know what it is to go without; May my whole life be given in service of your love and salvation, use all that I have and all that I am for your purposes; And may I always remember that you, O God, and I belong to each other. This is my commitment - I stand by it. And I ask that you, Jesus, bear witness to it. Amen. *A translation of the traditional Methodist Covenant Prayer by John van de Laar*

**A Concert to Celebrate the new organ at St Mark's Church** Sunday February 12 at 6.30pm  
From Clive Simmonds. I have asked two friends of mine to join me on Sunday, 12 February 2012 at 6.30pm for a concert to celebrate the arrival of our new organ at St Mark's. They are both professional musicians and singers and they live in the Scottish lowlands in almost the highest village in Scotland. Stewart Kempster is a bass who sings both solo and chorus work professionally in a wide range of venues. He has sung in a number of Covent Garden productions and is frequently involved as soloist in oratorios and a wide range of other solo performances both in this country and abroad. His wife, Taylor Wilson (Tracey to her friends) is a mezzo-soprano and has, for many years been involved in Scottish Opera. She performs regularly as soloist in a wide range of different styles – from cabaret and jazz to many varied classical styles - in many different countries. She is also often involved in Scottish Opera's Educational projects taking suitable productions into schools. We plan to share a time together at St Mark's of very varied music - songs from many styles, plus a few organ lollipops (Bach – Toccata and Fugue in D Minor and Widor's Toccata) and a couple of favourite hymns, so that there is plenty for all to enjoy. Please book the date in your diary and bring others with you who might appreciate the occasion.

**Our "Annual Unwanted Gift Stall"** will take place at Putnoe following Worship on 5 February. Please bring in your items for us to sell in aid of Church funds. Always a bargain to be had!! Thank you for your support. Liz and Carolyn.

**Hazeldene Heights Preschool**– We are looking for an Early Years Practitioner to work 1-1 with a child with additional needs on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.15am to 12.15pm, on a temporary basis. Previous experience would be preferable together with some knowledge of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Please ask Mrs Smith or Mrs Leggett at Preschool for further details or a copy of the Person Specification details. Hazeldene Heights Preschool has a statutory duty to Safeguard and Protect children in their care, all employees would be required to complete an enhanced CRB disclosure and undertake a basic Safeguarding course.

**Music for the New Year** The Ouse Valley Singers and Kempston Musical Society, Soloists Min-Min The, soprano and Michael Everett, trumpet to be held on 21 January 7.30pm at Priory Methodist Church, Newnham Avenue, Bedford. Tickets £7 includes a buffet available from Priory Methodist Church Office 01234 353523. Proceeds for the Karibuni Trust. Working with orphans and street children in Kenya.

**Messy Church.** The next messy church takes place at St Mark's Church Community Centre on Wednesday 18 January. Messy Church is for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. For more details contact Wendy Waters 401834. We are always looking for more volunteers, please speak with Wendy Waters if you can offer time between 3.30pm and 5.30pm



**Employment Opportunities** Kings Arms is looking for two full time project workers to work in their homes. For more details see [www.kingsarmsproject.org/](http://www.kingsarmsproject.org/)

**Training opportunity focused upon dementia**  
St. Nicholas' Church Hall, Church Road, Barton-le-Cley, Beds MK45 4LA Saturday 18 February 2012 09.45a.m. – 4.30 p.m. The cost of the day is £10. The Secretary, Diocesan Community Care Group, 'Elmwood', 452, New Bedford Road, Luton, Beds. LU3 2BA. Email: [lynda.logan@btinternet.com](mailto:lynda.logan@btinternet.com) Tel. No. 01582 585400

**Holocaust Memorial Day Commemorations**  
Friday 27 January. The first part of the commemoration events takes place around the Anne Frank Tree in Russell Park, between Pembroke and Bower Street at 12.30pm. After a short walk back to Borough Hall a second commemoration will commence at 1.30pm in the Council Chamber. The Theme for this year's commemoration is "Speak Up, Speak Out". The second part will be multi-faith and inclusive, and it is anticipated that it will last for about 40 minutes. Afterwards light refreshments will be served. Contact: [denise.malone@bedford.gov.uk](mailto:denise.malone@bedford.gov.uk).



**St Albans Woodland Burial Ground** We were delighted to hear last week that our application for planning permission has been approved. This allows us to extend our woodland burial ground by a further 10 acres. This is not part of a plan to bury lots more people, but rather allows us to set aside land and protect it by consecration from any alternative use. The larger woodland allows us more opportunities to think about sustainability, bio-diversity and woodland management. The next Open Day is on Saturday May 12, worth putting in the diary now .

**Lunch Club** - Please note that Lunch Club will be cancelled at Putnoe on Wednesday 1 February

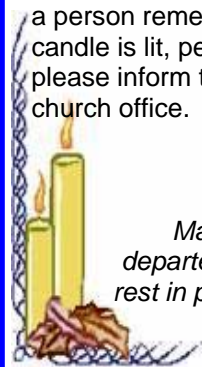
## Hymn for Sunday

- 1 No longer mine Lord, but yours  
what e'er the fight Lord, your cause,  
let me have all things, let me have naught,  
take every word Lord, and every thought,  
I gladly yield to your command,  
no longer mine, no longer mine but yours.
- 2 No longer mine Lord, but yours  
to do with me as you desire.  
To be exalted or laid aside,  
take vain ambition and selfish pride.  
Let me be humbled, you glorified,  
no longer mine, no longer mine but yours.
- 3 No longer mine Lord, but yours  
the sovereign Lord who we adore.  
We bow before you, our glorious King,  
our very lives Lord, we freely bring.  
A covenant human and divine,  
no longer mine, no longer mine but yours.

**Fancy a spring holiday** in the delightful county of Kent? Join our ninth group holiday to Cliftonville at the Walpole Bay Hotel from April 30 to May 4 2012. The hotel is situated on the cliff top with spectacular sea views and there are many miles of superb level walks along the cliffs directly outside the door. Excursions include visits to Broadstairs, the fishing town of Whitstable and Canterbury (with its splendid cathedral, Roman remains and fine shopping). Accommodation half-board for four nights, all rooms have en-suite, tea/coffee- making facilities and colour television. Lift serves all rooms. Cost £310 per person includes lunch on days of departure and return as well as return coach travel to and from Priory Churchard full portorage but not entrance fees to any attractions. Please contact Pauline and John Bassill on 01234 325227 or email [johnbassill@live.co.uk](mailto:johnbassill@live.co.uk)

## 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.'*

# Sleep Out 2012

## Survive a night under the stars

Fancy a night under the stars? Want to help out in some way with the King's Arms Project, but can't commit to doing something every week? If you are up for a challenge that helps significantly, then this could be for you. A night 'sleeping rough' and raising money for the Project at the same time. Starts 9:00 p.m. Friday 17 February 2012 - finishes 8:00 a.m. Saturday morning...  
Venue: King's House, 245 Amptill Road, Bedford MK42 9AZ Contact tel: 350900

## Rest in Peace

Members of our churches will be saddened to hear news of the death this week of The Reverend Trevor Noble. Trevor has been a faithful minister and member of our church at Putnoe Heights since his retirement from full time ministry. Whilst not conducting worship many people will remember that he devoted his time to visiting the elderly and housebound for some years. A service will be held at Putnoe Heights Church at 1.00pm on Wednesday 1 February at 1.00pm. Our thoughts and prayers are with Jennie and the family.



## Forthcoming Funerals

**The funeral of Joan Lawrence** will take place at 4.0p.m. on Wednesday 18 January at the Crematorium

**The funeral of Gladys Mary Judd** will take place at 12.15p.m. on Monday 23 January at Bedford Crematorium

**The funeral of Terence Makinson** will take place at 10.0a.m on Wednesday 25 January at the Crematorium

**The funeral of Christine Victoria Fox** will take place at St Mark's Church at 3.15p.m. on Monday 30 January followed by Cremation

**The funeral of Christine Saunders** will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Friday 27 January at 1.45pm

**The funeral of James Rowles** will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Friday 20th January at 10.45am

**The funeral of The Reverend Trevor Noble** will take place at Putnoe Heights Church on February 1 at 1.00pm