



Partnership News

**Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church
30 November 2014
First of Advent**



Sunday Services

8.30am Holy Communion every Sunday

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

30 November - First of Advent

9.30am St Mark's - Holy Communion with PCH

Preacher - Rev. Anne Brown Chair of District
Leadership - Mrs. Margaret Appleton
Intercessions - Mr. Ian Farthing
Organist - Mr. Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe - Holy Communion with PCH

Preacher - Rev. Anne Brown Chair of District
Leadership - Mrs. Sue Allen
Intercessions - Ministers
Organist - Mr. Clive Simmonds

7 December - Second of Advent - Christingle

9.30am St Mark's - Morning Family Worship

Preacher - Rev. Dr. Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mrs. Elizabeth Bean
Intercessions - Mrs. Mary Stubbs
Organist - Mr. Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Family Worship

Preacher - Rev. Dr. Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mrs. Jenny Snelson
Intercessions - Young People
Organist - Mr. Clive Simmonds

Readings 1. Isaiah 40: 1-11 2. 2 Peter 3: 8-15a
3. Mark 1: 1-8

Midweek Holy Communion at St. Mark's Chapel every
Wednesday at 10am 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

The flowers at St. Mark's this week have been
given by Rosemary and Colin McNeillage in
memory of their parents.

*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 con-
tact 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

Begotten of your love, O Father, we are made in
your image. Cared for all our days, we are never
beyond your sight. Enfolded in your heart, we are
never out of your thoughts.
To think of you is rest. To know you is eternal life.
To see you is the end of all desire. To serve you is
perfect freedom. To love you is everlasting joy.
Amen.

W E Orchard, 1877-1955

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**

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Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinators

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

Churchyards Administrator

Mrs Avril Williams 01234 342613

Putnoe Heights Church Centre

Open Monday to Thursday 9am - 5.30pm, Friday 9-1pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Geoff Gypps 365630
Leadership Team Mrs Jenny Snelson 344417
Treasurer Mr John Hitt 404186 treasurerph@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Mr Lawrence Wyatt 350188
Youth Team Leader Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com

St. Mark's Church Centre

Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5.00pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 342613 office@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613
Leadership Team - Mrs Jean Bank 355698
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892
treasurer@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Mr Jim Williams 360605

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

Hazeldene Heights Pre-school. Sessional and Full Day care available—open Mon.—Fri. Full Day Care 8.30am to 5pm Sessional times 9am—12noon and 12.45pm - 3.45pm

For more info please contact Laura Leggett 01234 326685 or www.hazeldeneheights.com

8.30-12.30pm 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

11am-12noon Pilates St. Mark's. Liz Mason

07816522200 (starts 8 Sept.)

1.30pm Chat & Make. Term time for babies and

toddlers 0-5. Crafts, toys, songs, story and refreshments

£1. More details contact St Mark's Church Office on 01234

342613 or Janine 01234 297481 Restarts 8 September

12.00 noon Storybox Putnoe Heights We welcome the

under 5's and their carers to join them between 12noon

and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based

story and singing. Contact Carolyn Morris

youth@thisischurch.com 365630

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-8pm Cubs at Putnoe Ages 8 –10.5

Email:phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509

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** at St. Mark's 2nd week each

month) Cheryl Green 07729187399

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

7.30pm Whist Drive. St Mark's (Weeks 3 & 5 in the

month).. Next meeting— 15 December 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 Candlewicking (Needlework). Putnoe Heights.

Pat McCart 365507

9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World St. Mark's.

Lorrie Pearson 01234 340473

11.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

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

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

2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 St Mark's (3rd Week in

month) Contact Janet King 313946

2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 St Mark's (2nd Week in

month) Contact Janet King 313946

2.00pm Library Walk W.I. Putnoe Heights, meets

monthly. Morag Tomkins 356895

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

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

07891879571

7pm - 8.30pm Daisy Birthing Putnoe Heights Susie

07980447390

7.30pm Ladies Tuesday Club at Putnoe Heights (Meets

fortnightly) Next meeting Christmas Crafts 9 November

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 3 December 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 November

2014 Wendy Waters 401834 Jean Bank 355698

4.15pm Kumon Maths. Putnoe Heights Mrs Raksha

Mistry 01908 392698

5.00–6.00pm Rainbows at Putnoe Heights Mrs Gill

Lake 218091

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

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

6-7pm ATSK Karate at Putnoe Height Kevin Stark Tel. 01234 353865

7.00pm-9.00pm Scouts at Putnoe ages 10.5-14; Email:phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509

7.00pm Bunyan Bridge. St. Mark's Colin Jackson 363398 or Brian Sallows 407725.

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

7.00pm 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 3 December 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.

9.15am Spanish for beginners Plus at Putnoe Heights

10.30pm Spanish Holiday Survival at Putnoe Heights. Elena 01234 266968

9.45am Chat and Play St.Mark's. A term time group for Mums & toddlers.0-5 Contact St Mark's Church Office 01234 342613 or Janine 01234 297481 Restarts September 11

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 Restarts 4 September

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 Brenna. 07919402797.

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

Bedford Folk Dancers (formerly Barn dancers) Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights Different guest callers each week.Except August. All welcome, cost £2.50

Including refreshments. More details Ron 825574 or Shirley 01767 651767

8.00pm Bedford Writers Circle. St Mark's (1st week in month). John Broadhouse 01525 404014

7.30pm Magpies Women's Group St Mark's (2nd & 4th week in month) Mrs Marie Cotchin 402089

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 (9.30 am—3.30pm from January.)

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

6.30pm-8.00pm Beavers at Putnoe Ages 6-8 Email: phxg.enquiries@gmail.com Tel Tom 07974566509

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

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

Saturday

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

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

Young Embroiderers bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher 357198

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

Sunday

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

10 - 5.30pm Bedford Stamp Fayre. 1st Sunday Feb/Apr/ Jun/Aug /Oct/Dec. Contact P Harris 01623 621143

11.00 - 12.00 Church and Junior at Putnoe Heights for the under 9's and Young Peoples Fellowship (Y.P.F) for our young adults. A crèche is also available.

2- 4.30pm Indoor Bowls at St. Mark's 2nd & 4th Sunday. Ray Seymour 305695 or church office.



Diary Dates



St Mark's Church Council -
St Mark's Leadership Team - 26 January
Annual Congregational Meetings— 26 April 2014
Putnoe Heights Leadership Team -
Putnoe Heights Management Meeting -
Putnoe Church Council - 20 February
Pastoral Group Meeting -
Churchyard Committee -
Commemoration Service -
Circuit meeting -
Deanery meeting -
Woodland Burial Trustees—
Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting - Monday 19 January 2015

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

First Sunday of Advent

Sentence of Scripture - 1 Corinthians Chapter 1:8-9

He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful.

Collect Prayer for the Day

Before we read we pray

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness and to put on the armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which your Son Jesus Christ came to us in great humility; that on the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen *Common Worship*



First Bible Reading Isaiah 64: 1-9

Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, that the mountains would tremble before you! As when fire sets twigs ablaze and causes water to boil, come down to make your name known to your enemies and cause the nations to quake before you! For when you did awesome things that we did not expect, you came down, and the mountains trembled before you. Since ancient times no one has heard, no ear has perceived, no eye has seen any God besides you, who acts on behalf of those who wait for him. You come to the help of those who gladly do right, who remember your ways. But when we continued to sin against them, you were angry. How then can we be saved? All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away. No one calls on your name or strives to lay hold of you; for you have hidden your face from us and made us waste away because of our sins. Yet, O LORD, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand. Do not be angry beyond measure, O LORD; do not remember our sins forever. Oh, look upon us, we pray, for we are all your people. (This is the word of the Lord – **Thanks be to God**)

Second Bible Reading - 1 Corinthians 1: 3-9

Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and our brother Sosthenes, To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be holy, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I always thank God for you because of his grace given you in Christ Jesus. For in him you have been enriched in every way—in all your speaking and in all your knowledge—because our testimony about Christ was confirmed in you. Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God, who has called you into fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, is faithful. (This is the word of the Lord-- **Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - Mark 13: 24-37 (When announced - **Glory to Christ our Saviour**)

But in those days, following that distress, 'the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken.'

"At that time men will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And he will send his angels and gather his elect from the four winds, from the ends of the earth to the ends of the heavens. "Now learn this lesson from the fig tree: As soon as its twigs get tender and its leaves come out, you know that summer is near. Even so, when you see these things happening, you know that it is near, right at the door. I tell you the truth, this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened. Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father. Be on guard! Be alert! You do not know when that time will come. It's like a man

going away: He leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with his assigned task, and tells the one at the door to keep watch. "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping. What I say to you, I say to everyone: 'Watch!' " (This is the Gospel of Christ—**Praise to Christ our Lord**)

Post Communion Prayer

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

Hymns *(Please distribute Methodist Advent Holy Communion & Hymn Sheet)*

1. Make Way
2. Lo he comes with clouds descending
3. Sing we the king who is coming to reign
4. Lord Jesus Christ
5. O Come o Come Emmanuel

Commentary

This is the first Sunday of Advent, and the first Sunday of the church liturgical year. It comes at a time of year when we are all looking forward to Christmas, which celebrates the unique coming to earth of God to live as Jesus in human history.

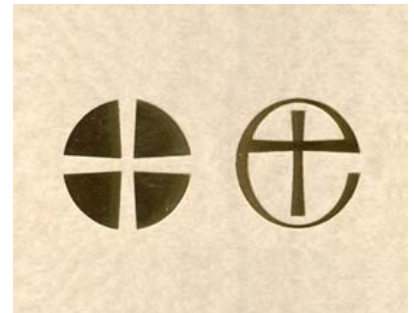
The reading from Isaiah today longs for God to come down to earth. We can all echo this longing, and we seek an assurance of God's presence in our world and in our lives. We live in a world which so needs the healing touch of God. Advent is a time when we think of light but it is an honest season in which we also acknowledge the darkness. The world is not a happy place, we are surrounded by evil and suffering and it is okay to be truthful Christians who recognise that we are weary of hoping and waiting and long for our Lord to appear to sort out the dreadful mess. Our minds are filled with all manner of apocalyptic scenarios from Ebola to terrorist attacks. Each Sunday we will be lighting candles, they remind us that we live in times of darkness in which the light of Christ is present with us.

The reading from the Gospel of Mark encourages us to 'watch and pray.' This is important for us as we go through this time of preparation for Christmas, we seek to create space for the presence of God. Advent is an opportunity to be able to stop our rushing and create that time to reflect. In four short weeks it will be Christmas and we will have to be filled with joy, but for now we can be realistic and think awhile before we rejoice. Christians are a joyful people but we are not supposed to head in the clouds people who have lost touch with the realities of life. Prayer is not meant to remove us from the chaos but rather equip us to be better able to serve in it. As Christians we know that 'All shall be well' but this statement is a future assurance, in spite of the present reality.

At Advent we remember that our Lord Jesus will come again and we look to be ready to welcome him. We also remind ourselves that Christ has come and is present with us. It is all too easy in the rush of modern life to become preoccupied with the hurry of day to day existence and we lose our spiritual awareness. Advent is a good time to resolve to awaken our spiritual sight and to become conscious of God's presence. Wake up and watch, for it is in the darkest night that the light shines most brightly.

Meditation

The President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference have welcomed a major step towards in Anglican-Methodist unity. Yesterday, the Church of England's General Synod debated a report on the Covenant between the two Churches and voted overwhelmingly in favour of its recommendations. The recommendations, which include steps towards greater interchangeability of ministries, were also overwhelmingly passed by the Methodist Conference this summer. The Revd Kenneth Howcroft, President of the Conference, said: "It was very good to attend the Church of England's General Synod to witness its debate on the JIC report 'The Challenge of the Covenant'. The JIC's Co-Chairs Professor Peter Howdle and Bishop Christopher Cocksworth made introductory speeches that set the tone for a very positive and encouraging debate." Vice-President Gill Dascombe added: "I am greatly encouraged to hear that the General Synod, like the Conference, supported the JIC's recommendations so strongly. We now look forward to further developments in our covenant relationship with the Church of England as we serve God and our communities together."



Professor Howdle's address to the synod Address to the General Synod, 18th November 2014 Co-Chair, Joint Implementation Commission for the Anglican Methodist Covenant

Allow me to start from a personal perspective on the recent history of the relationship between our two churches. As teenagers in the 1960s my future wife and I were excited to hear about the Conversations between the Methodist Church and the Church of England and that there was the possibility of their becoming one. Well, that was not to be. At that time my future wife went up to university and, despite being a regular attendee at her Oxford college chapel, there was an unease about her being a communicant since she was a Methodist. So she never received communion there. Happily, 25 years later she was invited to preach in the college chapel and it was the natural assumption that she would not only receive communion but assist to administer it by taking the chalice. So our churches had changed. Ten years later the Anglican Methodist Covenant was signed and that has enabled and encouraged much sharing. Another ten years later, in 2013, our local Methodist church where we attend, formed a single congregation Methodist Anglican partnership with the congregation of our local parish church. We are the Christian church in our suburb. So in 45 years I have experienced the movement of God's spirit within our churches. I pray that we remain faithful, hopeful and open to God's call.

I have heard and understand the frustrations and the boredom expressed with the Covenant process. Many Methodists have asked: where is the Covenant going; what has it achieved? Some say we have gone beyond 20th century ecumenism and our post-modern culture does not want that type of approach.

I would answer that the Covenant has achieved a lot. The relationship between our two churches at all levels has changed; there is a culture of encouraging sharing and cooperation. I know it doesn't happen everywhere, and some Methodists can be very protective of their traditions and reluctant to change. But overall the change has been positive. We have worked closely together in many ways, as our recent JIC Reports describe - for example on Fresh Expressions, on Safeguarding issues and in extended partnerships with shared ministry.

However the Joint Implementation Commission has come to the conclusion that we cannot move any closer together unless we now begin to try to solve some difficult issues for both of us. The Commission perceives that this is a significant moment for mission in our islands and that there is a change in the tone of ecumenical relationships with a sense of needing to move forward in answer to God's call.

We urge, in our recommendations, the establishment of a coherent framework which will not only sustain our current relationship but will also enable us to take a really focused look at the key obstacles which prevent us moving towards a deeper communion. These two key obstacles are dealt with in recommendation 1 of the Report before the Synod. In that recommendation we are asking our two churches to work together through our Faith and Order bodies, to bring some mutually dependent proposals for us to consider in the future. The first challenge is directed to the Methodist Church asking it to consider how it might become an episcopally ordered church within the historic episcopate. The second is directed to the Church of England, asking it to consider how it might in the meantime achieve the interchangeability of ministries by receiving those already ordained in the Church of God by the Methodist Church. The Joint Implementation Commission hoped and prayed that if such proposals were to be brought and eventually agreed, they would allow us to have a relationship of much deeper communion between our churches.

It is important to say here that this Report before you today was debated at the Methodist Conference in July this year and was received enthusiastically. Similar resolutions to those you will debate were agreed by large majorities.

Obviously there are concerns, and the Conference recognised, that in relation to recommendation 1, we are asking at this stage for detailed work to be done and proposals to be brought in due course.

The difficult recommendation directed to the Methodist Church is about bishops. It is important that the Synod hears that on the one hand the Conference (the body in which rests our corporate episcopate) has on several occasions agreed to move towards a personal episcopacy, particularly as a means to enhance the unity and mission of the Church, and the Conference this year recognised that when it voted for the resolution. But on the other hand there is still a variety of views in the Methodist Church, which wouldn't surprise you. There are those strongly in favour in principle, and there are those strongly opposed. I suspect, however, that the majority would be content to move forward in this way, if the Conference so determined, with the intention of enhancing the mission of the Church together with the Church of England. If the eventual proposal is for the Methodist Church to become episcopally ordered, it will no doubt be a matter of robust debate. I would stress to you that such a move would be permanent and irrevocable. I would also stress that when the Church of England is considering any proposals about the reception of existing ministries, although a significant step, clearly the intention would be that this would only be needed as an interim measure with a limited time span while the Methodist Church became fully episcopally ordered.

One last thought involves the Methodist Church world-wide. Although we do not have a Methodist Communion analogous to the Anglican Communion, there are, as members of the World Methodist Council, autonomous Methodist Churches in nearly every country in the world with a world-wide membership of approximately 80 million. The majority of these are episcopally ordered but not within the historic episcopate. If the Methodist Church of Great Britain, still regarded by many as the 'mother church', were to become ordered in the historic episcopate, I believe that it could begin to transform the relationship of other Methodist Churches with their Anglican neighbours, potentially a very significant opportunity for the world-wide mission of the Church.

Forty five years ago, I would never have imagined that I would be privileged to be speaking to you today. I still feel that excitement about our two churches moving closer together. I praise God for what has been achieved, and pray that we will continue to listen to God's call and be ready to answer.

Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

Heavenly Father, you exalted the humble and meek: give us humble and contrite hearts.

Lord Jesus, you grew towards birth in the Virgin's womb: be planted also in our hearts and lives.

Holy Spirit, you overshadowed Mary, that she might become the God-bearer: fill us with your heavenly gifts.

Eternal God, as Mary waited for the birth of your Son, so we wait for his coming in glory; bring us through the birth pangs of this present age to see, with her, our great salvation in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Methodist Women in Britain (MWiB). Everyone is invited to a Circuit Advent Service on Sunday 7 December at 4pm at Priory Methodist Church. Refreshments will be available after the service.

Are You Willing - November is Will Writing Month and we are encouraging everybody to make a will. Your church is important to you, so please consider leaving a legacy, however large or small. It can make a huge difference to the church and ensure that we are able to continue to provide Christian ministry in the years to come. To maintain the ministry of our churches we are dependant on generosity. .

Footprints 'Tea and Cake' Walk Sunday 30th NovemberThe final walk of the year will start at Putnoe Heights Church at 2.00pm following footpaths, cycleways and green spaces to 'Four Seasons Cafe' in Mowsbury Park and return. Friends, non walkers, past walkers and Footprints Weekenders are invited to join us at the cafe for tea and cake from 2.30pm.

Putnoe Provender Sunday 7 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 the Autumn Mission Project for Emmaus. All contributions gratefully received. John & Sally Gunning Tel 305925.

Mission Update In the past week or so we've continued to see a significant increase in the total donated towards our Autumn Mission project which has now grown to over **£3500** between the two churches. Thank you so much for your generosity. As we know this will make a real contribution to the work of Emmaus. Several people have asked if they can still make donations and the answer is absolutely 'Yes'! If you have not yet been able to pick up an envelope with details of how to support the project, these are available from the Ministers or from either church office.

Samaritan's Purse Shoe Boxes

Thank you very much to all who contributed, in any way, to the 56 Shoe Boxes we are donating to this year's Operation Christmas Child. At our October Messy Church we watched a video of delighted children receiving and opening their boxes, it was most humbling to see what happiness these gifts bring to children around the world. Wendy Waters

Christmas Craft Fayre Thank you to everybody who came along and supported the Christmas Craft Fayre. Huge thanks also to Avril and the team for another remarkable occasion and which was very fitting for the 20th celebration. An amazing £3,089 was raised on the day so it was another day well worth the hard work of everybody involved.

The Jaffa Orchard Community Cafe and Gift Shop
A warm welcome awaits you when you visit Jaffa at 51a/b Pembroke Street, Castle Road. On



Putnoe Heights Church Christmas Concert by Kempston Musical Society with Castle Lower School Choir

Putnoe Heights Church
Saturday 13 December 7.30pm.

Admission £7.50 (children £3.00)
to include seasonal refreshments,
donations of mince pies welcome.

Proceeds shared between Putnoe Heights Church
and Emmaus Village, Carlton. Admission pro-
grammes are on sale at both Church offices

Wednesday 10 December Jaffa will remain open for late night Christmas shopping to 7.30pm. The coffee shop will close as usual at 6pm. Please come along there are locally made crafts, paintings, jewellery, cards, Christmas decorations and much much more. Many items are sold to support charities. We hope to see you there. Thank you.

Bowls at St Mark's Please note that from December sessions will be held on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month. Ray Seymour

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

Church Christmas cards with invitations to our services are now available for delivery. Please take and distribute as you are able.

Microsoft Publisher Training. There will be a training session in Microsoft Publisher at St Mark's Church on Sunday 30 November.

There will be a meeting of the Trustees of St Albans Woodland Burial Ground at 12.30pm on Sunday 30 November at 12.30pm

St Mark's Christmas Newspaper. Help us Deliver.

We will be delivering a Christmas Newspaper to as many houses as possible again this year. It will be ready from next week. We will have a special 'Delivery Day' on Saturday 13 December. Please meet at St Mark's at 10.00am for an hour of delivery followed by coffee and mince pies back at Church.



WiFi. Please remember that you can access wifi at St mark's church using the password 'jesuslovesme'



**First Candle - The Candle of Hope (Purple Candle)
The Patriarchs, Abraham, the Old Testament
Ancestors of Jesus**

May your hearts be filled with hope as you hear the promises God made to bless all the peoples on earth through Abraham, the father of our faith.

Thanks be to God

Today is the First Sunday of Advent, we will light a candle to remember the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the ancestors of our faith.



Genesis Chapter 12


The LORD had said to Abraham, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. "I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, God of our ancestors: to you be praise and glory for ever. You called the patriarchs to live by the light of faith and to journey in the hope of your promised fulfilment. May we be obedient to your call and be ready and watchful to receive your Christ, a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; for you are our light and our salvation. Blessed be God for ever.

(A person lights the first candle here)

Let us pray:

**Lord Jesus, light of the world,
born in David's city of Bethlehem,
born like him to be a king:
be born in our hearts at Christmas,
be King of our lives today.**



Emmaus Mission Project

Last Sunday is the last week so please make sure you make your donation before we announce the final total after the Gift Service Next week.



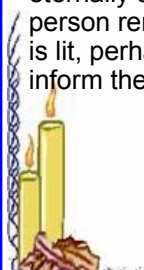
Christmas Shopping

Once we get into November we start thinking about presents and this year more than ever they will be bought online. So please can you make a point of always going to Amazon through the link on www.ThisIsChurch.com. If you look at an item through Amazon direct they put a cookie on your machine and we don't get any commission! Please make it a habit to always go through the church website. This costs you nothing and we get a bit of commission. For some reason very people have registered for www.easygiving.com. This works exactly the same when you shop with John Lewis, M&S and a whole host of other shops. This has an added benefit that you will also get some special offers - you can't lose !

**Please always shop through
www.thisischurch.com**


Rest In Peace

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



Heather Ivett

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 Colleen Heather Littlewood will take place at St Marks Church Chapel at 1:45pm on Tuesday 9 December

The funeral of Roy John Stevens will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Tuesday 2 December at 11.30am