



Methodist
Church

Partnership News

5 February 2012
Candlemas



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 – Candlemas

9.30am St. Mark's - Morning Worship
Preacher - Mr John Bassill
Leadership – Mrs Elizabeth Bean
Intercessions – Mr Warwick Holden
11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship
Preacher – Mr John Bassill
Leadership -Mrs Linda Hoar
Intercessions—YPF

12 February

9.30am St Mark's — Morning Worship
Preacher - Revd Dr Sam Cappleman
Leadership –Mr Mick Ovenden
Intercessions - Mr Mike Elliott
11.00 am Putnoe –Morning Worship
Preacher - Revd Dr Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mr Gordon Evans
Intercessions –Mrs Sam Ware

Bible Readings

1 2 Kings 5: 1-14 . 2.1 Corinthians 4: 3-6 3. Mark 1:
40-45

Midweek Worship 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 Keith, Glynis, Edward and Carina Armstrong, in memory of their beloved Mum and Nana, Vera Marsh, on her birthday.

The flowers in St Mark's Church this week are given by Valerie Edwards in memory of her mother, and Gill Williams in loving memory of her husband David. The flowers in the chapel are given by Marion Prior in memory of her mother.

Welcome

We welcome especially this morning at St Mark's Church the family and friends of Finlay Jay Thorne who has been brought for baptism.

Prayer for the Week

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)

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 Mason

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

For Data Protection Purposes

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. Linda Hoare 782717
Treasurer Mr Ian Morse 21428 treasurerph@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator John Hitt 404186
Youth Worker Emma Gordon email - 07593266091 youth@thisischurch.com

St. Mark's Church Centre (Open 9am - 5.00pm)

Tel/fax & Answering Service 342613 office@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613
Leadership Team - Laura Farthing 210892
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Jim Williams 360605

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

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

Head teacher Mrs Janet Smith ☎326685

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

9.30-3.15pm 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)

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 Emma Gordon ☎07593266091

2.00pm U3A History Group St Marks.(see contact details below)

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

4.15pm Rosemary Conley Diet & Fitness. Putnoe Heights. Margo Needham ☎843747 or 07881730747

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

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– 20 February Judith Stanton. ☎823313

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

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 Folbigg ☎351223

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

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

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

6.30pm Creative Card making. Putnoe Heights Church. Carol Houghton ☎346718

6.15pm Pilates St Mark's Church Jane Butcher ☎07891879571

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

7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club - Meets fortnightly. Next meeting February 7 'Wood Carving' Neil Kinselly. Details call Janet King 313946

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

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.(see 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)

12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next meeting 15 February 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

1.45 Scots Society Whist Putnoe monthly .All welcome Nancy Barr ☎268147

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

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 15th February. Wendy Waters401834

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

6.00 pm Brownies. St Mark's. Mrs Carol Warden ☎219731

6.00pm Shooting Stars. Youth Group for 9-13yrs at Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Contact Emma Gordon 365630.

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. Vanessa Aykac 268098 or 07917385987

7.00pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe Heights monthly Janice Loxley ☎347073

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 meet at St Mark's 1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next meeting will be 15 February 2012. Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Ring 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 .

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 group for Mums & toddlers. Jo Garner 400071 or 07719670624 Restarts on 12 January 2012

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.

1.45 Friendly Chicago Bridge at Putnoe Heights £2 per session inc. refreshments. New members welcome. Contact Pat 01234 294220.

2pm Putnoe Bridge Club. Gerald Palmer ☎345991

2-4pm U3A Indoor Games. St.Marks.(see contact details below)

2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society St Marks Mary Rich ☎272470

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

6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins

6.30-7.30pm Bootcamp/Circuits. (Fitness) St Marks. Laura Amor.341152. 07976259081.

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.

Frida y

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 Whist St Marks.Patricia Holland.☎262823

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

6.00-7.00pm Zumba at St Mark's. Contact Laura Harrow ☎07834529833

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 the under 9's and Young Peoples Fellowship (Y.P.F) for our young adults. A crèche is also available.

1pm Tabernacle of Truth Church Putnoe Heights Sacha Ojo ☎07590597891 or www.tabernacleoftruth.co.uk

7-9pm Tae Kwon Do St Mark's (not 25th March) Contact Adrian Felice

www.bedfordtkd.com 07964356355

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 – 21 February 2012

St Mark's Leadership Team - 16 February 2012
Putnoe Heights Leadership Team -

Putnoe Heights Management Meeting

St Mark's Forum Meeting - NA

Putnoe Church Council - 13 February 2012

Pastoral Group Meeting - 7th February 4pm in chapel

Churchyard Committee -

Brickhill Parish Council Meetings -

Circuit meeting - 8 February 2012 @ Kempston East

Deanery Meeting

Woodland Burial Trustees – 5th February 12.30pm

Putnoe Heights Children &

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

Candlemas

Opening Verse of Scripture –Psalm 118: 19

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

Collect Prayer *(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 Reading—Malachi 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. *(This is the Word of the Lord All: Thanks be to God)*

Second Reading – Hebrews 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. *(This is the Word of the Lord All: Thanks be to God)*

Gospel Reading – Luke 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 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.

(This is the Word of the Lord - All: Thanks be to God)

Post Communion Prayer

Lord, you fulfilled the hope of Simeon and Anna, who lived to welcome the Messiah: may we, who have received these gifts beyond words, prepare to meet Christ Jesus when he comes to bring us to eternal life; for he is alive and reigns, now and for ever.

Hymns *(Please distribute Morning Worship and)*

Commentary

When studying the scriptures it is important to remember that Jesus was a Jew.

With our Western eyes we often overlook this as we relate our Christian faith to our everyday world. Jesus grew up in first century Palestine with all its strict adherence to the Jewish faith. The day-to-day political leadership of the country was closely tied interlinked with its religious leaders. The occupying Roman Empire was content to let this status continue as long as it provided stability and no threat to Roman dominance. So we need to understand the strictures of the Law of Moses which would have underpinned the childhood of the boy Jesus.

The story of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple is one of only two glimpses into that childhood – the other being the story of Jesus staying behind in the Temple when he was old enough at 12 years of age to start taking part in adult religious observance. For the rest we can assume that he was at home learning his earthly father's trade of carpentry and in the Synagogue school learning about the religious teachings of Judaism. Today or rather on February 2nd each year we celebrate Candlemas, a service which marks the Presentation of Christ in the Temple by blessing candles with holy water sprinkled on them. In doing so we remind ourselves of the significance of the custom of the Presentation, the light of the candles signifying the lights in the Temple during this very precious ceremony.

Forty days after their birth Jewish baby boys are brought to the Temple by their mothers for several purposes. Firstly to mark the purification of the mother who until then is regarded as too unclean after the birth to attend Temple worship. After forty days it was considered that any physical danger to her life from the birth was past. Secondly to formally name the baby and then to dedicate him to the service of God as her first-born child. A sacrifice is offered. In the case of Mary and Joseph, who were really poor and could not afford a lamb, two doves are used, the smallest and cheapest acceptable offering in the Temple. But in Jesus's case the event is also marked by the reaction of two elderly members of the Temple fraternity which gives the event another name "The meeting of the Lord".

Simeon has been promised by God that in return for his service to God he will not die until he sees the messenger of God, the holy one, the Messiah promised of old. When in his declining years he sees the baby he praises God, takes the child into his arms and uttered those words of significance which we know as the Nunc Dimittis two (the song of Simeon), one of the canticles which is still included in Evensong and said at Vespers.

The other one is the Magnificat, the glorious Song of Mary when she was told of the impending birth of Jesus by the Angel.

An elderly prophetess Anna is also in the Temple to offer her thanks and praise at meeting the baby. Tradition has it that both she and Simeon then pass on content at the marvel of the Christ child they have witnessed.

As with many church festivals many customs and sayings have sprung up over the years. Our celebration of infant baptism was at one time linked with the Purification ceremony which since New Testament times has been called the Churching of Women and applies to all children not just boys. It is still observed in many Eastern Orthodox traditions though has fallen into disuse in much of the West.

Babies are brought to be blessed at this stage of their lives and prayers are also offered for the mother, thanks for her physical recovery from childbirth and also her spiritual safety so as to ward off possible post-natal depression. It also marks the occasion when the mother can once again receive the sacrament of Holy Communion. A rather appropriate folklore saying for the season is *"If Candlemas be fair and bright, winter shall have another flight"* meaning that if that day's weather is good we shall have more cold and wintry weather before the spring.

Thursday as I recall was a very bright fine winter's day!

So we have the context of the gospel reading but need also to consider for a moment the other readings. Malachi is the last book of the Hebrew scriptures (Old Testament) and tells of the way in which God's messenger (John the Baptist) will come to prepare the way before the Lord himself comes. The Messiah will come as the Lord's representative to confirm and re-establish God's covenant with his people. In the process He will purify hands and hearts to allow people to be ready to receive the message of salvation. Hebrews emphasises the humanity of Jesus because he has come as one of us). This is necessary for Christ to be able represent humankind before God and turn away His wrath against guilty sinners. He becomes the great high priest and so underpins the message of the Gospel of Redemption.

The Feast of Candlemas is thus an important milestone in our Christian calendar not just for the story of the Purification of the Virgin Mary, important as that is, but also for the purification of our souls and bodies. We are reminded that Christ came to save our souls, to save us from the tyranny of the sin which can hold us back from a full union with Christ. We are called to be ready to meet him as were Simeon and Anna, ready in body mind and spirit for the glories of the new life which He has promised to us. If you take away from this service just one thing remember this:

He comes to meet us where we are, fallen as we are and through his birth, life and death He is there beside us every step of our lives. Go forward in faith ready to meet him.

Meditation

Simeon and Anna, these old people greeted him. Now you would be forgiven for thinking that Mary and Joseph would find themselves hearing old Simeon and Anna moaning about how bad everything was. Like many old people they could have harked back to the good old days. But they didn't. They were both old but they didn't live in the past. They both had lots to complain about, but they were nevertheless positive about the future. Neither of them were moaners. We are told that the Holy Spirit rested on Simeon. The Holy Spirit leads us into the future with hope, because the future is God's. The challenge for each of us is to put our trust in God in the same complete way that Simeon and Anna did. We must like Simeon have the faith to recognise God at work in his world, have the faith to trust that God has a plan for his world

We must like Anna be able to look to the dawning of a new age. We do not know what lies around the corner. However we do know that God has not abandoned us in the dark

The Lord is my light and my salvation whom shall I fear !

Prayers

Almighty and everliving God, we humbly beseech thee that, as thy only-begotten Son was this day presented in the temple, so we may be presented unto thee with pure and clean hearts by the same thy Son Jesus Christ our Lord; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Let the flame of your love never be quenched in our hearts, O Lord. Waking or sleeping, living or dying, let us delight in your presence. Let the flame of your love brighten our souls and illumine our path, and let the majesty of your glory be our joy, our life and our strength now and for ever. Amen *Johann Arndt, 1555-1621*

Let us all hasten to meet Christ, we who honour and venerate the divine mystery we celebrate today. Everyone should be eager to join the procession to share in this meeting. Let no one refuse to carry a light. Our bright shining candles are a sign of the divine splendour of the one who comes to expel the dark shadows of evil and to make the whole universe radiant with the brilliance of his eternal light. Our candles show how bright our souls should be when we go to meet Christ. The God-bearer the most pure virgin, carried the true Light in her arms and brought him to help those who lay in darkness. In the same way we too should carry a light for all to see and reflect the radiance of the true light as we hasten to meet him. *Sophronius of Jerusalem*



Taylor Wilson



Stewart Kempster

A Celebration Organ Concert

A Free Concert to Celebrate
the Installation of a New Organ
at St Mark's Church, Calder Rise, Bedford

Sunday 12 February 2012 at 6.30pm

Taylor Wilson (mezzo soprano), Stewart Kempster (bass),
Clive Simmonds (organ)



We are delighted that the new Allen organ at St Mark's will be played by Clive Simmonds our resident organist. We are also extremely fortunate to welcome two professional singers Taylor Wilson and Stewart Kempster, who have international reputations for their performances and recordings. The programme is a delightful mix of musical styles which we are confident will be enjoyed by all.

Come and join us for an amazing musical evening
which promises to be a night to remember.

Entrance to this concert is free there will be a retiring offering. For more details
call St Mark's 01234 342613 email office@thisischurch.com

Count Your Blessings. During Lent Christian Aid's 'Count Your Blessings' reminds us how fortunate we are in the freedoms and living standards we enjoy. Each day we are invited to make a small donation eg for Ash Wednesday, realising how few countries have a free press, give 10p for each newspaper read in a week. If you would like to take part in Count Your Blessings, contact Carolyn Morris at Putnoe 350722 after 12 noon, or Jean Bank at St Mark's 342613

Our "Annual Unwanted Gift Stall" will take place at Putnoe following Worship on 5 February. Please bring in your items for us to sell in aid of Church funds. Always a bargain to be had!! Thank you for your support. Liz and Carolyn.

Footprints Walking Group Sunday 5 February 2pm. Meet at St Mary's Church, Stevington (parking on verge on Church Road) 3½ mile circular walk including Stevington Trail and Ouse Valley Way and a glimpse of snowdrops. Details Sylvia 343424

Joint Confirmation. We would be interested to know if there is anybody who would like to consider confirmation. Confirmation is an opportunity for anybody usually over the age of 10. Confirmation marks the point in the Christian journey at which you affirm for yourself the faith into which you have been baptized and your intention to live a life of committed discipleship. This affirmation is confirmed through prayer and the laying on of hands by the confirming bishop. The Church also asks God to give you power through the Holy Spirit to enable you to live in the way of Jesus.
If you were not baptized as a child and want to make

a commitment of faith, you might consider adult baptism or you can be baptized and confirmed in the same service or baptized shortly before your confirmation.

Joint Confirmation means the holding of a service of Confirmation of the Methodist Church and Church of England. In a joint Confirmation the confirming minister from the Church of England is always a bishop. In the case of the other churches it is the appropriate minister in terms of their practice. Those who are confirmed in this way are confirmed both in the Methodist Church and Church of England.

The family of Trevor Noble would like to say thank you for the many letters, flowers and cards received over the last few weeks. Thank you to all who attended the Service of Thanksgiving. Thank you to the Lunch Club team who worked so hard in the kitchen serving tea and washing up.

Forthcoming Church Meetings

Putnoe Heights Church Council will take place on Monday 13 February at 7.30pm

St Mark's Church Council will take place on Tuesday 21 February at 7.30pm

St Mark's Church Leadership Team will take place on Thursday 16 February at 7.30pm at the Vicarage
Pastoral Group - the next meeting will be at 4pm on 7 February in the chapel.

Lent Course Dates

Thursday 15 March at Putnoe Heights Church
Thursday 22 March at St Mark's - Wren Room
Thursday 29 March at Putnoe Heights Church



This year for Lent we are looking at doing our Mission Plan. The Diocese has asked us to produce one and we will be using the opportunity of Lent. Sam is kindly heading this strategic piece of work and we will be using materials based on the diocesan website. It would be helpful for you to take a look at <http://www.livinggodslove.org/resources/resource/mission-action-planning>

We will be using three evenings during Lent to go through the stages Look, Listen, Plan, after Lent we will be looking at implementation ie Act

Look or Review - a time to Look and Listen, often called an audit. Getting into the community and looking beyond the local area to consider needs of the wider world, and as well considering the life and values of the church community.

Discern or Choose - out of the looking, a time to develop and articulate a vision, which will energise and unite the church. When the vision is owned, the priorities and goals flow naturally.

Plan - taking each of the goals and asking 'How?' Again a very prayerful approach is vital as people take on responsibility for specific actions, working to agreed dates.

Act - getting started. Keep praying and communicating together - recognise where modification may be necessary in the light of real experience. Celebrate achieved goals together!

There are also materials for homegroups to use during Lent and for personal prayer and Bible study.

<http://www.livinggodslove.org/resources/resource/lent-course-2012>

We would like to stress that Mission Action Planning is not about looking for more things to do. It is about recognising who we are, what we do and where we see ourselves in the future. This might mean that we do some new things, however there is no expectation that we will do more. So if we decide to do something new, then we will be giving something else up! We cannot do everything and we already do so much. However it will be good to take some stock of where we are, a kind of audit and ask prayerfully what our strengths and weaknesses are. It should be something which we gain some satisfaction from as we reflect together on the life of our churches. Please speak to Sam if you have any questions !



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Rest in Peace

It is with great sadness that we heard this week of the death of Maureen Simmonds. Maureen died at home after having bravely fought against cancer. Maureen was a much loved member of our church family and our thoughts and prayers are with Ron and all the family.

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.

Christine Victoria Fox
Revd Trevor Noble

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 Thomas James Harvey will take place at 1.45pm on Monday 13 February

The funeral of Pat Gregory will take place at St Mark's Church on Friday 10 February at 10.00am

There will be a memorial service for Maureen Simmonds at Putnoe Heights Church on Wednesday 22 July at 11.30