



Partnership News

**Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church
7 December 2014
Second 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

7 December - Second of Advent - Christingle

9.30am St Mark's - Morning Family Worship

Preacher - Rev. Dr. Sam Cappleman

Leadership - Mrs Elizabeth Bean

Intercessions - Ministers

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

14 December - Third of Advent

9.30am St Mark's - Morning Worship

Preacher - Rev. Canon Charles Royden

Leadership - Mr Edward Parry

Intercessions - Mrs Morag Stewart

Organist - Miss Marion Prior

11.00 am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher - Rev. Canon Charles Royden

Leadership - Mrs Veta Hudson Rae

Intercessions - Mrs Sylvia Cohen

Organist - Mr Alan Bunker

Readings 1. Isaiah 61: 1-14. 8-11

2. 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-24 3. John 1: 6-8, 19-28

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 Sylvia Cohen in loving memory of her husband Ken, By Davina Latter in loving memory of her dear Mum, Mary Britton on her birthday, and by Julia Bailey in loving memory of her husband Bill on his birthday.

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

Teach us, good Lord,
to serve you as you deserve;
to give and not to grudge the cost;
to fight and not to heed the wounds;
to toil and not to seek for rest;
to labour and not to seek for any reward,
save that of knowing that
we do your will;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ignatius of Loyola (c. 1491-1556)

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 December

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 10 December

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
17 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 2015
Annual Congregational Meetings - 26 April 2014
Putnoe Heights Leadership Team -
Putnoe Heights Management Meeting -
Putnoe Church Council - 20 February 2015
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.*

Second Sunday of Advent



Sentence of Scripture - Mark 1:2,3

It is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way"-- "a voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"

Collect Prayer for the Day

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us, and with great might succour us; that whereas, through our sins and wickedness we are grievously hindered in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy may speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever. Amen
(Common Worship)

First Bible Reading Isaiah 40: 1-11

Comfort, comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and proclaim to her that her hard service has been completed, that her sin has been paid for, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins. A voice of one calling: "In the desert prepare the way for the LORD; make straight in the wilderness a highway for our God. Every valley shall be raised up, every mountain and hill made low; the rough ground shall become level, the rugged places a plain. And the glory of the LORD will be revealed, and all mankind together will see it. For the mouth of the LORD has spoken." A voice says, "Cry out." And I said, "What shall I cry?" "All men are like grass, and all their glory is like the flowers of the field. The grass withers and the flowers fall, because the breath of the LORD blows on them. Surely the people are grass. The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever." You who bring good tidings to Zion, go up on a high mountain. You who bring good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up your voice with a shout, lift it up, do not be afraid; say to the towns of Judah, "Here is your God!" See, the Sovereign LORD comes with power, and his arm rules for him. See, his reward is with him, and his recompense accompanies him. He tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young. (This is the word of the Lord – **Thanks be to God**)

Second Bible Reading - 2 Peter 3:8-15a

But do not forget this one thing, dear friends: With the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. Since everything will be destroyed in this way, what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming. That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat. But in keeping with his promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness. So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him. Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. (This is the word of the Lord-- **Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - Mark 1: 1-8

The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

It is written in Isaiah the prophet: "I will send my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way"-- "a voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'" And so John came, baptizing in the desert region and preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. And this was his message: "After me will come one more powerful than I, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." (This is the word of the Lord-- **Thanks be to God**)

Post Communion Prayer

Father in heaven who sent your Son to redeem the world and will send him again to be our judge: give us grace so to imitate him in the humility and purity of his first coming that, when he comes again, we may be ready to greet him with joyful love and firm faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymns *(Please distribute Family Worship & Hymn Sheet)*

1. Hills of the north rejoice
2. Christingle Carol
3. Come thou long expected Jesus
4. On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry
5. Hail to the Lord's anointed

Commentary Advent – He Comes!

Advent is a season of expectation and preparation, as the Church waits for the coming (adventus) of Christ, both in his incarnation and as judge at the end of time. The readings and liturgies therefore look forward not only to Christ's birth, but also to his final Coming, and challenge the modern reluctance to confront the theme of divine judgement: As Charles Wesley wrote:

'Every eye shall now behold him, robed in dreadful majesty.'

The characteristic note of Advent is expectation, rather than penitence, although the character of the season is easily coloured by an analogy with Lent. The anticipation of Christmas under relentless commercial pressure has also made it harder to sustain the appropriate sense of alert watchfulness. Church decorations are simple and spare, and purple is the traditional liturgical colour. In the northern hemisphere, the Advent season falls at the darkest time of the year, and the natural symbols of darkness and light are powerfully at work throughout Advent and Christmas. The lighting of candles on an Advent wreath, imported into Britain from northern Europe in the nineteenth century, is now a common practice in many churches. The Moravian custom of the Christingle which we use this week in our service, is now very popular, especially with the encouragement of the Children's Society. The third Sunday of Advent was observed in mediaeval times as a splash of colour in the restrained atmosphere of Advent (Gaudete or "Rose Sunday"), and the last days of Advent were marked by the sequence of Great 'O' Antiphons, which continue to inspire our modern Advent hymns and meditations.

From Common Worship – Introduction to the Season

Meditation

Advent truly is a season of expectation and hope, but its expectations and hope based not on empty human aspirations, but on the solid and sure foundation we have in Jesus Christ. He comes in the stillness and the turmoil, He comes to bring peace, and to disturb us. He comes as He walks with us in the past, the present and the future. He is our heritage, our stability and our transformation as He sustains, renews and continues to reveal more of His love and His plan for His creation as once again He breaks through into our world. The readings today remind us to speak up and to proclaim the message of God as we await Christ's coming in hope. Isaiah says there is a "voice crying in the desert", where God urges us to "Speak tenderly." and "Comfort my people." In Mark the voice of John the Baptist cries out to implore us to proclaim a message of hope to our world by preparing the way for the Lord and getting ready for Him. Both are messages of expectation and hope to all those who are in need. In a world of violence and terrorism, of poverty and injustice, of dishonesty and manipulation of the truth, and of political expediency, we are invited to practice our faith in the spirit of the great prophets and address issues of justice, peace, and genuine human development for all God's people. The images in the readings today are images of hope and possibility. The rough way can be made straight, the broken made whole. God will come with power. There will be a new heaven and new earth where the peace and righteous of the Christ child incarnate dwells. In Advent we wait in eager anticipation for Jesus to come.

A time of preparation and new beginnings

Advent is the time when we prepare for Christ's coming at Christmas and His return in glory, a time of new beginnings. But after the considered and measured discourses of Matthew we've been looking at over the past few weeks, the short sharp tone of Mark, the gospel for the church year just started in Advent, comes to us as something of a surprise, even shock, as it delivers its sense of energy and urgency as we '*Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him*' as we wait for His coming. No time here for birth narratives of a new beginning, just straight into the story of the Messiah who was about to start His ministry. It's characteristic of the way the gospel of Mark is written.

In Mark's gospel a sentence about Jesus going to Jerusalem would probably be starkly stated as: '*Immediately Jesus went to Jerusalem*'. Matthew, would probably have phrased as the same sentence: '*Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary, knowing that the writers and the teachers of the law were in the Temple Courts, went to Jerusalem, a day's walk away, to meet them*'. Luke, who we study next year, would probably write: '*Jesus went on his way to Jerusalem and on His way saw a woman who was sick. Filled with compassion He stopped to help her, to heal her sickness and forgive her sins*'. John would probably write: '*Knowing it was His destiny to meet with the scribes and the Pharisees, on the third day Jesus went up to Jerusalem so that the scriptures could be fulfilled*'. Matthew's house would be very orderly with all the ornaments precisely set out on the mantelpiece; Luke's house would probably be full

of people all of the time, John's full of candles and books, and Mark's looking like a whirlwind had just hit it, post still on the table, coffee cups waiting to be washed up and Mark nowhere to be seen !

It's a timely reminder that there is a sense of urgency about our spiritual lives and about our preparation. We all know that in preparation for anything there are some things that get put off until the last moment, for some this happens more than others, and for some a few things that just never get done. The prompting from John the Baptist is to take action now. The urgency of the gospel of Mark and the words of John with which it opens both underline the importance of acting sooner rather than later in matters of repentance and salvation. John the Baptist was offering his hearers, predominantly Jews and God fearing gentiles, a chance at a completely new beginning. Not through the symbolic baptism with water but through the life changing baptism of the Holy Spirit that the Messiah would bring and through that an offer of a restored relationship with God. John also speaks to us in a desert context. A lonely dry wilderness. A geographic location and a spiritual state. John speaks to us with urgency from his desert experiences into ours. And the people, listening to John, were drawn not to him, but to the one he pointed to, the one who would give living water, the one who would baptize with the Holy Spirit.

As Christians we will sometimes find ourselves in the desert places as we prepare to move on in our journey of life, times where our spiritual life seems dry and God seems distant. And there will be other times when we'll find ourselves as the ones who bring refreshment, bringing water to the thirsty, and pointing others to the one who gives living water. Helping others to find their new beginnings. John the Baptist also challenges our priorities, especially in the fast paced stories we have in Mark. What is important to us he seems to ask? What are our priorities as we prepare? Will we be ready in time? We can't just go through the motions he says, we have to do something. Just like we can't just think about the Christmas shopping, we have to do it. Baptism was an outward and visible sign of an inward and often invisible change. An acknowledgement that things had changed, priorities would now be different. A new beginning started as parts of the old life end and pass away.

Peter, in his epistle, picks up this theme. We are to be grateful that each ending is another new beginning. Each new beginning gives us yet more time before we have to face the final ending. We are to be grateful in our waiting and for our waiting. In Advent we pray for the coming of Christ, but do we really know what we are asking for it would seem Peter asks us? We're quite happy to pray for the coming of the baby Jesus and to make all the necessary preparations so we can celebrate accordingly. Surely that's enough. It would seem not. Yet we seem to be much less comfortable seeking a world where that baby becomes fully incarnate as God's Son, bringing righteousness to His cosmos and judgement to His world. A Messiah who disturbs our human props of comfort and the structures we have made for ourselves to support our contented way of living. A Messiah who challenges us to enter into a new way of living. As we see from the very beginning of his gospel, Mark clearly depicts Jesus as the Son of God, the Messiah. He also shows Jesus as inaugurating God's rule on earth, the Kingdom of God in the present and in the future, through His words and deeds. That's some new beginning, and some hope!

Sam Cappleman.

Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is given. I would be silent now, Lord, and expectant; that I may receive the gift I need, so I may become the gifts others need. **Amen**

Ted Loder

Thank you, Lord Jesus, for accepting the Servant's mission; thank you, Spirit of God, for the strength to carry it through; thank you, Father, for not withholding your only Son from the ultimate sacrifice. Help us to appreciate what our salvation has cost. **Amen** *Dick France*

Grant. O God, that as we rejoice in the hope of the coming of our Saviour, we may seek to prepare the way of His coming by advancing His Kingdom in the world and caring for the needs of our fellow men and women, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Keep us, O Lord, while we tarry on this earth, in a serious seeking after thee, and in an affectionate working with thee, every day of our lives; that when thou comest, we may be found not hiding our talent, nor serving the flesh, nor yet asleep with our lamp unfurnished, but waiting and longing for our Lord, our glorious King, for ever and ever. **Amen** *Richard Baxter 1615 - 1691*

Lord God, whose Word and will are made known in Jesus Christ, inspire in us faith in that Word and obedience to that will, for our salvation and for your glory. **Amen**

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you, scatter the darkness from before your path, and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory; and the blessing; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **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.

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.

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 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.

Service at Highfield. A group from St. Mark's will be conducting a Christmas Service at Highfield Residential Care Home on Sunday 14 December at 2.30pm. Helpers will be very welcome

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

Carol Singing. Putnoe Heights Church will be singing carols at Library walk on Saturday 20 December 11.00am - 12.00noon. All welcome to come and sing in aid of BeCHar. Meet at Putnoe heights at 10.30 for tea/coffee beforehand. Refreshments will be served in the small hall afterwards. John & Sally Gunning (305925)

Christmas closure at St Mark's Church office. The office will be closed from 1pm Wednesday 24 December and will reopen 9am Tuesday 6 January

Putnoe Heights Post Box and communal card will be available from today.



**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

Emmaus Mission Project

Thanks to everybody who has contributed towards our Emmaus Mission Project 2014. The amount raised has now raced past £4,000, with today the day on which we will close the appeal and send off the gift to Emmaus. We will give the final total next week, but in the meantime thank you for your tremendous generosity. The following letter has been received from Emmaus, *Sam Cappleman*



Please pass on my sincere thanks and gratitude, on behalf of the Emmaus Community, to your parishioners for this wonderful support. I know that it will be a great morale boost for all who live and work at Emmaus. As you may expect, life there can have all the highs, lows and vicissitudes of elsewhere, only more so at times! Knowing that the wider community is supportive means an awful lot to them.

You may also be interested to know that, as part of their commitment to solidarity with others who are homeless or marginalised in our community, the Companions' Solidarity Forum are gathering warm clothing, blankets, etc. from our donated goods to give to local agencies over the Christmas and winter period. If, in your capacity, you become aware of any individuals or groups who would benefit then please get in touch with me or with the community directly. With sincere thanks again, and every best wish to you all over the Advent and Christmas season. *Frank*

Brickhill Community Safety Forum met this week and heard reports of multiple burglaries in the Brickhill area, especially detached homes around Falcon Avenue. Please remember to lock up and report anything suspicious to Inspector Masters nicholas.masters@bedfordshire.pnn.police.uk You can obtain stickers printed by the Borough Council for your front door which remind callers that it is a criminal offence if they do not leave your property. These are available free from the church offices.



Second Candle - The Candle of Peace (Purple Candle) The prophets who foretold the birth of Jesus

Leader: May your hearts be filled with peace as you hear the words of the prophet Isaiah who told of one who would be born the Prince of Peace.

All: Thanks be to God

Leader: Last Sunday we lit the First Candle of Hope in our Advent Wreath, and celebrated the patriarchs. We light it again as we place our hope in Jesus the blessing of God for all nations.

(A person now lights the first candle)

The prophet Isaiah said 'For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.'

Blessed are you, sovereign Lord, just and true: to you be praise and glory for ever. Of old you spoke by the mouth of your prophets, but in our days you speak through your Son, whom you have appointed the heir of all things. Grant us, your people, to walk in his light, that we may be found ready and watching when he comes again in glory and judgement; for you are our light and our salvation. Blessed be God for ever.

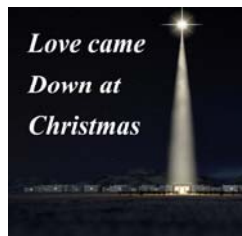
(A person lights the second candle)

Leader: Let us pray:

All: Lord Jesus, light of the world, the prophets said you would bring peace and save your people in trouble. Give peace in our hearts at Christmas and show all the world God's love.

Advent 1 Advent candles tell their story, as we watch and pray; longing for the day of glory, 'Come, Lord, soon,' we say. Pain and sorrow, tears and sadness, changed for gladness on that day.

Advent 2 Prophet voices loudly crying, making pathways clear, glimpsing glory, self-denying, calling all to hear. Through their message-challenged, shaken-hearts awaken: God is near!



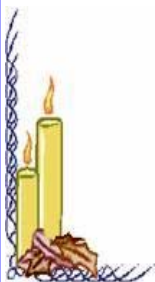
Christmas Delivery

Copies of the St Mark's Christmas Newspaper are printed and ready for delivery. Please do take roads if you are able. We will have a special 'Delivery Day' on Saturday 13 December. Please meet at St

Mark's at 10.00am for one hour of delivery followed by coffee and mince pies back at Church at 11.00am

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 Armitage
Roy John Stevens**

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

Christmas Shopping



Please can you make a point of always going to Amazon through the link on www.ThisChurch.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.thischurch.com**



Forthcoming Funerals

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