



# Partnership News

## Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church

### Christingle

### 8 December 2013



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

**Today – 8 December 2013**

**9.30 St Marks Messy Christingle**

Preacher – Waters/Ledger  
Leadership Team – Mrs Elizabeth Bean  
Intercessions – Mrs Wendy Waters  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

**11.00 am Putnoe — Messy Christingle**

Preacher – Waters/Ledger  
Leadership Leaders  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds



**15 December**

**9.30 St Marks – Holy Communion**

Preacher – Deacon Jane Mills  
Leadership Team – Mrs Wendy Waters  
Intercessions – Mrs Delia Shephard  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

**11.00 am Putnoe – Holy Communion**

Preacher – Deacon Jane Mills  
Leadership Team - Mrs Sam Ware  
Intercessions — Mr Alan Baylis  
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

**Readings 1** Isaiah 35: 1-10 **2. James 5: 7-10**  
**3.** Matthew 11: 2-11

**Midweek Holy Communion** at St Mark's Chapel every Wednesday at 10.00am and at Sir William Harpur House on first Monday of every month at 10.00am

**Thank You**

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Julia Bailey in loving memory of her husband Peter ('Bill'); by Sylvia Cohen in loving memory of her husband Ken; and by Davina Latter in memory of her mother Mary Britton on her 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**

O Lord God,  
since you have called us  
to devote ourselves to the needs of others,  
grant us the strength of your grace.  
In the midst of our work  
let us not lose sight of your great purposes.  
Let us not snatch the management  
of your world from your hands,  
lest we faint and fall  
in the presence of your wisdom;  
this we beg for Jesu's sake. Amen.

*Florence Nightingale (1820-1910)*

**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.ThisisChurch.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 Jenny Snelson 344417  
**Treasurer** Mr John Hitt 404186 treasurerph@thisischurch.com  
**Gift Aid Administrator** Mr Lawrence Wyatt 350188  
**Youth Team Leader** Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com

**St. Mark's Church Centre**  
**Open Monday - Friday 9am - 5.00pm**  
**Tel/fax & Answering Service** 342613 office@thisischurch.com  
**Centre Manager** Miss Wendy Rider 342613  
**Leadership Team** - Mr Michael Ovenden 826738  
**Treasurer** - Mr Ian Farthing 210892  
treasurer@thisischurch.com  
**Gift Aid Administrator** Jim Williams 360605

# Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

## Monday

**Hazeldene Heights Pre-school.** Sessional and Full Day care available—open Mon.—Fri. Full Day Care 8.30am to 5pm Sessional times 9am—12noon and 12.45pm - 3.45pm For more info please contact Laura Leggett 01234 326685 or www.hazeldeneheights.com

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

**9.-3.45pm Top Marks** Mon-Fri St Mark's

**8.30am—12.30pm St. Mark's Nursery**

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** Putnoe Heights (see contact details below)

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

**12.00 noon Story box** Putnoe Heights We welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Contact Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com 365630

**1.30-2.45pm Chat & Make** St Mark's for babies and toddlers 0-5. Crafts, toys, songs, story and refreshments £1. More details email– chatandplay@hotmail.co.uk .

**2pm U3A Music Appreciation** Putnoe Heights( see contact details below)

2.00pm U3A Italian Putnoe Heights– fortnightly

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

**6.00pm Brownies** St Mark's. Mrs C Mathew 826190

**6.15 pm Brownies** Putnoe. Sharon Tanner 01767699399 or 07720713738.

**6.15 Pilates** at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859

**6.15pm-8.15pm Fit for Life Yoga** - Putnoe Heights Contact Jane Butcher 07891879571

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

**7.00pm Sugarcraft Guild** St Mark's 1st week 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– 16 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

## Tuesday

**9.30am Jo Jingles.** St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Charlotte Williams 07968 207442

**9.30am Candleworking** (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Pat McCart 365507

**9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World** St. Mark's. Helen Skinner 07989080389

**10am Autism Beds Adult Support Group.** St Mark's. Sally Cripsley 350704

**11.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights** (see contact details below)

**1.15pm U3A Cinema Grp.** St Mark's (contacts details below)

**1.3pm U3A Choir.** St Mark's (contacts 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) (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.

**4.00pm-6.15pm Stars School of Dance** at Putnoe Heights. Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468

**7.30-8.30pm Pilates** St Mark's Church Jane Butcher 0789187957

**7pm - 8.30pm Daisy Birthing** Putnoe Heights Susie 07980447390

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

**7.00pm Keep Fit.** St. Mark's Jan Gregory 328455

**7.00pm Laughter Club.** St. Mark's Meeting (meets monthly) 12 Nov & 17 Dec. Cheryl Green 354339 or 07729187399

**7.30pm Ladies Tuesday Club** at Putnoe Heights (Meets fortnightly). 10 December Christmas Cracker Details Janet King 313946

## 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 below)

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

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

**10am U3A Diet and Nutrition-** Putnoe (contact below)

**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 18 December Putnoe Heights Office 365630

**1.00-3pm Police Surgery** at Putnoe Heights (Fortnightly)

**1.15pm Bridge Club for the Retired.** St. Mark's. Mr Barnes 261811

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

**2pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan** Putnoe Heights

**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 December Wendy Waters 401834

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

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

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

**7.00pm Bunyan Bridge.** St. Mark's Yvonne Blain 350241 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  
18 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 1st  
week in the month. Jean Ross 771870

### Thursday

**8.30am—12.30pm St. Mark's Nursery**

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

**9.30am Thursday Prayer Group.** Putnoe Heights.  
Valerie Capon 356306. Request for prayer can be written  
in the prayer diary on the information table.

**9.30am Spanish for total beginners.**at Putnoe Heights.  
Elena 01234 266968

**9.45am Chat and Play** St.Mark's. A term time group for  
Mums & toddlers.0-5 Jo Garner 400071 or 07932616468

**12pm Storybox** . St Mark's welcome the under 5's and  
their carers to join them between 12 noon and 1pm for a  
sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and  
singing. Lots of fun. Contact Jaana Swaby 342613

**1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic** at St Mark's 1st and 3rd  
Contact 267444

**1pm-2.30pm Drop in** (small hall) Next Steps 9-  
24months Putnoe Children's Centre.Please call Trudy  
Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information 340552.  
2pm -Friendly Chicago Bridge at Putnoe Heights £2 per  
session inc. refreshments. New members welcome.  
Contact Pat 01234 294220.

**2pm U3A Current Affairs** - Putnoe Heights

**2-4pm U3A Indoor Games.** St.Mark's (contact below)

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

**5.45pm Weightwatchers.** St. Mark's. Clare Martin  
07805408811.

**6.15pm Brownies.** Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins .

**7.00pm Club 2000** Putnoe Nina Ovenden 825059

**7pm U3A Folk & Poetry** St Marks (2nd and 4th week)  
(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

**7.30pm Gentle Birthing** St Mark's. Pat Wood 07946  
847231

**8 -10pm Bedford Folk Dancers** (formerly Barn  
dancers)

Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights Different guest callers  
each week.Except August. All welcome, cost £2.50  
Including refreshments. More details Ron 825574 or  
Shirley 01767 651767

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

**8.00pm Magpies Women's Group** St Mark's 2nd & 4th  
week Marie Cotchin 402089

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

### Friday

**8.30am—12.30pm St. Mark's Nursery**

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

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

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

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

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

below)

**2pm U3A Gardening** - Putnoe Heights

**4.50pm-8.15pm Stars School of Dance** Esther  
Richardson 295862 or 07917582468

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

**7.00pm Meditation** St Mark's.Cheryl Green  
07729187399

**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

### Sunday

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

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

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

**7-9pm Tae Kwon Do** St Mark's Adrian Felice  
www.bedfordtkd.com 07964356355

**Messy Church Dates** Weds 20 Nov, 15th Jan., 12th  
Feb., 19th March, 16th April, 21st May, 18th June.

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website then every purchase you make will  
provide a commission to [www.thischurch.com](http://www.thischurch.com)

**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 –**

**St Mark's Leadership Team -** 21 January 2014

**Annual Congregational Meetings**

**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team -**

**Putnoe Heights Management Meeting**

**Putnoe Church Council -**

**Pastoral Group Meeting -** 10 January at 10.00am

**Churchyard Committee -**

**Commemoration Service**

**Circuit meeting - Deanery Meeting -**

**Woodland Burial Trustees–** 15th December 12.30pm

**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting –**10th

February 2014 1.30pm

**New Year Lunch 19 January at Putnoe**

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

## Christingle

### Sentence of Scripture - John Chapter 8 v 12

Jesus spoke again to the people, He said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."

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

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

### First Bible Reading - Isaiah Chapter 11:1-10

A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him- the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD - and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked. Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist. The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. In that day the Root of Jesse will stand as a banner for the peoples; the nations will rally to him, and his place of rest will be glorious. This is the Word of the Lord— **Thanks be to God**



### Second Reading - Romans Chapter 15:4-13

For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy, as it is written: "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing hymns to your name." Again, it says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people." And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and sing praises to him, all you peoples." And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in him." May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (This is the Word of the Lord— **Thanks be to God**)

### Gospel Reading - Matthew Chapter 3:1-12

In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near." This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.' " John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to where he was baptizing, he said to them: "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. And do not think you can say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' I tell you that out of these stones God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor, gathering his wheat into the barn and burning up the chaff with unquenchable fire." (This is the Word of the Lord—**Thanks be to God**)

## 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 special hymns sheets.)

## Commentary

Our readings today point to new things — new values — a new way of life that is for living here and now, not merely a hope for the distant future. God's kingdom really is here and now.

Charlie, our vicar, wrote last year

*"The kingdom breaks into our lives every day and we do not need to ask when it will come. The kingdom seizes us embraces us, challenges us, in the ordinary events of life. A sick friend, a discouraged spouse, a troublesome person on the telephone, a demand which is made on us which we think to be unfair. Situations which cause us to question how we will respond. Times when we can perhaps do much good with very little effort. How we react determines and tests our faith and questions our membership of the Kingdom. These are the places where we really show God's loving power coming through in our lives. It is as we do this of course that we become like John the Baptist in declaring God and proclaiming the coming of our Lord. Our life, our deeds our words, all speaking of the Kingdom of God. It is when we do this that are perhaps the most powerful advertisement for our Lord, in so doing we make straight paths which perhaps allow others to see more easily the living Lord, the worship of whom transcends human religion."*

And it makes a difference. Just consider some of the words in Isaiah 11; righteousness, justice and faithfulness. Do they characterise our lives and the life of the world currently? What a difference there would be if they did! And in picture form we have the view of a new order- with the wolf living with the lamb and the leopard with the goat. They will neither harm nor destroy, says Isaiah, *"for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the land as the waters cover the sea."* Everything totally enfolded in God's love and light. We sometimes sing

*"At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow ..... every tongue confess him King of glory now."*

In Romans we read that we are to *"accept one another, just a Christ accepted you."* Yes, we are accepted by God: he offers us a transforming friendship as he fills us with joy and peace - and so may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Something here of the lines of the hymn *"Take from our souls the strain and stress and let our ordered lives confess the beauty of Thy peace."* It is for all - Jews and Gentiles - the near and the far-off- especially the last. For John came to call people back - to turn around - to repent. He talks of judgement - of consequences. I quote our Vicar again from last year;

*John the Baptist challenged people to think differently. The Beatitudes for example are a complete reversal of normal human standards: God's ways are different from many of the accepted norms of society, and that has always been the case. Society has never thought that the meek were blessed, or that there was blessing in mourning or poverty. This Christmas we must all try to think of ways in which we can be prepared and help prepare the way of the Lord; be modern day John the Baptists. It may be that we have to ring somebody up and try and rebuild broken relationships. It might be that we can offer some of our time to support community groups or a charitable organisation.*

*John had a message directed very forcefully towards the religious people, it was for them that he saved his most vehement statements. Everybody had to 'make straight paths for the Lord.'*

We are tempted sometimes to think that scriptures are directed at people outside the church, to imagine that we are the good ones and that the challenge is to [people outside the church]. The teachings of Jesus were always strongest to those who were most religious. So we ask ourselves this morning whether we have paths which are suitable for the coming of our Lord this Christmas? A lady said to me the other day that we ought to say only what we know to be a) True : b) kind and c) necessary. It makes you think how silent we'd be and how empty our newspapers !!! And yet Christmas and our preparation for it is good news. God reveals his love to us in Jesus. This is what we did last Christmas Day—Twitter sermons!

**This is the sermon from the Twitter account for St Mark's Church which is stmarktweets.** Jesus Gods Xmas gift He shows us Gods love . It's free 4 all & God gets stuck into our lives regardless of who u r unconditionally Accept Him.

**This is the sermon from the Twitter account for Putnoe Heights Church which is putnoeheights.** Jesus Gods gift @ Xmas shows us God luvs us, knows how we feel, 4gives us & brings new hope 4 life hes a friend who accepts us as we r. *Richard Ledger*

## **Meditation    The Christingle**

God so loved the world that he sent his only son to be our 'Christ Light' Saviour

**The Christingle orange** represents the world, John reminds us that 'Jesus was in the world, and though the world was made through Him, the world did not recognise Him. He came to that which was His own, but his own did not receive Him.' (John 1 v 10-11)

**The red ribbon of the Christingle** represents the blood of Jesus shed for us so that our sins may be forgiven. 'But we walk in the light, as He is the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from every sin.' (1John 1 v 7)

**The fruits and sweets on the four skewers** represent God's gifts to us, the fruits of the earth and the four seasons. 'As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.' (Gen 8 v 22)

**The lighted candle**, pushed into the centre of the orange represents Christ, the light of the world. 'He (Jesus) said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."' (John 8 v 12).



## **Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead**

At advent we should try the key to our heart's door. It may have gathered rust. If so, this is the time to oil it, in order that the heart's door may open more easily when the Lord Jesus wants to enter at Christmas time ! Lord oil the hinges of our heart's doors that they may swing gently and easily to welcome your coming. (*Prayer of a New Guinea Christian*)

And now we give you thanks because in his coming as man, the day of our deliverance has dawned : and through him you will make all things new, as he comes in power and triumph to judge the world

Here I wait in quiet hope, that you will come ,to water my barren fields, to make blossom the flower and fruit, that wither in merciless heat. Do not forsake me (*Frank Topping*)

Father, through John the Baptist, you tried to prepare your people for the coming of Jesus. Will you try to prepare us too? Prepare our hearts and minds that we may know what to look for in the coming of Jesus Christ into our world. May we show the joy of the Advent message in our lives day by day. (*Prayers before Worship*)

Gracious Father, You gave up your Son out of love for your world: Look with mercy on Madiba Mandela; And on all your children in South Africa. As they reflect on Christ's Death and Resurrection, may they know eternal peace through the shedding of our Saviour's blood, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.  
*John Sentamu Archbishop of York*

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## **The Methodist Church has launched a consultation on the implications of same sex marriage legislation for the Methodist Church.**

The Methodist Conference asked a working group to look at the implications of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act for the Methodist Church back in July. The group's task is to report on whether the Conference should embark on a process of reviewing the Church's position on marriage and on civil partnerships. The consultation is open to Methodists and will run until early February.

Susan Howdle, chair of the same sex marriage and civil partnership working party, said: "The working party has begun its consultations by meeting a few pilot groups as well as having very lively conversations at 3Generate 2013 Children's and Youth Assembly. From this, we have begun to identify some of the key implications which the legislation poses for our Church. We are now embarking on wider consultation, trying to fulfill our brief to be as open and inclusive as possible."

Following agreement by the House of Lords and the House of Commons, the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Bill received Royal Assent on 17 July. The Act makes provision for the marriage of same-sex couples in England and Wales.

Susan Howdle continued: "We do urge as many Methodists as possible to respond, thoughtfully and prayerfully, to the consultation in order to help us to gauge the mind of the Church. We hope the time scale will allow at least some of the responses to be from groups who have met for discussion, but individual responses are equally welcome." The consultation can be downloaded from the Methodist

**Christmas Voices** – Come and enjoy once more a seasonal celebration with a selection of nostalgic & amusing readings around the Christmas tree + mulled wine and mince pies during the interval. Friday December 13 at Putnoe Heights at 7.30pm. Admission free with retiring collection in aid of the Sweeter Deal Appeal.

**Putnoe large Christmas Card** is ready for your messages from this Sunday and the post box is also available to post your cards at 10p each

**Putnoe Services** are now recorded on CD. If you know of anyone who would like it please let Leadership team know.

**Kempston Musical Society** Annual Christmas Concert on Saturday 14 December 7.30pm at Kempston East Methodist Church Admission £6.00 Come along and enjoy some of your favourite Christmas carols. Telephone Bedford 781010 for further details

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

**Carol Singing** Putnoe Heights Church will be singing carols at Library Walk on Saturday 21 December 11am—12noon. All welcome to come and sing in aid of BeChar. Meet at Putnoe Heights Church at 10.30am for tea/coffee beforehand. Refreshments will be served in the small hall afterwards.

**Putnoe Provender** Last Sunday's sale raised the magnificent sum of £245 in aid of the Ethiopian Honey Appeal. Many thanks to all who contributed. John & Sally Gunning.

**St Mark's Craft Stall** Thank you to all the members of St Mark's and Putnoe Heights working party for their work during the last year.

**Members of St Mark's Craft Stall** would like to thank everyone for their support and are pleased to say they have made £860 for the Christmas Fayre.

**Chat and Play** at St. Mark's finishes on Thursday 12 December and restarts on 16 January 2014

**Chat and Make** at St. Mark's finishes on 9 December and restarts on Monday 13 January 2014

**Story Box** at St Mark's finishes on the 19 December and starts again on 9 January 2014

**Bedford Town Band** Internationally renowned soloist at Putnoe Heights: Bedford Town Band are holding their Christmas Concert at Putnoe Heights on Friday 20th December at 7.30. The concert will feature David Thornton, currently Principal

Euphonium with The Brighthouse & Rastrick Band, as guest soloist. Tickets £8 & £6 at the door or at Frescoes Coffee House, Mill Street, Bedford.



### **Rev Dr Sam Cappleman**

What's Happening to Sam ?

Many of you have asked what is happening to Sam now that he has retired as a vice

president of Hewlett Packard. The good news is that he will remain as a priest in our parish, however Sam will be doing other things and so we asked him to write this piece for Partnership News.

'I have just been appointed Executive Chair of the Movement. The Lee Abbey Movement [www.leeabbey.org.uk](http://www.leeabbey.org.uk) has been in existence for over 65 years and is made up of a number of residential Christian Communities united in the common mission statement of "Communicating Christ through relationships". These are Lee Abbey Devon (a Christian conference, retreat & holiday centre), Lee Abbey London (a hall of residence for international students), several Small Missional Communities (typically located in inner city locations) and also a Lee Abbey Friends organisation (who are the supporters and prayer partners of the Lee Abbey Movement). Although Anglican in its foundation, Lee Abbey is first and foremost a Christian community and aims to work across a wide spectrum of traditions as Community members represent a variety of Christian denominations and nationalities from across the world. These Communities share a simple and common rule and rhythm of life. In short, Lee Abbey offers hospitality in the context of Christian mission and ministry through intentional Communities undergirded by prayer. If you would like more details of the Lee Abbey Movement, or even like to book a break in Devon, there are some leaflets at the back of church with further details.'

We have been enormously blessed by Sam and his ministry with us over the years and we are thankful to God for his extraordinary contribution to our partnership. Please continue to support Sam in your prayers as he takes on this new responsibility.

### **One Hour Christmas delivery**

Please help us deliver invitations to the Christmas services around Brickhill. Meet at St Mark's at 10.00am on Saturday 14 December. Finish at 11.00am with coffee and mince pies back at Church. many hands make light work so please come and support us.



## We thank God for Madiba

'Humanity, courage, generosity': Archbishop Justin's statement following death of Nelson Mandela. Offering prayers to the family, friends and country of Nelson Mandela, who died today, the Archbishop of Canterbury said

Mandela's life challenges us to show 'the same degree of humanity, courage and generosity. The death of President Nelson Mandela was announced in memorable words by President Zuma. South Africa has lost its greatest citizen and its father. Nelson Mandela, fighting to the end, is freed to be with his God in joy and reward for his great service and sacrifice. We pray for his family, for his friends and for his country. We are challenged to show the same degree of humanity, of courage and of generosity.'



**The following is an extract from the obituary written by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu**  
**Read the full script here** <http://mg.co.za/article/2013-12-06-00-tutu-we-thank-god-for-madiba>

Some have said Mandela's 27 years in jail were a waste, suggesting that if had he been released earlier he would have had more time to weave his charm of forgiveness and reconciliation. I beg to differ. He went to jail an angry young man, incensed by the miscarriage of justice in the travesty of the Rivonia Trial. He was no peace maker. After all, he had been MK commander and intended to overthrow apartheid by force. The 27 years were absolutely crucial in his spiritual development. The suffering was the crucible that removed considerable dross, giving him empathy for his opponents. It helped to ennoble him, imbuing him with magnanimity difficult to gain in other ways. It gave him an authority and credibility that otherwise would have been difficult to attain. No one could challenge his credentials. He had proved his commitment and selflessness through what he had undergone. He had the authority and attractiveness that accompany vicarious suffering on behalf of others – as with Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa and the Dalai Lama.

We were spellbound on Sunday February 11 1990 when the world came to a standstill and waited for him to emerge from prison. When he came out with Winnie by his side we were united in our admiration. What bliss to be alive, to experience that moment! We felt proud to be human because of this amazing man. For a moment, we all believed that it is possible to be good. We thought enemies could become friends, as we followed Madiba in the path of forgiveness and reconciliation exemplified by the truth commission and a polyglot national anthem, 11 official languages, and a government of national unity in which the last apartheid president could be a deputy president and a "terrorist" the head of government. He was amazing. Madiba lived what he preached. Had he not invited his former white jailer as a VIP guest to his presidential inauguration? Did he not have lunch with Percy Yutar, the prosecutor at the Rivonia trial? Had he not flown to Orania, the last Afrikaner outpost, to have tea with Betsy Verwoerd, the widow of the high priest of apartheid ideology? He was amazing. ....

We thank God for you, Madiba. May you rest in peace and rise in glory.



### Forthcoming Funerals

There are no funerals this week

### 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.

#### Don Frederick Taylor

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

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Please also remember the Easyfundraising link. This is really a very good way to shop as it has lots of voucher codes which can save you a fortune on purchases and we receive a commission. You can shop at John Lewis, M&S etc - please always shop through [www.thischurch.com](http://www.thischurch.com)

