



# Partnership News

## Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church

### 2 February 2014

### Candlemas



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

#### Today – 2 February 2014 — Candlemas

**9.30 St Marks - Family Worship**  
Preacher – The Revd Ross Royden (Special guest)  
Leadership – Mrs Jean Bank  
Intercessions – Mr Richard Ledger  
Organist - Miss Marion Prior  
**11.00 am Putnoe — Family Worship**  
Preacher – The Revd Ross Royden (Special guest)  
Leadership Team - Mrs Jean Kirk  
Intercessions — YPG  
Organist - Mr Ben Mason

#### 9 February 2014 - 5th after Epiphany

**9.30 St Marks – Morning Worship**  
Preacher The Rt Rev Dr Alan Smith, Bishop St Albans  
Leadership –Mr Mick Ovenden  
Intercessions – Mrs Wendy Waters  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds  
**11.00 am Putnoe – Morning Worship**  
Preacher The Rt Rev Dr Alan Smith, Bishop St Albans  
Leadership Team - Mrs Sam Ware  
Intercessions — Mrs Claire Peck  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds  
**Readings** 1. Isaiah 58: 1-9a .2. 1 Cor 2. 1-16  
3. Matthew 5: 13-20

**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 kindly given by Ron Simmonds in loving memory of his wife Maureen, and by Keith, Glynis, Edward and Carina Armstrong in memory of their beloved Mum and Nana, Vera Marsh, on her birthday.

The flowers at St Mark's Church this week have been given by Barbara Pinney in memory of her husband Keith

*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

Lord give us the eyes of faith,  
to see your presence in the world.  
Where fear closes our eyes, help us.  
Where tears blind us, heal us.  
Where busyness keeps us from noticing,  
slow us.  
Where pride gets in the way, release us  
Set us free to see your love at work in the  
world. Amen

**The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman**  
107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR  
Tel: 266952 nsm@thisischurch.com

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

**The Reverend Canon Charles Royden**  
The Vicarage, Calder Rise. MK41 7UY  
309175 Mobile 07973 113861 vicar@thisischurch.com

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

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

**Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-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](http://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

**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 February 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 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) February 4 Afternoon Meeting at 2.30pm 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 12 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 12 February 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 February. 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 12th Feb., 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 September**

**Annual Congregational Meetings—27th April**

**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 10th February**

**Putnoe Heights Management Meeting 30th April**

**Putnoe Church Council - 18 February 10 July**

**Pastoral Group Meeting - 1 April 4pm**

**Churchyard Committee -**

**Commemoration Service - 2nd November**

**Circuit meeting –12th Feb, 19th June**

**Woodland Burial Trustees—**

**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting –10 February 2014 1.30pm**

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

# Candlemas

## Sentence of Scripture - Psalm 118:19

Open for me the gates of righteousness;  
I will enter and give thanks to the LORD

## Collect Prayer for the Day *Before we read we pray*

Almighty and ever-living God, clothed in majesty, whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple, in substance of our flesh: grant that we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts, by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.  
*Common Worship*

## First Bible Reading- Malachi Chapter 3:1-5

"See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty. But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years. "So I will come near to you for judgment. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud labourers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me," says the LORD Almighty.

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

## Second Bible Reading - Hebrews Chapter 2:14-18

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil-- and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

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

## Gospel Reading - Luke Chapter 2:22-40

When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons." Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." The child's father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. When

# Candlemas Bells



Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

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

### **Post Communion Prayer**

Almighty Father, whose Son Jesus Christ is the light of the world: may your people, illumined by your word and sacraments, shine with the radiance of His glory, that he may be known, worshipped and obeyed to the ends of the earth; for He is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen

### **Hymns** (*Please distribute Candlemas Worship*)

1. Jesus calls us here to meet him, as through word and song and prayer (*Tune Lewis Folk Melody*)
2. Faithful vigil ended, watching, waiting cease;
3. When candles are lighted on Candlemas Day (*Tune Lourdes*)
4. Longing for light, we wait in darkness (*Tune Christ be our light*)
5. Hail, thou once despisèd Jesus (*Tune Austria*)

### **Commentary**

If you have been looking around in the parks and gardens you will have seen the Candlemas Bells or Snowdrops bringing a welcome sign of fresh green and white. They make us glad as they remind us that there is new life coming to birth in creation. These little flowers are tiny signs of life and assurances to us that the worst of the winter is over, at least in terms of time! Spring is on its way and these glimpses of the future are like small miracles being born from the cold earth.

Candlemas is a Christian festival which commemorates the Feast of the Purification, the time we remember that Mary and Joseph took the baby Jesus to the Temple in accordance with the commandments in Leviticus. This is the Sunday 40 days after the birth of Jesus on which we come to the end of Christmas and Epiphany and we start looking towards Lent and Easter.

Candlemas has been likened to a lighthouse, it shines like a beacon shedding light all around, backwards from Christmas, because we remember the birth of Jesus, and forwards as we look to his passion. It comes at this time of year when there is a natural watershed in nature. This is the solstice, the world is moving, days are now getting longer, spring is in the air! If you are a gardener it is a great time to get out there and clear up. From now on it will be harder to do so because new growth will be breaking through, and you won't be able to cut those trees and hedges because birds will be building their nests! This is the time to get out there and rake up dead leaves, leaving them around will encourage pests and diseases. Burn them or put them in the bin and have them taken far away.

What we do with our gardens we should do with our lives, clear out the dead wood, rake up the rubbish and get rid of it. We should have no part in that which corrupts and produces discord. The point about light is that it exposes the darkness. The effect of coming to Church and meeting with Jesus is that we realise through the searchlight of the Holy Spirit, where we are failing to measure up. That willingness to think the worst of others, that lack of willingness to accept others and love them as Jesus does.

So this is Candlemas, a special festival of light - recalling those precious words of Simeon that Jesus would be the light. Simeon and Anna, saw in Jesus the one they had longed for, the Messiah who would bring peace and justice. The miracle was that when they recognised the Messiah it was not a king like figure on a horse, it was a 40 day old baby!

Simeon uttered those most famous words which have been spoken every day in churches across the world. There are reasons why the words of the Nunc Dimittis are so important. They tell us that God should be trusted. In the midst of the darkness it can be tempting to lose hope. After so much time of cold and darkness we might think that it will be for ever winter. However, as the fragile Snowdrop reassures us that spring will come, so the birth of this baby reassures us that God will bring salvation and an end to the darkness. The world might sometimes appear to be like a runaway train, gathering speed and racing towards a certain destruction. The appearance of the baby Jesus was a confirmation to Simeon and us that God had a plan and a purpose to rescue the world from catastrophe.

We have no idea what life holds for any one of us, life is full of potential and possibilities, but we know that we have little or no control over most of the big stuff that happens to us. Think how Mary and Joseph must have felt when they went to the temple with that little baby. They were just a young couple facing a very uncertain future, they had already faced all manner of difficulties and come through the temptation to lose faith in one another and God. Now they hear these chilling words, but they are told

that in the midst of the apparent chaos that will come upon them, they should nevertheless continue to trust in God because he has a bigger plan. The message for us is clear, we can like Simeon, trust God unto death itself, in the assurance that the salvation of God is for all people.

Simeon and Anna were old people and they lived at a time before the wonderful technology we have which restores perfect vision to eyes dimmed by cataracts. The message made out for us is that real sight is not affected by physical blindness. The spiritual sight of Simeon enabled him to see by faith and encourage trust in others. At Candlemas we are reminded that the crib can never be separated from the cross, but we are called to see deeper, below the surface of events and discover that God's purpose is transcendent. Simeon recognised who Jesus was with his gift of faith, it enabled him to overlook the weakness of a baby. Faith continues to trust even when the challenge seems to enormous to continue.

Faith does this, it enables us to get beyond the things which might tempt us to think that God has let us down. Perhaps this leads us to think of the prophetess Anna, an old woman. The actual words which she spoke are not written down for us to read, yet we do know that she was faithful and walked close enough to God to be a part of recognising his great purpose for Jesus. She was one of the tribe of Asher who had been disobedient by not eliminating the Canaanites but instead living with them. Knowledge of the tribe disappears after the Assyrians take their land, until Anna. She was married seven years, then a widow, it seems she is poor with no one to maintain her. Since she was a woman she was unable to even go into the temple to worship God, but had to stay in the Court of Women, where the Gentiles went. Anna was faithful in spite of all that had happened to her people it was to her that God revealed his wonderful plans for salvation, in the Court of Women. *Charles Royden*

### **Meditation**

Light up now your candles at this evening service, for the glory of your morning sacrifice: it is Candlemas, become we all burning and shining lights, to do honour to this day, and the blessed armful of it. Let your souls shine bright with grace, your hands with good works; let God see it, and let man see it; so bless we God. Walk we 'as children of the light,' as so many walking lights; and offer we ourselves up like so many holy candles to the Father of Light. But be sure we light all our lights at this Babe's eyes, that lied so enfolded in our arms; and neither use nor acknowledge any other light for better than darkness, that proceeds from any other light for better than darkness, that proceeds from any other but this Eternal Light, upon whom all our best thoughts, and words, and works, must humbly now attend like so many petty sparks, or rays, or glimmerings, darted from and perpetually reflecting thankfully to that glorious Light; from this day beginning our blessing God, the only lightsome kind of life, till we come to the land of light, there to offer up continual praises, sing endless Benedicites and Alleujas, no longer according to the laws or customs upon earth, but after the manner of heaven, and in the choir of angels, with holy Simeon, and Anna, and Mary, and Joseph, all the saints in light and glory everlasting. Amen, amen. *Second Candlemas sermon of Mark Frank*

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

Come from the four winds, O Lord, and in your holiness breathe upon us with your Spirit, that we may be gathered into your kingdom; for yours is the glory and the power throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. *The Didache (c. 100)*

A prayer for the Methodist Church in Britain. Almighty God, in the beginning you made the world and saw that it was good, yet today we see a world broken and in need of healing: people face discrimination and injustice, children live in poverty, hunger and disease, and many are denied their basic human rights. People cry out for justice: they want a better world, where all can be valued and hope for life in all its fullness. Your Son promised a world that is healthy, just, inclusive and sustainable. Give us courage to speak out and work for this new society. Enable us to be agents of your kingdom, in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray: "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven." Amen. *Daleep Mukarji, Vice-President of the British Methodist Conference, 2013/2014*

Eternal God, whose Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ, is proclaimed as the Light of the World; may your people, guided, warned and warmed by the light of your word and sacraments, shine with the radiance of his glory, that you may be known, worshipped and obeyed to the ends of the earth.

O Lord Jesus Christ, as a child you were presented in the Temple and received with joy by Simeon and Anna as Redeemer of Israel: mercifully grant that we like them, may be guided by the Holy Spirit to acknowledge and love you until the end of our lives. Amen (Church of South India)

*If Candlemas be fair and bright, Come, winter, have another flight.  
If Candlemas brings clouds and rain, Go, winter, and come not again.*

**The Very Reverend Dr Jeffrey John Dean of St Albans Cathedral** will be returning to BELIEF to speak on 'Means of Grace' Saturday, 22 February, 2014 10.00am to 1.00pm St Andrew's Church Centre, Kimbolton Road, Bedford MK40 2PF £10 per person, payable on the day register in the 'Contact' section of [www.beliefbeds.org](http://www.beliefbeds.org), email [belief@standrewsbedford.org](mailto:belief@standrewsbedford.org) or phone 01234 330314

**St Albans Diocese are currently advertising for a Synodical & Pastoral Officer at Holywell**

Lodge. Further details of this full-time post are on <http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/diocese/other-vacancies/>

**Footprints walk** Sunday 2nd February. Meet at 2.00pm at Marston Country Park Visitor Centre (where there are toilet and refreshment facilities) for circular walk including paths round Stewartby Lake. Distance can be agreed according to the conditions on the day. Sue & Gerry Allen.



**The St Albans Diocese of the Church of England**, which covers Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, are holding an event at Keysoe in Bedford to celebrate 100 years of the Diocese.

This is a unique opportunity which will see the largest ever gathering of the Diocese on 25 August 2014 at the College Equestrian Centre, Keysoe. Coaches are already being booked by churches from places as far afield as Watford, Stevenage, Leighton Buzzard and Sharnbrook.

Plans are already in place to provide facilities for over 5,000 visitors to be accommodated safely as we know that this free event will attract many people who have little or no connection with churches but will be attracted by this free event, with no charges for parking.

Entitled Celebrate 100 the event will combine fun activities, shows and displays from 10.00am until 5.00pm. Classic car displays will include cars from across the last 100 years, including a special display of vehicles from the entire history of MG. There will be a large outdoor stage and if weather is good we would expect that bands will continue to play into the evening. Hosted by Pam Rhodes of Songs of Praise there are many professional performers who have been booked to contribute to the entertainment. In the event of wet weather the event not be cancelled but moved indoors into the equestrian arena.

**This special day will start at 10.00am and run into the early evening. Please put this date in your diary and come and help Celebrate 100**



#### **Lent 2014**

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. We will be issuing tickets soon but for now it is important to have the date in your diary

# Welfare benefits are Changing

## 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

**Get ready for the summer**, learn Spanish at Putnoe Heights Church. Survival Spanish for holidays. On Thursdays 9.15-10.45 for more information contact

Elena 01234 266968 or [www.elcole.co.uk](http://www.elcole.co.uk)

**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

**A recent study** showed that only a quarter of church going Christians are in the habit of inviting other people along to church. Why not invite somebody next week to our special service with the Bishop of St Albans ?

## 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.

### Vera Marsh

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

## If you are elderly or living alone

then it is important for us to be able to keep in contact with you. Please sign up for Telecare and we will give you a telephone call every week or fortnight to check if all is well. This enable us to keep track if somebody is ill and cannot come to church. We would like more people to join so just give St Mark's office a ring and they will put you on the list.

*This is a telephone service, nobody will call without your request*



## Intercessions: St Marks

**Bidding:** Lord our light and our Salvation.

**Response:** Be the strength of our life.

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and you're done.

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

Thank you for shopping using the link on ThisisChurch.com to shop through Amazon. Please be careful to make sure that you never access Amazon direct but always use the link on ThisisChurch.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. You can shop at John Lewis, M&S etc - please always shop through [www.thisischurch.com](http://www.thisischurch.com)



## Forthcoming Funerals

**The funeral of Olive Rose** will take place at Putnoe Heights Church on Thursday 20 February at 12.30pm