



# Partnership News

Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church  
22 December 2013  
4 Sunday in Advent



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

## Today – 22 December 2013

### 9.30 St Marks - Morning Worship

Preacher – Mr David Jewitt  
Leadership Team – Mrs Jean Bank  
Intercessions – Mr Mike Elliott  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

### 11.00 am Putnoe —Morning Worship

Preacher – Mr David Jewitt  
Leadership -Mrs Sylvia Cohen  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

## Christmas Eve & Christmas Day

*Please see special services*

## 29 December 2013 - Advent 4

### 9.30 St Marks – Morning Worship with Baptism

Preacher – Mr Richard Ledger  
Leadership – Mr Mick Ovenden  
Intercessions – Mrs Morag Stewart  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

### 11.00 am Putnoe – Holy Communion with PCH

Preacher – Mr Richard Ledger  
Leadership Team - Mrs Sue Allen  
Intercessions — Dr Tim Wilkes  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

### Readings 1 Isaiah 63: 7-9 2. Hebrews 2:10-16

3. Matthew 2: 13-23

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

## Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Patricia Pollard in loving memory of her mother Eva Hopkins on her birthday.

## Prayer for Sunday

Lord, I believe in Thee,  
help Thou mine unbelief.  
I love Thee,  
yet not with a perfect heart as I would.  
I long for Thee,  
yet not with my full strength.  
I trust in Thee,  
yet not with my whole mind.  
Accept my faith, my love  
, my longing to know and serve Thee,  
my trust in Thy power to keep me.  
I wait Thy blessing.  
Through Jesus Christ my Lord.  
*Malcolm Spencer*

## Marriage

We publish the banns and pray for the marriage of  
Alan John Stewart Graham and Gail Jacqueline  
Preston both of this parish to be married at St Mark's  
Church

### The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR  
Tel: 266952 nsm@thisischurch.com

### Deacon Jane Mills

c/o Putnoe Heights Church Centre  
Tel. 348091 Mobile 07807 146535  
jane@thisischurch.com

### The Reverend Canon Charles Royden

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

**Partnership News** is sent out by email every Saturday  
in a colour edition. If you would like to receive a copy  
please send an email entitled 'Partnership News' to  
vicar@thisischurch.com. Please note that any items  
submitted for inclusion in Partnership News will  
automatically be posted on our website and may appear in  
other local media sources.

**Partnership News is also archived on our church  
website [www.ThisChurch.com](http://www.ThisChurch.com)**

### Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator

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

### Churchyards Administrator

Mrs Avril Williams 01234 342613

### Putnoe Heights Church Centre

**Open Monday to Thursday 9am - 5pm, Friday 9am - 1pm**  
**Tel/fax & Answering Service** 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com  
**Centre Manager** Mr Geoff Gypps 365630 mob 07947 902846  
**Leadership Team** Mrs Jenny Snelson 344417  
**Treasurer** Mr John Hitt 404186 treasurerph@thisischurch.com  
**Gift Aid Administrator** Mr Lawrence Wyatt 350188  
**Youth Team Leader** Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com

### St. Mark's Church Centre

**Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5.00pm**  
**Tel/fax & Answering Service** 342613 office@thisischurch.com  
**Centre Manager** Miss Wendy Rider 342613  
**Leadership Team** - Mr Michael Ovenden 826738  
**Treasurer** - Mr Ian Farthing 210892  
treasurer@thisischurch.com

# Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

## 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 Laura Leggett 01234 326685 or www.hazeldeneheights.com

**8.30-12.30pm St Mark's Pre-School Nursery**

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

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

**9.00-3.45pm Top Marks** Mon-Fri St Mark's

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

(See website for more details)

**9.45am - Body Control Pilates** –Putnoe Heights

Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430

**10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group.** St Mark's Mrs M. Berry 211955

**10.30am U3A Play reading** Putnoe Heights (see contact details below)

**1.30pm Chat & Make. For babies and toddlers 0-5.**

**Crafts, toys, songs, story and refreshments £1. More details email-chatandplay@hotmail.co.uk**

**2.00pm U3A Calligraphy** at St Mark's (2nd week in the month) Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119.

**12.00 noon Story box** Putnoe Heights 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. Contact Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com 365630

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

2.00pm U3A Italian Putnoe Heights– fortnightly

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

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

**6.15 pm Brownies** Putnoe. Sharon Tanner

01767699399 or 07720713738.

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

**6.15pm-8.15pm Fit for Life Yoga** - Putnoe Heights

Contact Jane Butcher 07891879571

**6.30pm Boot Camp** Putnoe Heights – Laura Amor 341152 / 07976259081

**7.00pm Sugarcraft Guild** St Mark's (1st week in month) Pat Nicholson 353518

**7.00pm Cancer Care Society.** St Mark's. (1st week in month) Mr J Dewhurst 01908 377020.

7.00-8.00pm Laughter Club 92nd week each month) Cheryl Green 07729187399

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

**7.30pm Whist Drive.** St Mark's (3rd & 5th week in the month).. Next meeting– 20 January Judith Stanton. 823313

**7.30pm No Fear Bridge Club** St. Mark's Mrs. Susan Ford 300218.

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

## Tuesday

**9.30am Jo Jingles.** St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Charlotte Williams 07968207442

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

**9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World** St. Mark's. Helen Skinner 07989080389

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

**11.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights** (see contact details below)

**1.15pm U3A Cinema Group.** St Mark's Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

**1.30pm U3A Choir.** St Mark's Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

**2.00pm U3A Book Group 1** St Mark's (3rd Week in month) Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

**2.00pm U3A Book Group 2** St Mark's (2nd Week in month) Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

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

**2pm U3A Photography Group 3** St. Mark's (1st Week in month) Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

**2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group.** St Mark's (1st & 3rd week in month). Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225

**2.15pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup.** St Mark's (2nd & 4th week in month) Mary Stubbs 406784.

**4.00pm-6.15pm Stars School of Dance** at Putnoe Heights. Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468

**7.30-8.30pm Pilates** St Mark's Church Jane Butcher 0789187957

**7pm - 8.30pm Daisy Birthing** Putnoe Heights Susie 07980447390

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

**7.00pm Keep Fit.** St. Mark's Jan Gregory 328455

**7.30pm Ladies Tuesday Club** at Putnoe Heights (Meets fortnightly). Afternoon meeting at 2.30pm on 7 January Details Janet King 313946

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

## Wednesday

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

**10am-2pm Open House** at St Mark's for those with learning disabilities., their friends, family , carers and supporters 342613.

**10am U3A Gardening Group 3** St Marks. Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

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

**10am U3A Card Making,** St Marks Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

**10am U3A Diet and Nutrition-** Putnoe (contact below)

**11.15am U3A Keep Fit** at Putnoe Heights

**12.30pm –4pm St Mark's Nursery**

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

**12.30pm Luncheon Club.** Putnoe fortnightly. Next meeting 15 January Putnoe Heights Office 365630

**1.00-3pm Police Surgery** at Putnoe Heights (Fortnightly)

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

**2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft** at St Marks. Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

**2pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan** Putnoe Heights

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

**3.45- 5.30pm Messy Church.** St Mark's (3rd Week in month). for children of lower school age and their carers.

Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 15 January 2014 Wendy Waters 401834 Jean Bank 355698

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

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

**6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation** Putnoe Heights Racheall Monton 01234 297138 or 07910835994.

**7.00pm Bunyan Bridge.** St. Mark's Colin Jackson 363398

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

**7.00pm Putnoe Guild** Putnoe 3rd Wednesday in every month except August Mrs Jo Street 344600

**7.00pm Line Dancing** Putnoe Mike Del-Boyer 348378

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

**8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club** at St Mark's (1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month). Next meeting will be 15 January Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Rosemary 405594 or Graham 406359 for more details.

**8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club** St Mark's (1st week in the month) Greta Cansfield 215016

### Thursday

**8.30am—12.30pm St. Mark's Pre School Nursery** Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

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

**9.30am Spanish for total beginners.**at Putnoe Heights. Elena 01234 266968

**9.45am Chat and Play** St.Mark's. A term time group for Mums & toddlers.0-5 Jo Garner 400071 or 07932616468

**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 342613

**1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic** at St Mark's (1st and 3rd week in month)Contact 897401

**1pm-2.30pm Drop in** (small hall) Next Steps 9-24months Putnoe Children's Centre.Please call Trudy Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information 340552. 2pm -Friendly Chicago Bridge at Putnoe Heights £2 per session inc. refreshments. New members welcome. Contact Pat 01234 294220.

**2pm U3A Current Affairs** - Putnoe Heights

**2-4pm U3A Indoor Games.** St.Mark's Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

**2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society** St Mark's Jean Paterson 307210  
3.15-5.15pm Social Care Solutions Drama Group Claire Creek 262650

**5.45pm Weightwatchers.** St. Mark's. Clare Martin 07805408811.

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

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

**7pm U3A Folk & Poetry** St Marks (2nd and 4th week in month)Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

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

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

**7.30pm Gentle Birthing** St Mark's. Pat Wood 07946 847231

**8 -10pm Bedford Folk Dancers** (formerly Barn dancers)

Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights Different guest callers each week.Except August. All welcome, cost £2.50 Including refreshments. More details Ron 825574 or Shirley 01767 651767

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

**8.00pm Magpies Women's Group** St Mark's (2nd & 4th week in month) Mrs Marie Cotchin 402089

**8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group** St Mark's (1st and 3rd week in month) Susan Perugi 300219

### Friday

**8.30am—12.30pm St. Mark's Nursery** Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

**8.30am Diabetic Centre** St Mark's (1st week in month) Deborah Hennessey 792013

**9am -1pm Machine Knitting** group at Putnoe Heights, fortnightly . Contact Marion Sutton 217647

**10am -12.00 U3A Photography** St Marks.(4th week in month) Mrs Yvonne Francis

**10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French** St. Marks Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

**2.00-4.00 pm U3A Whist** St Marks. (2nd week in month) Mrs Yvonne Francis 405119

**2pm U3A Gardening** - Putnoe Heights

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

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

**7.00pm-9.00pm Meditation** St Mark's.Cheryl Green 07729187399

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

### Saturday

**9.00am Faith Temple Ministries** St Mark's (1st week in month) Dawn Kelly 07863762593

**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

### 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.** 1st Sunday Feb/ Apr/Jun/Aug /Oct/Dec. Contact P Harris 01623 621143

**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.

**7-9pm Tae Kwon Do** St Mark's Adrian Felice www.bedfordtkd.com 07964356355

**Messy Church Dates** Weds 20 Nov, 15th Jan., 12th Feb., 19th March, 16th April, 21st May, 18th June.

## Diary Dates

**St Mark's Church Council –**  
**St Mark's Leadership Team -** 21 January 2014  
**Annual Congregational Meetings**  
**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team -**  
**Putnoe Heights Management Meeting**  
**Putnoe Church Council -**  
**Pastoral Group Meeting -** 10 January at 10.00am  
**Churchyard Committee -**  
**Commemoration Service**  
**Circuit meeting - Deanery Meeting -**  
**Woodland Burial Trustees–** 15th December 12.30pm  
**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting –**10th February 2014 1.30pm  
**New Year Lunch 19 January at Putnoe**

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



# Advent 4

## Sentence of Scripture - Ephesians 3:20

God is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or even imagine.

## Collect Prayer for the Day -

Before we read we pray

God our redeemer, who prepared the Blessed Virgin Mary to be the mother of your Son: grant that, as she looked for his coming as our saviour, so we may be ready to greet him when he comes again as our judge; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. Common Worship



## First Bible 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— **Thanks be to God**)

## Second Reading - Romans Chapter 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. (Reader: This is the word of the Lord - All: Thanks be to God

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

## Gospel Reading - Matthew 11: 2-11

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 Word of the Lord—Thanks be to God)

## Post Communion Prayer

O Lord our God, make us watchful and keep us faithful as we await the coming of your Son our Lord; that, when he shall appear, he may not find us sleeping in sin but active in his service and joyful in his praise; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## Hymns (Please distribute Hymns and Psalms and Morning Worship )

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel (Tune Veni Immanuel) 85
2. Come, thou long expected Jesus (Tune Stuttgart) 81
3. Advent candles (Tune Angel Voices) On Partnership News
4. Long ago, prophets knew (Tune Theodoric) 83
5. Christ is surely coming (Tune Land of Hope and Glory) On Partnership News MP75

## Commentary

No woman in history has been as influential as Mary the Mother of Jesus. No wonder that she sang the song of the Magnificat, *'my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour, ... from now on all generation will call me blessed'*. The faith which Mary showed in God was remarkable and exemplary. As a poor peasant girl she had few resources upon which to draw when faced with the shame of what was considered to be adultery. She was female, little more than a child and she came from Nazareth, one of those places which was considered the wrong sort of place. Such was the reputation of Nazareth that Nathanael said *"Can anything good come from Nazareth?" (John 1:46)*. Yet out of the lack of her own resources she drew upon God's strength to enable her to face the public shame and the demanding days which lay ahead. She is an example to us all of how to act, in the face of what life throws at us God will provide to us the grace needed to endure.

We should not forget Joseph either, who we are told was a 'just' man. He did not want to expose Mary to public ridicule, but how could you avoid this in such a small town? Everybody would know of her misbehaviour. What did that word 'just' mean? Joseph does not want justice from the law, with Mary stoned to death, or the father of the child. Instead he shows compassion on the disgraced Mary, in the same way that Jesus called for compassion over the demands of the religious laws. In Matthew's Gospel Jesus quotes Hosea twice : "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice" (9:13, 12:7). *Charles Royden*

## Meditation

The Revd Ruth Gee, President of the Methodist Conference, has called on the Methodist people to celebrate God's generosity by being generous disciples. In her Christmas message, the Revd Ruth Gee urged people to "celebrate and share the generous love of God who mothers us and longs to wipe away our tears, and to nurture us so that we can become the people she has created us to be." Her message also advised people on how to respond to God's "generous love" which is "offered to all".

"We should respond by being generous disciples," she said. "We can be generous with our time; time spent with God and time spent with others. Only if we spend time with God will we grow to know God better."

The full text of the President's Christmas message follows:

When I first went to Yorkshire I had to learn a new language. Apart from three years when I was at university in Hull, I had lived in the south of England, and there were words and phrases that were completely unfamiliar to me. I learned that having a pot on meant that you were wearing a plaster cast and that to 'play pop' was to make a fuss. I learned to sing about chiming Christmas bells between the verses of 'While shepherds watched' and I discovered that the 'Cornish' served in the lunch club was nothing like the Cornish Pasties enjoyed in the South West.

One word that was often used by people in Yorkshire was 'real'. People were said to be real if they were genuine and trustworthy. To be described as real was a seal of approval, it meant that a person or a thing was authentic and true.

Several years ago, I visited Florence. In a number of places in that city you can see replicas of Michelangelo's David and they are very beautiful. If you want to see the original sculpture, you need to go into the Academia, in which it is the major exhibit. The David in the Academia is 'real', it is undoubtedly the real thing and it stands out from all the copies. As you look at it you can see the skill, the style and the technique of Michelangelo, there is something of the artist himself in his creation.

At midnight on Christmas Eve, in many of our churches the central candle will be lit in the Advent wreath. The white candle symbolises the birth of Jesus, the light of the world. This is the start of Christmas. This is the moment when we remember that: "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory." It doesn't get much more real than this. In Jesus we see, and we encounter, the creator of the universe, the artist who weaves the fabric of our being. This is the reality that God is with us. God is with us - how exciting and awesome is that? In all the busyness of the festival, don't forget to be excited. Christmas is not only for the children! Celebrate the birth of Jesus,

and share the good news of God's generous love as widely as you can. Celebrate and share the generous love of God who sent his only son so that we might know the father through the child. Celebrate and share the generous love of God who mothers us and longs to wipe away our tears, and to nurture us so that we can become the people she has created us to be. I remember so clearly the first time that I held each of my children in my arms. I remember the overwhelming love I felt for them and I hoped that they would love me too. I couldn't demand their love, I have no right to it, but I longed for it. If you kneel at the manger this Christmas and look into the eyes of the baby, you may find that you are filled with love and you might discover a longing for the generous love of God?

God's generous love is offered to all of us and invites a response from us. How can we respond? We should respond by being generous disciples. We can be generous with our time; time spent with God and time spent with others. Only if we spend time with God will we grow to know God better. How generous are we with the time we spend in prayer? I find that it is all too easy to rush through prayer or to be distracted by other worthy things, which are themselves impoverished if they are not grounded in prayer.

We can also be generous with our resources, with our gifts and skills and with our money. And we can be generous with our love, love of God and love of others which is often shown when we engage with, and respond to, challenges and needs in society. In all this we are joyful. We are filled with the deep and real joy of those who know that they are loved and valued beyond measure. When we have this much real joy in our lives we have to celebrate and we have to share. I pray that you will all have a joyful, peaceful and blessed Christmas and that you will find the space and the time to kneel at the manger, to look deep into the eyes of Jesus and to glimpse the glory of God. Then you will know that Christmas is real.

### Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

Be to us, O Lord, the closest of our companions, our everlasting love and our enduring happiness. Through your Spirit, create in us holy fire and purity of life, that loving you above all things and our neighbours ardently, we may come to the glories of your everlasting kingdom; through Christ our Lord. Amen. *Thomas à Kempis (1380-1471)*

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#### 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. Luke Chapter 1

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."

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, merciful and gentle: to you be praise and glory for ever. Your light has shone in our darkened world through the child-bearing of blessed Mary; grant that we who have seen your glory may daily be renewed in your image and prepared like her for the coming of your Son, who is the Lord and Saviour of all. Blessed be God for ever.  
(*Light the fourth pink candle now.*)

Leader: Let us pray:

**All: Lord Jesus, light of the world, blessed is Gabriel, who brought good news; blessed is Mary, your mother and ours. Bless your Church preparing for Christmas; and bless us your children, who long for your coming.**

**Putnoe large Christmas Card** is ready for your messages from this Sunday and the post box is also available to post your cards at 10p each

**Christmas closure at St. Mark's Church Office**  
The office will be closed from 1pm Tuesday 24 December and will reopen 9am Monday 6 January.

**Christmas closure at Putnoe Heights Church Office.** The office will be closed from 1.00pm Friday 20th December and reopen on Monday 6 January.

**Putnoe Provender** Last Sunday's sale raised the magnificent sum of £245 in aid of the Ethiopian Honey Appeal. Many thanks to all who contributed.  
*John & Sally Gunning.*

**Chat and Play** at St. Mark's restarts on Thursday 16 January 2014

**Chat and Make** at St. Mark's restarts on Monday 13 January 2014

**Story Box** at St Mark's starts again on Thursday 9 January 2014

**Action for Children** Thank you to all who sang Carols at the station last Friday and raised the sum of £233. Santa was in his grotto to the delight of several children and the station staff looked after the singers well. There was a real Christmassy buzz as the rail passengers appreciated our efforts and gave so generously to the Charity.

**Footprints Walking Group.** New Year's Day Walk. Wednesday 1 January, 2014. All welcome to join us at the start of the year. Meet at St. Mark's Church at 10.30am for gentle 2-3 mile walk via Anjulita Court and Clapham Wood. Lunch afterwards at Putnoe Heights Church. Sue Allen

**Putnoe Heights New Year Lunch** Sunday 19 January 2014. Starter, roast, dessert, wines and coffee. Tickets now available from Putnoe Office or after Sunday services. £8.00 (£4.50 children under 10)

**Nominations for High Sheriff's Awards Sought**  
Nominations for the High Sheriff's Citizenship Awards in Bedfordshire are now being sought. If you know of someone who has given their time freely to their community and who deserves to be recognised, nominate them now. For more information, <http://voluntaryworks.org/news/nominations-high-sheriff%E2%80%99s-awards-sought> here

**Thank You** to Judith Stanton whose whist drive raised a magnificent £230 for St. Mark's Church.

**St Mark's Wednesday Communion** There will be no Communion service on Wednesday 1 January.. Commencing again on 8 January 2014

**Putnoe Prayer Group** will meet on Wednesday January 9 2014.

**Putnoe Youngsters** have been invited to join the residents of Puttenham to sing carols at 11am on Christmas Eve. They would welcome any members of the congregation who would like to join them. For more details contact Carolyn

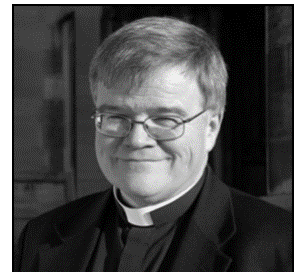
**Footprints walk:-** There will be a footprints walk from Shefford on Sunday the 12 of January 2014. Meet at the car park (Free) at the end of Old Station Way off of the High Street in Shefford 2.00pm. About 2 miles in length, a bit muddy in places, a steep longish hill to climb (Cockshoot hill) No stiles. Any queries contact Alan or Margaret at [massey-1@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:massey-1@tiscali.co.uk)

**Christmas Voices at Putnoe.**  
£175 was raised at this event and was added into the total for the Sweeter Deal Appeal. Many thanks to all the readers who took part. Gerry & Sue

#### **Equipping God's People**

There are many training opportunities for those interested in learning more about the Christian faith or discipleship. Courses range from leading church prayers to pastoral care. A leaflet entitled Learn and Grow Together is available at the church offices or online at [www.stalbans.anglican.org](http://www.stalbans.anglican.org)

### **The Very Reverend Dr Jeffrey John Dean of St Albans Cathedral**



will be returning to  
BELIEF to speak on

#### **Means of Grace**

Saturday, 22 February, 2014  
10.00am to 1.00pm  
St Andrew's Church Centre,  
Kimbolton Road,  
Bedford MK40 2PF  
£10 per person, payable on the day

To book and reserve a place, please use the slip below or register in the 'Contact' section of

[www.beliefbeds.org](http://www.beliefbeds.org), email  
[belief@standrewsbedford.org](mailto:belief@standrewsbedford.org)  
or phone 01234 330314





## Hymns for Sunday

### Advent 1

Advent candles tell their story  
as we watch and pray,  
longing for the Day of Glory,  
"Come, Lord, soon", we say,  
Pain and sorrow, tears and sadness  
changed for gladness  
on that day.

### Advent 2

Prophet voices loudly crying,  
making pathways clear,  
glimpses glory, self-denying  
calling all to hear.  
Through their message – challenged, shaken –  
hearts awoken:  
God is near.

### Advent 3

John the Baptist, by his preaching  
and by water poured,  
brought to those who heard his teaching  
news of hope restored:  
"Keep your vision strong and steady,  
and be ready  
for the Lord.

### Advent 4

Mary's gift, beyond all telling,  
was to give Christ room.  
She gave God a human dwelling  
in a mother's womb.  
Who could guess the final story?  
- cross and glory;  
Empty tomb!

### Christmas Day

Advent candles tell their story  
on this Christmas Day.  
Those who waited for God's glory:  
they prepared the way.  
Christ is with us: loving, giving,  
in us living,  
here today!

**Christ is surely coming bringing his reward,**  
Alpha and Omega, First and Last and Lord:  
Root and stem of David, brilliant Morning Star:  
meet your Judge and Saviour, nations near and far;  
meet your Judge and Saviour, nations near and far!

See the holy city! There they enter in,  
All by Christ made holy, washed from every sin:  
thirsty ones, desiring all he loves to give,  
come for living water, freely drink, and live;  
come for living water, freely drink, and live!


Grace be with God's people! Praise his holy name!  
Father, Son, and Spirit, evermore the same.  
Hear the certain promise from the eternal home:  
'Surely I come quickly!'-Come, Lord Jesus, come;  
'Surely I come quickly!'-Come, Lord Jesus, come!

## New Noticeboard for Putnoe

Thank you to those who have contributed towards  
the new noticeboard at Putnoe which was  
dedicated last week. If anybody feels moved to help  
contribute towards the new board then donations  
will be gratefully received by John Hitt.

amazon.com  
and you're done.

**When you do your  
Christmas shopping please  
shop at [www.  
ThisChurch.com](http://www.ThisChurch.com)**

Thank you for shopping using the link on  
ThisChurch.com to shop through Amazon. Please  
be careful to make sure that you never access  
Amazon direct but always use the link on  
ThisChurch.com, this  ensures we get a  
donation every time you  
make a purchase.

Please also remember the Easyfundraising link.  
This is really a very good way to shop as it has lots  
of voucher codes which can save you a fortune on  
purchases and we receive a commission.

## 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.

**Christine Marie Pamment**

*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 Ethle Adair Wilcox**  
will take place at St Mark's Chapel  
on Monday 23 December at  
11.30am

**The funeral of Mrs Kathleen Nash**  
will take place at St Albans  
Woodland Burial Ground at 3.00pm  
on Monday 23 December