



Partnership News

Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church
23 February 2014
7th Sunday after Epiphany



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

Today – 7th after Epiphany

9.30 St Marks - Holy Communion

Preacher - Deacon Jane Mills
Leadership – Mr Michael Ovenden
Intercessions – Ministers
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe — Holy Communion

Preacher - Deacon Jane Mills
Leadership Team - Mr Gordon Evans
Intercessions — Mr Alan Bayliss
Organist - Mr. Clive Simmonds

2 March 2014 - Sunday Before Lent

9.30 St Marks – Morning Worship

Preacher - Revd. Canon Charles Royden
Leadership – Mrs. Wendy Waters
Intercessions – Mrs. Mary Stubbs
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe – Morning Worship

Preacher– Revd. Canon Charles Royden
Leadership Team - Barry
Intercessions — Young People
Organist - M Clive Simmonds

Readings 1. Exodus 24: 12-18

2. 2 Peter 1: 16-21 3. Mathew 17: 1-9

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 have been given by Julia Furnell in memory of her husband Hugh on the anniversary of his death. Still dearly missed.

And by Jack and Kathleen Stennett in celebration of their 65th wedding anniversary.

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

Great, O Lord, is your kingdom,
your power and your glory;
great are your works,
your wonders and your praises;
great also is your wisdom,
your goodness, your justice
and your mercy,
and for all these we bless you
and magnify your holy name,
for ever and ever. Amen.

George Wither (1588-1667)

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

Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinators

Mrs Wendy Waters 342613 office@thisischurch.com
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.

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
Gift Aid Administrator 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

8.30-12.30pm 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 Contact Janet King 313946

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) Contact Janet King 313946.

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 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 Emily Taverner 01234 792013

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 (Weeks 3 & 5 in the month).. Next meeting— 17 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 –1pm Bedford Stop Smoking at Putnoe Heights. For more details please contact Olivia Tornyie 01234 276826

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 Contact Janet King 313946

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

1.3pm 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

2pm 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.

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

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

7.30pm Ladies Tuesday Club at Putnoe Heights (Meets fortnightly) 4 March Beetle Drive Details Janet King 313946

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.

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. 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

10am U3A Diet and Nutrition- Putnoe 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 26 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

2pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

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 19 March 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

6-7pm ATSK Karate at Putnoe Height Kevin Stark Tel.

01234 353865

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 5 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

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 (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 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)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

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

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 19th March, 16th April, 21st May, 18th June.



Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council – 25 February
St Mark's Leadership Team - 20 May, 9 Sept
Annual Congregational Meetings—27th April
Putnoe Heights Leadership Team -
Putnoe Heights Management Meeting 30th April
Putnoe Church Council - 10 July
Pastoral Group Meeting - 1 April 4pm
Churchyard Committee -
Commemoration Service - 2nd November
Circuit meeting – 19th June
Woodland Burial Trustees—
Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting –

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

Second Sunday before Lent

Sentence of Scripture - Matthew Chapter 5

I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be children of your Father in heaven;

Collect Prayer for the Day

Almighty God, give us reverence for all creation and respect for every person, that we may mirror your likeness in Jesus Christ our Lord.

First Bible Reading - Genesis 1:1-23

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and he separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day", and the darkness he called "night". And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

And God said, "Let there be a vault between the waters to separate water from water." So God made the vault and separated the water under the vault from the water above it. And it was so. God called the vault "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning, -- the second day.

And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place, and let dry ground appear." And it was so. God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good. Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the vault of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark sacred times, and days and years, and let them be lights in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

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

Second Bible Reading - Romans 8:18-25

I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we



were saved. But hope that is seen is no hope at all. Who hopes for what they already have? But if we hope for what we do not yet have, we wait for it patiently.
(This is the word of the Lord -- **Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - Matthew 6:25-34

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life? “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own. (This is the word of the Lord -- **Thanks be to God**)

Post Communion Prayer

Merciful Father, who gave Jesus Christ to be for us the bread of life, that those who come to him should never hunger: draw us to the Lord in faith and love, that we may eat and drink with him at his table in the kingdom, where he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

Hymns (*Please distribute morning Worship and Mission Praise*)

1. All things praise thee, Lord most high 24
2. God forgave my sin (freely, freely) 181
3. Lord of creation 440
4. Father hear the prayer we offer 132
5. God is working his purpose out 189

Commentary

Jesus tells his followers that they cannot serve God and try to be wealthy in material goods at the same time. In Ancient Israel less than 10% of people had very much wealth. However these few were very wealthy indeed. They were aristocratic families, many of whom were of Greek or Roman background, who had received their property through military conquest--the plunder of war. These rich families were very rich, and constituted perhaps 2-3% of the people, at most. There was a big drop-off to the next level, which would have included the major tax collectors, and those who held high positions with the major landowners. The priests and scribes in Jerusalem, while not necessarily rich in terms of assets (though some were), nevertheless lived in palatial splendour. As the tax collectors were political oppressors, the priests and scribes were religious oppressors. The people caught it from both sides. Their political oppression was being supported by their religious leaders. Everybody else was poor and operated at a bare subsistence level. This calls into question most traditional interpretations, as if Jesus were giving poor people a lecture on how they ought to get better at handling their money. In fact, his listeners would likely have agreed with Jesus that "you are not able to serve God and mammon." With the various taxes they paid approaching 50% of their already meagre income, they regarded their economic superiors as rapacious and obviously following mammon more than God. They didn't think too much of those who lived high at the peoples' expense, while the people themselves were near starvation.

These ten verses contain six injunctions not to worry. With "mammon" as our "treasure," we'll never have a moment's rest. We'll always be worrying about holding on to what we have or trying to get more. The great Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, once defined anxiety as "the next day." We don't know what will happen "the next day," which creates anxiety this day. Therefore, we are consumed on this day with trying to anticipate future calamities against which to protect ourselves. Since there is no end to the calamities we can anticipate, we're always uncertain and constantly chasing after something which, we hope, will decrease our level of uncertainty. This never works. Acquiring things doesn't reduce anxiety. It generates anxiety. You buy some kind of insurance to protect you against some kind of risk, which means that you now have one more bill to worry about paying!

Discipleship frees us to trust in the only true Giver and Sustainer of life. The coming kingdom already shapes the present life of the disciple. His God grants a higher security even in the midst of his trials. Free from anxiety, the disciple is free from confused priorities: one's life and body are the main gifts from God; food and clothing are just means to an end.

Food and clothing are important. Jesus does not discount the peoples' needs. In fact, he says that their physical needs are known and understood by God: "For your heavenly Father knows that you need quite all of these." However Jesus goes further. Not only does he reject anxiety about wealth, he rejects the entire premises of the established market system. Not only can you not serve God and mammon, do not be bothered by the whole mechanism of getting things.

"For this reason, I say to you, do not be anxious for your life (psyche)." Psyche means "life" or "soul," or, even better, "the essence of life," or "true life." (We get our word "psychology" from psyche.) Despite your very real needs, true life is not about food, or drink, or clothes. True life comes first through the kingdom, the earthly application of which would mean food and clothing for everyone.

This has nothing to do with soothing the anxieties of affluence. It has nothing to do with counselling modern people to keep their obsession with wealth in better perspective and urging them to be better Christians in their application of it--not that that's a bad idea necessarily, only that Jesus has much bigger things on his mind than that. It has to do with disconnecting from a hierarchical system which generates anxiety and worry in the first place. The rich, currently on top, can't take it with them--nor perhaps even keep it while they're here.

Jesus mentions clothes because they were the outward mark of social rank. This is true today as well, of course, but it was really true then. The wealthy, including priests and scribes connected with the Temple establishment, were easily identified by their glitzy robes. Jesus attacks fancy clothes more than once. In 11:8, he talks about "those who wear soft robes...in royal palaces." It wasn't a compliment there, and it isn't here either. This is a barbed reminder of the high social rank of their overlords.

The crops of the field are nourished by God, raised up in God's field--"how they grow"--and gathered in to make daily bread for the life of the world. How much more you! Like the crops of the field, which God raises, processes and distributes, those who follow the way of the kingdom also lose their own life for the life of the world.

Then Jesus tells how the disciple is to live "But seek first the kingdom, and its justice, and all these things will be added to you." *Dikaiosyne* may be translated "righteousness" or "justice." Translating as "righteousness" sometimes means that we think in terms of personal morality. The context makes clear that Jesus' concern is more social justice than individual sanctity. Indeed, this is nearly always the case. This is an imperative that we ignore at our peril. There are several places in the Bible where God rejects the worship of his people because they lack justice (eg. Micah 6:6-8; 1 Tim. 6:9-10, 17; Matt. 6:19-21), but there is nowhere in the Bible where God rejects the justice of his people because they lack worship. Does this mean that social, political and economic justice are more important to God than worship? Possibly it does, what is most certainly does mean is that worship which doesn't grow out of justice is worth nothing.

Meditation

Today is the date set to remember Polycarp, the bishop of Smyrna in Turkey. He died at 86 about 155AD as a christian martyr. Polycarp was arrested, and tried on the charge of being a Christian. When the proconsul Statius Quadratus urged him to save his life by cursing Christ, he replied: "Eighty-six years I have served him, and he never did me any wrong. How can I blaspheme my King who saved me?"

Prayer Almighty God, who gave to your servant Polycarp boldness to confess the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ before the rulers of this world and courage to die for his faith: grant that we also may be ready to give an answer for the faith that is in us and to suffer gladly for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead

A call to worship. We come not because we are able by our own right, but because we know our need of God. We come not because we are able by our own deeds, but because we are summoned in God's love. We come in our need and hope. We come because of all that God has done. We come in thanksgiving.

A prayer for going out. Loving God as we go into your world in the power of your Spirit, help us to live justly and work for justice, to love and practise kindness and to walk humbly with You.

Father, all loving and most tender, we confess the hardness of our hearts and our want of compassion for our neighbour. Grant us the grace of true pity, the ministry of compassion and the gift of consoling the broken-hearted. Teach us to love with your own forbearance and never harshly or unlovingly to judge another; for your own mercies' sake. Amen *Johann Arndt, 1555-1621*

Putnoe Heights Bring & Buy Stall.

In the welcome area on Sunday 9 March. Please bring any saleable items to the Church Office or on the day, eg bric-a-brac, gifts and cakes. Then come along to BUY. It is hoped that this will be the first of a series of modest monthly fund-raising events for church funds. We have recently had some expenses which were not in the budget so funds are urgently needed. If you would like to help with future events please speak to a member of the Leadership Team.

Putnoe Book Stall : Our bookstall is now up and running; the books are to be found on a Library Trolley which is being kept in the Quiet Room. This can be wheeled anywhere in the building and if any Groups using Church premises wish to have it in their room, please take advantage of it (we would ask that it be returned to the Quiet Room afterwards). The loan charge per book is 25p, purchase price of any book is £1 and an honesty box is attached to the trolley. We will still have some books in the Small Hall and the same charges apply here. Until this project gets going, perhaps anyone with any books for the stall will be patient and keep them until later. Thank you to everyone who has donated books up to now. Pam Kinselley

Wanted – Waitrose Green Tokens; Friends for Life have been selected as a nominated charity for the Waitrose Community Matters scheme for the month of February 2014. If you shop at Waitrose in Bedford please choose Friends for Life for your green token. Tell all your friends to support us too. Friends for Life is an ecumenical project dedicated to supporting Care Home residents in the Bedford area by providing volunteer visitors to residents who have few or no other visitors.
www.friendsforlifebedford.org.uk

Coloured plastic bags are wanted by the guides for their show in April. Please leave at St Mark's church office.

Christian Aid News: Christian Aid Oxford are organising a sponsored abseil down Elstow Abbey

tower. They are busy looking for volunteers to abseil as well as sponsors. more details to follow shortly. Speaker Sarjon Toma from Iraqi Christian Aid partner REACH will be at Stopsley Baptist Church, St Thomas Road, Luton LU2 7XP on Tuesday 11 March, 7pm. An evening to hear about your impact in Iraq and beyond, as well as discussing faith, hope, conflict, and the role churches can play in building peace this Christian Aid Week. Carolyn

Ash Wednesday Service 5 March

Our Ash Wednesday Service will be at St Mark's Church Chapel at 7.30pm. The service is a great way to start Lent.

St Mark's Church Council is on Tuesday 25 February at 7.30pm for a 7.45pm start
All welcome to attend

Annual Congregational Meetings

These will take place after Church on Sunday 27 April. Everybody is invited to attend.

Many thanks to Judith Stanton and the members of her whist drive who have donated £105.20 to St. Mark's.

Women's World Day of Prayer Services 7 March 'Streams in the Desert' - Praying for Egypt

2pm at the Miracle Church of God. Speaker: Revd. Gayne Worgan 7.30pm at St Mark's Church. Speaker: Revd. Fiona Gibson. Men and women welcome to this moving, interdenominational, service compiled by the women of Egypt. This is the first time it has been held at St Mark's so do come if you can. For more information please speak to Wendy Waters



Lent 2014

Lent starts with an Ash Wednesday service at St Marks' Chapel at 7.30pm on 5 March There will be a Holy Communion at Putnoe Heights Church on Maundy Thursday

This year we are going to do something very different for Lent and we want as many people as possible to join and hopefully also invite friends to come along. On Wednesday 9 April we will be hosting a performance of the Passion Play Inheritance by the Riding Lights Theatre Company at St Mark's. This is a meditative and reflective opportunity to consider the Passion and our response. Tickets are now available from both church offices.



Lifesigns In addition you can take part in the Lent reflection from the Diocese of St Albans called LifeSigns. Take part by receiving a brief email: a bible verse, a short reflection, an image and a challenge for each day. More simply get texts to your phone, or follow @live_challenge. The bible verses follow the life and words of Jesus from John's Gospel. for more go to www.livethechallenge.co.uk

Lent Soup Lunch for Christian Aid.

Make a donation to Christian Aid and enjoy a home made soup, bread and cheese lunch at Putnoe Heights Church after morning service on Sunday 16th March. No tickets but please sign the list in Putnoe Welcome Area.

St Mark's Craft Group have their Easter novelties on sale after morning service and from the office during the week. Everything £1. Please support us, all profits to the Church. Thank you.

Putnoe Men's second Fellowship meeting will take place at the Cappochino bar on Tuesday 18 March at 7.30pm. If you would like to join them please ring Barrie Southam 219714 or email barrysoutham@aol.com for more details.

Fashion Show and Nearly New Sale Putnoe Conservatives will be holding this show at Putnoe Height Church on Saturday 8 March, at 7.30pm. Many bargains for men, women and children in all sizes. Entrance fee £3. 50. All welcome

Join the Real Easter Egg 2014 Campaign.

Out of 80 million chocolate Easter Eggs sold each year, The Real Easter Egg is the only one with the Easter story in the box. This year there are two versions available at £3.99 and £9.99. See St. Mark's notice board for further details and order at the office

St. Mark's Church Preschool are now collecting Sainsbury's kids vouchers. Please pass to Helen Harpin or pop them into the box provided.

Welfare Benefits are Changing Find out how benefit changes may affect you. This session is for people of working age with a physical disability. Including Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Employment Support Allowance, Universal credit changes, Housing Benefit, Council Tax and Benefit cap. Thursday 6 March St Andrew's Parish Church 10.30am - 12.30pm You must book ! Call Anona 01234 718345 anona.hoyle@bedford.gov.uk

Welfare reform is set to be the driving force behind increasing child poverty for the next decade. The response of the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to Archbishop Vincent Nichol's criticism of welfare reform has come under fire from Churches today.

The Baptist Union of Great Britain, Methodist Church and United Reformed Church say that the DWP's response to the Archbishop is misleading and only shows a carefully selected 'airbrushed' picture of UK welfare reform.

The DWP states that 3 million households will be better off because of Universal Credit, but it neglects to mention that its own figures also state that over the long term 2.8 million families will be worse off under the new system. Universal Credit is only one part of the welfare reform programme. Analysis by the Institute of Fiscal Studies shows conclusively that, taken together, the raft of tax and benefit changes that make up welfare reform will increase the levels of both child and working age poverty.

"The DWP's response to the Archbishop's criticism is seriously misleading and disappointing," said Paul Morrison, Public Issues Policy Adviser and author of *The lies we tell ourselves: ending comfortable myths about poverty*. "The DWP states that Universal Credit will lift hundreds of thousands of children out of poverty. However, the other changes that are part of welfare reform are likely to push these children straight back down again. Indeed, welfare reform is the driving force behind the predicted increases in both relative and absolute poverty in families with children over the next decade. "People are entitled to take different views on the merits of welfare reform, but they should be given a clear and fair picture of the reality. The British public deserve better than the diet of half-truths and skewed statistics they are currently being fed."

For more see news article from www.Methodist.org.uk

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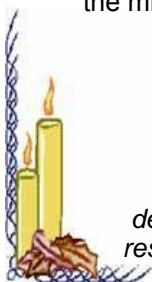
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Thank you for shopping using the link on ThisChurch.com to shop through Amazon. Please be careful to make sure that you never access Amazon direct but always use the link on ThisChurch.com, this ensures we get a donation every time you make a purchase.

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.



Olive Rose
Roger Terence Beard
Irene Jenny Hill

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 Mr Haydn Woodward will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Thursday 27th February at 10.00am