

# Partnership News

16 December  
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

### Today 16 December

#### 9.30am St Mark's – Holy Communion

Preacher - Revd Dr Sam Cappleman  
Leadership - Mrs Laura Farthing  
Intercessions - Mrs Morag Stewart

#### 11.00 am Putnoe - Holy Communion

Preacher - Revd Dr Sam Cappleman  
Leadership – Mrs Jean Kirk  
Intercessions - Mrs Sue Allen

### Sunday 23 December

#### 9.30 St Marks Church – Morning Worship

Preacher –Mr John Ayers  
Leadership - Mrs Elizabeth Bean  
Intercessions –Mr Chris Izzard

#### 11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher –Mr John Ayres  
Leadership –Mrs Veta Hudson-Rae  
Intercessions—Mrs Sylvia Cohen

**Readings** 1. Micah 5:2-5a 2. Hebrews 10: 5-10  
3. Luke 1: 39-45

**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

## Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Chris Nixon on the occasion of the wedding of her son Captain Kenny Nixon to Miss Natalie May at Fort Amherst in Kent.

*We are grateful when people make donations towards flowers perhaps to celebrate a special occasion such as an anniversary or in memory of a loved one. Please contact Miss Marion Prior 303254 (St. Mark's) or Ann Hitt 404186 (Putnoe Heights) or add your name to the rota on the foyers*

## Prayer for Sunday

Grant us grace, O God,  
to take your Son for our Redeemer,  
his life for our example,  
his word for our rule,  
his Spirit for our guide,  
his wounds for our healing  
and his cross for our salvation,  
that he may take possession  
of our hearts, now and for ever. Amen.

*Jeremy Taylor (1613-1657)*

### 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 Mills

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

**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](http://www.ThisChurch.com)

### Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator

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.*

### 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. Jean Kirk 317699  
**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** - Morag Stewart 360103

# Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

## Monday

**9.15 –3.45 pm Mon and Wed/ 9.15-12.15pm Tues/ Thurs/Fri. Hazeldene Heights Pre-school.** See website for more details [www.ThisChurch.com](http://www.ThisChurch.com)  
Head teacher Mrs Laura Leggett 326685  
**8.30-5.30pm Pre-school** Mon-Fri St Mark's  
**9.-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 Berry 211955  
**10.30am U3A Play reading** St Mark's (see contact details below)  
**2.00pm U3A Calligraphy** at St Mark's 2nd week (see contact details below)  
**2.00pm U3A Relaxation & Meditation** at St Mark's 1st & 3rd week starting 1st October (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 Carolyn Morris [youth@thisischurch.com](mailto:youth@thisischurch.com) 365630  
**1.30-2.45pm Chat and Make** For babies and toddlers 0-5.  
Crafts, toys,songs,story and refreshments £1. More details email– [chatandplay@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chatandplay@hotmail.co.uk) . Restarts on 10 September  
**2pm U3A Music Appreciation** (see contact details below)  
**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 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– 17 December Judith Stanton. 823313  
**7.30pm House group** 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck 267567  
**7.45pm Opus Choir** at St Mark's Mrs Sutherland 269100  
**8pm 'Get Fit, Stay Fit'** at Putnoe 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 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)  
**1pm –2.30pm Drop in Wiggles and Jiggles** 0-5 years,

Putnoe Children's Centre. Please call Trudy Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information 340552  
**1.15pm U3A Cinema Group.** St Mark's (contacts 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) (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.  
**4.00pm-6.15pm Stars School of Dance.** Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468  
**6.15pm 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  
**6.30pm MT Karate** (all ages) Karen King 07941264885  
**7pm Keep Fit.** St. Mark's Jan Gregory 328455  
**7pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Bible study & prayers. Sacha Ojo 07590597891 or [www.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk](http://www.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk)  
**7pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club** (Meets fortnightly). Janet King 313946 Next meeting 8 January 2.30pm Afternoon. Details Janet King 313946  
**8.15pm - 10.15pm Bedford Advanced Dancers Workshop** St. Mark's 1st Tuesday in month. Shirley Sadler 01767 651767

## Wednesday

**9am -1pm Machine Knitting** group at Putnoe Heights, fortnightly. Contact Marion Sutton 217647  
**9.30am Body Control Pilates.** Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430.  
**9.30am Discovery & Do** (Childminders) St. Mark's. Clare Simmons 328380 or 07788824666  
**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. (contact 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)  
**10am U3A Diet and Nutrition-** Putnoe (contact below)  
**11.15am U3A Keep Fit**  
**12.30pm Luncheon Club.** Putnoe fortnightly. Next meeting 16 January 2013 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** St Marks.(see contact details below)  
**2.00pm Fifty Plus Keep Fit** Mrs Webster 856966  
**2pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan**  
**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 12 December. Wendy Waters /401834

**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.

**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. Sylvia Woods 365095

**7.00pm Putnoe Guild** Putnoe monthly Mrs O Holt 266004

**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 19 December. Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. 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 No meeting on 1 November.

*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 term time group for Mums & toddlers.0-5 Jo Garner 400071 or 07719670624

**110-11.30am Gentle Yoga** For more details contact Helen Nicholson Tel.03003004305

**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

**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 (contact below)

**2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society** St Mark's Mary Rich 272470

**6.15 pm 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) (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 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 Pat Cass 294220

**8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group** St Mark's 1st and 3rd week in month Kay Logan 01234 309105.

#### 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 U3A Whist** St Marks. (contact details below)

**2pm U3A Italian**-Putnoe Heights (contact details below)

**2pm U3A Gardening** - Putnoe Heights

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

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

**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 w.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk

**7-9pm Tae Kwon Do** St Mark's Adrian Felice

**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** – 19 Feb,11 June

**St Mark's Leadership Team** - 22 January

**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team** - 5 February

**Putnoe Heights Management Meeting** 24 January

**Putnoe Church Council** - 19 February

**Pastoral Group Meeting** - 5 February

**Churchyard Committee** -

**Brickhill Parish Council Meetings** -

**Commemoration Service**

**Circuit meeting** - 7 February

**Deanery Meeting** -

**Woodland Burial Trustees**—

**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting** -

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

## Third Sunday in Advent

**Opening Verse of Scripture** — Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. The Lord, the Lord is my strength and my song, He has become my salvation. Is 12 v 2 – 3

### Collect Prayer

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 – Zephaniah 3:14-20

Sing, O Daughter of Zion; shout aloud, O Israel! Be glad and rejoice with all your heart, O Daughter of Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away your punishment, he has turned back your enemy. The LORD, the King of Israel, is with you; never again will you fear any harm. On that day they will say to Jerusalem, "Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands hang limp. The LORD your God is with you, he is mighty to save. He will take great delight in you, he will quiet you with his love, he will rejoice over you with singing." "The sorrows for the appointed feasts I will remove from you; they are a burden and a reproach to you. At that time I will deal with all who oppressed you; I will rescue the lame and gather those who have been scattered. I will give them praise and honour in every land where they were put to shame. At that time I will gather you; at that time I will bring you home. I will give you honour and praise among all the peoples of the earth when I restore your fortunes before your very eyes," says the LORD

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

### Second Bible Reading - Philippians 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

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

### Gospel Reading - Luke 3: 7-18 When announced **All:—Glory to Christ our Saviour**

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." "What should we do then?" the crowd asked. John answered, "The man with two tunics should share with him who has none, and the one who has food should do the same." Tax collectors also came to be baptized. "Teacher," they asked, "what should we do?" "Don't collect any more than you are required to," he told them.

Then some soldiers asked him, "And what should we do?" He replied, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely--be content with your pay." The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Christ. John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one more powerful than I will come, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." And with many other words John exhorted the people and preached the good news to them. (This is the Gospel of Christ **All: Praise to Christ our Lord**)

### Post Communion Prayer

We give you thanks, O Lord, for these heavenly gifts; kindle in us the fire of your Spirit that when your Christ comes again we may shine as lights before his face; who is alive and reigns now and for ever. Amen

One who is more  
powerful

than I is coming and  
he will baptize you  
with the Holy  
Spirit and fire.

Luke 3.16



## **Hymns** (*Please distribute Holy Communion and Hymns and Psalms* )

1. Hark the glad sound, **210**
2. Holy Child, how still you lie! **236**
3. Darkness like a shroud, **110**
4. Long ago, prophets knew, 83

## **Commentary Gaudete Sunday**

This reading from Philippians is the traditional one for the third Sunday of Advent and gave it the name by which this Sunday is sometimes known, "Gaudete Sunday." Despite the tradition of using same liturgical colour of purple as is used for Lent, Advent is not a gloomy season (although John the Baptist does preach repentance in our Gospel reading!). Advent is marked by its finale of Christmas where, as the Lord comes nearer and nearer, we become more and more excited. The rhythm of Advent is well captured by the Advent wreath, which starts with one lighted candle and ends with four, the pink candle often being lit today. Gaudete Sunday, 'Rejoice Sunday', provides the central theme of the readings for this particular Sunday in Advent. This year the Third Sunday is a mere nine days before the celebration of the birth of Christ and the sense of joyful anticipation is emphasized. Jesus, as Victorious Messiah, is drawing near.

The first two chapters from the book of Zephaniah are full of prophecies against the nation, the leaders and the people of Israel. Disasters will befall God's people because of their false worship and disregard for the needs of the poor. The very first verses of the book declare that God is going to sweep away all living things from the face of the earth. The leaders, the judges, the prophets, and the priests have all defiled the nation and the city of Jerusalem and consequences should follow. But then we read that the Lord Himself will save His people and bring them home. There will be a salvation. The dark times of the past have been driven away and a time of rejoicing has arrived.

John the Baptist's preaching, which in some ways parallels the message of Zephaniah, predicts the imminent arrival of the Messiah, and demands a response from all who hear it. Many different people respond by asking what is required from them. In front of John a diverse variety of people line up to find out what they must do to be ready. They want to know what's going to be expected that will make them ready for this soon to be happening event. The crowds, the tax collectors, the soldiers and presumably other groups of influential people, stepped up to make sure they would be wearing the proper clothes and appearing just right and ready. But John the Baptist tells each in turn to let go of the natural inclinations of their trade or lifestyle. They need to let go of the things that provide them with their supposed security and perceived freedom so they can be truly secure and free.

Luke ends this passage with John continuing to distribute the "Good News." The rejoicing, it seem, is both in the giving and the receiving of the news of the coming of the presence of the Good. Rejoicing which will be echoed in the giving and receiving of gifts this Christmas. Gifts which express something about the giver, the receiver and something about the relationship between both. As such they are also an echo of the three fold relationships implicit in the Trinity. As we share communion together we have the same sense of giving, receiving and of rejoicing. Our actions in receiving communion have words which make explicit what is being said by the gift which is offered, the sacraments we receive and share and the presence of God which they represent in our lives. Similarly, as we celebrate Christmas we express something about our feelings and our reverence for the God who became incarnate and of respond in some small way to His love for us. John was preparing to present Jesus and made it explicit by his preaching. Like Zechariah John is proclaiming that the time of falsehood is coming to an end. Like Zechariah, this is no abstract concept but a breaking through of a God who will become incarnate in a personal form to liberate His people. He will bring them to their true home, not some geographic piece of land (although John does baptise in the river Jordan where the Israelites came into the Promised Land) but a home which is spiritual in its locus and purpose, eternal in its nature and one which will never fade or be invaded or overrun by foreign armies and enemies. A

place of real security and truth. A place called home. God invites each one of us to that same land, a place of security and warmth, filled with His everlasting and unfathomable love. He invites us home. Wherever we have been, wherever we may have travelled in the past, He calls to us as John the Baptist called to his followers. He invites us to respond, as did the followers of John, as The God who became incarnate at Christmas and became homeless for us welcomes us back to His home and invites us in to stay for ever.

### **Meditation**

Zephaniah is a mysterious book. Despite placing itself in the days of King Josiah, 640 – 609 BC, around the same time as Jeremiah, there is considerable debate about its structure, how it was written, and about the date of the book itself. Overall it speaks of God's judgement and ultimately His promise to restore the faithful few. But there's an interesting twist half way through today's reading where, following some verses speaking to the readers in the third person and announcing to them that the Lord has taken away their punishment and is with them, the passage then switches to the Lord Himself speaking in the first person and promising to gather His people and to bring them home, to give them honour and praise and to restore their fortunes. Is this home Jerusalem? Perhaps so, but it's clear that home is not so much a place or location, or 'where the heart is', but home is where God is, wherever that may be. It could be Jerusalem, but only if God is there too. Jane Williams reminds us that it was Augustine who wrote, 'Our hearts are restless till they find their rest in thee'. Sometimes everyone's hearts can be restless and looking for a home. It is God's willingness to be homeless in order that he might bring everyone home that we celebrate at Christmas, and we prepare ourselves for that life changing time with anticipation in Advent.

### **Prayers for Sunday and the Week ahead**

O God, whose son Jesus Christ our Lord showed the world His majesty and His humility, keep us ever focused on you so that when we are tempted to show our own majesty we are instead stirred to demonstrate our humility; so that the glory of He whom we represent can be shown in all the world. Amen

God for whom we wait and watch, you sent your servant John the Baptist to prepare your people for the coming of the Messiah. Inspire the ministers and stewards of your truth to turn our disobedient hearts to you; that, when Christ shall come again in glory to be our judge, we may stand with confidence before him, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen

Grant. O God, that as we rejoice in the hope of the coming of our Saviour, we may seek to prepare the way of His coming by advancing His Kingdom in the world and caring for the needs of our fellow men and women, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Keep us, O Lord, while we tarry on this earth, in a serious seeking after thee, and in an affectionate working with thee, every day of our lives; that when thou comest, we may be found not hiding our talent, nor serving the flesh, nor yet asleep with our lamp unfurnished, but waiting and longing for our Lord, our glorious King, for ever and ever. Amen

*Richard Baxter 1615 - 1691*

Lord God, whose Word and will are made known in Jesus Christ, inspire in us faith in that Word and obedience to that will, for our salvation and for your glory. Amen

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you, scatter the darkness from before your path, and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory; and the blessing; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen



### **Another Fabulous Concert at St Mark's Church**

Concert on Saturday, 9 February 2013 at 7.30pm in St Mark's Church given by Taylor Wilson, Stewart Kempster and Clive Simmonds.

Entrance is free and there will be a retiring offering

in aid of the St Mark's piano fund.

We were delighted that you were all so enthusiastic after our concert last February to celebrate the arrival of the new organ at St Mark's. I'm delighted that Tracey (Taylor Wilson) and Stewart have agreed to join us for a second concert next February. This year we also have a new piano at St Mark's to enjoy and this will widen the range of items which we can include in our programme. Tracey has had a particularly busy few months. She is singing in a series of concerts in Switzerland at present. During October, when Stewart and I were working in Hong Kong (enjoying the company of another part of the Royden family) Tracey joined us for a couple of weeks and gave a number of performances with the big band of Colin Aitchison at "Ned Kelly's Last Stand", as well as an interview on Hong Kong Radio. In the last two months she performed at the opening of the new Bond film "Skyfall" in Glasgow's Grosvenor cinema, gave a further performance of her show "Alchemy" which includes a wide variety of songs performed with cello, piano and accordionist, and gave a series of performances of songs written especially for her by the Scottish composer, John McCleod, along with songs by Debussy, Ravel and Kurt Weill. We've made provisional plans for the programme on February 9th and it is extremely varied – I think there's plenty for everyone to enjoy - and it includes a few opportunities for audience participation. I do hope you'll be there.

(You may be interested to look at Tracey's latest newsletter [www.taylorwilson.com](http://www.taylorwilson.com))

**Kisizzi Appeal** In our appeal for Kisizzi hospital our churches have now raised over £5,000 which will be hugely appreciated by those working so hard in Kisiizi and engaging in the work there. Thank you so much for your outstanding generosity. Thank you too for your prayers for Kisiizi which are greatly valued too and an equally important element of our support for this critical work. *Sam Cappleman*

**Bedford Town Band** will be holding a Christmas Concert at Putnoe Heights Church on Friday 21 December at 7.30pm. Tickets £8, Conc £6, available from Frescoes Coffee House, Mill St or on the door on the night.

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

**The Craft group** at St.Mark's would like to thank everybody for their support and are pleased to say that they have made £760 for the church.

**Chat and Play** at St.Mark's restarts on Thursday 10 January at 9.30am

**Chat and Make** restarts Monday 14 January 2013 at 1.30pm.

**Storybox** at St Mark's restarts on Thursday 10 January at 12 noon

**Junior Church (Putnoe Heights)** has been invited to Carol sing at Anjulita court on Sunday 23 December at 3pm and at Puttenhoe on Monday 24th December at 11am. if you would like to join us to bring some Christmas cheer to the residents you are very welcome to join us.

**Putnoe Heights New Year Lunch.** Sunday 20 January 2013 at 1.00pm. Tickets now available from Putnoe Office and at coffee time after church on Sundays. Adults £8.00, children under 10, £4.50. Three courses with drinks included. Book early to secure tickets.

**Footprints New Year's Day Walk.** Meet at Bromham Mill at 10.30 am on Tuesday 1st January for easy walk followed by simple lunch at Putnoe Heights. All welcome.

### **Prayer of Stillness – Contemplative Prayer.**

**"Be still....."** A group meets in the Quiet Room at Putnoe Heights at 1.45pm on the second and fourth Fridays of each month. The prayer is structured on a brief Biblical extract,. Beginning with a short period of thoughtful reflection, we move to settling into stillness of mind and body so that the Word may speak within each one of us in the silence. This period is followed by silent personal intercession. Experience is better than description. Should anyone like to taste the Prayer of Stillness the meetings for early 2013 will be January 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>; February 8<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>.

Eileen Brown

**Congratulations to Laura Leggett,** Head of Hazeldene Heights Preschool here at Putnoe Heights, for successfully completing her Level 4 qualification and for receiving the "Learner of the Year" award at the recent Bedford Training Awards Presentation Evening. Well Done Laura.

**Putnoe Provender** Last Sunday's sale raised the magnificent sum of £228.05 in aid of the Kisiizi Mission Project. Grateful thanks to all who contributed.

## Christmas closure at St. Mark's Church

**Office**—The office will be closed from Monday 24 December and will reopen Monday 7 January.

**Putnoe Office** will be closed for Christmas from 1pm on Friday 21 December and reopen on Wednesday January 2 2013.

**Putnoe Heights** Communal Christmas Card will be up from Sunday 2 December. Wish your friends at Church a Merry Christmas and donate to our charity.

## The Bedford and District Christian Aid

**Committee** have been granted a collecting day at Tesco Cardington Road store on Saturday 12 January 2013. If you would like to volunteer to help on this day please speak to Carolyn for further details.



## Christmas News

We have newspapers for deliver from each of our churches.

Please help us

get them out inviting people to our Christmas services with a Christmas message.

**Church Christmas Cards** in aid of Kisizzi are on sale at St Mark's Church at 25p each. Order can be placed by phoning the church

**Thank you to Wendy Waters and Richard Ledger** and all of those who supported them in enabling us to take part in the Messy Church Christingle Service last week.

## 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.

## 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.'

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.**

## 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.

**Barbara Joan Austin  
June Ann Atkins**

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



**St Mark's Messy Church** Future dates: all 3.45 to 5.30pm ,  
Wednesday 16 January,  
Wednesday 20 February

## Forthcoming Funerals

Please remember these families and friends in your prayers.

Brian Keith Taylor (Taz) will take place on Friday 21 December at 10.45am

