



Methodist  
Church

# Partnership News

12 July 2009  
Ordinary 15



Church of  
England

## Partnership Church Services Today

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

**9.30am St. Mark's - Morning Worship**  
Preacher - Mr Paul Fricker

Leadership - Mrs Morag Stewart  
Intercessions - Mrs Wendy Waters

**11.00am Putnoe Heights - Morning Worship**

Preacher - Mr Paul Fricker  
Leadership - Mrs Linda Hoar  
Intercessions - Mrs Sue Allen

## Sunday 19th July - Ordinary 16

**9.30am St. Mark's - Holy Communion**

Preacher - Rev Eric Royden  
Leadership - Mrs Avril Williams  
Intercessions - Mr Mike Elliott

**11.00am Putnoe Heights - Holy Communion**

Preacher - Rev Eric Royden  
Leadership - Mrs Wendy Nash  
Intercessions - Mrs Sylvia Cohen

**Readings** 1. Jeremiah 23: 1-6 2. Ephesians 2:  
11-22 3. Mark 6:30-34, 53-56  
3. Mark 6: 14-29

## Thank You

The flowers at St Mark's Church this week have been given by Barbara Joy in loving memory of her daughter Linda.

*We are always grateful for any donations for 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 Jennie Cooper 404950 (Putnoe Heights) or add your name to the rota in the foyers.*

## Prayer for Sunday

Kindle about us, O Lord,  
the glory of heaven.  
May the love of your Son protect us.  
May the fire of your love  
burn brightly within us.  
May our hearts be without malice  
and without fear.  
Kindle within us the bright flame of love  
to neighbour, love to friend and love to all,  
for your holy name's sake. Amen.

*Celtic prayer*

## Contact Details

**The Reverend Dr. Sam Cappleman**

107 Dover Crescent, Bedford MK41 8QR  
266952 Fax- 402624 nsm@thisischurch.com  
(Sam also works full time as a General Manager for Hewlett Packard)

**The Reverend Charles Royden**

The Vicarage, Calder Rise. MK41 7UY  
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## For Data Protection Purposes

Please note that any items submitted for inclusion in Partnership News will automatically be posted on our website.

Partnership News is also archived on our church website [www.ThisIsChurch.com](http://www.ThisIsChurch.com)

## Partnership Pastoral Support Team Co-Ordinator & Churchyards Administrator

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.*

## Putnoe Heights Church Centre

Open Monday to Thursday 9am - 5pm, Friday 9am - 1pm  
Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com  
Centre Manager Mr Barry Snelson 365630 & 344417  
Leadership Team Mr. Lawrence Wyatt 350188  
Treasurer Mr Ian Morse 216428 treasurerph@thisischurch.com  
Gift Aid Administrator - Mr John Hitt 404186  
Youth & children's worker - Mrs Spavins 302349  
youth@thisischurch.com

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

Tel/fax & Answering Service 342613 office@thisischurch.com  
Centre Manager Miss Wendy Rider 342613  
Leadership Team - Mrs Delia Shephard 275628  
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com  
Gift Aid Administrator Jim Williams 360605

# Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

## Monday

- 9.30-12.00pm Mon-Fri Putnoe Heights Pre-school**  
Headteacher Mrs Janet Smith ☎326685
- 8.30-5.30pm Pre-school** Mon-Fri St Mark's
- 9.30-3.15pm Top Marks** Mon-Fri St Mark's  
Headteacher Mrs. Helen Harpin ☎312634  
(See website for more details)
- 9.00am Clubhouse** at St. Mark's for those with Learning Disabilities. Karen Bywater ☎315460.
- 9.45am - Body Control Pilates** –Putnoe Heights  
Stephanie Smith ☎ 357787 or 07973174430
- 10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group.** St Mark's Mr Kellie ☎ 721063
- 10.30am U3A Play reading** St Mark's J Birks ☎219607
- 12.00pm 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. ☎Liz 302349
- 1.30pm U3A History Group** St Mark's ☎ David Fowler 824474
- 2pm U3A Drama** St Mark's 1st & 2nd week. Mr Ovenden ☎ 825059
- 4.00pm Storybox Plus** Putnoe Heights for 4-9 year Old. Meet at 3.30 for refreshments & games. Then till 5pm 'follow the year' through stories, drama, singing & craft activities. We then make a short presentation in church on first Sunday in each month. ☎Liz Spavins 302349
- 4.15pm Rosemary Conley Diet & Fitness.** Putnoe Heights. Margo Needham 843747 or 07881730747
- 4.15pm Kumon Maths** Putnoe Heights. Mrs Raksha Mistry ☎01908 392698
- 6.00pm Brownies** St Mark's. Mrs C Mathew ☎826190
- 6.15 pm Brownies** Putnoe. Sharon Tanner ☎ 07720713738.
- 6.15 Pilates** at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859
- 7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild** St Mark's 1st week Pat Nicholson ☎353518
- 7.30pm Cancer Care Society.** St Mark's. 1st Week. Mr J Dewhurst ☎01908 377020
- 7.15pm Guides.** St Mark's. Mrs Gill Lake ☎218091
- 7.15pm Yoga.** Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎244970
- 7.30pm Whist Drive.** St Mark's 3rd & 5th week . Next meeting 20 July Judith Stanton. ☎823313
- 7.30pm House group** 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck ☎267567.
- 8.00pm 'Get Fit, Stay Fit'** Putnoe Heights. Mrs Diane Field ☎404976

## Tuesday

- 9.30 12.30 Jo Jingles.** St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Renu Elston ☎01908 587299
- 9.30am Candlewicking** (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Judi Staughton ☎341821
- 9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World** St. Mark's. Helen Folbigg ☎351223
- 10am -Bedford Arts Society** starting at St Mark's Mrs Brown☎771676
- 10am Autism Beds Adult Support Group.** St Mark's. Sally Cripsley ☎350704
- 11.15am U3A Keep Fit** Sally Banks ☎ 870357
- 1.30pm Toddlers Playtime.** Putnoe Heights Majella Atkinson ☎325293.
- 1.30pm U3A Cinema Group.** St Mark's 4th Week in

month . Mrs Beaumont ☎261461

- 2.00pm U3A Book Group.** St Mark's 3rd Week Mrs Forrest ☎344043
- 2.00pm Library Walk W.I.** Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Morag Tomkins ☎356895
- 2pm U3A Photography** (Group 3) St Mark's 1st Week. Janet King ☎313946
- 2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship.** Next meeting July 7 Mrs. Kate Martineau : Family Centre. Betty Wyatt ☎350188.
- 2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group.** St Mark's Fortnightly . Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs Maureen Watling ☎262225
- 2.15pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup.** St Mark's Fortnightly. Mary Stubbs ☎406784.
- 3.45pm Stars School of Dance.** Putnoe Heights. Esther Sancto ☎295862 or 07917582468.
- 6.30pm Creative Card making.** Putnoe Heights Church. Carol Houghton 346718
- 6.30pm Yoga** Putnoe Heights Veronica Lafferty ☎781466 or 07788750360
- 7pm Keep Fit.** St. Mark's Jan Gregory ☎328455
- 7pm MT Karate** [all ages] Putnoe Heights. Karen King ☎ 07941 264885
- 7.30pm Hearts & Beds. Cardiac Support Group** 1st Tuesday in the month
- 7.30pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Bible study & prayers. Revd. Tarr ☎360188 or 07866775515
- 7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club** - Meets fortnightly. Meeting July 14 Bring and Share Evening Details from Audrey Wilkins☎365068 or Margaret Gentle ☎309043

## Wednesday

- 9.30am** Body Control Pilates. Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith ☎357787 or 07973174430.
- 9.00am Clubhouse** at St Mark's for those with Learning Disabilities. Karen Bywater ☎315460.
- 10.00am Holy Communion.** St. Mark's Chapel. A half hour service followed by coffee. All welcome.
- 10am Sewing & Chat.** Putnoe Heights Valerie Russell ☎01462 815966
- 12.30pm Luncheon Club.** Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next - 15 July 2009 Putnoe Heights Office ☎365630
- 1.00-3pm Police Surgery** at Putnoe Heights .
- 1.15pm Bridge Club for the Retired.** St. Mark's. Mr Barnes ☎261811
- 1.45 Scots Society Whist** Putnoe monthly .All welcome Nancy Barr 268147
- 2-5pm Police Surgery.** St Mark's Foyer. ☎349179
- 1.30-4.30pm U3A Craft St Mark's** 1st & 3rd week. Pat Holland ☎ 262823
- 2.15pm - Fifty plus Keep Fit.** Putnoe Heights Mrs Webster ☎856966
- 4.15pm Kumon Maths.** Putnoe Heights Mrs Raksha Mistry ☎01908 392698
- 6.00 pm Brownies.** St Mark's. Mrs Carol Warden ☎219731
- 6.15pm Yoga and Relaxation** Putnoe Heights Racheall Monton ☎01234 297138
- 6-8pm Karate.** St Mark's Karen ☎079412 64885
- 7.00pm Bunyan Bridge.** St. Mark's Brian Sallows ☎407725

**7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society** Putnoe Heights monthly. Vanessa Aykac 268098 or 07917385987

**7.00pm Putnoe Guild** Putnoe Heights monthly Janice Loxley ☎ 347073

**7.00pm Line Dancing** Putnoe Heights Mike Del-Boyer ☎ 348378

**8.00pm Badminton Club** Putnoe Heights All welcome. Ken Marriott ☎ 214867

**8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club** meet at St Mark's 1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesday in month. Next Meeting 15 July Everyone welcome. All dances called, only £1 including refreshments.. Ring Graham ☎ 406359 or Alan 345312. or Rosemary 405594 for more details

**8.00pm Bedford Wine and Social Club** St Mark's 1st week in the month. Mrs Gansfield ☎ 215016

**7.45 for 8pm God talk** - women's group monthly meeting for worship and friendly chat at Wendy Nash's Contact Majella Atkinson ☎ 325293

### Thursday

**9.30am Thursday Prayer Group.** Putnoe Heights in the quiet room. Sylvia Cohen ☎ 343424

*Request for prayer can be written in the prayer diary on the information table. (No meeting on 9th April)*

**9.45am Yoga** Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎ 244970

**9.45am Chat and Play** St. Mark's. A group for Mums & toddlers. Emma Strangwick ☎ 211070

**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 Emma Strangwick ☎ 211070

**1.30 - 3.00pm NHS Baby Clinic** St. Mark's ☎ 267444

**1.30pm Toddler Playtime.** Putnoe Majella Atkinson ☎ 325293.

**2pm Putnoe Bridge Club.** Gerald Palmer ☎ 345991

**2.30 - 4.30pm Bedford Art Society** at St Mark's. Mary Rich ☎ 272470 Next meeting 24 September

**4 - 7.00pm Police Surgery.** St Mark's Foyer. ☎ 349179

**6.15 pm Weightwatchers.** St. Mark's. Mrs Margaret Ralph ☎ 01767 224978.

**6.15pm Brownies.** Putnoe Heights Caroline Morgan ☎ 07786508351

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

**7pm U3A Folk & Poetry Group.** St Mark's 2nd & 4th week in month. Doug Ovenden ☎ 825059

**7.15pm Putnoe Art Group** Bob Wardale ☎ 406094

**7.30pm Bedford Embroiderers' Guild** St Mark's 3rd week in month. Nadeen Salmon ☎ 301550

**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 Jean Birks ☎ 219607

**8.00pm Brickhill Ladies Group** St Mark's 1st and 3rd week in month. Pat Foulks ☎ 346505

### Friday

**9.30-12.30pm U3A Photography** (Group 1) St Marks 4th week in month Val Scrivener ☎ 346397

**9.00am Clubhouse** St. Mark's for those with Learning Disabilities. Karen Bywater ☎ 315460.

**10am - 12 & 1.15 - 3.15pm U3A Beginners French** St Mark's Joyce Fields ☎ 353086

**12.15pm U3A Photography** (Group 2). St Mark's 4th week in month. Sue Butler ☎ 354183

**5pm Stars School of Dance** Putnoe Heights Contact Esther Sancto ☎ 295862 or ☎ 07917 582468

**2.00pm U3A Gardening Group** Putnoe Heights Eve Whitehead ☎ 356875

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

**6.30pm Line Dancing.** St Mark's Christine Rushton ☎ 782360

**7pm Bedford Art Society** monthly Putnoe Heights. Next meeting 1st May Mary Rich ☎ 272470

**7.45 - 10.45pm Bedford Astrology Club.** St. Mark's. Carol Brown ☎ 01438 233385

### Saturday

**9.45am Bedford Stamp Auction** at Putnoe Heights Next Auction 30th May. Contact Stuart or Anne 01327 876438

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

**Young Embroiders** bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher Tel 357198

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

**7.00pm Duplicate Bridge.** St Mark's Mrs Pillinger ☎ 212066

### Sunday

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

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

**1pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Revd. Tarr ☎ 360188 or ☎ 07866775515

**6pm T.N.T.** Putnoe. For 9-12 year olds (fortnightly) join us for fellowship & fun. Please see Liz ☎ 302349 .



## Diary Dates

**St Mark's Church Council – 9 Nov**

**St Mark's Leadership Team –**

**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team – 12 Oct, 8 Feb 2010**

**Putnoe Heights Management Meeting 20 July**

**St Mark's Church Forum Meeting - 15 July, 8 Sept , 11 Nov, 12 Jan 2010**

**Putnoe Church Council - 5 Oct**

**Pastoral Group Meeting -**

**Churchyard Committee -**

**Putnoe Heights Mission Group -**

**Partnership Council - September 6th**

**Brickhill Parish Council Meetings -**

**Deanery Meeting 17 Sep, 19 Nov,**

**Circuit/Deanery Meeting**

**Woodland Burial Trustees –**

**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth –**

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

# Ordinary 15

## Opening Verses of Scripture - Ephesians 1:3

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

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

Eternal God, giver of love and peace, you call your children to live together as one family. Give us grace to learn your ways and to do your will, that we may bring justice and peace to all people, in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen *Methodist Worship*

## First Bible Reading- Amos 7: 7-15

This is what he showed me: The Lord was standing by a wall that had been built true to plumb, with a plumb line in his hand. And the LORD asked me, "What do you see, Amos?" "A plumb line," I replied. Then the Lord said, "Look, I am setting a plumb line among my people Israel; I will spare them no longer. "The high places of Isaac will be destroyed and the sanctuaries of Israel will be ruined; with my sword I will rise against the house of Jeroboam."

Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent a message to Jeroboam king of Israel: "Amos is raising a conspiracy against you in the very heart of Israel. The land cannot bear all his words. For this is what Amos is saying: "'Jeroboam will die by the sword, and Israel will surely go into exile, away from their native land.'" Then Amaziah said to Amos, "Get out, you seer! Go back to the land of Judah. Earn your bread there and do your prophesying there. Don't prophesy anymore at Bethel, because this is the king's sanctuary and the temple of the kingdom."

Amos answered Amaziah, "I was neither a prophet nor a prophet's son, but I was a shepherd, and I also took care of sycamore-fig trees. But the LORD took me from tending the flock and said to me, 'Go, prophesy to my people Israel.' (Reader : This is the word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**)

## Second Reading - Ephesians 1: 3-14

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-- to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ. In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.

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

## Gospel Reading -Mark 6: 14-29

King Herod heard about this, for Jesus' name had become well known. Some were saying, "John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him." Others said, "He is Elijah." And still others claimed, "He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago." But when Herod heard this, he said, "John, the man I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!" For Herod himself had given orders to have John arrested, and he had him bound and



put in prison. He did this because of Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, whom he had married. For John had been saying to Herod, "It is not lawful for you to have your brother's wife." So Herodias nursed a grudge against John and wanted to kill him. But she was not able to, because Herod feared John and protected him, knowing him to be a righteous and holy man. When Herod heard John, he was greatly puzzled ; yet he liked to listen to him. Finally the opportune time came. On his birthday Herod gave a banquet for his high officials and military commanders and the leading men of Galilee. When the daughter of Herodias came in and danced, she pleased Herod and his dinner guests. The king said to the girl, "Ask me for anything you want, and I'll give it to you." And he promised her with an oath, "Whatever you ask I will give you, up to half my kingdom." She went out and said to her mother, "What shall I ask for?" "The head of John the Baptist," she answered. At once the girl hurried in to the king with the request: "I want you to give me right now the head of John the Baptist on a platter." The king was greatly distressed, but because of his oaths and his dinner guests, he did not want to refuse her. So he immediately sent an executioner with orders to bring John's head. The man went, beheaded John in the prison, and brought back his head on a platter. He presented it to the girl, and she gave it to her mother. (This is the word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**)

### **Hymns** (*Please distribute Morning Worship and Mission Praise*)

1. Fill your hearts with joy and gladness (*Tune Regents Square*) 147
2. Bind us together 54
3. Great is thy faithfulness 200
4. O praise ye the lord (*Tune Houghton*) 518
5. For all the saints 148

### **Post Communion Prayer**

Eternal God, we thank you for nourishing us with these heavenly gifts: may our communion strengthen us in our faith, build us up in hope, and make us grow in love; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

### **Commentary**

For about a thousand years, from Moses to Malachi, God spoke to his people by sending them prophets. After Malachi there was a 450-year prophetic silence, a silence that was finally broken with the first prophet of the New Testament period, John the Baptist.

Luke pinpoints the time and place when "the word of God came to John son of Zechariah." The "fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar" dates his story to about the year 26 AD. Luke also provides some additional political and religious commentary. He says that the word of God came to John the Baptist "when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene." After naming Rome's political powers both great and small, Luke then identifies Jerusalem's religious establishment; the story takes place "during the high priesthood of Annas and [his successor] Caiaphas." These incidental details hint at a major theme in the story of Jesus. The "word of the Lord" through John the Baptist did not come from Rome's imperial government or from Israel's religious establishment in the temple. It did not come from someone dressed in fashionable clothes who lived in an expensive palace, said Jesus (Luke 7:25).

God's word to all humanity came from a wild and wooly man who lived in the deep of the desert, on the fringes of society rather than in its corridors of power, at the periphery rather than at the epicenter. The divine messenger and his message originated in an unlikely place and from an improbable source. John would have been easy to ignore if you expected or wanted something normal, safe, or traditional. Neither John nor his message was normal by any stretch of the imagination.

Whereas John's father had been part of the religious establishment as a priest in the Jerusalem temple, John fled the comforts and corruptions of the city for the loneliness of the desert. There he dressed in animal skins, ate insects and wild honey, and preached. Living on the margins of society, both literally and figuratively, he preached "a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Mark 1:4).



*The beheading of John, Caravaggio*

The message which John preached was aggressive in pinpointing sin, yet it also invited repentance and offered the opportunity for change. Contrary to what we might have expected from such an ascetic man with an austere message, the Gospels say that people flocked to John: "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" (Mark 1:5).

John urged his listeners to prove their spiritual intentions by concrete deeds rather than by claims of religious or political affiliation. Some among the crowds took John at his word, but neither the political powers in Rome nor the religious establishment in the temple did. To their credit, they understood that his message was not only deceptively simple; it was deeply subversive.

About six months after John emerged from the desert like some scraggly lunatic and baptized Jesus, he was beheaded at the whim of Herod the tetrarch. At a dinner party one night, Herod capitulated to the sadistic demand of his girlfriend's daughter. John was a forerunner of Jesus, but he was also a forth-teller to Herod, having rebuked Herod for sleeping with his brother's wife (Mark 6:14–29). But as with many perverse politicians, Herod had his way with him who had spoken truth to power, so John was murdered. As for the religious establishment, Jesus tells us that "the Pharisees and experts in the law" spurned John's call to baptismal repentance, and in so doing "rejected God's purpose for themselves" (Luke 7:30). The prophetic word of God from John the Baptist, then, did not originate with the state powers or the religious establishment, nor did it find a receptive audience with them.

John told that the claim of God's kingdom upon our lives is ultimate. That means that the claims of the state and religious establishments, of race, gender, culture, and money all are less important. The earliest and most radical Christian confession was simple: "Jesus is Lord." By direct implication, Caesar is not lord or god, and neither are all the other many false gods of religion, money, sex, power, etc. With his pronouncement and then martyrdom, John counsels us to turn away from anything and everything that might hinder ultimate allegiance to Jesus. He invites us to make our crooked ways straight, to flatten all hilly terrain, and to prepare space for the birth of the Messiah into our own lives. When we do that, we'll find ourselves in the truly Good News that subverts and transcends all politics and religion.

### **Meditation**

When you think of a prophet what image comes to mind? It might be like the one shown here of John the Baptist, with robes, perhaps a beard, and almost certainly in need of a hairdresser ! But there is much more to prophecy than these old fashioned pictures. Prophets are not necessarily people who can foretell the future, in fact they might not be able to do that at all. What they do is to speak to us words, or images which are of God. They tell us things about God and about ourselves, sometimes things which we don't want to hear. John the Baptist was a prophet who did just this he spoke out what he believed to be the truth and people were so moved by his words that they wanted to turn their lives around and serve God faithfully. So what about us, are we prepared to stand out from the crowd and faithfully serve God in the ways he has called us?

### **Prayers**

Lord God we rejoice in the news of your coming. Open our hearts we pray that your Son Jesus Christ at his coming may find in us a dwelling prepared for himself. Stir up your power Lord and with great might come among us. May we find time in our busy lives, time to reflect upon the wonder of your love. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

God of power and mercy, open our hearts in welcome. Remove the rough places in our lives, things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy, so that we may share his wisdom and become one with him when he comes in glory. Fill the valleys with your light, level the uneven paths with your grace, and grant that your Spirit might so move us and others, that your saving presence might be visible to all. Amen.

Father, all-powerful and ever-living God, we do well always and everywhere to give you thanks through Jesus Christ our Lord. When he humbled himself to come among us as a man, he fulfilled the plan you formed long ago and opened for us the way to salvation. Now we watch for the day, hoping that the salvation promised us will be ours when Christ our Lord will come again in his glory. And so, with all the choirs of angels in heaven we proclaim your glory and join in their unending hymn of praise.

## **Youth, children and friends summer diary dates**

**Sunday 12th July TNT and friends** "Cycle ride to Danish Camp" meet 2.00 by recycling area at Priory. All welcome to join us or meet for refreshments at the camp about 3.00. The young people remain the responsibility of their parent/guardian during the above two events.

**Thursday 16th July** St Mark's last Storybox and Chat and Play. Restart Thursday 10th September.

**Monday 20th July** Putnoe Holiday Storybox 12.00 till 1.00 followed by Storybox plus until 2.45.  
**Monday 27th July** at Putnoe The Cheeky Dog Children's Entertainer and sandwich lunch 12.00 till 2.00. Tickets £2.50 from Liz or £3.00 on the door/office, accompanying adults £1.00, under 1 year free. This will be the last Storybox and Storybox plus until Monday 7th September

**Monday 24th August** under 5's summer workshop 2.00 till 4.00 and Tuesday 25th and Wednesday

**26th August** 5 years plus summer workshop 10.00 till 3.00pm Join us to "Travel God's world." Both these events celebrate the United Nations Year of the Child and will include stories of Children in the Bible, stories from around the world, music, games, crafts and Fun! Small charge.

There will be no Junior Church or YPF at Putnoe during August.

If you are able to help any of these groups in anyway over the summer or at the new term start in September please speak to Liz or Emma. Thank you for all your support. See Liz for further details on all the above events..

**Outdoor Bowls Roadshow** - An opportunity to see if you would like to join a local bowls club. In July, 6 bowls clubs are offering sessions for just £1 with all equipment provided. A brochure is on the notice board in St Mark's Foyer. Why not visit and see if you like it.

**Seeking The Way** A course for laypeople seeking to know how and where to serve God and his Church. The course is being provided by the St Albans Diocesan Board for Christian Development. Cost £40 Venue The Transept, St Mary's Church, Redbourn. Dates October 17th, November 7th & 21st, 10am - 4pm. Application form and full details about the course available from St Mark's Church Office.

**A huge thank you** to Judith Stanton and her many supporters for their recent donation to St Mark's Church of £241.

**New Website** - After many months of work we are now close to being able to launch our new church website, [www.thisischurch.com](http://www.thisischurch.com). The change has been made necessary due to a need to convert our existing site away from old technology to the new standard for websites. This has been a complex procedure given the size of our website and we are grateful to the Methodist Circuit who have helped us by providing funding for the work by professionals. The site will go live in August and we would appreciate comments from church members. You can see the new site by visiting the web address <http://tic.srv26.haisoft.net> Comments please to Charlie by Email.

Our website has now been changed to include minutes of meetings. These can be accessed by visiting each church homepage.

**Chellington Centre Fun Day** Sunday 12 July, 12 - 6pm Felmersham Road, Nr Carlton. Discover the Chellington Treasure Trail, Take you teddy bear for the Teddy Bears picnic, Face Painting and many stalls. Free entry.

## **Independent Board Members for BPHA**

bpha is a diverse organisation providing homes for all sections of society. We are in a period of exceptional growth and have ambitious plans for transformational change in the way we deliver customer services. Our Board are at the heart of driving this change programme with our highly talented Executive Team.

We are looking for two Board members to help ensure effective focus on goals and enable us to turn vision into reality. You will have strong leadership qualities, excellent communication and interpersonal skills.

You will be committed to a high standard in governance and have strong board level experience, with an understanding of the environment in which we operate. We are looking for outstanding candidates who can demonstrate strong commercial and business acumen in property development; financial and treasury management or commercial/property law. These will also be underpinned by the broader commitments to equality and diversity and customer service. These roles will require a commitment of 12 to 15 days which will include attending evening meetings, occasional daytime meetings and /or Saturday Board away days. Salary £8,000 per annum. For an informal discussion, please ring John Cross, Chief Executive on: 01234 221201. For an information pack please ring Sereena Sihota on: 01234 221259 or email: [jobs@bpha.org.uk](mailto:jobs@bpha.org.uk) quoting job reference: R01. Closing date: Noon on Friday 31st July 2009

## Methodist President: Church must make the world a safer place

In his inaugural presidential address to the annual Methodist Conference, Revd David Gamble spoke of the need for the Church to be a 'safer space' for people from every walk of life.

David spoke particularly of the importance of supporting the survivors of abuse, affirming his commitment to making the Church and the world a safer place. He said; "When I'm talking about creating safer space I'm talking about places, situations, moments, relationships, occasions where and when people feel accepted as they are, able to tell their story, not judged and not put at unnecessary risk."

David was inducted as the President of the Methodist Conference as the first order of business at opening of the Conference in Wolverhampton. He will serve for one year, representing the Church and meeting people across Britain.

Speaking of climate change as 'the biggest issue facing our world today', he said, "In the face of what is happening to this planet as the direct result of how we live, do we just give up, or is there a word of hope and are there possibilities to turn the tide and make this planet a safer space? Christians and churches need to be fully involved, and have things to offer in making our world a safer space."

David also called for greater openness and understanding between people of different perspectives, traditions and faiths, commenting that, "If we really listen to people's different perspectives we may come to a fuller and richer understanding ourselves. We can challenge and be challenged if there is respect between us. Not to seek to cast out those who think differently, but to listen, to understand and to grow."

People can follow David's travels on the President and Vice President's blog ([www.methodist-presandvp.blogspot.com](http://www.methodist-presandvp.blogspot.com)).

## Church calls on all to repent of climate change sin

The Methodist Church is urging Christians to repent of the sins that contribute to climate change. A report received by the annual Methodist Conference in Wolverhampton today encourages people to acknowledge their complicity in systems that exploit creation and prey on the powerless.

But the Church also wants to empower Christians to make positive lifestyle changes, in line with the report's title, Hope in God's Future.

Revd David Gamble, the President of the Conference, said, "The first step in making a difference is the recognition of what we've done wrong so far. But we can't just stop there. We must not be beholden to economic growth at the expense of our world and the lives of those who are most vulnerable.

"In the face of climate change, do we give up and treat it as a lost cause? No. We are people of faith. We can turn the tide if we commit ourselves to acting together to make our planet a safer space. So the report challenges the Church to tackle the issue head on, committing itself to significant action over the coming years."

The report outlines plans to reduce the Church's carbon emissions by 80% by the year 2050, in line with the target set by the UK Government. The Government is criticised in the report for its failure to outline how these tough targets can be achieved.

"But we are also challenging ourselves," added David. "We cannot expect the Government to take the issue seriously if we fail to do so ourselves, and this report outlines some big changes for the Church."

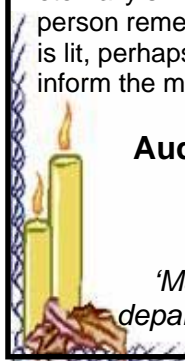
Bishop Michael Baroi of the Church of Bangladesh urged the British Church to prioritise this work. He said, "By 2050, two thirds of my country will go under water and about 30 million people will be displaced and have no place of their own to live on this planet Earth, if we do not deal with this issue of global warming and climate change urgently and seriously".

## 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.

**Audrey Gladys May Fuller**  
**Mary Pitts**

*'May the souls of all the faithful departed through the mercy of God,*



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## Forthcoming Funerals

*There are no funerals this week*