



Partnership News

19 December 2010

Fourth 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

9.30 am St. Mark's – Holy Communion

Preacher - Mr Barry Owen
Leadership - Mrs Morag Stewart
Intercessions - Mr Warwick Holden

11am Putnoe – Holy Communion

Preacher - Mr Barry Owen
Leadership - Mr Lawrence Wyatt
Intercessions - Mrs Sylvia Cohen

25 December—Christmas Day

9.30 am St. Mark's - Morning Worship

Preacher - Rev Charles Royden
Leadership – Mrs Laura Farthing
Intercessions – Mrs Margaret Appleton

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher - Rev Charles Royden
Leadership - Mr Lawrence Wyatt
Intercessions - Ministers

Readings 1. Isaiah 63: 7-9 2. Hebrews 1: 1-4
3. John 1: 1-14

26 December

8.30am Holy Communion at St Mark's Chapel

No Service at 9.30am St Mark's
No Service at 11.00am Putnoe

Thank You

The flowers in the Chapel at St. Mark's Church this week have been given by Joyce Bean and family in memory of Ray on his birthday.

The flowers in Church include donations from Mike Ovenden in memory of his mum, and from the Corfield family, in loving memory of John Norris Corfield.

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Gwyn and Val Morgan to celebrate the marriage of their younger son, Alastair, to Pierra Pattullo.

Prayer for This Week

Dearest God,
as we contemplate the wonder of your birth, that you gave up your majesty to become weak and vulnerable for us; stir up in us the desire to consider the needs and feelings of others, before we think of ourselves. Help us to be so willing to give of ourselves that we may be an encouragement to all whom we meet this Christmas time.

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)

Deacon Jane Mason

12 Hartop Close, Bedford MK41 8HE
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The Reverend Charles Royden

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For Data Protection Purposes

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

Partnership News is also archived on our church website www.ThisisChurch.com

Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator & Churchyards Administrator

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

Putnoe Heights Church Centre

Open Monday to Thursday 9am - 5pm, Friday 9am - 1pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Mr Barry Snelson 365630 & 344417
Leadership Team Mrs Samantha Ware 304058
Treasurer Mr Ian Morse 216428 treasurerph@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator John Hitt 404186
Youth Worker Emma Gordon email - 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 - Avril Williams 360605
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Jim Williams 360605

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

9.15 -11.45 am Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school

Head teacher Mrs Janet Smith ☎326685

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

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.

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 J Birks ☎219607

12.00pm 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.

3.30pm Storybox Plus Putnoe Heights for 4-9 year olds. Meet at 3.30 for refreshments & games. Then until 5pm stories, drama, singing & craft activities.

4.15pm Rosemary Conley Diet & Fitness. Putnoe Heights. Margo Needham ☎843747 or 07881730747

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

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

6.15 pm Brownies Putnoe. Sharon Tanner ☎07720713738.

6.15 Pilates at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859

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

7.30pm Cancer Care Society. St Mark's. 1st Week. Mr J Dewhurst ☎01908 377020

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

7.15pm Yoga. Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎244970

7.30pm Whist Drive. St Mark's 3rd & 5th week . Next meeting—20 December St. Mark's Judith Stanton. ☎ 823313

7.30pm House group 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 Jo Jingles. St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Renu Elston ☎07790296016

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

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

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

11.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights Sally Banks ☎ 870357

1.15pm Sing and Stomp. For toddlers & their carers. Run by the Putnoe Children's Centre. Putnoe Heights Majella Atkinson ☎325293.

1.30pm U3A Cinema Group. St Mark's 4th Week in month . Mrs Beaumont ☎261461

2.00pm U3A Book Group. St Mark's 3rd Week Mrs Forrest ☎344043

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

2pm U3A Photography (Group 3) St Mark's 1st Week.

2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship. Next meeting 11 January 2011 For more details contact Betty Wyatt ☎350188.

2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group. St Mark's Fortnightly . Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling ☎262225

2.15pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. St Mark's Fortnightly. Mary Stubbs ☎406784.

3.45pm-6.15pm Stars School of Dance. Putnoe Heights. Esther Richardson ☎295862 or 07917582468.

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

6.30pm Yoga Putnoe Heights Veronica Lafferty ☎781466 or 07788750360

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

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

7.30pm Hearts in Beds. Cardiac Support Group 1st Tuesday in the month at St Mark's. Brian Ibberson ☎ 403497

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

7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club - Meets fortnightly. Next meeting January 4 afternoon tea. For more details call Janet King 313946

8.15pm - 10.15pm Bedford Advanced Dancers St. Mark's 1st Tuesday in month. Shirley Sadler ☎01767 651767

Wednesday

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

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

10am U3A Card Making, St Mark's Church. 4th week in the month. Janet Fitch 838689

12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next -8 December Putnoe Heights Office ☎365630

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 Putnoe monthly .All welcome Nancy Barr ☎268147

2-5pm Police Surgery. St Mark's Foyer. ☎349179

1.30-4.30pm U3A Craft St Mark's 1st & 3rd week. Pat Holland ☎262823

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

3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church. St Mark's for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Monthly. Next meetings 8 December. Wendy Waters 401834

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 or 07910835994.

6-8pm Karate. St Mark's Karen King ☎079412 64885

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

7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society Putnoe Heights monthly. Vanessa Aykac 268098 or 07917385987

7.00pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe Heights monthly Janice Loxley ☎347073

7.00pm Line Dancing Putnoe Heights Mike Del-Boyer ☎348378

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

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club meet at St Mark's 1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next meeting will be January 5 2011 Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Ring Graham 406359 or Rosemary 405594 for more details.

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. Valerie Capon ☎356306 .

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

9.45am Yoga Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎244970

9.45am Chat and Play St.Mark's. A group for Mums & toddlers. Jo Garner 40007112354rrrr7651

11am-12noon Citizens Advice Bureau Putnoe Heights.

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 St. Mark's ☎267444

1.30pm Toddler Playtime. Putnoe Majella Atkinson ☎325293.

2pm Putnoe Bridge Club. Gerald Palmer ☎345991

2-4pm U3A Indoor Games St Mark's Contact Radmila Dancer ☎404811

2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society at St Mark's. Malcolm Smith ☎400741

4 - 7.00pm Police Surgery. St Mark's Foyer. ☎349179

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

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins **7.00pm Club 2000** Putnoe Heights Nina Ovenden

☎825059

7pm U3A Folk & Poetry St Mark's 2nd & 4th week in month. Doug Ovenden ☎825059

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale ☎406094

7.30pm Bedford Embroiderers' Guild St Mark's 3rd week in month. Pauline Lynham ☎01525 714517

8 -10pm Bedford Folk dancers (formerly Barn dancers) Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights . Different guest callers each week. All welcome, cost £2 Including refreshments. More details Ron Law 825574.

8.00pm Bedford Writers Circle. St Mark's 1st week in month. Mr Newton ☎01525 378193

8.00pm Magpies Women's Group St Mark's 2nd & 4th week Jean Birks ☎219607

8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group St Mark's 1st and 3rd week in month. Julia Nicholson ☎353642

Friday

9.30-12.30pm U3A Photography (Group 1) St Marks 4th week in month Val Scrivener ☎346397

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

10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French St Mark's Joyce Fields ☎353086

12.15pm U3A Photography (Group 2). St Mark's 4th week in month. Sue Butler ☎354183

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

2.00pm U3A Gardening Group Putnoe Heights Eve Whitehead ☎356875

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

7-9pm Tae Kwon Do St Mark's Contact Adrian Felice 07964 356355☎

7.45 - 10.45pm Bedford Astrology Club. St. Mark's. 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

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.

7-9pm Tae Kwon Do St Mark's Contact Adrian Felice 07964 356355☎

Diary Dates



St Mark's Church Council –

Annual General Meeting 10 April 2011

St Mark's Leadership Team 31 January

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 7 February

Putnoe Heights Management Meeting - .

St Mark's Forum Meeting -

Putnoe Church Council - 14 February

Pastoral Group Meeting - 8 February 4.15pm

Churchyard Committee - 26 January at 11.00am

Putnoe Heights Mission Group

Brickhill Parish Council Meetings

Deanery Meeting - .

Woodland Burial Trustees – 13 February 2011

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth – 10th January 2010 1.30pm

Please advise St Mark's Church Office

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Opening Sentence from Scripture - Psalm 80:7

Restore us, O God; make your face shine upon us, that we may be saved.

Collect (Before we read we pray)

God our Redeemer, you choose the Virgin Mary, to be the mother of our Lord and saviour. Fill us with your grace that in all things we may embrace your holy will and with her rejoice in your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. *Methodist Worship*

Old Testament Reading – Isaiah Chapter 7:10-16

Again the LORD spoke to Ahaz, "Ask the LORD your God for a sign, whether in the deepest depths or in the highest heights." But Ahaz said, "I will not ask; I will not put the LORD to the test." Then Isaiah said, "Hear now, you house of David! Is it not enough to try the patience of men? Will you try the patience of my God also? Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel. He will eat curds and honey when he knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right. But before the boy knows enough to reject the wrong and choose the right, the land of the two kings you dread will be laid waste.

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

Second Reading - Romans 1: 1-7

Paul, a servant of Christ Jesus, called to be an apostle and set apart for the gospel of God— the gospel he promised beforehand through his prophets in the Holy Scriptures regarding his Son, who as to his human nature was a descendant of David, and who through the Spirit of holiness was declared with power to be the Son of God by his resurrection from the dead: Jesus Christ our Lord. Through him and for his name's sake, we received grace and apostleship to call people from among all the Gentiles to the obedience that comes from faith. And you also are among those who are called to belong to Jesus Christ. To all in Rome who are loved by God and called to be saints: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. (This is the word of the Lord — **All: Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading – Matthew 1: 18-25

After the gospel is announced — **Glory to Christ our Saviour**

This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly. But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus because he will save his people from their sins." All this took place to fulfil what the Lord had said through the prophet: "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us." When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus. (**This is the Gospel of Christ—All: Praise to Christ our Lord**)

Post Communion Prayer Father in heaven, who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**



Hymns for Sunday (Please distribute Holy Communion and Hymns and Psalms)

1. O come O come Emmanuel 85
2. Long ago prophets knew 83
3. The angel Gabriel from heaven came 87
4. Let all mortal flesh 266
5. A messenger named Gabriel (On Partnership news)

Commentary

The Gospel of Matthew begins with the genealogy of Jesus, we looked at this a few weeks ago in the Jesse Tree. It is not really a genealogy in the sense that we know today when somebody does their family tree. It is not accurate in that sense, it is more of a theological statement. If we look at it carefully we see that Matthew lists 42 generations, which is six blocks of seven names. Numbers were so important, the 7th "age"--the one of completion and wholeness--is about to begin.

The list of names in Matthew's genealogy is important, it includes the names of five women. Matthew likes to do things in "fives." There are five sections of Matthew's gospel, for example, symbolic of the five books of Moses. In Matthew's Christmas story, there are five Old Testament citations, five dreams, five scriptural fulfillments, and five uses of the word "Messiah." Matthew likes "fives" because he is presenting Jesus as the "new Moses, and of course Moses had five books in the Pentateuch, Genesis to Deuteronomy.

Including women in a genealogy was unusual. Yet, Matthew's list includes Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, "the wife of Uriah" (Bathsheba), and Mary. It is a checkered list indeed. Tamar and Rahab were prostitutes, Ruth a seductress, Bathsheba an adulteress. Rahab and Ruth were also foreigners. Mary herself would be accused of sexual impropriety.

In our reading today the first line translated literally is "The genesis of Jesus Christ was this." Matthew is drawing on the name of Moses' first book, drawing a link between the "genesis" of the creation, and the "genesis" of Christ, the new creation. It isn't just thrown together this Gospel is it!

Mary and Joseph were engaged, it was like marriage but they were not yet living together. Then Mary turns up pregnant. Of course everybody asks who is the father? Why does Matthew tell us this at all? Luke tells his entire Christmas story without mentioning the questionable paternity of Jesus. Was Matthew dealing with an early rumor, one that asserted Mary was raped by a Roman soldier? The Roman writer, Celsus, later asserted this c. AD 150, and used Matthew's gospel a source. Roman soldiers had likely swept through Nazareth upon the death of Herod in 4 BC. When Herod died, there were uprisings all through the land of Israel. Rome had to bring three Legions from Syria to suppress all the revolts. This would have involved about 20,000 soldiers. (The soldiers were stationed in Syria to counter a major empire to the east, Parthia.) One of the revolts was in Sepphoris, only a few miles from Nazareth. The Roman Army destroyed the city.

Matthew presents Joseph as a "just" man who did not want to expose Mary to public ridicule and decided to release her secretly. It seems unlikely that such a thing could be done secretly in a small town. In any case, the sense of the text seems to be that Joseph was trying to handle the situation with minimal damage to anyone's reputation--his, and Mary's as well. Technically speaking, Mary could have been stoned to death, as could the father of the child, if known. Strict adherence to the law was, in some peoples' minds, the very definition of "justice." Strictly speaking, under the law, Mary dies. But Joseph is portrayed as elevating compassion--concern about disgrace for Mary--above strict adherence to the law. This pre-figures the "new justice"--compassion over "religion"--that will be taught by Jesus himself later in Matthew. Jesus will quote Hosea twice in Matthew, both times the same citation: "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice" (9:13, 12:7). I desire compassion, in other words, and not the religious act.

As Joseph is struggling with all of this an angel addresses him as Joseph "Son of David." This is the sixth mention of "David" in Matthew's gospel, and we've only gone 20 verses! David was the "messiah" figure par excellence. He was the great king who had defeated Israel's enemies, and ushered in a great "golden age." For Matthew, not only is Jesus the "new Moses." He is also the "new David."

The angel encourages Joseph not to be afraid. Mary will bear a son. The root of the word 'bear' means to bring forth fruit from a seed. The idea of "bearing fruit" is of major importance throughout Matthew's gospel. "Beware of false prophets," Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount (7: 16). How will you know if they are a false prophet? "By their fruits"--by what they do, by what they bring forth. Here, Mary brings forth the fruit of Jesus.

The angels tells Joseph that the child is to be named "Jesus"--"Yeshua" actually, which is "Joshua," which means "he will save." The name recalls the great leader, Joshua, who had led the people across the Jordan into the Promised Land. This new Joshua will save "his people" from their sins.

A major theme of Matthew is the problem of unbelief in Israel, the main subject, in fact, of Matthew's third major section of his gospel. Nevertheless, despite their sins, Jesus will save "his people." Matthew

follows with the first of five Old Testament citations:

But all this had come to be so that what had been spoken of the Lord through the prophet might be fulfilled, saying, "Behold, a virgin will be with child and will bring forth a son and they will call his name Emmanuel," which, translated, is, "God with us." Matthew must have been using the Septuagint--the Greek translation of the Hebrew scriptures. (The Septuagint version of Isaiah 7: 14 uses "virgin," but the original Hebrew does not.) Isaiah was referring to a "young woman" who was already pregnant during the reign of King Ahaz, who was, at the time, dealing with a twin threat from Aram and Remaliah.

"Behold, the young woman is with child," says Isaiah. By the time this child is old enough to know the difference between right and wrong, Isaiah continues, the land in front of the two enemies of Ahaz will be deserted. Isaiah was not predicting the future, in other words, but speaking to the immediate situation facing King Ahaz in the 8th century BC. Isaiah was not actually foretelling the future at all.

In verse 23, Jesus is given another title "Emmanuel" is added to "Joshua." The latter will be the child's personal name, and the former might be thought of as his ruling title: "God with us." When the book of Matthew closes, Jesus will say, "I am with you always" (28:20).

We are told that Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and he took his wife, and he did not know her until of her was brought forth a son and he called his name Jesus. This then is the first of five dreams in Matthew's Christmas story. In the case of Joseph, it also recalls that earlier dreamer, Joseph, son of Jacob, who interpreted dreams for Pharaoh in Egypt. Joseph, the "just" man, does as he was told, married Mary, and named the new baby Jesus. In those days, it was the father's prerogative to name the child. In naming Jesus, Joseph is "owning" the child and accepting responsibility for him.

Meditation

Joseph had very little reason to be happy at that first Christmas. His wife could be thought to have betrayed him, he had to travel to Bethlehem and then flee a mad king. Yet because of his faith he is able to bring great good out of the difficulty of the situation. This Christmas, can we dare to try and be like Joseph? To look whatever chaos or difficulties comes along straight in the face and still be trusting in God that good will come out of it? Joseph had very little to go on. He was probably surrounded by people who told him to get rid of Mary, that no good could come out of a woman like that. Yet his faith enabled him to see that God comes to us at times when we least expect it and in ways that we least expect. All around us, every day of our lives we will hear the words of people who see doom and gloom and speak words of hopelessness. We Christians must be better than that, we have been assured of the future by God himself. Because we are people who believe in the future, therefore we can live better today. We can see the beginnings of a new life right now, in the face of baby born in Bethlehem.

Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

Strengthen your Church in the name of Jesus, to know the power of the Saviour, of Emmanuel, of God with us. Hold us fast in the obedience and faith that enabled Joseph and the Holy Family to perform your will in the work of bringing salvation to the world. Amen

Christ the Son of God, born of Mary, fill you with His grace to trust His promises and obey His will; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen

A Hymn for Sunday

A messenger named Gabriel came to the land of Israel;
and he proclaimed that Mary's son was God's messiah, holy One.

*O Jesus Christ, strong Son of God, once born for us at Bethlehem:
we listen to the angels' song, and worship you for ever.*

Angelic hosts of God most high with radiant glory fill the sky;
enraptured voices joyful sing to welcome Christ, the new-born king.

In awesome fear and bitter cold the shepherds huddle in their fold;
then since the message is for them, they make their way to Bethlehem.

Within the sacred stable-shrine they see the holy child divine;
the manger stands amidst the straw and humble folk their God adore.

Since then have passed two thousand years of human misery and tears;
yet Christ alone can bring release: he loves us still - the prince of peace.



Fourth Candle - The Candle of Joy (Pink candle) Mary the Mother of Jesus

Leader: May your hearts be filled with joy as you hear the song of Mary, the Mother of Jesus.

All: Thanks be to God

Leader: Last Sunday we lit the Candles of Hope, Peace and Love

(A person now lights the Candles of Hope, Peace, and Love)

Today we light the Fourth Candle of Advent, the Candle of Joy, as we remember Mary the mother of Jesus

And Mary said: "My soul glorifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on all generations will call me blessed, for the Mighty One has done great things for me— holy is his name. His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation. He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts. He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty. He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors." *Luke Chapter 1*

Mary had been told by the angel Gabriel that she would bear Jesus, a holy child, the Son of God. We are told that Mary rejoiced and sang a song which glorified God. Just as the birth of Jesus gave great joy to his mother, so his presence in the world gave joy to those who had none before. He healed them and gave them hope and peace when they believed in him.

(Light the fourth pink candle now.)

Leader: Let us pray:

All: Lord God, may we follow the example of Mary and serve you in joyful obedience. In all circumstances give us trust in your promises and help us to faithfully serve you, all of our days. We ask this prayer in the name of Jesus our Saviour, the babe of Bethlehem. Amen.

The Christmas Posting Box is in position for you to post your cards to friends who come to Putnoe Church. As always, it will be 10p per card or 12 cards for £1. Please leave the money in the wooden box near by. Please put surnames and addresses on the envelopes. Cards which are left on Christmas day will have to be collected afterwards, unfortunately. Thank you **Joy** and Peter Parker

Church Christmas Cards are now on sale at both church with proceeds for Kisiizi. Or place an order by phone from St Mar'k's Church Office. Cards are 25p each or a pack of 5 for £1

Footprints New Year's Day Walk

Sat 1 January 2011. Meet at 10.30 am at Mowsbury Park (Kimbolton Rd car park- on RHS after 'Pheasant' roundabout) for short circular walk followed by lunch at Putnoe Heights. Further details from Sue Allen

St Mark's Christmas Card Screen The Christmas card board for members of the congregation to place their Christmas Cards on is now available. Please leave cards at the Office to be placed on the board. Please do not attempt to put them on the board yourself. If you would like to leave a donation for the Kisiizi Hospital it would be very much appreciated.

Church Chairs. St Marks Church have ordered new chairs which we hope will arrive just after Christmas. We would be very grateful to any members of the congregation who felt able to contribute towards the cost of the chairs which will cost £50 each. Please make cheques payable to St Mark's Church and remember to gift aid.

Action for Children collected £281.15 singing carols at Bedford railway station. Thanks to all concerned. Vera

Action for Children Thank you to all who contributed to and worked on our stall at the Craft Fayre in November with £142 raised on that occasion. On 11 December supporters from Ampthill, Kempston and Brickhill collected £225.03 at Sainsbury's in Kempston. There are still Action for Children diaries at £2 each available from St. Mark's Church office. Margaret Standley

Putnoe Provender Last Sunday's sale raised the grand total of £223.30 for the Kisiizi appeal. Grateful thanks to all who contributed. John & Sally Gunning.

Priory Methodist Church is pleased to announce that the Rev. Glayne Worgan has accepted the appointment at Priory from September 2011.

St Mark's Church Community Centre Christmas Closure. St Mark's church office will be closed from Thursday evening 23 December and will re-open on Wednesday 5 January 2011.

Printer Cartridge Recycling St Mark's are collecting printer cartridges from home or office printers for recycling. If you would like to help with this please bring them to St Mark's and place in the box in the foyer or hand in to the church office. We would appreciate your support as this raises funds and also helps the environment.

Thursday Prayer Group will not be meeting on December 23 or 30.

St. Mark's Church Craft Stall would like to thank everyone for their support. We are pleased to say we made almost £600 for the church. If anyone would like to join us in the New Year or has any new ideas please contact Maureen 262225 or Rosemary 405594 or hand them in to Wendy in the office. Thank you.

Flower Donors. Anyone wishing to contribute towards the cost of flowers at Putnoe for any Sunday in the first six months of 2011, is invited to enter their name on the rota on the board in the welcome area.



Traditional Carols by Candlelight

Putnoe Heights Church will hold their carols by candlelight service tonight Sunday 19 December at 6.30pm

A Christmas service at Highfield will be conducted by St. Mark's at 2.30pm on Sunday 19th December.

Magnet This uplifting magazine, at a cost of £10 per year, is produced quarterly. Hilda Hicks and Margaret Stamdley distribute it at Putnoe Heights and St. Mark's Church. Please contact either of them to make sure you have your copies next year, as payment is required and orders will be placed before the end of December 2010. Thank you for your co-operation. Margaret Standley.

Messy Church

We continue to be delighted by the response from families to Messy Church, at our December gathering there we 20 children plus Mums and one Dad! However we could do with a few more people to help, especially if some of our regular, enthusiastic, team members are unable to be at a session. From January Messy Church will be held from 3.45 to 5.30pm on the 3rd Wednesday of the month. If you are interested in helping please speak to Jean Bank or Wendy Waters

Putnoe Heights New Year Lunch Sunday 9th January 2011 at 1.00pm A festive lunch with 3 courses inclusive of drinks. All proceeds to church funds. Tickets (from Putnoe Office) £8.00 (£4.50 for children under 10)

Christmas Holy Communion. If you know of anybody who is sick and house bound over Christmas and would like Holy Communion, please advise the ministers who will be pleased to take the sacraments to them.

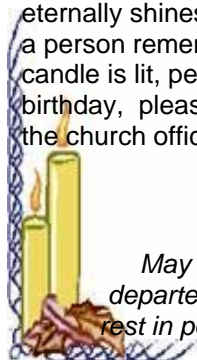
Partnership Council are invited to the Vicarage Christmas Party today from 1.00pm

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.

John Tatman

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



Cold Weather preventing you from coming to church? Tell St Mark's Church office (Tel: 342613) and we will arrange for a taxi to include you on its route to the 9.30am service.

Forthcoming Funerals

There are no funerals this week

