



Partnership News

Putnoe Heights & St Mark's Church
9 February 2014
5th Sunday after Epiphany



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

Today – 9 February 2014 — 5th after Epiphany

9.30 St Marks - Morning Worship

Preacher The Rt Rev Dr Alan Smith, Bishop St Albans
Leadership – Mr Mick Ovenden
Intercessions – Mrs Wendy Waters
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe — Morning Worship

Preacher The Rt Rev Dr Alan Smith, Bishop St Albans
Leadership Team - Mrs Sam Ware
Intercessions — Mrs. Claire Peck
Organist - Mr. Clive Simmonds

16 February 2014 - 6th after Epiphany

9.30 St Marks – Holy Communion

Preacher - Revd. Dr. Sam Cappleman
Leadership – Mr. Edward Parry
Intercessions – Mrs. Delia Shephard
Organist - Mr. Clive Simmonds

11.00 am Putnoe – Holy Communion

Preacher- Revd. Dr. Sam Cappleman
Leadership Team - Mrs. Sue Allen
Intercessions — Mrs Sylvia Cohen
Organist - Mr Clive Simmonds

Readings 1. Deuteronomy 30:15-20

2. 1 Corinthians 3:1-9 3. Matthew 5:21-37

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

Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been kindly given by Elsie Slack in memory of her husband Hartley and friends of Jennie Cooper.

The flowers at St Mark's Church this week have been given by Gill Williams in memory of David.



Prayer for Sunday

Lord Jesus: You call us to be Salt and Light; Salt in a world that is filled with your richness, yet many lead insipid lives. Help us to add flavour to the lives of others, to sprinkle all that we do with your love, so that others may savour your goodness.

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-Ordinators

Mrs Wendy Waters 342613 office@thisischurch.com

Mrs Mary Stubbs 406784 Mary@thisischurch.com

Please inform us if you know of anyone who is ill, bereaved, housebound, requires a visit, home communion or counselling services. Please also ask us if you would like a home visit for any reason.

Churchyards Administrator

Mrs Avril Williams 01234 342613

Putnoe Heights Church Centre

Open Monday to Thursday 9am - 5pm, Friday 9am - 1pm
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com
Centre Manager Mr Geoff Gypps 365630 mob 07947 902846
Leadership Team Mrs Jenny Snelson 344417
Treasurer Mr John Hitt 404186 treasurerph@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Mr Lawrence Wyatt 350188
Youth Team Leader Carolyn Morris youth@thisischurch.com

St. Mark's Church Centre

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

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

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

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

8.30-12.30pm St Mark's Pre-School Nursery

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

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

9.00-3.45pm Top Marks Mon-Fri St Mark's

Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

(See website for more details)

9.45am - Body Control Pilates –Putnoe Heights

Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430

10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group. St Mark's Mrs M. Berry 211955

10.30am U3A Play reading Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

1.30pm Chat & Make. For babies and toddlers 0-5. Crafts, toys, songs, story and refreshments £1. More details email-chatandplay@hotmail.co.uk

2.00pm U3A Calligraphy at St Mark's (2nd week in the month) Contact Janet King 313946.

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

2pm U3A Music Appreciation Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

2.00pm U3A Italian Putnoe Heights— fortnightly

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

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 Boot Camp Putnoe Heights – Laura Amor 341152 / 07976259081

7.00pm Sugarcraft Guild St Mark's (1st week in month) Pat Nicholson 353518

7.00pm Cancer Care Society. St Mark's. (1st week in month) Mr J Dewhurst 01908 377020.

7.00-8.00pm Laughter Club 92nd week each month) Cheryl Green 07729187399

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

7.30pm Whist Drive. St Mark's (Weeks 3 & 5 in the month).. Next meeting— 17 February Judith Stanton. 823313

7.30pm No Fear Bridge Club St. Mark's Mrs. Susan Ford 300218.

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

7.45-9.15 Get Fit Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights Diane Field 01234 404976

Tuesday

9 –1pm Bedford Stop Smoking at Putnoe Heights. For more details please contact Olivia Tornyie 01234 276826

9.30am Jo Jingles. St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Charlotte Williams 07968207442

9.30am Candlewicking (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Pat McCart 365507

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

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

11.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

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

1.3pm U3A Choir. St Mark's Contact Janet King 313946

2.00pm U3A Book Group 1 St Mark's (3rd Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

2.00pm U3A Book Group 2 St Mark's (2nd Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

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

2pm U3A Photography Group 3 St. Mark's (1st Week in month) Contact Janet King 313946

2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group. St Mark's (1st & 3rd week in month). Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling 262225

2.15pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup. St Mark's (2nd & 4th week in month) Mary Stubbs 406784.

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

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

7pm - 8.30pm Daisy Birthing Putnoe Heights Susie 07980447390

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

7.30pm Ladies Tuesday Club at Putnoe Heights (Meets fortnightly) February 18 'Experiences in Nepal' - Margaret Hakin Details Janet King 313946

8.00pm Hearts in Beds Committee St Mark's (week 4 in month) Mrs N Aspey 309816

Wednesday

9.30am Body Control Pilates. Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith 357787 or 07973174430.

10am-2pm Open House at St Mark's for those with learning disabilities., their friends, family , carers and supporters 342613.

10am U3A Gardening Group 3 St Marks. Contact Janet King 313946

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

10am U3A Card Making, St Marks Contact Janet King 313946

10am U3A Diet and Nutrition- Putnoe Contact Janet King 313946

11.15am U3A Keep Fit at Putnoe Heights

12.30pm –4pm St Mark's Nursery Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634

12.30pm Luncheon Club. Putnoe fortnightly. Next meeting 12 February Putnoe Heights Office 365630

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

2.00-4.00pm U3A Craft at St Marks.Contact Janet King 313946

2pm U3A Gilbert and Sullivan Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946

2.15pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit. Putnoe Heights Mrs Webster 856966

3.45.- 5.30pm Messy Church. St Mark's (3rd Week in month). for children of lower school age and their carers. Bible-based story, crafts, singing and a meal. Next meeting 12 February 2014 Wendy Waters 401834 Jean Bank 355698

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

6.00 pm Brownies. St Mark's. Mrs C Warden 219731
6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation Putnoe Heights Racheall Monton 01234 297138 or 07910835994
6-7pm ATSK Karate at Putnoe Height Kevin Stark Tel. 01234 353865
7.00pm Bunyan Bridge. St. Mark's Colin Jackson 363398
7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society Putnoe Heights monthly. Sylvia Woods 365095
7.00pm Putnoe Guild Putnoe 3rd Wednesday in every month except August Mrs Jo Street 344600
7.00pm Line Dancing Putnoe Mike Del-Boyer 348378
8.00pm Badminton Club Putnoe Heights All welcome. Ken Marriott 214867
8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club at St Mark's (1st,3rd & 5th Wednesday in month). Next meeting will be 19 February.AGM Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments. Rosemary 405594 or Graham 406359 for more details.
8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club St Mark's (Week 1 in the month) Greta Cansfield 215016

Thursday

8.30am—12.30pm St. Mark's Pre School Nursery Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634
9.30am Thursday Prayer Group. Putnoe Heights. Valerie Capon 356306. Request for prayer can be written in the prayer diary on the information table.
9.30am Spanish for total beginners.at Putnoe Heights. Elena 01234 266968
9.45am Chat and Play St.Mark's. A term time group for Mums & toddlers.0-5 Jo Garner 400071 or 07932616468
12pm Storybox . St Mark's welcome the under 5's and their carers to join them between 12 noon and 1pm for a sandwich lunch followed by a Bible based story and singing. Lots of fun. Contact Jaana Swaby 342613
1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic at St Mark's (Weeks 1 & 3 in the month)Contact 897401
1pm-2.30pm Drop in (small hall) Next Steps 9-24months Putnoe Children's Centre.Please call Trudy Hamilton (centre assistant) for more information 340552.
2pm -Friendly Chicago Bridge at Putnoe Heights £2 per session inc. refreshments. New members welcome. Contact Pat 01234 294220.
2pm U3A Current Affairs - Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946
2-4pm U3A Indoor Games. St.Mark's Contact Janet King 313946
2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society St Mark's Jean Paterson 307210
3.15-5.15pm Social Care Solutions Drama Group Claire Creek 262650
5.45pm Weightwatchers. St. Mark's. Clare Martin 07805408811.
6.15pm Brownies. Putnoe Heights Lou Watkins .
7.00pm Club 2000 Putnoe Nina Ovenden 825059
7pm U3A Folk & Poetry St Marks (2nd and 4th week in month)Contact Janet King 313946
7.15pm Putnoe Art Group Bob Wardale 406094
7.00pm Bedford Embroiderers' Guild St Mark's (3rd week in month). Carol Plant 01832710504
7.30pm Gentle Birthing St Mark's. Pat Wood 07946 847231
8 -10pm Bedford Folk Dancers (formerly Barn dancers)
 Meet weekly at Putnoe Heights Different guest callers each week.Except August. All welcome, cost £2.50 Including refreshments. More details Ron 825574 or Shirley 01767 651767
8.00pm Bedford Writers Circle. St Mark's (1st week in

month). Mr Newton 01525 378193
8.00pm Magpies Women's Group St Mark's (2nd & 4th week in month) Mrs Marie Cotchin 402089
8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group St Mark's (1st and 3rd week in month) Susan Perugi 300219

Friday

8.30am—12.30pm St. Mark's Nursery Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin 312634
8.30am Diabetic Centre St Mark's (1st week in month) Deborah Hennessey 792013
9am -1pm Machine Knitting group at Putnoe Heights, fortnightly . Contact Marion Sutton 217647
10am -12.00 U3A Photography St Marks.(4th week in month) Contact Janet King 313946
10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French St. Marks Contact Janet King 313946
2.00-4.00 pm U3A Whist St Marks. (2nd week in month) Contact Janet King 313946
2pm U3A Gardening - Putnoe Heights Contact Janet King 313946
4.50pm-8.15pm Stars School of Dance Esther Richardson 295862 or 07917582468
7.00pm-9.00pm Meditation St Mark's.Cheryl Green 07729187399
7.45 - 10.45pm Bedford Astrology Club. St Marks(2nd week in month)Carol Brown 01438 233385

Saturday

9.00am Faith Temple Ministries St Mark's (1st week in month) Dawn Kelly 07863762593
10.00am Theatretrain St Mark's. Dancing acting, singing. Kate Howard 01234 782414
Young Embroiderers bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher 357198
2.15pm Society of Recorder Players at Putnoe Heights. G Parry 01462 674792

Sunday

9.30 - 10.30 Church and Sunday School at St Mark's with crèche for under 3's
10 - 5.30pm Bedford Stamp Fayre. 1st Sunday Feb/ Apr/Jun/Aug /Oct/Dec. Contact P Harris 01623 621143
11.00 - 12.00 Church and Junior at Putnoe Heights for the under 9's and Young Peoples Fellowship (Y.P.F) for our young adults. A crèche is also available.
7-9pm Tae Kwon Do St Mark's Adrian Felice www.bedfordtkd.com 07964356355
Messy Church Dates Weds 12th Feb., 19th March, 16th April, 21st May, 18th June.

Diary Dates

St Mark's Church Council – 25 February
St Mark's Leadership Team - 20 May, 9 September
Annual Congregational Meetings—27th April
Putnoe Heights Leadership Team - 10th February
Putnoe Heights Management Meeting 30th April
Putnoe Church Council - 18 February 10 July
Pastoral Group Meeting - 1 April 4pm
Churchyard Committee -
Commemoration Service - 2nd November
Circuit meeting –12th Feb, 19th June
Woodland Burial Trustees—
Putnoe Heights Children & Youth Meeting –10 February 2014 1.30pm

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

5th after Epiphany

Sentence of Scripture Isaiah 58

Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:
To loose the chains of injustice
and untie the cords of the yoke,
To set the oppressed free and break every yoke?
Is it not to share your food with the hungry
And to provide the poor wanderer with shelter -
When you see the naked, to clothe him
And not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

Collect Prayer for the Day *Before we read we pray*
Almighty God, by whose grace alone we are accepted
and called to your service: strengthen us by your Holy
Spirit and make us worthy of our calling; through Jesus
Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with
you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and
for ever. *Common Worship*

First Bible Reading- Isaiah 58:1-9a

“Shout it aloud, do not hold back. Raise your voice like a trumpet. Declare to my people their rebellion and to the house of Jacob their sins. For day after day they seek me out; they seem eager to know my ways, as if they were a nation that does what is right and has not forsaken the commands of its God. They ask me for just decisions and seem eager for God to come near them.

‘Why have we fasted,’ they say, ‘and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?’ “Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers. Your fasting ends in quarrelling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.

Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself? Is it only for bowing one’s head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD? “Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?

Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard. Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry for help, and he will say: Here am I.

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

Second Bible Reading - 1 Corinthians 2:1-16

When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the Spirit’s power, so that your faith might not rest on men’s wisdom, but on God’s power.

We do, however, speak a message of wisdom among the mature, but not the wisdom of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. No, we speak of God’s secret wisdom, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. None of the rulers of this age understood it, for if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. However, as it is written:

“No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him” – but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit.

The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man’s spirit within him? In the same way no-one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us. This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words. The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. The spiritual man makes judgments about all things, but he himself is not subject to any man’s judgment:

“For who has known the mind of the Lord that he may instruct him?” But we have the mind of Christ.

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



Let your light shine
before others
that they may
see your good deeds
and glorify your
Father in heaven

Jesus

Gospel Reading - Matthew 5:13-20

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot. “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly I tell you, until heaven and earth disappear, not the smallest letter, not the least stroke of a pen, will by any means disappear from the Law until everything is accomplished. Therefore anyone who sets aside one of the least of these commands and teaches others accordingly will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.

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

Post Communion Prayer

God of truth, we have seen with our eyes and touched with our hands the bread of life: strengthen our faith that we may grow in love for you and for each other; through Jesus Christ our Lord

Hymns *(Please distribute Morning Worship Sheets)*

1. Come, let us worship the Lord of our birth *(Tune: Slane)*
2. All earth was dark until you spoke *(Tune: Lights to the world)*
3. Lord Jesus, once you spoke to men *(Tune: Winchester New)*
4. Thou whose almighty word, chaos and darkness heard *(Tune: Moscow)*
5. God has spoken-by his prophets *(Tune: Ode to Joy)*

Commentary

Today we read that Jesus draws metaphors from daily life to describe the role of his disciples.

1. Like salt, the disciples are to add zest and flavour to life.
2. Like a city, they are to be visible for others to see.
3. Like a lamp, they are to be visible enlighten others.

Jesus uses ordinary images to convey extraordinary things, the point about them is that all three stand out and all three make a difference.

Salt Some theologians have suggested that salt cannot lose its savor, but this is not true. Impure salt, dug from the deposits of the Dead Sea could lose its saltiness as the sodium chloride is dissolved or evaporated. Jesus is also using a play on the Aramaic words here, *Tabel* means salt and *Tapel* means foolish. The point Jesus is making is not about the chemistry of salt but rather by using a play on words he shows that a disciple who is not bearing witness appropriately in the world is worthless and might as well be thrown out in the street - where they tended to throw their rubbish before there were bin collections !

Light The purpose of being a disciple is to bear witness in word and deed, just as obviously as the reason for a lamp is to give light. The disciples are to give light to the world, the entire world. Jesus uses the word *Kosmos*, which shows that he sees himself as being not just for Israel but for all nations, all people.

So we are supposed to ask in what ways we are different because we are Christians. How is your life different because of your Christian faith? Christians we know believe certain things and that is really important. However we spend so much time fussing over the details of belief, rather than questioning what difference, if any, our belief makes. That is in itself interesting because most of the time people outside the church do not really bother about what we believe, they are more interested in how we behave. So today Jesus asks us how our belief actually makes a difference. Are you changing your environment or just reflecting it ? Jesus tells us that our task is to allow others to see, in the brightness of our lives our heavenly Father at work. It is to God, and not to ourselves that our lives must point. This might sound more like a job for the Pope, the Archbishop of Canterbury, another Mother Theresa or the Dali Lama - someone with clout and a big voice. Someone who speaks, or makes a visit to foreign lands and the world sits up to take notice. But - Jesus challenges us to seriously consider our calling to the world. For better or worse, we have been chosen by God to address others with the message we have received. We may communicate the message with words, but as the ending of the passage suggests, we are also to do it by our good works. Our good deeds are to witness to what we believe. When people see them they are to be drawn to their source- our God. We disciples are, like it or not light of this world. To put it another way, we are fingers that point to God. Our lives are to be such that when people see us they look to the direction we are pointing.

Even though many of us have been told to "watch our salt," nevertheless, salt, in moderation, is a very good thing. It makes food tasty. What's encouraging is that salt is such a seemingly insignificant and tiny element. It's a good metaphor for the ordinary Christian. We may feel insignificant, but in the divine scheme of things, we have a part to play. Salt may not change or affect the whole world, but it certainly affects the smaller world with which it comes in contact. We have to be more than just fitting in with what is around us, we are supposed to make a difference as we act and speak. We are called not just to reflect society but to change it. If we simply absorb the prevailing attitudes around us, then we are like thermometers. Christians should not be simply indicators of what is happening around. Instead we are called to be like thermostats, we are supposed to be able to change the temperature of society, not just measure it.

Liberal optimism supposed that given the right conditions humankind could change itself. However, humankind is not evolving into a better species. Dawkins recently embarked on an aggressive crusade to rid the world of religion which he has described as 'impoverishing and limiting, not enriching'.

However the world without religious faith is not better, education has not brought an end to violence, instead we build better weapons and devise more skilful means to kill. Human endeavour has manufactured machines that are capable of producing amazing results, yet we use them to make people redundant, poor and without food, dignity or jobs.

Jesus is clear that the world cannot simply be left to turn out right, it requires treatment. We are lights in this world in that we have the one true light. Humankind has searched for answers, which it is doomed never to find. And yet we have the one true light and it is our task to make Him known to others. There is a way to God and a very simple one. It is to know one person, Jesus Christ of Nazareth, He is the Son of God and He came from heaven to earth to seek and to save that which was lost. He came to illuminate the darkness, to expose the cause of darkness and to make a new way of living. If we feel daunted by the task of being salt and light. If we think that we won't measure up, then fear not. For all we are really asked to do is to walk with Christ. It is not ourselves that we proclaim, it is Jesus that we take to our world. *Charles Royden*

Meditation

A survey by the Bible Society has shown a growing ignorance among both children and parents about the contents of the Bible. Three in 10 young people were unaware the story of the birth of Jesus came from the Bible.

Almost half did not recognise the story of Noah's Ark as coming from the Bible.

A similar number of children had never read or heard about tales of the Crucifixion or Adam and Eve. Many confused Biblical stories with plotlines from well-known films such as Harry Potter. A quarter of adults think that Superman is in the Bible! The report was based on a poll of 800 children aged eight to 15 and about 1,100 parents. The study revealed a generation of children with little knowledge of the most important stories forming the basis of Christianity, and parents who often knew little more. Dr Richard Chartres, Bishop of London said 'Sharing Bible Stories is as vital now as it has ever been. Too few children have the opportunity to hear and reflect on what this life-changing book contains.'

This might be a good reason to buy Real Easter Eggs this year for your children and grandchildren?

Out of the 80 million chocolate Easter Eggs sold each year, The Real Easter Egg is the only one with the Easter story in the box. To see who is stocking them visit www.realeasteregg.co.uk Carolyn Morris will be taking orders which you can leave at the church offices. Original Real Easter Egg (150g RRP £3.99) has 3 crosses on the box, comes with Mark's Resurrection text in the lid, a 24 page Easter storybook, milk chocolate egg (125g), pack of our Chunky Buttons (25g) and a donation to Traidcraft Special Edition /Premium (280g RRP £9.99) has Celtic crosses with a gold foil on the box, comes with a Holy Land Olive wood holding cross, extra thick milk chocolate egg (180g), Meaningful milk Chocolate orange bar (100g) and a special Easter version of the Easter Story.



Prayers for Sunday and the week ahead

Let the fragrance of your glory draw us into your presence, O Christ. Let the perfume of your love be our salvation and let the scent of your sacrifice bring us your blessing. Amen. *Aelred of Rievaulx (1110-1167)*

God our Father, in this centenary year, we thank you for the life and witness of your Church in this Diocese of St. Albans, for making us your pilgrims and disciples in our own day. May we always be valiant for truth and ready to live your love in our lives, for Jesus' sake. Amen

Lord Jesus Christ. You are the Light of the World: Light up our lives when we are in darkness. In the darkness of our uncertainty — When we don't know what to do, when decisions are hard to take: Lord, give us light to guide us. In the darkness of our anxiety - When we are worried about what the future may bring, When we don't know where to turn: Lord, give us the Light of Your Peace. In the darkness of our despair — When life seems empty, when we feel there is no point in going on: Lord, give us the Light of Your Hope, In Your Name we ask it. Amen. *Jean Good*



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

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

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

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

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



INHERITANCE

**Tickets Free and Available Now
Retiring Offering**

On Wednesday 9 April we will be hosting a performance of the Passion Play *Inheritance* by the Riding Lights Theatre Company at St Mark's. Tickets are free and available from Church offices. *Inheritance* will provide a communal experience of theatre and worship. The performance provides an opportunity to reflect on Christ's Passion and gives space for the audience to make their own response at the foot of the Cross for our Lent preparation.

Lent 2014

On a dusty road leading to Jerusalem, a woman stumbles towards her judgement. Just weeks later, Jesus will take the same road, leading to the cross...

Inheritance

In Capernaum, the town they both call home, they are rejected. In the temple where they worship, they are condemned. The synagogue leader plots to destroy them both. **Inheritance** weaves the strands of the biblical Passion into a dramatic new narrative. It evokes the community where Jesus lived, the people who knew him best, the powers that brought him to execution. And in the shadow of the cross, it casts light on some of the women who Jesus stands alongside, sharing in their suffering. Echoing through time, it renews our expectations of the kingdom of heaven and who might share its inheritance.



Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013

2013 CHAPTER 30

An Act to make provision for the marriage of same sex couples in England and Wales, to amend the law relating to the change of name of married persons and civil partners, and for purposes connected therewith.

Same Sex Marriage and Same Sex Civil Partnerships

The Methodist Church consultation on same sex marriage and civil partnerships ends at 9.00 am Monday 10 February. If you wish to contribute then please go on line www.methodist.org.uk

Welfare Benefits are Changing Find out how benefit changes may affect you. This session is for people of working age with a physical disability. Including Disability Living Allowance, Personal Independence Payment, Employment Support Allowance, Universal credit changes, Housing Benefit, Council Tax and Benefit cap. Thursday 6 March St Andrew's Parish Church 10.30am - 12.30pm You must book ! Call Anona 01234 718345 anona.hoyle@bedford.gov.uk

Get ready for the summer, learn Spanish at Putnoe Heights Church. Survival Spanish for holidays. On Thursdays 9.15-10.45 for more information contact Elena 01234 266968 or www.elcole.co.uk

Join the Real Easter Egg 2014 Campaign. Out of 80 million chocolate Easter Eggs sold each year, The Real Easter Egg is the only one with the Easter story in the box. This year there are two versions available at £3.99 and £9.99. See St. Mark's notice board for further details and order at the office.

St. Mark's Church Preschool are now collecting Sainsbury's kids vouchers. Please pass to Helen Harpin or pop them into the box provided.

Women's World Day of Prayer Services 8 March 'Streams in the Desert' - Praying for Egypt 2pm at the Miracle Church of God. Speaker: Revd. Glayne Worgan 7.30pm at St Mark's Church. Speaker: Revd. Fiona Gibson. Men & women welcome to this moving, interdenominational, service compiled by the women of Egypt. This is the first time it has been held at St Mark's so do come if you can. For more information please speak to Wendy Waters



If you are elderly or living alone then it is important for us to be able to keep in contact with you. Please sign up for Telecare and we will give you a telephone call every week or fortnight to check if all is well. This enable us to keep track if somebody is ill and cannot come to church. We would like more

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.

Jennie Cooper

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

people to join so just give St Mark's office a ring and they will put you on the list. *This is a telephone service, nobody will call without your request.*

Christian Aid News: Christian Aid Oxford are organising a sponsored abseil down Elstow Abbey tower. They are busy looking for volunteers to abseil as well as sponsors. more details to follow shortly. Speaker Sarjon Toma from Iraqi Christian Aid partner REACH will be at Stopsley Baptist Church, St Thomas Road, Luton LU2 7XP on Tuesday 11 March, 7pm. An evening to hear about your impact in Iraq and beyond, as well as discussing faith, hope, conflict, and the role churches can play in building peace this Christian Aid Week. Carolyn

Lent Soup Lunch for Christian Aid.

Make a donation to Christian Aid and enjoy a home made soup, bread and cheese lunch at Putnoe Heights Church after morning service on Sunday 16 March. No tickets but please sign the list in Putnoe Welcome Area.



When you do your shopping please shop at www.ThisChurch.com

Thank you for shopping using the link on ThisChurch.com to shop through Amazon. Please be careful to make sure that you never access Amazon direct but always use the link on ThisChurch.com, this ensures we get a donation every time you make a purchase. Please also remember the Easyfundraising link. This is really a very good way to shop as it has lots of voucher codes which can save you a fortune on purchases and we receive a commission. You can shop at John Lewis, M&S etc - please always shop through www.thischurch.com



Forthcoming Funerals

The funeral service for John Emery will take place at Putnoe Heights Church at 3.30pm on Monday 10 February. This follows a private burial at St Albans Woodland burial ground

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

The funeral of Roger Terence Beard will take place at Bedford Crematorium at 2.30pm on Thursday 20th February

The funeral of Irene Jenny Hill will take place at Bedford Crematorium at 10.45am on Thursday 20 February