



Partnership News

Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church 16 December 2018 Advent 3



Sunday Services

8.30am Holy Communion every Sunday

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

16 December 2018 - Advent 3

9.30am St Mark's Church - Holy Communion

Preacher - The Reverend Dr Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mrs Laura Farthing
Intercessions - Mrs Wendy Waters
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe Heights Church – Holy Communion

Preacher - The Reverend Dr Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mrs Maureen Watling & Mrs Val Morgan
Intercessions - Ministers
Organist - Mr Clive Simmons

23 December 2018 - Advent 4

9.30am St Mark's Church - Morning Worship

Preacher - The Reverend Canon Charles Royden
Leadership - Mr. Jim Williams
Intercessions - Mr. Richard Ledger
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe Heights Church – Morning Worship

Preacher - Mrs. Christine Denny
Leadership - A&S Dennison
Intercessions - Mrs. Sue Allen
Organist - Mr Clive Simmons

Lectionary Readings:

1. Micah 5.2-5a. 2 Hebrews 10:5-10 3.
Luke 1:39-45(46-55)

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

Thank you

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week
have been given by Tim and Carolyn Morris

The flowers at St Mark's Church this week have
been given by Elizabeth Bean in loving memory of
her parents, Neil & Elizabeth MacLeod.

Prayer for Sunday

Almighty God,
your Son our Saviour
Jesus Christ
is the light of the world.

May your people shine
with the radiance of his
glory, that he may be
known, worshipped and
obeyed to the ends of the
earth;



who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever. Amen.

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

Assistant Rural Dean of Bedford
107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41
Tel: 266952 nsm@thisischurch.com

The Reverend Caroline Weaver

Putnoe Heights Church Putnoe Heights MK41 8HE
Tel: 348091 carolineweaver@live.co.uk

The Reverend Canon Charles Royden

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

Reader: Mrs Wendy Waters

Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator
342613 office@Thisischurch.com

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

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

Partnership News is also on www.ThisisChurch.com

Putnoe Heights Church Centre

www.putnoechurch.org.uk

Open Mon - Thur 9-4pm, Friday 9-1pm

Tel: 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com

Centre Manager: Krystyna Oborn 365630

Leadership Team: Mrs Sue Allen 407264

Treasurer: Mr Andrew Dennison

treasurerph@thisischurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator: John Hitt 404186

Youth Team Leader: Carolyn Morris

youth@thisischurch.com

<http://www.facebook.com/PutnoeChurch>

St. Mark's Church Centre

www.stmarkschurch.com

Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5.00pm

Tel/fax: 342613 office@stmarkschurch.com

Centre Manager: Miss Wendy Rider 342613

Leadership Team: Mr Edward Parry

Treasurer: Mr Ian Farthing 210892

treasurer@stmarkschurch.com

Gift Aid Administrator: Mr Jim Williams 360605

Churchyard Administrator: Mrs Avril Williams 342613

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Charity No 1164416

Regular Weekly Activities - Putnoe Heights Church

Monday

Hazeldene Heights Pre-school. Sessional and Full Day care available—open Mon.—Fri. Full Day Care 8.30am to 5pm Sessional times 9am—12noon and 12.45pm - 3.45pm. For more info please contact Nuru Lyria 01234 326685 or www.hazeldeneheights.com

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

2.00pm U3A Music Appreciation Rod Fewings 07718390188

2.00pm U3A Italian – fortnightly Rod Fewings 07718390188

4.15pm Kumon Maths Mrs Raksha Mistry 01908 392698

6.15 pm Brownies . Sharon Tanner 07928483418 email firstputnoebrownies@hotmail.co.uk

6.15-7.15pm Pilates Jane Butcher 07891879571

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

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

6.30pm Fit For All – Laura Amor 341152 / 07976259081

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

7.45-9.15 Get Fit Keep Fit Diane Field 01234 404976

Tuesday

9.30am Candlewicking (Needlework). Jenny Snelson 344417

11-12.15am U3A Keep Fit Rod Fewings 07718390188

2.00pm Library Walk W.I. meets monthly.

Jo Fordham (President) 01234 217396

Margaret Bull (President) 01234 267866

Cheryl Gardner (President) 01234 261584

2.30pm. Ladies Tuesday Club (meets monthly) Next Meeting Tuesday 8 January 2019 'Bring and Share'

Details Diane Bayliss 268101

2.30-4.30 U3A Play Reading Rod Fewings 07718390188

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

Wednesday

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

11.00am U3A Keep Fit. Rod Fewings 07718390188

12.30pm Luncheon Club. Fortnightly. Contact Putnoe Office 365630

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

2.00pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit. Mrs Webster 856966

4.15pm Kumon Maths. Mrs Rakha Mistry 01908 392698

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

6.15-7.15pm ATSK Karate Kevin Stark 01234 353865

6.15-7.45pm GKR Karate Daniel Freer 07931 504 712

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

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

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

Thursday

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

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

10.00-12pm U3A Painting & Sketching Rod Fewings 07718390188

1.30-3.00pm Little Fishes for the under 4's and their carers. Playtime, craft, story time, music and singing. For further details please contact Carolyn Morris tel 07751348925 or email storyboxplus@btinternet.com

2pm –4pm U3A Current Affairs Rod Fewings 07718390188

2.30pm-3.30pm U3A Spanish (Weekly) Rod Fewings 07718390188

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

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

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Brennan. 07919402797.

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

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale 406094

8.00pm Bedford Folk Dancers (formerly Barn dancers) Meet weekly with different guest callers each week. Except August. All welcome, cost £2. Including refreshments.

More details Ron 825574 or Shirley 01767 651767

Friday

9.30pm Spanish Holiday Survival Elena 01234 266968

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

10am-12 U3A French Conversation Rod Fewings 07718390188

2pm U3A Gardening Rod Fewings 07718390188

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

Saturday

2.15pm Society of Recorder Players G. Parry 01462 674792

Sunday

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

Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council -

St Mark's Leadership Team -

St Mark's Church AGM - 28 April 2019

Putnoe Leadership Team – 12 February 2019

Putnoe Management Meeting – 29 January 2019

Putnoe Church Council - 21 February 2019

Pastoral Group Meeting –

Churchyard Committee -

Circuit Meeting -

Deanery meeting -

Woodland Burial Trustees –

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting -

St Marks Messy Church - 16 January 2019

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

Regular Weekly Activities - St Mark's Church

Monday

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

7.30am-6.00pm Top Marks Mon-Fri St Mark's

Manager Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

(See website for more details)

9.00am-12noon St Mark's Pre-School Nursery

Manager Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

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

10.00am U3A Play reading Rod Fewings 07718390188

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

2-4pm U3A Meditation & Wellbeing Rod Fewings
07718390188

2-3.15pm U3A Recorder Group Rod Fewings
07718390188

6.00pm Brownies Mrs C Mathew 826190

7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild St Mark's (1st week in month)
Mary Daly 217127

7.00-8.00pm Laughter Club on 2nd week each month
Cheryl Green 07729187399

7-9pm Rangers. Nikki Lake 07584028653

7.15pm Guides. Mrs Gill Lake 218091

7.30pm Whist Drive. Weeks 3 & 5 in the month. Judith
Stanton. 823313

Tuesday

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

9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World

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

1.15pm U3A Cinema Group. Rod Fewings 07718390188

1.30pm U3A Choir. Contact Rod Fewings 07718390188

2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 (3rd Week in month) Contact
Rod Fewings 07718390188

2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 (2nd Week in month)
Contact Rod Fewings 077183901882

2.00pm U3A Photography Group 3 (1st Week in month)
Contact Rod Fewings 07718390188

2.30pm Knit & Natter Group Meetings 4/12, 18/12 Wool
and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling
262225

2.00-3.30pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. A social
and Bible Study group. Meetings: 11/12. Mrs Jean Bank
355698

6-7pm Supple Strength Yoga Amanda Alcock
07769747393

7.30-9pm Faith Community Church Audua Ogilvie 01234
308644

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

8.20-9.20pm Restoration Pilates Johanna Debnam
07753418170

Wednesday

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

10.00am U3A Gardening Group 3 Rod Fewings
07718390188

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

10am U3A Card Making, Rod Fewings 07718390188

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

1.15pm Social Bridge Club Mr Barnes 261811

2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft 1st week of the month Contact:
Rod Fewings 07718390188

3.45- 5.30pm Messy Church. (3rd Week in month). for
children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based

story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 16
January Wendy Waters 401834

6.00pm Brownies. Mrs C Warden 219731

7.00pm Bunyan Bridge. Peter Cullum 07545508185

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club at St Mark's
(1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next meeting 19

December. Christmas Party Tickets £5. Everyone
welcome. All dances called, Call Rosemary 405594 or
Graham 406359 for more details or come and join our
friendly group and have a try.

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

Thursday

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

12pm Storybox . Welcomes the under 5's and their carers
to join them between 12 noon and 1pm for a sandwich
lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing.. Contact
Jaana Swaby 342613

2-4pm U3A Indoor Games. Rod Fewings 07718390188
2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society Jean Patterson
307210

5.15-6.45pm Weightwatchers Jodi Henderson
07449890830

6-7pm Supple Strength Yoga Amanda Alcock
07769747393

7-9pm Bedford Community Gospel Choir weekly
meeting . Contact 07554148540

7.00pm U3A Singing for Fun (1st & 3rd week in month)
Rod Fewings 07718390188

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

7.30pm Magpies. Meet on 2nd & 4 Thursday Next
meeting 10 January 2019 Call Rosemary 405594 for more
details.

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

Friday

10am -12.00 U3A Photography (4th week in month)
Contact Rod Fewings 07718390188

10.45am - 12 U3A Poetry & Literature St. Marks
Contact Rod Fewings 07718390188

2.00-4.00 pm U3A Whist (2nd week in month) Contact
Rod Fewings 07718390188

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

6.30 -8.30pm Pakua Martial Arts John Waugh
07802755914

7-9pm Mindfulness Meditation Bhante Samitha
07983466105

Saturday

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

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

10am-1pm Sugarcraft Guild Cygnets (2nd week in
month) Margaret Baldry 07919404906

Sunday

9.30 - 10.30 Church and Sunday School at St Mark's
with crèche for under 3's

10 - 5.30pm Bedford Stamp Fayre at St. Mark's.
P Harris 01623 621143 1st week Dec/Feb/Apr/Jun/Aug/
Oct.

Advent 3

Opening Verse of Scripture - Is 12 v 2 – 3

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.

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 - Zephaniah Chapter 3:14-20

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all your heart, O daughter Jerusalem! The LORD has taken away the judgements against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the LORD, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The LORD, your God, is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you in his love; he will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival. I will remove disaster from you, so that you will not bear reproach for it. I will deal with all your oppressors at that time. And I will save the lame and gather the outcast, and I will change their shame into praise and renown in all the earth. At that time I will bring you home, at the time when I gather you; for I will make you renowned and praised among all the peoples of the earth, when I restore your fortunes before your eyes, says the LORD. NRSV
(This is the word of the Lord - **Thanks be to God**)

Second Bible Reading - Philippians Chapter 4:4-7

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. NRSV
(This is the word of the Lord - **Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading Luke Chapter 3:7-18

(When the reading is announced - **Glory to Christ our Saviour**)

John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, "We have Abraham as our ancestor"; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.'
And the crowds asked him, 'What then should we do?' In reply he said to them, 'Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.' Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, 'Teacher, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.' Soldiers also asked him, 'And we, what should we do?' He said to them, 'Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.' As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.' So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people. NRSV
(This is the Gospel of the Lord - **All: Praise to you, O Christ**)

Post Communion Sentence

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. CW

Hymns

1. O bless the God of Israel (Cruger) HTC 599
2. Restore, O Lord, the honour of your name (as) MP 579
3. On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry (Winchester New) HP 84
4. Lo, He comes with clouds descending (Helmsley) HP 241

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.

Coming Home

Zephaniah speaks of a homecoming. He is prophesying to the Southern Kingdom of Judah around the time the exiles were returning to the Promised Land. The kings of Manasseh and Amon had brought the religion and morality of Judah to an all-time low and Zephaniah speaks out. Judgement will come to Judah and their only hope is to seek God and live by His standards. If they do not they will share the fate of the nations around them. But for the faithful few, the remnant, God is in the midst of them and will save them. He will pour out His love on them and they will be brought home rejoicing and restored to favour. And all the nations of the world will share in this favour as they turn and worship God.

It's a familiar story. In the time of John the Baptist the Romans had brought things to a low point. Morality as we know it was virtually absent and religion was compromised internally and externally. John urges his hearers to produce fruits in keeping with repentance. There will be a judgement, but for the faithful, those who repent, there will be salvation as they too are brought home with rejoicing a restored people. The pattern is the same: Failure, judgement, repentance, followed by a coming home, a restoration and rejoicing. And in the centre on this pattern we see the key themes of Advent, repentance (as we get ready), restoration (as we live out God's ways in our lives), and rejoicing (as we are brought home). In the time of John the Baptist the expectations about the coming of the Messiah were running high which is why he was questioned about whom he was. Was John the Messiah, the one who was to be expected? In response, John indicated that he is not, he is merely pointing the way to the Christ Messiah who will follow. He wanted nothing for himself but to do God's bidding. And in order that the people may be prepared for the coming Messiah, he confronts them with the truth of their lives and invites them to repent, being quite specific about what some of them need to do, so that they too may share the joy of the 'Good News' and come to their true home. Like John the Baptist; we are to point people to Christ, invite them to repent so that they may find the joy of salvation. Like John, we are to be all out for God. Like his listeners we are called to repent and to rid ourselves of the things which keep us from being the people that God wants us to be. John challenges his hearers to 'bear fruits worthy of repentance', to think about their attitude to their possessions, their positions and status in society and how they use these for personal gain and benefit. He challenges their attitude to justice, equality and fairness and their motives for doing the things that they do. That is the challenge he presents to us today. What we believe needs to be lived out in our lives today and has eternal implications.

John says that for the faithful who repent, they will enter into God's Kingdom, come home to their

true inheritance. What does this home look like? Above all it is a place where God is. It's a place of security; no more will those who live in it be threatened by the things which are outside it. Those who are in it, those who are in God's Kingdom, the Kingdom that John announces, can find safety and peace. Not the Pax Romana that the Romans brought by force, or the peace brought by merely human endeavours, even though this is often a peace brought about through the highest possible human motives. The peace John speaks of is the peace which Paul describes as the peace, 'which transcends and passes all understanding'. It's also a place where we can be in relationship with the rest of the family of God. It's much easier to be happy and rejoice with others than it is in personal isolation. Much of what Jesus speaks about in the gospels is about affirming family in its broadest context, and the welcome and acceptance of all, speaking out against the things which break them down. It no coincidence that the gospel stories start with a narrative about the birth of Jesus which is placed in a family context. John the Baptist too, His herald, is placed in a family context before he starts his ministry.

The concept of the 'extended family' and coming home to the Father are golden threads which runs throughout the entire Bible. Home is also where we can be ourselves. It's where we are our most natural, and it's often a place God can meet with us because of that, perhaps even to challenge us in a John the Baptist kind of way. We can rest, be refreshed, be fed and be restored. Where we can have our needs met and our stories told. That's the kind of home that God invites us to. But above all, home is a place where we can have a relationship with the Father because home is where the Father lives. As such, it's not a physical place; it's a place where the Father is. For the Jews this was seen as Jerusalem and particularly the Temple. But God is not restricted to a particular time or place or space. God pervades every atom of our lives, He is with us always. At Advent we look forward to His coming at Christmas and at the end of time, to invite us to His home, permanently.

Sam Cappleman

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**

Action For Children. Putnoe Heights Autumn Appeal. Formerly known as National Children's Home, Action for Children has been helping the young and vulnerable for over 148 years. £5 could fund a disabled child's place in an after-school activity session. £10 could pay for a one-to-one advice session for a young person leaving care. £20 could provide a one-to-one play therapy session for a child who has been abused. Appeal envelopes will be available for the next few weeks. Please give generously.

The Greeting Banner is ready for you to write and attach your communal Christmas Greeting to friends at Putnoe Heights. The post box is also ready for individual cards. Donations should be placed in the post box.

St Mark's Church Office Closure The office will close on Monday 24 December at midday and re-open on Monday 7 January 2019.

Putnoe Heights Church Office Closure The office will be closed from Friday 21 December to Tuesday 1 January 2019 inclusive.

Footprints Traditional New Year's Day Gathering. Meet outside Pizza Hut at Aspects at 10.30 am on 1 January 2019. All welcome, bring your New Year visitors. 2 mile walk in Embankment area on pathways suitable for ordinary shoes and buggies. Optional jacket potato lunch afterwards at Putnoe Heights. Please let Sue Allen know for numbers.

Putnoe Heights Fairtrade. Good news! Traidcraft have confirmed that they will continue to trade after 31 December. The new company will be a smaller operation with fewer staff and focusing on a reduced number of core grocery lines. The details are still being finalised so watch this space for further updates. Catalogues can be found on the information table in the foyer. Next stall 6 January 2019

Last date for Junior Church at St. Mark's for 2018 is 16 December and starts back on 13 January

Chat and Make restarts on Tuesday 8 January 2019

Chat and Play restarts on Thursday 10 January 2019

Storybox restarts on Thursday 10 January 2019

Jaana would like to thank everyone who sent her cards, best wishes, flowers and in particular the prayers which she found so supportive. She is making good progress.

Elsie Slack would like to thank Putnoe Heights for the lovely flowers and smiling delivery ladies which she enjoyed and appreciated.



Over 6,500 people received help from Bedford Foodbank last year. Christmas is a particularly difficult time for many families. The Foodbank is currently experiencing the following shortages

- UHT Fruit Juice
- UHT Milk
- Squash
- Tinned Sponge Pudding
- Tinned Meat (chicken)
- Chocolate Selection Boxes
- Deodorant
- Shampoo
- Washing Powder Tablets
- Washing Up Liquid

Items can be left in the box in the foyer at St Mark's. Thank you for your continued support.
Mrs Chris Hubbard Admin Support

Brexit Statement

The Church of England's House of Bishops, which met in London this week, has issued the following statement on the tone of debate over Brexit:

In the light of this week's turbulent events, the bishops of the Church of England pray for national unity – and courage, integrity and clarity for our politicians.

We call on the country to consider the nature of our public conversation. It is time to bring grace and generosity back to our national life.

At the heart of the Christian message is Jesus' command to love our neighbour. This includes those with whom we agree and disagree – at home, in Europe, and further afield. We urge everyone – our political leaders and all of us – to bring magnanimity, respect and reconciliation to our national debate.

There is now an urgent need for the United Kingdom to recover a shared vision and identity to help us find a way through the immediate challenges.

Regardless of what happens next with Brexit, the Church of England, alongside many other churches and other agencies striving for the common good, will be at the heart of local communities; educating one million children, providing 33,000 social action projects and running 16,000 churches across the country. Above all else, we will continue to support the most vulnerable and share Christ's love with all. This is the Advent season. As we reflect and await Christmas in joyful anticipation, we have faith in Christ to show us all the way of hope.

Christmas Services



St Mark's Church

Saturday 22 December

6.30pm Carols in the Car Park
with Bedford Town Band
Free mulled wine and mince pies

Monday 24 December Christmas Eve

3.00pm Children's Crib Service
6.30pm Carols by Candlelight
With the Bedford Town Band
11.30pm Midnight Mass by Candlelight

Tuesday 25 December Christmas Day

9.30am Family Morning Worship
A perfect way to start Christmas Day

Putnoe Heights Church

Sunday 23rd December

6.00 pm - Carols by Candlelight

Monday 24th December

4.00pm - Children's Crib Service
11:30pm - Midnight Mass by Candlelight

Tuesday 25th December

11.00am Family Morning Worship -
A perfect way to start Christmas Day



For Christmas Presents Remember

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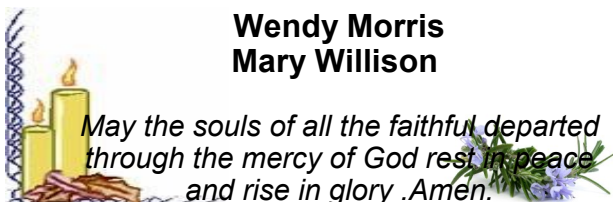
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Rest In Peace

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.

**Wendy Morris
Mary Willison**



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



Forthcoming Funerals

The funeral of Gershom Williams will take place at Bedford Crematorium at 3.15pm on Friday 28 December

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