



Methodist  
Church

# Partnership News

17 February 2008

## Second Sunday of Lent



Church of  
England

### Partnership Church Services Today

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

**9.30am St Mark's –Holy Communion**

Preacher - Mr J Bassill

Leadership Team - Mrs Linda Parry

Intercessions– - Mr Ian Farthing

**11.00am Putnoe - Holy Communion**

Preacher - Mr John Bassill

Leadership Team - Mr Lawrence Wyatt

Intercessions - Dr Tim Wilkes

### 3rd Sunday of Lent

**9.30am St Mark's Church - Morning Worship**

Preacher - Revd Charles Royden

Leadership Team - Mrs Morag Stewart

Intercessions –Mr John Tatman

**11.00am Putnoe Heights – Morning Worship**

Preacher – Revd Charles Royden

Leadership Team –Mrs Jenny Emsley

Intercessions - Mrs Claire Peck

### Bible Readings.

1. Genesis 12: 1-4a 2.Romans 4:1-5,13-17

3. John 3: 1-17

### Thank You

The flowers in the church at St Mark's this week have been given by May Dingwall in memory of her friend Jean Wallis.

The flowers at Putnoe have been given by Valerie Parker in memory of her husband Bill.

We are always grateful for any donations for 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 Miss Jennie Cooper 404950 (Putnoe Heights) or add your name to the rota in the foyers.

### Prayer for Sunday

O Good Shepherd, when the pastures are green  
let us share our fortune.

When we walk through the shadows  
let us be comforted by your presence.

When our cup overflows  
let us bring happiness to others.

When we come to your house  
let us rejoice with the redeemed for ever. Amen.

*John Hunter, 1849-1917*

### Contact Details

**The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman**

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR

266952 Fax- 402624 NSM@ThisisChurch.com

(Sam also works full time as a General Manager for Hewlett Packard)

**The Reverend Dr. Joan Crossley** (Day off Friday)

30 Cutcliffe Grove, Bedford. MK40 4DD.

Home 344536 Crossley@thisischurch.com

**The Reverend Charles Royden** (Day off Thursday)

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.

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 9am—5pm Monday to Friday**

**Tel/fax & Answering Service** 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com

**Centre Manager** Mr Barry Snelson 365630 & 344417

**Leadership Team** Mr Alan Cooper 365302 Mob 07989367604

**Treasurer** Mr Ian Morse 216428 treasurerph@thisischurch.com

**Gift Aid Administrator** - Mr John Hitt 404186

**Youth & children's worker** - Mrs Spavins 302349

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** - Mrs L Parry 216724 Mob 07922053740

**Treasurer** - Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com

**Gift Aid Administrator** Mr Williams 360605

# Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

## Monday

**9.30-12.00pm Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school**  
Headteacher Mrs Janet Smith ☎326685

**8.30-5.30pm Mon-Fri St Mark's Pre-school**  
Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin ☎312634

*(See website for more details)*

**9.00am Clubhouse** at St. Mark's for those with Learning Disabilities. Karen Bywater ☎315460.

**10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group.** St Mark's  
Mr Kellie ☎721063

**10.45am U3A Playreading** St Mark's C Birks ☎219607

**12.00pm Story box** We welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. ☎Liz 302349

**1.45pm U3A History Group** St Mark's 2nd & 4th week of the month. ☎ David Fowler 824474

**4.00pm Storybox Plus** Putnoe Heights for 4-9 year Old. Meet at 3.30 for refreshments & games. Then till 5pm 'follow the year' through stories, drama, singing & craft activities. We then make a short presentation in church on first Sunday in each month. ☎Liz Spavins 302349

**4.15pm Rosemary Conley Diet & Fitness.** Putnoe Heights. Margo Needham 843747

**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 ☎07720712735

6.15 Pilates at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859

**7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild** St Mark's 1st week every month  
Pat Nicholson ☎353518

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

**7.15pm Yoga.** Putnoe Heights Lena Holland ☎244970

**7.30pm Whist Drive.** St Mark's 3rd & 5th week each month . Next meeting 18 February Judith Stanton. ☎823313

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

**8.00pm 'Get Fit, Stay Fit'** Putnoe Heights. Mrs Diane Field ☎404976

## Tuesday

**9.30am Candlewicking** (Needlework). Putnoe Heights.  
Judi Staughton ☎341821

**9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World** St. Mark's.  
Helen Folbigg ☎351223

**10am -Bedford Arts Society** starting at St Mark's on the 11th September. ☎Mrs Brown 771676

**1.30pm Toddlers Playtime.** Putnoe Heights Majella Atkinson ☎325293.

**1.30pm U3A Cinema Group.** St Mark's last Tuesday of the month. Mr Austin ☎365184

**2.00pm U3A Book Group.** St Mark's 3rd Tuesday of the month Mrs Berman ☎364723

**2.00pm Library Walk W.I.** Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Mrs C Allen ☎363878

**2-5pm Police Surgery.** St Mark's Foyer.

**2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship.** Next meeting 19 February 'Healthy Eating Mrs Sue Bedford. Betty Wyatt ☎350188.

**2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group.** St Mark's alternate weeks. Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs

Maureen Watling ☎262225

**2.30pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup.** St Mark's alternate weeks. Mary Stubbs ☎406784.

**3.45pm Stars School of Dance.** Putnoe Heights. Esther Sancto ☎295862 or ☎07917582468.

**7.00pm Hearts in Beds Cardiac Support Group**  
St Mark's 1st Tuesday ☎Parsons 351150

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

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

**7.30pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Bible study & prayers. Revd.Tarr ☎360188 or 07866775515

**7.30pm Chartered Management Institute** St Marks 3rd week of the month. Mrs Dimmock ☎01525 862374

**7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club -** Meets fortnightly. Next meeting 26 February Talk By Val Scriivenor 'Fair Trade—Bangladesh .Audrey Wilkins☎365068 or Margaret Gentle ☎309043

## Wednesday

**9.15am Paint Tots** St Mark's Jacqui Hanahan ☎824475

**9.30am Childminding Support Group** Putnoe Heights.  
Mrs S Longman ☎313949

**9.30am Body Control Pilates.** Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith ☎07973174430.

**9.00am Clubhouse** at St Mark's for those with Learning Disabilities. Karen Bywater ☎315460.

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

**10am Sewing & Chat.** Putnoe Heights Valerie Russell ☎01462 815966

**10.30 am U3A Art Appreciation** Putnoe Heights Fortnightly. Audrey Hancock ☎365915.

**Luncheon Club.** Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next meeting 20 February 2008 Putnoe Heights Office ☎365630

**12.30pm Men's Fellowship Lunch** St Mark's 2nd week each month. Chris Izzard ☎212164

**1.00-3pm Police Surgery** at Putnoe Heights .

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

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

**2pm U3A Whist Group** St Mark's 3rd week of the month  
Ken Silvester☎400584

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

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

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

**6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation** Putnoe Heights Racheall Monton ☎01234 297138

**6.30pm Karate.** St Mark's Karen ☎079412 64885

**7.00pm Bunyan Bridge.** St. Mark's Brian Sallows ☎407725

**7pm U3A Whist Group** St Mark's 4th Wednesday of the month. Ken Silvester ☎400584

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

**7.00pm Yoga** St Mark's Dorothy Turner ☎721763

**7.00pm Putnoe Guild** Putnoe Heights monthly Janice ☎Loxley 347073

**7.00pm U3A Sky at Night** 2nd Wednesday of the month.

Mr Farish ☎824984

**7.45pm Badminton Club** Putnoe Heights All welcome.

Ken Marriott ☎214867

**8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club** St Mark's,

1st ,3rd & 5th Wednesday. Next meeting 20 February 2008

Graham ☎406359 or Danny ☎401668.

**8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club** St Mark's 1st

week in the month. Mrs Gansfield ☎215016

### Thursday

**9.30am Thursday Prayer Group.** Putnoe Heights in the

quiet room. Sylvia Cohen ☎343424

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

**9.40am Jo Jingles.** St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Jayne Phillips ☎01582 485333

**9.45am Yoga** Putnoe Heights Lena Holland ☎244970

**9.45am Chat and Play** weekly at St.Mark's. A group for

Mums & toddlers. £1.75 for first child. More details from St.

Marks Office ☎342613 or Emma Strangwick ☎211070

**1.30pm-3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic.** St. Mark's ☎267444

**12pm Storybox** weekly at 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 Emma Strangwick ☎211070

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

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

**5.30pm Police Surgery.** St Mark's Foyer.

**6.15 pm Weightwatchers.** St. Mark's. Mrs Margaret Ralph ☎01767 224978.

**6.15pm Brownies.** Putnoe Heights Helga Nash ☎218521

**6.15pm Bedford Junior Chess Club.** St. Mark's

Mr C Hill ☎772922

**7.00pm Club 2000** Putnoe Heights

Nina Ovenden☎825059

**7pm U3A Folk & Poetry Group.** St Mark's 2nd & 4th

week of the month. Doug Ovenden ☎825059

**7.00pm British Cardiac Patients Assoc.**at Putnoe bi monthly Mrs.E. marriot 303834

**7.30pm Bedford Senior Chess Club** St Mark's Mr P

Housden ☎376597

**7.30pm Bedford Embroiderers' Guild** St Mark's

3rd Thursday of the month. Mrs C Smith ☎344544

**8.00pm Bedford Writers Circle.** St Mark's 1st week

each month. Mr Newton ☎01525 378193

**8.00pm Magpies Women's Group** St Mark's 2nd & 4th

week Mrs Cotchin ☎402089

**8.00pm Brickhill Wives** St Mark's 1st and 3rd week Next

meeting Mrs Woods ☎404702

### Friday

**9.30-12.30pm & 12.30 - 2.30pm U3A Photography**

**Group** St Marks 4th week Joyce Fildes ☎353086

**9.00am Clubhouse** St. Mark's for those with Learning Disabilities. Karen Bywater ☎315460.

**1.30pm Stars School of Dance** Putnoe Heights Contact Esther Sancto ☎295862 or ☎07917 582468

**2.00pm U3A Gardening Group** Putnoe Heights Eve Whitehead ☎356875

**6.30pm –7.30pm Line Dancing. Beginners 7-8pm Improvers** St Mark's Christine Rushton ☎782360

**7pm Bedford Arts Society** fortnightly Putnoe Heights from 8 September. Malcolm Smith ☎01234 400741

**7pm Youth Club for age 10-15.** St Mark's Church.

Contact PC Dave Hawkey ☎349179

**7.45pm Astrology Group** St Mark's as from 11th January.

Mr Kenworthy ☎402792

### Saturday

**9.00pm Stars School of Dance.** Putnoe

Esther Sancto ☎295862 or ☎07917 582468

**10.00am Theatretrain** St Mark's. Dancing acting, singing.

Kate Howard ☎01234 782414

1.30pm Young Embroiders bi monthly Terry Fletcher Tel 357198

**7.00pm Duplicate Bridge.** St Mark's Mrs Pillinger

☎212066

### Sunday

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

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

**1pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Revd.

Tarr ☎360188 or ☎07866775515

**6pm T.N.T.** Putnoe. For 9-12 year olds (fortnightly) join us for fellowship, fun, games & outings .Next meeting 10

February Liz ☎302349

## Diary Dates

**St Mark's Church Council** – 17th June 08, 18 November 08

**St Mark's Leadership Team** – 13 May 2008

**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team** – May 12th

**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Committee** – 21st April

**Putnoe Heights Management Meetings** ., 14th April and 14th July.

**St Mark's Church Forum Meeting** - 11h March .5 May, 11 July, 9 September, 12 November all at 12 noon

**Putnoe Church Council** -

**Pastoral Group Meeting** -

**Churchyard Committee** - 11 June 2008

**Putnoe Heights Mission Group** –Weds 26th

March, 7.30 at 14 Flint Way

**Partnership Council** -

**Brickhill Parish Council Meetings** -

**Deanery Meeting** - 21 February, 12 June, 18 September, 13 November

**Circuit Meeting** - 10 March 2008, 12 June 2008

**Woodland Burial Trustees - Sunday 6th April**

2008 in the Wren Room at 3.30pm

**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth**–

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

## Second Sunday in Lent

**Opening Verse John 3:16** For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

### Collect Prayer for the Day

Merciful Lord, grant your people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh and the devil, and with pure hearts and minds to follow you, the only God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen *Methodist W.*

### First Bible Reading -Genesis 12: 1-4a

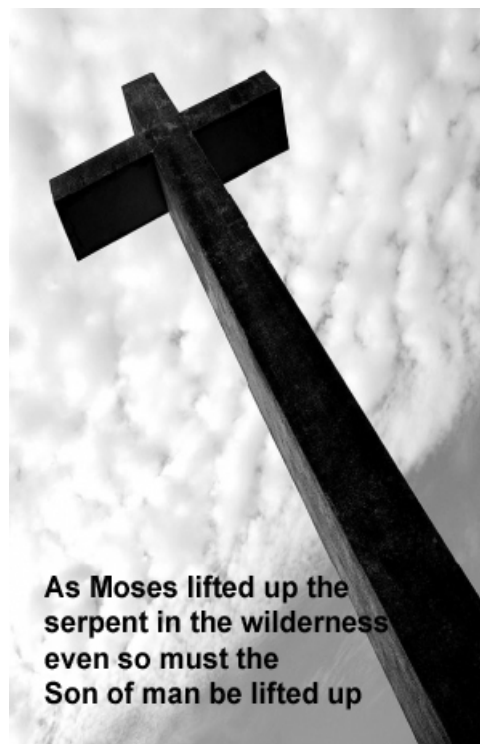
The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." So Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him. (This is the word of the Lord - **All: Thanks be to God**)

### Second Bible Reading - Romans 4: 1-5, 13-17

What then shall we say that Abraham, our forefather, discovered in this matter? If, in fact, Abraham was justified by works, he had something to boast about—but not before God. What does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness." Now when a man works, his wages are not credited to him as a gift, but as an obligation. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness. It was not through law that Abraham and his offspring received the promise that he would be heir of the world, but through the righteousness that comes by faith. For if those who live by law are heirs, faith has no value and the promise is worthless, because law brings wrath. And where there is no law there is no transgression.

Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may be by grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the sight of God, in whom he believed—the God who gives life to the dead and calls things that are not as though they were. (This is the word of the Lord - **All: Thanks be to God**)

**Third Reading - John 3: 1-17** *Please stand* When announced 'Glory to Christ our Saviour' Now there was a man of the Pharisees named Nicodemus, a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, "Rabbi, we know you are a teacher who has come from God. For no one could perform the miraculous signs you are doing if God were not with him." In reply Jesus declared, "I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again" "How can a man be born when he is old?" Nicodemus asked. "Surely he cannot enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born!" Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit. You should not be surprised at my saying, 'You must be born again.' The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit." "How can this be?" Nicodemus asked. "You are Israel's teacher," said Jesus, "and do you not understand these things? I tell you the truth, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things? No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven—the Son of Man— Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be



As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so must the Son of man be lifted up

lifted up, that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. (Reader: This is the Gospel of Christ — **All: Praise to Christ our Lord**)

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

1. Crown him with many crowns 255 Tune Diademata
2. Blessed assurance 668
3. To God be the Glory great things He has done" 463
4. Come let us sing of a wonderful love 691

### **Post Communion Prayer**

Almighty God, you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves: keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Commentary**

The Gospel of John was written with a real purpose in mind - to cause the reader to believe

*But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:31)*

Perhaps one of the major discourses in the Gospel which serves to bring this about, is found in this dialogue between Jesus and Nicodemus. We are in Lent, that time of the year when we are all engaged in seeking to live our lives in closer obedience. Lent is a time when some forgo the after dinner mints or the pre dinner sherry, our equivalent of sackcloth and ashes. It is a time of repentance and mourning over what we might be, if only we could try harder. Yet we are reminded in this verse that the way of the cross is not about what we have done or left undone, but about what God has done. God loves the world, loves it so much that he gave of his life. Jesus comes not to scold but to save. It was out of love that he came among us and stood beside us and died with us, for us, and saved us. It is all about love and because of God's love we are not here as the lost but as the found.

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son For God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him (John 3:16-17)*

Nicodemus was a religious leader, he had much understanding, yet he is told that he must start over. He must start looking at things differently. It is also a real success story. So often Jesus seems to fail in his teachings. People ignore Jesus, take oppositions against Jesus, even his closest disciples go on to deny that they know him. Yet we are told that Nicodemus was a man of considerable courage. In John 7:50-52, Nicodemus appeals to the Law of Moses to defend Jesus to his fellows in the Sanhedrin. In John 19:38-40, it is Nicodemus who aligns himself publicly with Jesus in his "lifting up" by joining Joseph of Arimathea in removing Jesus' body from the cross and burying him with an enormous outlay of spices. Nicodemus clearly changed. Not in the sense of factual knowledge, but in terms of his relationship to Jesus. What Jesus says about the difference between water and spirit makes the point that we can be physically alive, but there is another level of life - spiritual life. We know this to be true and Nicodemus found it. As we look around at our society today, perhaps now as importantly as ever before, we need to know the truth of these words. For so many people, in spite of the presence of so many things, life is still very empty. Real fulfilment is found through faith in the love of God, found in Jesus. *Charles Royden*

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

I thank you, Lord, for knowing me better than I know myself. I thank you for letting me know myself better than others know me. Make me, I ask you then, better than they suppose I am, and forgive me for what they do not know. Amen.

Behold Lord, an empty vessel that needs to be filled. My Lord, fill it. I am weak in the faith; strengthen me. I am cold in love; warm me and make me fervent that my love may go out to my neighbour. I do not have a strong and firm faith; at times I doubt and am unable to trust you altogether. O Lord, help me. Strengthen my faith and trust in you. In you I have sealed the treasures of all I have. I am poor; you are rich and came to be merciful to the poor. I am a sinner; you are upright. With me there is an abundance of sin; in you is the fullness of righteousness. Therefore, I will remain with you, of whom I can receive, but to whom I may not give. Amen. Martin Luther

## What did the Archbishop say ?

Whenever I have been involved in an issue reported by the press, I have to say that usually there are many factual inaccuracies. Sometimes this is a mistake, sometimes there is a clear and deliberate spin which distorts and gives the wrong impression. There are occasions when our press will refuse to print things which it wants kept quiet. This is all very worrying, but it is even more worrying when as Christians our faith is under attack by vested interests. We live in a society where some who control our press are quick to discredit the church and where many secular interests like nothing better than to criticise religious belief. Just because it appears in a newspaper doesn't mean it is true, in fact it most probably isn't! Our Archbishop has recently suffered a sustained attack and it is quite remarkable that people have jumped so quickly to condemn him without having first read the facts of what he said, as opposed to what the media think he said. Journalists without any comprehension of theology have assumed powers of understanding well above their abilities. A visit to our church website will provide you with access to the full transcripts and comments from our own Bishop of St Albans.

### **The following information comes from the website of the Archbishop.**

The Archbishop made no proposals for sharia in either the lecture or the interview, and certainly did not call for its introduction as some kind of parallel jurisdiction to the civil law. Instead, in the interview, rather than proposing a parallel system of law, he observed that "as a matter of fact certain provisions of sharia are already recognised in our society and under our law". When the question was put to him that: "the application of sharia in certain circumstances - if we want to achieve this cohesion and take seriously peoples' religion - seems unavoidable?", he indicated his assent.

The Archbishop opened his lecture by noting importantly that the very term sharia is not only misunderstood, but is the focus of much fear and anxiety deriving from its 'primitivist' application in some contexts. As such he said that sharia is a method of law rather than a single complete and final system ready to be applied wholesale to every situation, and noted that there was room, even within Islamic states which apply sharia, for some level of 'dual identity', where the state is not in fact religiously homogenous.

In his lecture, the Archbishop sought carefully to explore the limits of a unitary and secular legal system in the presence of an increasingly plural (including religiously plural) society and to see how such a unitary system might be able to accommodate religious claims. Behind this is the underlying principle that Christians cannot claim exceptions from a secular unitary system on religious grounds (for instance in situations where Christian doctors might not be compelled to perform abortions), if they are not willing to consider how a unitary system can accommodate other religious consciences. In doing so the Archbishop was not suggesting the introduction of parallel legal jurisdictions, but exploring ways in which reasonable accommodation might be made within existing arrangements for religious conscience.

He explained that his core aim was to: "to tease out some of the broader issues around the rights of religious groups within a secular state" and was using sharia as an example. These include:

- How when the law does not take seriously religious motivation, it fails to engage with the community in question and opens up real issues of power by the majority over the minority, with potentially harmful effects for community cohesion.
- How the distinction between cultural practices and those arising from genuine religious belief might be managed.
- How to deal with the possibility that a 'supplementary jurisdiction' could have the effect of reinforcing in minority communities some of the most repressive or retrograde elements in them, with particularly serious consequences for the role and liberties of women".

At the end of the lecture the Archbishop referred to a suggestion by a Jewish jurist that there might be room for 'overlapping jurisdictions' in which "individuals might choose in certain limited areas whether to seek justice under one system or another". This is what currently happens both within the Jewish arrangements and increasingly in current alternative dispute resolution and mediation practice.

He concludes his lecture with the comment:

"if we are to think intelligently about the relations between Islam and British law, we need a fair amount of 'deconstruction' of crude oppositions and mythologies, whether of the nature of sharia or the nature of the Enlightenment"

## Lent 2008

**This year our Lent Course** will take place at Putnoe Heights Church on Wednesday evenings Starting on Wednesday 20 Feb.at 7.30(refreshments) and 8.00pm start. This year in our Lent Course we will be looking at the Old Testament Prophets and Prophecy as they point towards the events of Easter.

### Wednesday 20 February

Charles Royden Amos & Hosea, the prophets of the Northern Kingdom of Israel.

### Wednesday 27 February -

Joan Crossley-Isaiah, Jeremiah & the minor prophets of the Southern Kingdom of Judah

### Wednesday 5 March

Sam Cappleman

Daniel, Zechariah, Haggai & Malachi, A view from exile and the end of the beginning

### Wednesday 12 March

Bishop Christopher-Prophecy today

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### Religious Affairs Team - Yarls Wood

Do you have any Christian videos (NB videos not DVDs), which you could spare?

They are incredibly popular here. It seems to be standard practice for a family or an individual to arrive, get settled in their room, and go to the library to ask for a Christian video. Particularly requested are the bible stories (eg The visual bible - esp Matthew, which seems to be the most popular of all!). Videos are much preferable to DVDs, particularly on the families unit, because they like to watch them in their rooms with their kids - and they only have video players in their rooms rather than DVD players. For the single ladies, DVDs are also appreciated. If you can help, please get in touch with either Revd Catherine Lack or Pastor Lonnie Haye, on 01234-821170, or [rayarlswood@serco.com](mailto:rayarlswood@serco.com) Many thanks, and God bless, Revd Catherine Lack.

**District Network Day** - Tuesday 26th February at Central Methodist Church, Letchworth from 10.45am to 3.30pm. Please see notice in foyer for more details.

## St Mark's Coffee Shop

Sunday 1.30pm - 4pm

Don't forget to come along and enjoy great teas, where else can you get great teas and coffee with a piece of homemade cake, all for £1 ! Thank You!

**Daffodil Day** Monday 3rd March at Central Hall Westminster. 1.40pm for a 2pm start. There will be a coach leaving from Kempston or Ampthill, cost £10. To book please contact Corinne Thomas on 1525 403936.

**St Mark's Preschool** have some spare Tickets for Kids World 29th February 6.30pm to 8.15pm. £5 per child, adults free. Interested? Ring preschool on 01234 312634 or call in for a booking form. Leave your name, address, contact number and how many tickets you would like.

**Help Needed** Jean Bank as a member of the congregation, is a volunteer at pre-school every Monday lunch time. She is going on holiday and we will need cover for Monday, Feb 18, 25, & March 3 & 10, from 12 until 1pm. If any member of the congregation at St. Marks is able to volunteer for all or any of these Mondays please let Helen Harpin, Sue Jones, or Janet Day know. We are a friendly bunch and there will be two regular members of staff present at all times

## Telecare



Telecare volunteers serve the church in helping us care for each other. They telephone church folks on a regular basis just to check up how things are going and share a friendly message.

Occasionally they are able to alert the ministers to somebody who is poorly or who is going to hospital. The Ministers are very grateful for this support which helps them to know that there is a pastoral safety net. Those who register for Telecare are encouraged to know that the ministry of caring for one another is considered to be at the heart of what it means to be a church. If you have not already done so please register by telling one of the ministers - *Thank you*

## Friends for Life

Is a new North Bedfordshire Churches project which aims to help people living in sheltered accommodation, residential and cares homes to reconnect with the community. I am the link person between St Marks and Putnoe Heights and Margaret-Anne Tibbs who is the project co-ordinator.

Several people from the Partnership have already expressed an interest in becoming part of this worthy venture. However to be viable a large number of men and women will be required who can make a commitment to visit residents on a regular basis.

Two training days have been arranged:  
10am to 4pm Saturday 23 February at St Marks and Saturday 1 March at Priory Methodist

The morning session 10 to 12.30 is for those who wish to visit sheltered accommodation. Those who wish to befriend people in care homes will be required to stay for the afternoon session. Please bring a packed lunch.

Please prayerfully consider if this is a role God may be calling you to. The need is extensive but you can stipulate how much time you can give e.g. 1 hour a month or a week, whatever suits your situation. You will need a CRB check if you do not already have one.

Leaflets giving more details should be in the churches or phone me on 01234 401834 if you would like to know more or wish to attend the training. *Wendy Waters*

**Service of Holy Communion** at Sir William Harpur House on the first Monday of every month at 10.00am, led by Charles Royden. Everybody is invited to attend, not just residents. Next Service March 3rd.

**Hazeldene Heights Preschool.** Come & share in the activities with the children in our Preschool at Putnoe Heights. Please talk to Linda Hoar if you can spare a few hours each month or would like to know more about the group. Your help would be greatly appreciated. Linda Hoar 782717

**Storybox** at St. Mark's really need volunteers to help with catering and assistance with setting up and clearing away. If we can get enough people it would only mean once every 4-6 weeks on a Thursday from 11-1.15pm. Emma would also like a few more storytellers. If you can help please contact Emma Strangwick (211070) or talk to Linda Parry or Janet Day

**Can you face paint ?** We are looking for help at the Partnership Children's Good Friday event. Please see or ring Liz. 302349

**Mission Update** - Following our Autumn mission project at Putnoe Heights we sent a Cheque off to Keech Cottage Hospice for the magnificent total of £3044, a combination of your donations from the Keech Cottage Mission Keech Cottage Mission envelopes, coffee mornings and other great fundraising events. Thank you to all who gave so generously of their time and money. We have had a letter back from Keech thanking us for the "fantastic amount"

**Thanks.** I wish to say thank you for the prayers and best wishes I have received, also the lovely birthday cards. I am making a steady recovery and with the Lord's help hope to make a complete recovery. Doris Jefferies.



## Rest in Peace

**There are no funerals this week**

## 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.'*

