



# Partnership News

**Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church  
22 February 2015  
First Sunday of Lent**



## Sunday Services

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

## 22 February - First Sunday of Lent

### 9.30am St Mark's - Commissioning Service

Preacher - Deacon Jane Mills  
Leadership - Mrs. Elizabeth Bean  
Intercessions - Mr. Richard Ledger  
Organist - Mr. Clive Simmonds

### 11.00 am Putnoe - Commissioning Service

Preacher - Deacon Jane Mills  
Leadership - Mrs. Sue Allen  
Intercessions - Dr. Tim Wilkes  
Organist - Mr. Clive Simmonds

## 1 March - Second Sunday of Lent

### 9.30am St Mark's - Family Morning Worship

Preacher - Rev. Canon Charles Royden  
Leadership - Mrs. Wendy Waters  
Intercessions - Mrs. Margaret Appleton  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

### 11.00 am Putnoe - Family Morning Worship

Preacher - Rev. Canon Charles Royden  
Leadership - Mr. Barry Southam  
Intercessions - Young People  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

**Readings** 1. Genesis 17:1-7 2. Romans 4:13-25  
3. Mark 8:31-38

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

## Thank You

The flowers at St Mark's Church this week have been given by Geoff & Margaret Appleton in memory of their beloved granddaughter Alice Margaret Woolley.

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

## Prayer for Sunday

Give to us, Lord,  
the peace of those  
who have learnt to serve you,  
the joy of those  
who are glad to obey you  
and the delight of those  
who rejoice in your praise;  
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Aidan of Lindisfarne (d. 651)*

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

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**Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinators**  
Mrs Wendy Waters 342613 office@Thisischurch.com  
*Please inform us if you know of anyone who is ill, bereaved, housebound, requires a visit, home communion or counselling services. Please also ask us if you would like a home visit for any reason.*

**Churchyards Administrator**  
Mrs Avril Williams 01234 342613

**Putnoe Heights Church Centre**  
**Open Monday to Thursday 9am - 5.30pm, Friday 9-1pm**  
**Tel/fax & Answering Service** 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com  
**Centre Manager** Geoff Gypps 365630  
**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** - Mrs Jean Bank 355698  
**Treasurer** - Mr Ian Farthing 210892  
treasurer@thisischurch.com  
**Gift Aid Administrator** Mr Jim Williams 360605

# 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

**8.00am-5.30pm Pre-school** Mon-Fri St Mark's

**8.00am-5.30pm Top Marks** Mon-Fri St Mark's

Manager Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

(See website for more details)

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

Manager Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

**9.30-10.30am - Body Control Pilates** –Putnoe Heights

Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430

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

**10.00am-12 U3A Play reading** Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

**11.00am-12noon Pilates** St. Mark's. Liz Mason 07816522200 (starts 8 Sept.)

**12.00 noon Storybox** 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

**1.30pm Chat & Make. Term time** for babies and toddlers 0-5. Crafts, toys, songs, story and refreshments £1. More details contact St Mark's Church Office on 01234 342613 or Janine 01234 297481

**2.00pm U3A Music Appreciation** Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

**2.00pm U3A Italian** Putnoe Heights– fortnightly

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

**5.30 - 8.30 NHS Eat Smart Think Active** at Putnoe Heights. For more details contact Zoe Wilcox 07767311424

**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-8pm Cubs** at Putnoe Ages 8 –10.5 Email:phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509

**6.30pm Fit For All** 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** at St. Mark's 2nd week each month) Cheryl Green 07729187399

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

**7.30pm Whist Drive.** St Mark's ( Weeks 3 & 5 in the month).. Next meeting– 16 March 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

**7.45-9.15 Get Fit Keep Fit** at Putnoe Heights Diane Field 01234 404976

## Tuesday

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

**9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World** St. Mark's. Lorrie Pearson 01234 340473

**11-12.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights** Contact Janet King 313946

**1.15pm U3A Cinema Group.** St Mark's Contact Janet King 313946

**1.30pm U3A Choir.** St Mark's Contact Janet King 313946

**2.00pm U3A Book Group 1** St Mark's (3rd Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

**2.00pm U3A Book Group 2** St Mark's (2nd Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

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

**2.00pm U3A Photography Group 3** St. Mark's (1st Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

**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.

**3.30-6.30pm Stars School of Dance** at Putnoe Heights. Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468

**7.15-8.15pm Pilates** St Mark's Church Jane Butcher 07891879571

**7.00pm - 8.30pm Daisy Birthing** Putnoe Heights Susie 07980447390

**7.30pm Ladies Tuesday Club** at Putnoe Heights (Meets monthly Next meeting 3 March Easter Crafts Details Diane Bayliss 268101

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

## Wednesday

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

**10.00-2pm Open House** at St Mark's for those with learning disabilities., their friends, family , carers and supporters 342613.

**10.00am U3A Gardening Group 3** St Marks. Contact Janet King 313946

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

**10am U3A Card Making,** St Marks Contact Janet King 313946

**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 11 February Putnoe Heights Office 365630

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

**2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft** at St Marks.Contact Janet King 313946

**2.00pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan** Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

**2.00pm - 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 18 March

2014 Wendy Waters 401834 Jean Bank 355698

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

**5.00–6.00pm Rainbows** at Putnoe Heights Mrs Gill Lake 218091

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

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

**6.00-7.00pm ATSK Karate** at Putnoe Height Kevin Stark Tel.01234 353865

**7.00pm-9.00pm Scouts** at Putnoe ages 10.5-14;  
Email:phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509  
**7.00pm Bunyan Bridge.** St. Mark's Colin Jackson 363398  
or Brian Sallows 407725.  
**7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society** Putnoe  
Heights monthly. Sylvia Woods 365095  
**7.15pm Putnoe Guild** Putnoe 3rd Wednesday in every  
month except August Mrs Jo Street 3446008.**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  
4 March 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 ( Week  
1 in the month) Greta Cansfield 215016

### Thursday

**9.30am Thursday Prayer Group.** Putnoe Heights. Will  
meet again on 8 January 2015  
Valerie Capon 356306. Request for prayer can be written  
in the prayer diary on the information table.  
**10.30pm Spanish Holiday Survival** at Putnoe Heights.  
Elena 01234 266968  
**9.45am Chat and Play** St.Mark's. A term time group for  
Mums & toddlers.0-5 Contact St Mark's Church Office  
01234 342613 or Janine 01234 297481  
**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  
**1.00ui-2.30pm Wiggles & Jiggles** Putnoe Heights.  
Drop in.  
**1.00 - 2.30pm NHS Baby Clinic** at St Mark's ( Weeks 1  
& 3 in the 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 Contact  
Janet King 313946  
**2-4pm U3A Indoor Games.** St.Mark's Contact Janet King  
313946  
**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  
07768481499  
**6.15pm Brownies.** Putnoe Heights Lou Brenna.  
07919402797.  
**7.00pm Club 2000** Putnoe Audrey Halford 407284  
**7pm U3A Folk & Poetry** St Marks (2nd and 4th week in  
month)Contact Janet King 313946  
**7.15pm Putnoe Art Group** Bob Wardale 406094  
**7.00pm Bedford Embroiderers' Guild** St Mark's  
(3rd week in month). Carol Plant 01832710504  
**8.00pm 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). John Broadhouse 01525 404014  
**7.30pm Magpies Women's Group** St Mark's (2nd & 4th  
week in month) Mrs Marie Cotchin 402089  
**7.30pm Brickhill Ladies Group** St Mark's (1st and 3rd

week in month) Kaye Logan 309105

### Friday

**9.30am -3.30pm Machine Knitting** group at Putnoe  
Heights, 2nd week per month.. Contact Marion Sutton  
217647  
**10am -12.00 U3A Photography** St Marks.(4th week in  
month) Contact Janet King 313946  
**10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French** St.  
Marks Contact Janet King 313946  
**2.00-4.00 pm U3A Whist** St Marks. (2nd week in month)  
Contact Janet King 313946  
**2pm U3A Gardening** - Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King  
313946  
**4.50pm-7.00pm Stars School of Dance** at Putnoe.  
Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468  
**6.30pm-8.00pm Beavers** at Putnoe Ages 6-8 Email:  
phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509  
**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.  
**2- 4.30pm Indoor Bowls** at St. Mark's 2nd &  
4th Sunday. Ray Seymour 305695 or church office.  
**Messy Church Dates** 18 Mar. 15 Apr.



**St Mark's Church Council –**  
**St Mark's Leadership Team -**  
**Annual Congregational Meetings - 26 April 2015**  
**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team –**  
**Putnoe Heights Management Meeting –**  
**Putnoe Church Council -**  
**Pastoral Group Meeting**  
**Churchyard Committee - 15 April 11.15am**  
**Circuit meeting –**  
**Deanery meeting - 19 March 7.30pm.**  
**Woodland Burial Trustees – 15 March 12.30pm**  
**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting - 1 June**  
**2015 2pm**  
**St Mark's Car Boot Sales 2015,6 April, 4 May, 25**  
**May and 31 August.**  
**Harvest Festival** service will be on Sunday 27  
September.  
*Please advise St Mark's Church Office of the dates of  
your meetings.*

# First Sunday of Lent

## Sentence of Scripture - Psalm 25:4

Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Saviour, and my hope is in you all day long.

## Collect Prayer for the Day

*Before we read we pray*

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, 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 - Genesis 9:8-17

Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you--the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you--every living creature on earth. I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."

And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come: I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth. Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life. Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth." So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth."

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

## Second Bible Reading - 1 Peter 3:18-22

For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. In it only a few people, eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also, not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God's right hand--with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him.

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

## Gospel Reading - Mark 1:9-15

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. As Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased." At once the Spirit sent him out into the desert, and he was in the desert forty days, being tempted by Satan. He was with the wild animals, and angels attended him. After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!"

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

## Post Communion Prayer

Lord God, you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven; by it you nourish our faith, increase our hope, and strengthen our love: teach us always to hunger for him who is the true and living bread, and enable us to live by every word that proceeds from out of your mouth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## Hymns for Sunday *(Please distribute Service sheets and Mission Praise Hymn Books)*

1. How great thou art 506 MP
2. God forgave my sin (freely, freely) 181 MP
3. Take my life and let it be 624 MP
4. Jesus Christ is waiting (On Partnership News)
5. O Jesus I Have promised 501 MP

## Commentary The first Sunday of Lent

The act of 'giving things up for Lent' has become part of our culture, with many people using the opportunity to 'take a break' from something that may be detrimental, such as too much chocolate or alcohol! It is at this time of year that people begin thinking about spring cleaning, as the days brighten outside we often want our homes to reflect that. Lent itself can be seen as an opportunity for us, as Christians, to 'spring clean' our lives too. It can be a time to look inward and discover the destructive habits we may have, those traits that are detrimental to our own health or to our relationships, and to get our lives and priorities back into perspective so that we may focus on those things God would want us to. There is so much we have to be thankful for, in our own gifts and in our lives, there can be so much we simply take for granted and we need to reflect and relearn the value of who we are and what we have. Today's readings are full of promise, in Genesis we join Noah after the flood waters have subsided. God has cleansed his creation from all its corruption and is starting again with one family, yet the horror of all that loss seems to have changed many things and God declares that "Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth." And goes on to establish a new covenant, signified by the rainbow, between God and "all life on the earth." Then in 1 Peter the water of the flood is compared to that of baptism, that sacrament considered to be one which cleans our souls. It is through the act of baptism that we can express our trust in Jesus, and in what he has achieved for us. A wonderful gift in its own right which can release us from inner conflict and give us the reassurance of forgiveness.

Then we heard the Gospel account of the start of Jesus' ministry, his baptism, after which he was compelled to go into the wilderness and prepare for all that lies ahead. The version in Mark, brief though it is, manages in a few words to assert that Jesus is both God and human. The 'sundering' of heaven declares him as God, then the turmoil and temptation of the wilderness declare his very humanity. Many of us may be able to associate with that inner turmoil as we seek to find the correct path for our own lives. The beginning of Lent is a good opportunity for us, as a church, to ask Jesus, in his humanity and divinity, to help us look at what we have. Too often we risk focussing on the negatives, 'we used to have more children' or 'we are all getting so old', rather than celebrating what we do have and valuing the people we do serve. We are truly blessed by the many people who are willing to give of their time and skills for the benefit of this church and community. All gifts are of equal value, no work that is done amongst us is insignificant - from maintaining our property to opening the church to visitors, from leadership to visiting the sick and praying for one another- all are integral to the life of this Church. We also, at times, need to be reminded that our church is so much more than what happens in a certain room at a certain time, every person who walks through our doors should be as important to us as our ministers, leadership teams and staff; after all they are all equally important to God!

So it is that today that we celebrate all that happens in the life of our churches, and in doing so we recognise, and give thanks for, the work that is done by so many dedicated people. We also make a new commitment to recognising and using our own gifts, as we seek a renewed spirit of thanksgiving for all the good gifts and blessings we receive from God. *Deacon Jane Mason*

## Meditation

It was great to have a full chapel at St Mark's on Ash Wednesday and I was pleased to welcome my brother Ross who preached for us on his visit to Bedford. Ross spoke about Ash Wednesday and how it reminds us of our death. It might sound gruesome but it was actually a great service to start Lent. On Ash Wednesday across the world the priest places a cross on the forehead of the worshipper and says '*Remember you are dust and to dust you shall return*'

It is a sobering moment as we remind ourselves that our time on earth is limited. Ash Wednesday is one of the most powerful days of the entire church year, however it is not for the fainthearted or the casual worshippers because there is no fooling around. The service challenges what our prevailing society pretends, that somehow we can live on and on. We are obsessed with eating the right things, doing the right exercise, having health checks, which we hope will prolong our days and stave off death. Ash Wednesday is a most honest of days, because we come to God's place and are reminded of the simple truth that our days are numbered. No matter how hard we fight to hold back the years and cling to the appearance of youth, those ashes remind us that we are in physical decay, going back to dust.

This reminder of dust is taken straight out of the pages of Genesis. When Adam is turned out of the Garden of Eden, God tells Adam that he has ruined everything in the created order because of his disobedience. Adam has messed things up and now the world is not as God intended

*By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."*

Adam got into this mess following the lie Satan told the woman Eve. Satan held out to Eve the ultimate temptation, that she would not die (3:4). Perhaps our generations are more tempted by this fantasy than ever before as we become ever more secular and materialistic. The church has always been very good at reminding people that they are mortal. We might not be as rigorous as St Benedict who in his famous "Rule," advised his monks to "see death before one daily," nevertheless it has been part our basic pattern in our worship and pastoral services to speak of death and prepare for it. Contrast this with the medical profession today which seems incapable of dealing with death, refuses to prepare for it to the extent that it might never happen and deals with it as a medical experience.

In his posthumous memoir, the atheist Christopher Hitchens describes his dying days — feelings of impotence, oppression, resignation, unbearable physical pain, humiliation, and vulnerability. He debunks the dangerous illusion that "whatever doesn't kill me makes me stronger." And he meditates on the poetry of TS Eliot: "I have seen the moment of my greatness flicker, / And I have seen the eternal Footman hold my coat, and snicker; / and I am afraid."

There are good reasons to remind ourselves of our mortality and its not all doom and gloom! When we live in the conscious state that we have limited time, we live differently, more spiritually. Materialism challenges us to get stuff, to spend time acquiring, building and becoming. When we have a proper spiritual perspective on life we are not so concerned with the size of our barns. There is a change of priorities for those who wear the cross of ash on their foreheads, giving is more important than getting, family and friendships rather than ambitions and achievements. This is a more authentic way to live, there is no denial of the reality of death, a healthier perspective that life hangs by a thread and should therefore be enjoyed and lived well. We live conscious of our death in order that we might truly enjoy living fully in the present moment of our lives.

As we move from Ash Wednesday towards Easter, thank God for Lent, for the opportunity to live authentically and not in denial of our humanity. Most importantly during this time of Lent we look forward to Easter which confirms God's promise of resurrection. Death loses its sting for the Christian people who look forward to that day when God will restore all things and his Garden is lovely once more.

*'Creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.'*

Charles Royden

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

Let us pray to our God who is gracious and merciful. God our Father, as we begin our journey through this holy season of Lent, of repentance and renewal, help us to see that your merciful love is with us always, even when we wander far from you. We ask you to change our hearts, that we might become better followers of your Son Jesus, that we might live in the joy and freedom of your kingdom. With the help of your grace, may our prayers and sacrifices over the next forty days lead us to welcome Him in each other, in the poor, sick and lonely so that together, we can greet Him as one family at Easter. We make this prayer to you in Jesus' name. Amen.

Let us pray for the Church. That all God's people will remember their lonely, poor and forgotten brothers and sisters across the world, by sharing their food, money and time with them this Lent and always.

Let us pray for the leaders of the Church, that the Spirit would empower them with wisdom and strength to lead the church joyfully in truth and proclamation of God's love.

Let us pray for world peace. That those who lead our countries may do what is best for all the peoples of the world, especially the poor and needy. May God empower leaders of integrity to be guided in their decisions, seeking the good of all and refusing to be constrained by narrow self interests.

Let us pray for each other. That God may give us his strength not to pray for our desires but only our needs, to learn to be generous in giving of ourselves and share with others as Christ gave himself for us. May God bless us as we seek to serve him in service to others. Amen.

**Clear out your wardrobe** St Mark's have installed a textile clothing bank in the car park and we want your old clothes, curtains, sheets, soft toys, belts, handbags and shoes. Every kilo which you give us will help raise money for church funds

**St Mark's Craft Stall** will have their Easter novelties now available from @ £1 each. This year we have Shaun the sheep. All profits to St. Mark's.

**International John Bunyan Society** Conference on Representing Dissent in the Long Eighteenth Century at University of Bedfordshire on Friday 10 April 10.00am - 5.00pm. Free of charge. Contact bob.owens@beds.ac.uk for more information.

**St Mark's Church Council** - Minutes of the recent church council are available on the church website

**St. Mark's Pre-school** are collecting Active Kids vouchers. There is a box on the table or they can be handed into the office. Thank you Helen Harpin.

**Next Messy Church at St Mark's Church** on Wednesday 18 March 3.45 - 5.30pm. Messy Church takes place monthly on a Wednesday from 3.45pm - 5.30pm. For children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. For more details contact Wendy Waters 401834

**Lent Group** using extracts from the film 'The Kings Speech' and related Bible passages to explore fear, how it holds us back; how we can face and overcome it. To be held on Monday evenings 7.30 pm on 23 February, 2, 9 and 16 March. If you are interested please contact Wendy Waters.

**Lent Homegroup** We have had an offer of a new weekday evening Homegroup for Lent in Putnoe which will be advised. If you would like to offer a Lent Homegroup then we can advertise that and encourage people to come and supply suitable materials for reflection. If you would prefer something during the day then we have a homegroup at St Mark's 2.15pm Tuesday afternoons and this group welcomes new members even if it is just through Lent.

**Christian Aid** "Count Your Blessings" in Lent beginning Ash Wednesday, 18 February. During Lent, Christians think about the time that Jesus spent in the desert without food and drink. Many give up something they enjoy and reflect on the things they have and remember those who are less fortunate. Lent is a good opportunity to take actions that make a difference for people all over the world. "Count Your Blessings" leaflets will be available at both churches today. At the end of the Lent period, please send any contributions you would like to make directly to Christian Aid. The address is in the leaflet. Thank you. Further information from Carolyn Morris at Putnoe Heights and Jean Bank at St Mark's.

**Date for your diary** Auction of Promises at St Mark's Church Saturday 18 April at 7.30pm. Please put this date in your diary. This will be a fund raising evening at which we can offer things we have, experiences, gifts etc. More information to follow. Ian Farthing



**Footprints Walk** Sunday 1 March 2.00pm A circular walk, under 3 miles, from the War Memorial in the centre of Biddenham, passing through some interesting parts of Biddenham and Great Denham. Details from Sue & Gerry.

**Bedford Town Band** The first concert of 2015 will be held at Putnoe Heights Church on Saturday February 28 at 7.30pm. Tickets on the door £8 or £5 concessions

**Congratulations to Hazeldene Heights** our church preschool which has been awarded 'Outstanding' following the recent inspection by Ofsted. This is an acknowledgement of the fantastic work which has taken place by all the teachers and volunteers led by Laura. The report can be downloaded from their website [www.hazeldeneheights.com](http://www.hazeldeneheights.com)



**Brickhill BEE Group**  
Working together to cut  
Brickhill's carbon footprint and  
tackle fuel poverty

**Help for draughty homes**  
Is your home hard to heat or draughty? Or do you have a friend,

neighbour or relation in Brickhill with the same problem? The Brickhill BEE group is keen to provide advice and may be able to give some help at no charge.

#### **Where does all your heat go to?**

Have you ever wondered just where the heat goes from your home? On 28 February and 1 March, the Brickhill BEE group will be using a special Thermal Imaging Camera to carry out audits of some Brickhill homes. The camera is being provided by Cambridge Carbon Footprint and a small donation is requested in return for the audit report. Bookings for this will be on a first come, first served basis.

#### **Brickhill Green Open Homes 2015**

In January 2014, a number of Brickhill residents opened their homes to show how they had made their homes more energy efficient; these included the use of technologies such as solar panels and heat pumps. Plans are afoot for another Green Open Homes event – on Sunday 31 May. If you would like to take part, please contact Mark Fitzpatrick.

If interested in any of these items, please contact Mark Fitzpatrick (tel: 07976 421992, email: [markfitzp@cix.co.uk](mailto:markfitzp@cix.co.uk))

## A Hymn for Sunday

### Jesus Christ is waiting

Jesus Christ is waiting, Waiting in the streets;  
No one is his neighbour, All alone he eats.  
Listen, Lord Jesus, I am lonely too.  
Make me, friend or stranger, Fit to wait on you

Jesus Christ is raging, Raging in the streets,  
Where injustice spirals And real hope retreats.  
Listen, Lord Jesus, I am angry too.  
In the Kingdom's causes, Let me rage with you.

Jesus Christ is healing, Healing in the streets;  
Curing those who suffer, Touching those he greets.  
Listen, Lord Jesus, I have pity too.  
Let my care be active, Healing just like you.

Jesus Christ is dancing, Dancing in the streets,  
Where each sign of hatred He, with love, defeats.  
Listen, Lord Jesus, I should triumph too.  
On suspicion's graveyard let me dance with you.

Jesus Christ is calling, Calling in the streets,  
"Who will join my journey? I will guide their feet."  
Listen, Lord Jesus, Let my fears be few.  
Walk one step before me; I will follow you.

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**Rest in Peace.** Many member of our churches will remember Peter Parker who was a long standing member of Putnoe Heights Church and who served on the Leadership Team. Peter was a lovely man who we have not seen for some time as he was cared for at home by his wife Joy. His funeral will be held at Putnoe Heights Church.

Living God's Love

### Partnership Mission 14- 19 July

In July, Bishop Richard will be joining us in the Partnership for a week of mission in our community. We will be holding special events and Bishop Richard will be visiting groups and meeting people leading up to special Sunday Services. If you have any ideas of events which you would like to hold or that you would like to participate in, then please speak with Charlie. During this week the aim will be to make contact with as many people as possible and offer them a welcome to our church family in Jesus name.

### Please shop at ThisisChurch.com



Please can you make a point of always going to Amazon through the link on [www.ThisisChurch.com](http://www.ThisisChurch.com). If you look at an item through Amazon direct they put a cookie on your machine and we don't get any commission! Please make it a habit to always go through the church website. This costs you nothing and we get a bit of commission.

**www.easyfundraising.com.** This works exactly the same when you shop with John Lewis, M&S and a whole host of other shops. This has an added benefit that you will also get some special offers - you can't lose ! Please click the link on the church website go online and sign up now

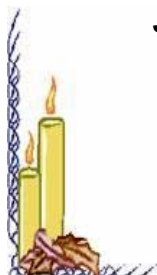
**Please always shop through  
[www.thisischurch.com](http://www.thisischurch.com)**

### 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

**Patrick Vincent Elms  
John Henry Owen Williams  
Alice Margaret Woolley**

*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 Nina Margaret Allen** will take place at Bedford Crematorium at 10.45am on Monday 23 February

**The funeral of Lily May Hostler** will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Monday 9 March at 1.45pm

**The funeral of Peter Parker** will take place at Putnoe Heights Church on Wednesday 18 March at 11.30am

**The funeral of Elsie Mary Lumbers** will be held at Putnoe Heights Church at 11.30a.m. on Thursday 26 February, the Committal will be held at 9.15a.m. on Friday 27 February.