



Methodist
Church

Partnership News

25 November

Christ the King – Stir up Sunday



Church of
England

Partnership Church Services Today

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

Today 25 November

9.30am St Mark's – Morning Worship

Preacher - Deacon Jane Mills
Leadership - Mr Mick Ovenden
Intercessions – Mr Mike Elliott

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher - Deacon Jane Mills
Leadership – Mr Barry Southam
Intercessions - Mrs Sam Ware

Sunday 2 December

9.30 St Marks's – Family Worship

Preacher - Revd Charles Royden
Leadership - Mrs Morag Stewart
Intercessions - Ministers

11.00 am Putnoe - Family Worship

Preacher - Revd Charles Royden
Leadership - Mrs Jenny Snelson
Intercessions - YPG

Readings 1 Jeremiah 33: 14-16. **2.** 1 Thess 3:9-13
3. Luke 21:25-36

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 Irene McKenzie in memory of her beloved husband Eddie, and by Mrs Mike Wisdich in memory of her dear mother, Charlotte Ramsay, whose birthday was in November.

The flowers at St Mark's Church this week have been given by Jean, Sylvia, Ann & son-in-law– Reg in loving memory of our Mum, Alice Chapel

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 on the foyers.

Prayer for Sunday

Gracious Father, fill your whole Church with truth and peace: where it is corrupt, purge it; where it is in error, direct it; where anything is amiss, reform it; where it is right, strengthen it; and where it is divided and torn asunder, heal it and bind up its wounds; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

William Laud (1573-1645)

The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR
266952 Fax- 402624 nsm@thisischurch.com
(Sam also works full time as a Vice
President for Hewlett Packard)

Deacon Jane Mills

12 Hartop Close, Bedford MK41 8HE
348091 Mobile 07807 146535 jane@thisischurch.com

The Reverend 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

Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator

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. Jean Kirk 317699
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 - Morag Stewart 360103

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

9.15 –3.45 pm Mon and Wed/ 9.15-12.15pm Tues/Thurs/ Fri. Hazeldene Heights Pre-school. See website for more details www.ThisChurch.com

Head teacher Mrs Laura Leggett ☎326685

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

9.-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 Berry ☎211955

10.30am U3A Play reading St Mark's (see contact details below)

2.00pm U3A Calligraphy at St Mark's 2nd week (see contact details below)

2.00pm U3A Relaxation & Meditation at St Mark's 1st & 3rd week starting 1st October (see contact details below)

12.15pm Story box Putnoe Heights We welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12.15 and 1.15 for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Contact Carolyn Morris youth@thischurch.com 365630

1.30-2.45pm Chat and Make For babies and toddlers 0-5. Crafts, toys, songs, story and refreshments £1. More details email– chatandplay@hotmail.co.uk . Restarts on 10 September

2pm U3A Music Appreciation - (see contact details below)

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

66.15pm Fit for Life Yoga - Putnoe Heights Contact Jane Butcher ☎07891879571

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

Zumba - Explosion Fitness—Putnoe Heights - Sam Baptista 07402965490

7.00pm Sugarcraft Guild St Mark's 1st week Pat Nicholson ☎353518

7.00pm Cancer Care Society. St Mark's. 1st Week. Mr J Dewhurst ☎01908 377020

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

7.30pm Whist Drive. St Mark's 3rd & 5th week . Next meeting– 17 December Judith Stanton. ☎823313

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

7.45pm Opus Choir at St Mark's Mrs Sutherland ☎269100

8pm 'Get Fit, Stay Fit' Putnoe Heights. Mrs Diane Field ☎404976

Tuesday

9.30am Jo Jingles. St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Renu Elston ☎07790206016

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)

1pm –2.30pm Drop in Wiggles and Jiggles 0-5 years, Putnoe Children's Centre. Please call Trudy Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information ☎340552

1.15pm U3A Cinema Group. St Mark's (see contact details below)

2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 St Mark's (3rd Wk) (see contact details below)

2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 St Mark's (2nd Wk) (see contact details below)

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

2pm U3A Photography Group 3 St. Mark's (1st Wk) (contact details below).

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

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

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

6.15pm 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

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

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

7pm Tabernacle of Truth Church Putnoe Heights Bible study & prayers. Sacha Ojo ☎07590597891 or www.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk

Putnoe Heights Ladies 7.30pm Tuesday Club - Meets fortnightly. Next meeting November 27 Jaffa Orchard. Details call Janet King 313946

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

Wednesday

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

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

9.30am Discovery & Do (Childminders) St. Mark's. Clare Simmons ☎328380 or ☎07788824666

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 details below)

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

10am U3A Card Making, St Marks (see contact details below)

10am U3A Diet and Nutrition—Putnoe Heights (see contact details below)

11am U3A Keep Fit. - Putnoe Heights

12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next meeting 5 December 2012 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 St Marks.(see contact details below)

2pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan

2.15pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit. Putnoe Heights

Mrs Webster ☎856966

3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church. St Mark's (3rd Wk). for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 12 December. Wendy Waters /401834

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.

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

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

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

7.00pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe Heights monthly Mrs O Holt ☎266004

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

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

8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club at St Mark's 1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next meeting will be 5 December. Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Valmai ☎219555 Rosemary ☎405594 or Graham ☎406359 for more details.

8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club St Mark's 1st week in the month. Jean Ross ☎771870

Thursday

9.30am Thursday Prayer Group. Putnoe Heights.

Valerie Capon ☎356306 No meeting on 1 November.

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

9.45am Yoga Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎244970

9.45am Chat and Play St.Mark's. A term time group for Mums & toddlers.0-5 Jo Garner ☎400071 or ☎07719670624

12pm Storybox . St Mark's welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12 noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Lots of fun. Contact Jaana Swaby ☎363283

1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic 1st and 3rd Thursdays St. Mark's ☎267444

1pm—2.30pm Drop in (large hall) Children's Chatty Time 0-5 years, Putnoe Children's Centre.Please call Trudy Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information ☎340552.

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. (see contact details below)

2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society St Mark's Mary Rich ☎272470

6.15 pm Weightwatchers. St. Mark's. Clare Martin 07805408811.

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins .

7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Heights Nina Ovenden ☎825059

7pm U3A Folk & Poetry St Marks (2nd and 4th week) (see contact details below)

7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale ☎406094

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

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

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

8.00pm Magpies Women's Group St Mark's 2nd & 4th week Pat Cass ☎294220

8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group St Mark's 1st and 3rd week in month Kay Logan ☎01234 309105.

Friday

10am -12.00 U3A Photography St Marks.(4th week) (see contact details below)

10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French St. Marks (see contact details below)

2.00-4.00 pm U3A Whist St Marks. (contact details below)

2pm U3A Italian—Putnoe Heights (contact details below)

2pm U3A Gardening - Putnoe Heights

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

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

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

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

Saturday

10.00am Theatretrain St Mark's. Dancing acting, singing. Kate Howard ☎01234 782414

Young Embroiderers bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher ☎357198

2.15pm Society of Recorder Players at Putnoe Heights. G Parry ☎01462 674792

6.45pm Duplicate Bridge. St Mark's Mrs Pillinger ☎212066

Sunday

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

11.00 - 12.00 Church and Junior at Putnoe Heights for

U3A For information on the U3A groups meeting at St Mark's and Putnoe Heights Church please contact Yvonne Francis ☎405119

Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council – 19 Feb,11 June

St Mark's Leadership Team - 22 January

Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 5 February

Putnoe Heights Management Meeting 24 January

Putnoe Church Council - 19 February

Pastoral Group Meeting - 5 February

Churchyard Committee -

Brickhill Parish Council Meetings -

Commemoration Service

Circuit meeting - 7 February

Deanery Meeting -

Woodland Burial Trustees—

Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting -

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

Christ the King

Opening Verse of Scripture—Psalm 1:1 Blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked or stand in the way of sinners or sit in the seat of mockers. But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night

Collect Prayer

Eternal Father, whose Son Jesus Christ ascended to the throne of heaven that he might rule over all things as Lord and King: keep the Church in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace, and bring the whole created order to worship at his feet; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen *Common Worship*

Stir up, O Lord, the wills of your faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may by you be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

First Bible Reading –Daniel 7:9-10,13-14

As I looked, "thrones were set in place, and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool. His throne was flaming with fire, and its wheels were all ablaze. A river of fire was flowing, coming out from before him. Thousands upon thousands attended him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him. The court was seated, and the books were opened.

"Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.)

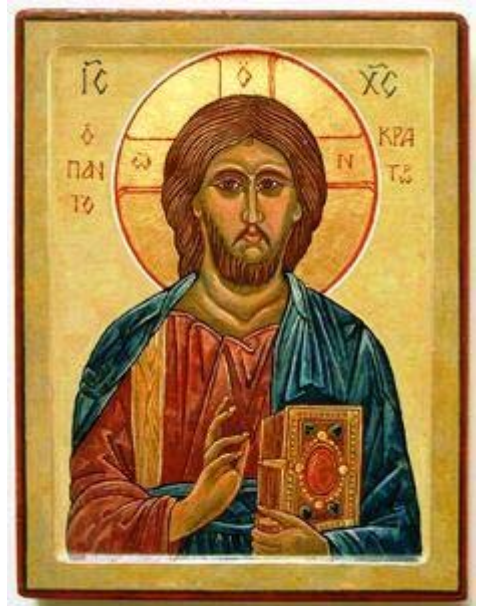
"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. (This is the word of the Lord **All: Thanks be to God**)

Second Bible Reading - Revelation Chapter 1: 4b-8

Grace and peace to you from him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen. Look, he is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen. "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." (This is the word of the Lord **All: Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - John 18:33-37

Pilate then went back inside the palace, summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?" "Is that your own idea," Jesus asked, "or did others talk to you about me?" "Am I a Jew?" Pilate replied. "It was your people and your chief priests who handed you over to me. What is it you have done?" Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place." "You are a king, then!" said Pilate. Jesus answered, "You are right in saying I am a king. In fact, for this reason I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me." (This is the Word of the Lord **All: Thanks be to God**)



Pantocrator (Ruler of All)

Jesus is typically depicted as teacher and philosopher. Like other teachers, he holds a book. His gaze is intent, inquiring, both open and inward. His heavenly blue outer garment and earthy red inner garment symbolize his dual nature. His unique halo is marked by a cross and lettering, roughly translatable as "I am who I am."

Post Communion Prayer

Holy and blessed God, you have fed us with the body and blood of your Son and filled us with your Holy Spirit: may we honour you not only with our lips but in our lives dedicated to the service of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

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

1. Praise my soul the King of heaven 13
2. Seek ye first the Kingdom of God 138
3. Crown him with many crowns 255
4. King of glory, king of peace 499
5. Hills of the north rejoice 237

Meditation

The Bishop of St Albans the Rt Revd Dr Alan Smith issued a statement on 20 November 2012. The Bishop of Hertford and the Bishop of Bedford have associated themselves with it:

After many years of discussion and debate the General Synod of the Church of England today rejected the legislation which provided for the ordination of women as bishops. A two-thirds majority was required in all three Houses of Synod. Whilst the House of Bishops and the House of Clergy achieved the necessary two-thirds majority, the motion was lost by a few votes in the House of Laity. I have always been a supporter of women bishops' legislation and I share in the disappointment of the many outstanding women priests who play such a valuable role in the mission and ministry of our diocese

I recognise that a significant minority of people in the Diocese of St Albans have theological objections to the proposals which were being debated. I have always tried to keep in close contact with them and to support them. Nevertheless I know that the vast majority of people in the diocese were in favour of this development and for them today's vote will be a cause for deep sadness. We need time to reflect on what has happened. In the meantime, I urge everyone to double their efforts to love and serve their communities, offering their pain and frustration to God. No one has any cause for rejoicing; all are aware that the pain felt will affect the whole church. I was grateful for the grace shown when the result was announced to the General Synod in silence.

It is a bishop's task to unite all those in his care and I call on all the people of the diocese that I lead to continue in the service of their communities, loving them as Christ loved us, sacrificing their pain to that task. As we double our efforts to reach out to the most needy, we will discover the future to which God is calling us.

We have more listening and more work to do to achieve the end result which so many believe is the right way forward both inside and beyond our church. †Alan St Albans

Commentary

One name for the Sunday before advent is 'Stir-up Sunday', from the wording of the collect,

Stir up, we beseech thee, O Lord, the wills of thy faithful people; that they, plenteously bringing forth the fruit of good works, may of thee be plenteously rewarded; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Traditionally it was also the time to make the Christmas cakes, giving them one final 'stir' for luck before they are set aside to 'mature'.

What does it mean to 'stir-up'? In addition to the obvious: passing an implement through something in circular motions to mix or cool the contents, it also has other meanings that may be more pertinent to us on this day;

- To move in your sleep or wake up
- To cause someone else to move or shift; to disturb, rouse, prompt into action.

Some things are said to 'stir' us, meaning they excite strong feelings in us or that we have been 'moved' by someone else story/situation

If we are said to have caused a stir; this can be by doing something that is unexpected, perhaps not thought suitable to our public role which causes a disturbance or commotion, maybe causing an excited reaction

In advent we are encouraged to revisit the familiar story of the birth of Jesus and then to realise afresh its significance. Today's readings remind us of the prophecies that herald Christ's coming, both to earth and in the end of days, both visions show him to be not only our friend, but an awesome ruler. Christ is indeed King, but not in a way that is familiar to modern culture, perhaps even the opposite of what this world expects. Rather than a mighty leader we await the birth of a small, frail child, one who is born into exile. Today we should be 'stirred-up' to re-evaluate both our own lives and how we see the world, throughout

advent we are given the opportunity to remove from our lives those things that come between us and Christ, that frail child who became ruler of an eternal Kingdom, a Kingdom to which we became 'heirs' by all Christ achieved for us.

There is a special quality about waiting for something to happen, knowing that it is almost upon you but not quite. There is a palpable sense of expectation at the airport arrivals gate, when the plane has landed and you are waiting for your friends or family to get through the baggage hall and meet you. Some of the things we wait for, like moving house, starting a new job or going to a new school can be stressful, yet they also hold a sense of anticipation for a better future. At this time of year many of us are selecting gifts to give to those people we care about, at times we can get excited about giving the gift, because we know how much the recipient will love it!

This focus on a future event, however near, should never wipe out the value of the present, even our impatience can be a good thing, if our frustrations cause us to hope, therefore strive, for better things (Romans 8).

One example that may be familiar is that of Narnia, in the book 'The Lion, the witch and the wardrobe' four children encounter a magical world in which it is always winter, yet never Christmas. Many of the people they meet have never known anything else, yet they KNOW that Aslan's return would make their world better and eagerly look for any sign of his return. Many, however, have come to take the situation for granted and find the idea of challenging the cruel queen ludicrous. The arrival of these children helps to remind people that they are worth more and some learn to risk their own security for the sake of others, taking action themselves rather than waiting for Aslan to do it all, maybe it is actually their action that causes him to return?

As God's people we are called to live in the 'in-between' time, to recognise its value while looking forward to the day when the Kingdom comes, not allowing that hope to overpower our awareness of, and concern for, the present.

Jesus, and the epistle writers, taught so often about the nearness of the kingdom, we can imagine that people thought this would happen in their life time. What of us today? The immanence of the Kingdom has slipped out of our thinking. Many of the stories of war, famine and natural disaster we have in the news can seem worryingly close to the apocalyptic visions that are said to herald the end of times in the book of revelation, but is it helpful to interpret contemporary disasters as 'signs' of God's displeasure? Isn't it better to try to follow Jesus teachings and reach out to help those most in need? With each small act we bring the reality of the Kingdom ever closer, and perhaps find ourselves 'stirring-up' others and becoming signs of hope ourselves in doing so. *Deacon Jane Mason*

Prayers for Sunday and the Week ahead

Lord Jesus our Saviour and our King

Your kingdom extends over all people and at your name every knee shall bow, in earth and in heaven. We pray that your authority would now govern our lives that we would live in accordance to your commandments.

Especially we pray for help as we seek to love you with our whole hearts. Forgive us when we are preoccupied with ourselves and when our own priorities are more important to us than worship of you. Lord Jesus you went out of your way to care for those who were lonely, those who were despised, people of other faiths, those who society judged as bringing hardship upon themselves. Fill us with your Holy Spirit that our love for you be shown in our dedication to love all people without favouritism. Especially we pray that we would be able to demonstrate your compassion to those we find different from ourselves. May our lives reflect your commitment to love without distinction or boundary, and so may your kingship be evident in our lives.

We pray Lord Jesus that your kingship would be known all over the world, that all those who govern would seek justice and peace and look wisely to protect the weak and the defenceless.

Christ our King you knew the road of suffering and you were deserted at your time of greatest need by those who called themselves your friends. Be present with those who are lonely and feel unwanted or unloved. In times of weakness may we know your power to sustain and comfort and give us strength to reach out in your name to all of those who are in any kind of need.

Lord Jesus our Saviour you bring eternal life to all of those who put their trust in you. Be with all of those who face death and comfort those who are bereaved. As you held out the promise of paradise to the thief who hung on the cross, so may we all know your power to save and know that peace for our souls which passes understanding.

.Bedford Town Concert Brass will be holding a concert "An Evening of Brass and Voice" at St Mark's on Friday 30 November at 7.30pm. The band are pleased to have as their guest a new and exciting choir "Alive & Singing". Tickets £8, Conc £5, children under 14 Free available on 01234 306676, Frescoes Coffee House Mill St or on the door on the night.

Footprints Walking Group

Walk on 2 December. Planting trees in Wiles Wood, part of the new Marston Vale Forest. Meet at Wootton Village Hall at 2.00pm for short walk to planting area. Trees, tools, tea and toilets provided. Details from Sue A.

Advent Course

The Advent Course will be interesting to everybody and great for those considering confirmation in 2013. Each session will start with refreshments at 7.30pm with the main meeting 8.00pm - 9.00pm.

For our second session we will be joined by The Reverend Dennis Stamps who until recently was responsible for ministerial education in the Diocese.

Thursday 29 November

Coffee served in Chapel 7.30 - 8pm
Session in Church from 8pm
with Rev Canon John Tibbs

Thursday 6 December

In WREN room from 7.30pm
With Rev Dennis Stamps
Vicar of St Nicholas Harpenden

Thursday 13 December

Rev Jennie Cappleman
Coffee served in Chapel 7.30 - 8pm
Session in Church from 8pm.

Mission Update Thank you to everyone who has given so generously to the Mission Project supporting Kisiizi so far this year. Already we have raised around £3000 between the churches which is a great achievement and truly reflects the mission heart of the Partnership. If you have not already completed your form and returned it either in the offertory tray or directly to one of the church offices there is still time to do so - please let one of the ministers know if have not received a letter explaining the project and details of how to contribute and we can ensure you get one. Thank you for your generosity.

Christmas Presents Now is the time when many of us will be going online to buy gifts. Please always only ever access Amazon by clicking on the logo on www.thischurch.com. 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. Even if you use a computer and go to Amazon and have a look first without clicking we will lose our referral, because they put a secret cookie on your

computer! .This is really a very good way to shop as it has lots of voucher codes and discounts which can save you a fortune on purchases and help raise money.

Make Way for Christmas

On 16 December at 6pm –Make Way for Christmas Do you fancy a change from the usual nativity plays and Christmas Carols? If so, then 'Make Way for Christmas' could be just what you're looking for this Christmas time. It's a modern musical written by the Christian song-writer, Graham Kendrick, with songs that in the short time since Kendrick wrote them have become firm favourites as alternatives to the more traditional Christmas Carols. Add to that a slightly less conventional take on the Christmas story with drama from the Wild Goose Worship Group and you have a completely different, yet no less meaningful, version of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus. It will be performed by the choir and drama group of Kempston East Methodist Church on Sunday 16 December at 6pm. So, if you fancy something a bit different, come along and listen. Admission is free and everyone is welcome.

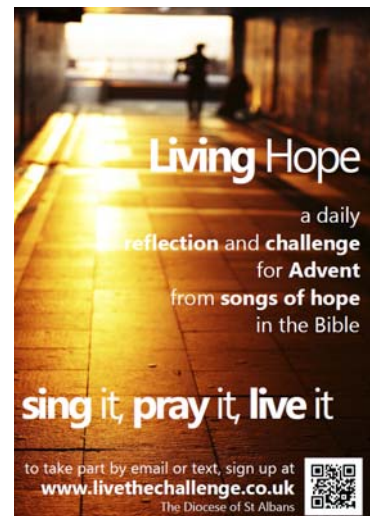
Living Hope www.livethechallenge.co.uk

A Daily reflection and challenge for Advent from the St Albans Diocese. It offers individuals a simple way of taking time each day to reflect and making time to act.

If you would like to print out the daily verses to give to people who do not have access to the internet you can find weekly sheets at Week 1 is already up and others will follow shortly, at least a fortnight in advance. You will also be able to download again the Wait Look Listen

sheets we developed three years ago for families, children and schools to use each day in Advent at <http://www.livethechallenge.co.uk/download/>. Telling the Advent story, from creation to Christmas, they introduce a character each day. There are readings, activities, prayer pointers and pictures to colour. Attractive folders for the Wait Look

Kempston Musical Society present their annual Christmas concert on Saturday 15 December at Kempston East Methodist Church at 7.30pm, with guests Goldington Green Lower School Choir. This promises to be a most enjoyable evening and includes audience participation. Admission £6.00. For more details contact kempstonmusicalsociety@hotmail.com or telephone Bedford 781010



St Mark's Messy Church Future dates: all 3.45 to 5.30pm, Wednesday 12 Dec, Wednesday 16 January, Wednesday 20 February

Methodist Women in Britain The Daffodil Day celebration will be on Monday 4 March 2013 at Westminster Hall. To book a place on the coach leaving Kempston East Methodist Church at 8.45am please contact Corrine Thomas a.s.a.p. Tel 01525 403936.

Dressing of Christmas Tree at St. Mark's Church Friday 30 November at 4pm. All volunteers welcome especially children. Wendy

Christmas closure at St. Mark's Church Office— The office will be closed from Monday 24 December and will reopen Monday 7 January.

Open House raised £271 at the coffee morning they held for Children in Need. Thank you to everyone who came and supported us.

Putnoe Provender Sunday 9 December Sales of the ever popular Christmas puddings, cakes, mince pies, jam, marmalade, chutney and much more in the Welcome area after morning service. Proceeds In aid of Kisiki. All contributions gratefully received. John & Sally Gunning 305925.

Christmas Fair at Priory Methodist Church on Saturday 1 December from 10.30 to 2.30. Gifts, cards, crafts, paintings etc. Lunches and light refreshments available. Admission £1 (accompanied children free). Everyone welcome.

Circuit Advent Service: On Sunday 2 December you are invited to the Circuit Advent Service at Priory Methodist Church; this will begin at 4pm and will be followed by refreshments. A service of readings and songs, with participants from across the Circuit.

Date for your diary: The New Year Lunch at Putnoe Heights will be held on Sunday 2h January 2013. Tickets will be on sale before Christmas.



Operation Christmas Child, Shoe Boxes: Very many thanks to all who contributed to our Messy Church first mission activity! We hoped to send 10 boxes but have sent 38! The Messy Church families also brought gifts and entered enthusiastically into wrapping and filling the boxes. Wendy Waters

Christmas Fayre Thank you to everybody who worked so hard to make this year a bumper Christmas Fayre with record number attending. Special thanks To Avril for her work throughout the year organising. **We raised over £2,250 !!**

Open House—Well done to all at Open House who raised £275 for Children in Need. Our thank to Cheryl Green for organising this special event.



Christingle Service Sunday 9 December

This year the Christingle Service at both churches will be led by Richard

Ledger and Wendy Waters in the Messy Church style. It will be a bit new and a bit different, but an insight for us all into what happens at messy Church.

St Marks: Refreshments will be served from 09.00 to 9.25. Service 09.30 to 10.15. Followed by drinks and cake. We look forward to welcoming some of our Messy Church families, brownies and guides to our Sunday Worship.

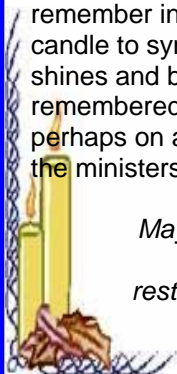
Putnoe Heights: Service 11.00 to 11.45 Followed by drinks and cake. We look forward to welcoming some Messy Church families, brownies, cubs, scouts and their families to our Sunday Worship.

Puttenhoe residential home will be having their Christmas fair on Saturday 1 December, 2 to 4pm, donations for their raffle, tombola, bric a brack and cake stall would be welcomed.

Rest In Peace

On the Sunday following a funeral service we remember in church those who have died. We light a candle to symbolise the light of Christ which eternally shines and brings hope. If you would like a person remembered in our service when the candle is lit, perhaps on an anniversary or birthday, please inform the ministers, or telephone the church office.

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



Forthcoming Funerals



Please remember these families and friends in your prayers.

The funeral of Muriel Alice Herridge will take place at 10-45am on Tuesday 27 November at the Crematorium.

The funeral of Joan Vera Burden will take place at 1.45pm on Wednesday 28 November at the Crematorium.



The wedding of Jane and Maurice Mills

As the sun shone, at Putnoe Heights Church in Bedford on the 01/09, it was overflowing with smiling wedding attendees and I felt incredibly proud and happy as my bride and her bridesmaids, all in dresses made by her, came down the aisle. However, if I had not been late it

would have been at 1pm!

We had the most marvellous day and spent the service smiling at each other, embracing and holding hands. We almost burst into an impromptu dance when the hymn "The Lord of the dance" was sung as we were just so happy and although neither of us felt or showed any nerves I managed to say "Elizabeth Jane" rather than "Jane Elizabeth" which caused a big laugh as I had no idea what I had done.

When I said my vows I knew to the very core of my heart I meant them and it was a promise to my wife in front of the congregation and God which was never to be broken.

It was fantastic to see those we love and care about, enjoying the day as much as we were, and to have many of them joining in the Lord of the Rings theme the wedding was based on. Lunch was held in the church hall and we hired various trees & shrubs from a nearby garden centre and bought a giant woodland mural which hung behind the top table to make it feel as if we were eating in a woodland clearance.

We did not have an evening reception as we both felt it was unlikely our energy levels would last that long and we were so, so right. However, we took every opportunity to visit our guest at their tables, which were named after places in Lord of the Ring, as often as possible during the lunch. Something we truly enjoyed doing and gave us the opportunity to really connect with our guests on a very personal and inclusive level. We wanted everyone to know they were part of our day and we were pleased they could be there.

It was a wedding truly blessed by God for when things did not go as we wanted in the build up, the alternative/substitute exceeded the expectation of the original. A very good example of this was my choice for the best man. My original best man discovered he could not do it but instead of telling me straight away, waited until I rang him 10 days before the wedding. I decided to ask my friend Sue, who I had thought about asking originally, and she was nothing short of brilliant. She was the organiser on the day, making sure we wanted for nothing and sorting out any little hiccups. She made us feel very special, something with the best will in the world I know my original best man would not have been able to achieve.

All the hard work we and others had put into the wedding was so worthwhile as we basked in the love of those there had for us and we for them. So many people did so much for us and were incredibly generous in their time and energy and we could like to thank Carolyn, the catering team, junior church, the choir & musicians and everyone connected with both churches and who attended on the day and contributed to our wonderful chalices. We are both very touched and moved by all everyone did to make our day so very, very special. It was a truly beautiful & memorable day with almost £1000 raised for cancer research.

Maurice Mills

Christmas Services

St Mark's Church

Sunday December 9

Messy Church Christingle Service

Saturday 22 December at 6.30pm

Carols in the Car Park

An hour of singing carols with Bedford Town Brass Band. We will be warmed with mulled wine and mince pies!

Monday 24 December Christmas Eve

Crib Service at 3.00pm

A service especially for the young and the young at heart. Have fun building a crib and singing carols. Come early to get a seat.

Carols by Candlelight at 6.30pm

A traditional service of nine carols and readings, accompanied by our organist and Bedford Town Brass Band

Midnight Holy Communion at 11.30pm

We gather together this most holy night to welcome the birth of the Christ-Child

Christmas Day

9.30am Morning Family Worship

A perfect way to start Christmas day

Putnoe Heights Church

Sunday December 2

Mission Gift Service



Sunday December 9

Messy Church Christingle Service and Putnoe Provender

Sunday December 23

Carols by Candlelight at 6.30pm,

A traditional service of nine carols and readings, followed by mince pies

December 24 Christmas Eve

Crib Service at 4.00pm

Midnight Communion at 11.30pm

We gather together this most holy night to welcome the birth of the Christ-Child

Christmas Day December 25

Family Worship at 11.00am



Jesus, God's Greatest Gift

We all love giving and receiving gifts at Christmas. On the first Christmas over 2,000 years ago, people travelled to bring gifts to Jesus. They knew that Jesus was the physical presence of God on earth, a way in which God revealed his love and compassion for all people. Jesus is God's greatest gift to us and by his life and teaching, we see what God is like.

Jesus was born to an unmarried mother and grew up in a poor family home and learned to earn a living as a carpenter. But from the moment he was born he was persecuted and had to go into hiding from people who wanted to kill him. Eventually his teachings led jealous political and religious leaders to have him put to death. Jesus said that God wanted us to learn to love each other, even our enemies and he went out of his own way to look after and care for the weakest, the poorest and most vulnerable members of society. Jesus invited everybody to discover God as a loving heavenly Father, who was kind and cared for them. Ever since then people who have trusted his words have found a new and exciting way of living which made sense and gave meaning for their lives.

Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift! 2 Corinthians 9:15