



Methodist  
Church

# Partnership News

## 13 January 2008

### Second Sunday of Epiphany



Church of  
England

#### Partnership Church Services Today

##### Second Sunday of Epiphany

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

##### 9.30am St Mark's - Morning Worship

Preacher - - Mr Paul Fricker  
Leadership Team - Mrs Morag Stewart  
Intercessions - Mrs A Holden

##### 11.00am Putnoe - Morning Worship

Preacher -Mr Paul Fricker  
Leadership Team - Mrs Jenny Emsley  
Intercessions - Mr Eddy Peck

##### Third Sunday of Epiphany

##### 9.30am St Mark's

##### Covenant and Renewal of Baptism Vows

Preacher - Revd Dr Joan Crossley  
Leadership Team - Mrs Avril Williams  
Intercessions - Mr Mike Elliott

##### 11.00am Putnoe Heights

##### Covenant and Renewal of Baptism Vows

Preacher - Revd Dr Joan Crossley  
Leadership Team - Mrs Wendy Nash  
Intercessions - Dr Tim Wilkes

##### Bible Readings.

Covenant Service Readings

#### Thank You

The flowers at Putnoe Heights this week have been given by Betty Wren in memory of her mother.

The flowers at St Marks this week have been given by Jan Cooper and family in memory of Jan and Peter's wedding anniversary.

We are always grateful for any donations for flowers perhaps to celebrate a special occasion, an anniversary or in memory of a loved one. Please contact Miss Marion Prior 303254 (St Mark's) or Miss Jennie Cooper 404950 (Putnoe Heights) or add your name to the rota in the foyers.

#### Prayer for Sunday

Let us love you, O God, with a heart that you have made for yourself, with a mind that you alone can satisfy, with a soul that longs for your presence and with a strength spent in serving you all our days.

Usurp our hearts, fill our minds, lift our souls and be our strength, now and for ever.  
Amen.

*Walter Howard Frere, 1863-1938*

#### 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 Dr. Joan Crossley (Day off Friday)

30 Cutcliffe Grove, Bedford. MK40 4DD.  
Home 344536 Crossley@thisischurch.com

##### The Reverend Charles Royden (Day off Thursday)

The Vicarage, Calder Rise. MK41 7UY  
309175 Mobile 07973 113861 vicar@thisischurch.com

##### For Data Protection Purposes

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

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 9am—5pm Monday to Friday

Tel/fax & Answering Service 365630 putnoe@thisischurch.com  
Centre Manager Mr Barry Snelson 365630 & 344417  
Leadership Team Mr Alan Cooper 365302 Mob 07989367604  
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 L Parry 216724 Mob 07922053740  
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com  
Gift Aid Administrator Mr 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 Mon-Fri St Mark's Pre-school**  
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.

**10.00am Bakers Barn Art Group.** St Mark's  
Mr Kellie ☎721063

**10.45am U3A Playreading** St Mark's C Birks ☎219607

**12.00pm Story box** 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

**1.45pm U3A History Group** St Mark's 2nd & 4th week of the month. ☎ David Fowler 824474

**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

**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 ☎07720712735

6.15 Pilates at Putnoe Heights Jane Butcher 300859

**7.30pm Sugarcraft Guild** St Mark's 1st week every month  
Pat Nicholson ☎353518

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

**7.15pm Yoga.** Putnoe Heights Lena Holland ☎244970

**7.30pm Whist Drive.** St Mark's 3rd & 5th week each month . Next meeting 21 January Judith Stanton. ☎823313

**7.30pm Housegroup** 30 The Ridgeway. The home of Eddy & Margaret Peck ☎267567.

**8.00pm 'Get Fit, Stay Fit'** Putnoe Heights. Mrs Diane Field ☎404976

## Tuesday

**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 on the 11th September. ☎Mrs Brown 771676

**1.30pm Toddlers Playtime.** Putnoe Heights Majella Atkinson ☎325293.

**1.30pm U3A Cinema Group.** St Mark's last Tuesday of the month. Mr Austin ☎365184

**2.00pm U3A Book Group.** St Mark's 3rd Tuesday of the month Mrs Berman ☎364723

**2.00pm Library Walk W.I.** Putnoe Heights, meets monthly. Mrs C Allen ☎363878

**2-5pm Police Surgery.** St Mark's Foyer.

**2.15pm Putnoe Heights Women's Fellowship.** Next meeting 15 January 2008 'Armchair Keep Fit' with Mrs. Webster. Betty Wyatt ☎350188.

**2.30pm Mother Teresa Support Group.** St Mark's alternate weeks. Wool and knitting needles provided. Mrs

Maureen Watling ☎262225

**2.30pm Tuesday Afternoon Housegroup.** St Mark's alternate weeks. Mary Stubbs ☎406784.

**3.45pm Stars School of Dance.** Putnoe Heights. Esther Sancto ☎295862 or ☎07917582468.

**7.00pm Hearts in Beds Cardiac Support Group**  
St Mark's 1st Tuesday ☎Parsons 351150

**7pm Keep Fit.** St. Mark's Jan Gregory ☎328455

**7pm MT Karate** [all ages] Putnoe Heights. Karen King ☎07941 264885

**7.30pm Tabernacle of Truth Church** Putnoe Heights Bible study & prayers. Revd.Tarr ☎360188 or 07866775515

**7.30pm Chartered Management Institute** St Marks 3rd week of the month. Mrs Dimmock ☎01525 862374

**7.30pm Putnoe Heights Ladies Tuesday Club -** Meets fortnightly. Next meeting 15 January 'Talk about Acorn Vets. Audrey Wilkins☎365068 or Margaret Gentle ☎309043

## Wednesday

**9.15am Paint Tots** St Mark's Jacqui Hanahan ☎824475

**9.30am Childminding Support Group** Putnoe Heights.  
Mrs S Longman ☎313949

**9.30am Body Control Pilates.** Putnoe Heights. Stephanie Smith ☎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

**10.30 am U3A Art Appreciation** Putnoe Heights Fortnightly. Audrey Hancock ☎365915.

**Luncheon Club.** Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next meeting 23 January 2008 Putnoe Heights Office ☎365630

**12.30pm Men's Fellowship Lunch** St Mark's 2nd week each month. Chris Izzard ☎212164

**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** monthly .All welcome Nancy Barr 268147

**2pm U3A Whist Group** St Mark's 3rd week of the month  
Ken Silvester☎400584

**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

**6.30pm Karate.** St Mark's Karen ☎079412 64885

**7.00pm Bunyan Bridge.** St. Mark's Brian Sallows ☎407725

**7pm U3A Whist Group** St Mark's 4th Wednesday of the month. Ken Silvester ☎400584

**7.00pm Archaeological & Local History Society** Putnoe Heights monthly. . Sylvia Woods ☎365095

**7.00pm Yoga** St Mark's Dorothy Turner ☎721763

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

**7.00pm U3A Sky at Night** 2nd Wednesday of the month.  
Mr Farish ☎824984  
**7.45pm Badminton Club** Putnoe Heights All welcome.  
Ken Marriott ☎214867

**8.00pm Tudor Reeds Folk Dance Club** St Mark's,  
1st, 3rd & 5th Wednesday. Next meeting 16 January 2008  
Graham ☎406359 or Danny ☎401668.

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

### 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.*

**9.40am Jo Jingles.** St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-  
school children. Jayne Phillips ☎01582 485333

**9.45am Yoga** Putnoe Heights Lena Holland ☎244970

**9.45am Chat and Play** weekly at St. Mark's. A group for  
Mums & toddlers. £1.75 for first child. More details from St.  
Marks Office ☎342613 or Emma Strangwick ☎211070

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

**12pm Storybox** weekly at 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

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

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

**5.30pm Police Surgery.** St Mark's Foyer.

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

**6.15pm Brownies.** Putnoe Heights Helga Nash ☎218521

**6.15pm Bedford Junior Chess Club.** St. Mark's  
Mr C Hill ☎772922

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

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

**7.00pm British Cardiac Patients Assoc.** at Putnoe bi  
monthly Mrs. E. marriot 303834

**7.30pm Bedford Senior Chess Club** St Mark's Mr P  
Housden ☎376597

**7.30pm Bedford Embroiderers' Guild** St Mark's  
3rd Thursday of the month. Mrs C Smith ☎344544

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

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

**8.00pm Brickhill Wives** St Mark's 1st and 3rd week Next  
meeting Mrs Woods ☎404702

### Friday

**9.30-12.30pm & 12.30 - 2.30pm U3A Photography  
Group** St Marks 4th week Joyce Fildes ☎353086

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

**1.30pm Stars School of Dance** Putnoe Heights Contact  
Esther Sancto ☎295862 or ☎07917 582468

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

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

**7pm Bedford Arts Society** fortnightly Putnoe Heights

from 8 September. Malcolm Smith ☎01234 400741

**7pm Youth Club for age 10-15.** St Mark's Church.

Contact PC Dave Hawkey ☎349179

**7.45pm Astrology Group** St Mark's as from 11th January.  
Mr Kenworthy ☎402792

### Saturday

**9.00pm Stars School of Dance.** Putnoe

Esther Sancto ☎295862 or ☎07917 582468

**10.00am Theatretrain** St Mark's. Dancing acting, singing.

Kate Howard ☎01234 782414

1.30pm Young Embroiders bi monthly Terry Fletcher Tel  
357198

**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, games & outings. Next meeting 27  
January' Liz ☎302349

## Diary Dates

**St Mark's Church Council** – 29th Jan 08, 17th  
June 08

**St Mark's Leadership Team** – 5 February 2008,  
13 May 2008

**Putnoe Heights Leadership Team** – 21st January  
**Putnoe Heights Management Meetings** 14th Jan.,  
14th April and 14th July.

**St Mark's Church Forum Meeting** - 12noon 15  
January

**Putnoe Heights Centre Management -**

**Putnoe Church Council** - 28 January 2008

**Pastoral Group Meeting** – 4.30pm 15 January

**Churchyard Committee** - 16 January 2008

**Putnoe Heights Mission Group** Next meeting

Weds 16 Jan 2008 at 14 Flint Way 7.30pm

**Partnership Council -**

**Brickhill Parish Council Meetings** - 7 February

**Deanery Meeting -**

**Circuit Meeting** - 10 March 2008, 12 June 2008

**Woodland Burial Trustees** - January 27th at

3.30pm 2008 in the Wren Room

**Putnoe Heights Children & Youth**– 21st January

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

## Second Sunday of Epiphany

### Opening Verse - Psalm 29

The LORD is enthroned as King forever. The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace.

### Collect Prayer for the Day

Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit, that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children; 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. Amen. *Common Worship*

### First Bible Reading - Isaiah 42: 1-9

"Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight; I will put my Spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out, or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break, and a smouldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice; he will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his law the islands will put their hope." This is what God the LORD says-- he who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and all that comes out of it, who gives breath to its people, and life to those who walk on it: "I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and a light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. "I am the LORD; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols. See, the former things have taken place, and new things I declare; before they spring into being I announce them to you."

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

### Second Bible Reading - Acts 10: 34-43

Then Peter began to speak: "I now realize how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all. You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached-- how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him. "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen. He was not seen by all the people, but by witnesses whom God had already chosen--by us who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

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

### Third Reading -- Matthew 3: 13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

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



## Post Communion Prayer

Lord of all time and eternity, you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son: by the power of your Spirit complete the heavenly work of our rebirth through the waters of the new creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## Commentary Agnus Dei

*Taken from the Blog of Rev Ross Royden, printed with permission. Ross keeps a weekly blog which can be accessed from [www.thisischurch.com](http://www.thisischurch.com)*



I hope that you have all recovered now from the festivities of Christmas and the New Year and are settling well into 2008! Here in Hong Kong and China, of course, we are now getting ready for what is a much bigger celebration in terms of the effort that goes into it, that is, Chinese New Year. Not having liturgical significance, this is a celebration I rather enjoy!

At the moment, however, I am preparing for the sermon on Sunday and it has led me down some interesting paths. I am going to be preaching on the Gospel reading from John 1:29 specifically John the Baptist's words: 'Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.' The Lamb motif, the Agnus Dei, is in effect the logo of Christ Church, Kowloon Tong. We have it as a mosaic outside our church and it appears on our literature. This was something I inherited when I came here and have been more than happy to use.

In the past, I have spent some time looking up its use historically in attempt to understand where the symbol originally came from. Fifth century Rome seems the most likely answer, although it only comes to prominence in sources from the ninth century onwards. It was later widely used by the Knights Templar during the Crusades. What I have been wondering this week, however, is why it was adopted by Christ Church. True, the Lamb represents Christ and we are Christ Church, but I have been at many Christ Churches and it has not been used in this way by them. I have started to enquire into its usage here and interestingly no-one seems to know when, or why, it came to be used. Enquiries are on going and I will let you know! Does it matter? Not at all. This is just one of those fun things that it is nice to know!

Perhaps more interesting is something that I uncovered in an essay by Richard Bauckham in his recent book: *The Testimony of the Beloved Disciple*. He discusses the use of gematria in St John's Gospel. Gematria is where a numerical value is assigned to a word. In Hebrew and Greek, he writes, the letters also represented numbers. Similarly, we sometimes do this in English with A having the value of 1, B equalling 2, and so on. He cites an interesting piece of graffiti from Pompei: 'I love the girl whose number is 545'. That is, the girl the letters of whose name add up to 545.

Gematria is also behind the number of the Beast in the book of Revelation. In Revelation 13:18 it says: *'This calls for wisdom: let anyone with understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a person. Its number is six hundred sixty-six.'*

The writer is telling his readers who the Beast is. It most likely is the Emperor Nero. The sum of the letters Nero Caesar written in Hebrew is 666. Why this is interesting as I prepare for Sunday is that, according to Bauckham, in Hebrew the numerical value for the name 'Jesus' and for the 'Lamb of God' are the same, that is, 391. To quote Bauckham:

*So when John the Baptist sees Jesus and says, 'Behold the Lamb of God' (1:29, 35-36), he is interpreting the name Jesus by gematria.*

Does it matter? Not at all. This is just one of those fun things that it is nice to know!

Much more important is the question of what it means to say that Jesus is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. The use of gematria that I have just referred to shows that the ancient Biblical writers used techniques with which we are not immediately familiar nowadays. This means that we miss things that would have been obvious to the first readers. But it isn't just in the area of literary techniques that we run into problems.

The sacrifice of animals was a familiar practice in the ancient world. At Passover Jews in Jerusalem sacrificed lambs in their thousands. This is not something we do or understand the point of. In fact, we

rather regard the whole business as barbaric and primitive. This makes understanding the concept of Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world also hard to understand. Indeed, it perhaps why some modern day Christians recoil from the idea of Jesus being a sacrifice for sin. As one recent writer puts it: 'isn't the idea of God sacrificing his Son a form of cosmic child abuse?'

We live in different worlds in more ways than one. The problem is that because we think we are more advanced than them in scientific and technological ways, we are also more advanced theologically. This is cultural and historical arrogance. We are back to the fact that God chose this time, 2,000 years ago, to give the supreme revelation of himself, the Word made flesh, as we have just celebrated. If we believe this, we are going to have to swallow our pride and accept that in this conceptual world we find so foreign, lie truths that are timeless and eternal, and which we ignore or dismiss at our peril.

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, miserere nobis.  
Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi, dona nobis pacem.

### **Meditation**

Jesus asks John to baptize him "to fulfill all righteousness." The word righteousness is not easily understood, and sometimes we are put off by connotations of 'self-righteousness.' It might be used of people who think a bit too much of themselves! However I have heard the word used recently in some American films where it is given a new meaning. When somebody is said to be 'righteous' it means that they can be trusted and are faithful to their friends.

We need to remember that the righteousness of God is a good thing, it is not judgemental and superior. We don't have to make ourselves right with God; we don't have to spend our lifetime "paying God back" for our sins and making amends for our past; we don't have to grovel to get God on our side; we don't have to say endless prayers to convince some angry god to yield to our urgent needs. The voice affirming Jesus as God's "beloved son" was God's stamp of approval on Jesus. Hence forth, what he proclaimed in words and actions about God's love for us could be trusted. His message is that we don't have to make God love us. God already does. We don't have to push and shove to move God to our side. God is already standing with us. Jesus is proof-positive of where God is in our lives. Jesus, Matthew tells us, is Emmanuel, God with us. Jesus' life and death assure us that we don't have to earn God's righteousness, God has given it to us.

### **Hymns** (*Please distribute morning worship and Hymns and Psalms*)

1. When morning gilds the skies 276 (Tune Laudes Domini)
2. This is the day 578
3. Christ when for us you were baptised 129 (Tune Saint Magnus)
4. When Jesus came to Jordan (Tune Cruger) 132
5. Thou whose almighty word 29 (Tune Moscow)

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

May God the Father, and the eternal High Priest Jesus Christ, build us up in faith and truth and love, and grant us our portion among the saints with all those who believe on our Lord Jesus Christ. We pray for all saints, for kings and rulers, for the enemies of the cross of Christ, and for ourselves we pray that our fruit may abound and we be made perfect in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Polycarp*.

Glorious God, give me grace to amend my life and to have an eye to mine end without grudge of death, which to them that die in thee, good Lord, is the fate of a wealthy life.

Give me, good Lord, a full faith, a firm hope and a fervent charity, a love to thee incomparable above the love to myself.

Give me, good Lord, a longing to be with thee, not for the avoiding of the calamities of this world, nor so much for the attaining of the joys of heaven, as for the very love of thee

*Thomas Moore, from a prayer written a few days before his execution*

Jesus, by your wounded feet direct our path. Jesus, by your nailed hands move us to deeds of love. Jesus, by your pierced side purify our desires. Jesus, by your crown of thorns annihilate our pride. Jesus by your broken heart, knit ours to yours. Amen. *Richard Crawshaw, 1613-49*

**Putnoe New Year Lunch** - Sunday 13th January at 1 pm. Tickets now available from Putnoe Office or Sue Allen (407264) Adults £8.00. Children under 10 £4.50. 3 courses including drinks Vegetarians please pre order. Proceeds 50/50 to Keech Cottage and Church Funds.

**The next Children and Youth Meeting** will be held at Putnoe Heights Church on Monday 21st January at 1.10pm.

**TNT/TXT** next meet Sunday 27 January, 6pm at Putnoe. Could **ALL** interested parties, members & adults please try & come as we would like to plan the future of both groups.

**1st Putnoe Brownies** would like to thank you for your support at their Christmas Cake Stall. They raised £53.

**Unwanted Gifts.** Hold on to those unwanted gifts!!! We need them on Sunday 3 February at Putnoe for our fund raising stall. Half profits to Church Youth Funds & half to Keech Cottage.

**Another Charity Performance for Cancer Research UK** Bedford Dramatic Club is performing "Habeas Corpus" a satirical farce by Alan Bennett in January and has kindly donated 50 tickets for the performance on Tuesday, 22<sup>nd</sup> January for our fundraising. They are £6 each (£5 for concessions). This will be an enjoyable evening to look forward to after the rush of Christmas and the new year. Tickets are available from Sue and Richard Butler (Tel: 354183) or Howard Lawrence (Tel: 267837).

**Music at St Andrew's** St Andrew's Church, Kimbolton Road, Bedford Saturday 8 March 2008 at 8.00pm Gamelan Lila Cita, the UK's premier Balinese Gamelan. Pre-concert supper at 6.30pm Concert tickets: £7 (£5 concessions) Concert and supper tickets £14 (£12) from: St Andrew's Church Centre Office, tel: 01234 216881 Classic Music, tel: 01234 357221 Central Box Office tel: 01234 269519

**Covenant and Renewal of Baptism Vows** The Partnership Services on Sunday 20 January will be Covenant and Renewal of Baptism Vows. This is a special service of commitment including Holy Communion. Our preacher will be The Reverend Dr Joan Crossley

**Service of Holy Communion** at Sir William Harpur House on the first Monday of every month at 10.00am, led by Charles Royden. Everybody is invited to attend, not just residents.

**Hazeldene Heights Preschool.** Come & share in the activities with the children in our Preschool at Putnoe Heights. Please talk to Linda Hoar if you can spare a few hours each month or would like to know more about the group. Your help would be greatly appreciated. Linda Hoar 782717.

**An Organ Recital** at Priory Methodist Church, on Saturday 19 January at 12 noon followed by a buffet lunch at 1pm, by six members of Bedfordshire Organists Association. Tickets £5(including lunch). Proceeds in aid of Siyahlala, the community living on dumpsites in South Africa. For details & tickets contact Sue Gordon in Priory Church Office 353523 or Marion Goddard 344617. Every body welcome.

**Bunyan Meeting Free Church** are holding an open morning for new stewards for the John Bunyan Museum. It will take place on Saturday 19 January at 10.30am. For further details contact Mrs Doreen Watson Bunyan Meeting free church, Mill Street, Bedford.

### **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 18-25 January 2008**

The Bedford-Wide United Service this year will be held at Priory Methodist Church on Sunday, 20 January at 6.30 pm. The preacher will be the Roman Catholic Bishop of Northampton, the Rt. Rev. Peter Doyle. Do not miss this wonderful opportunity to share in Worship with Christians of our own and other denominations from all over the town. In addition, short Lunchtime Services are being held during the week at the following venues: Friday, 18 Jan St Luke's, URC, St Peter's Street Monday, 21 Jan St John's, St John's Street Tuesday, 22 Jan Bedford University Chaplaincy A104, Upper Room Wed, 23 Jan Miracle Church, Conduit Rd Thur, 24 Jan Friends Meeting, Lansdowne Rd Friday 25 January Priory All the Services start at 12.45 pm, with the exception of that at the Friends Meeting House on 24 January which starts at 12.30 pm. Tea/coffee will be provided after each of the Services and you are encouraged to stay, bringing your own sandwiches if you wish. These Services, too, provide an excellent opportunity to have a chat with other Bedford Christians.

**100 years of Prayer for Christian Unity 1908-2008** Celebration Sunday 20 January 4 - 7.30pm at St Albans Abbey. Wendy Waters (01234 401834) is going by car, if anyone would like to go please phone her. Including London Community Gospel Choir, St Albans Cathedral Choir, Salvation Army Band, Pam Rhodes, Fr Timothy Radcliffe.

## Lent Books

Sam Cappleman reflect upon book for Lent

Easter comes very early this year; Ash Wednesday will be with us on 6 February, and the time of Lent that falls in between Ash Wednesday and Easter offers us an opportunity to pause and reflect on our spiritual journey. Some people find Lent books helpful in their reflections and perhaps these brief outlines of some of the diverse books available will encourage you to pick up a book to guide you through Lent, perhaps for the first time. The prices are those on the books I have so they may have changed slightly since the time of their publication.

### **Sacred Space for Lent 2008: Jesuit Communication Centre, Ireland £1.99**

This book, which was written specifically for 2008 is ideal for those with very limited time. It offers a different outline of prayer each week, which can then be used each day of that week together with a short daily reading and two short comments. However, just because the scripture readings, comments and prayers are quite short, don't expect them to be any the less challenging on the journey through Lent.

### **The Matthew Passion: John Fenton £5.99**

Written by a notable scholar of Matthew this book, John Fenton takes the reader through Matthew's gospel with daily readings and comments. Each day there are three short sentences which form a prayer which sums up the essence and challenge of the passage. Matthew is the lectionary gospel this year and this book would be ideal for those wanting to gain a deeper insight into Mathew's gospel for the year ahead.

### **Lenten Prayers for Busy People: William O'Malley SJ £9.99**

This is possibly my favourite book for Lent. It offers a collection of prayer and readings for Lent which are grouped into morning, daytime and evening reflections for each day. Passages are selected not only from the bible but from writers and poets as diverse as John Donne, C S Lewis, Thomas Merton and Bob Dylan. It is perhaps a little American but is none the less an excellent book to give a broader perspective on our Lenten pilgrimage. It has the sub title as 'A forty day retreat wherever you happen to be', a highly appropriate title as we travel towards Easter.

### **When They Crucified My Lord: Brother Ramon SSF £6.99**

Brother Ramon was an Anglican Franciscan Friar until his death in June 2000 and wrote extensively on contemporary spirituality. This is a book which is designed for people who perhaps have more time to spend each day reading and reflecting on a Lent book, the book suggests up to one hour per day. It offers a passage of scripture, some comments, a prayer and a refection for each day, drawing insight from those who were present that first Easter. It is a deep, and in many places, a profound book with the insights that would be expected from a writer such as Brother Ramon.

### **Oh God, Why?: Gerard W Hughes £5.99**

Subtitled as 'A journey through Lent for bruised pilgrims', this Lent book is perhaps a great book to use if you have not used a Lent book before. It opens up with a description of what is happening in Lent, the true meaning of penance, and describes some different ways in which to pray. Each day there is a passage from scripture, a comment and a prayer that can be used which reflects on the essence of the days material. Drawing parallels with the Jewish Passover in the preface, Hughes highlights that Lent is not just a commemoration of a past event, but a celebration of the present reality of God in our lives.

### **The Return of the Prodigal Son: Henri J M Nouwen £8.95**

Not so much a book of daily readings and reflections as a book to be read through Lent and there is now a CD course based on this book for Lent groups. A chance encounter with Rembrandt's painting, 'The return of the prodigal son', Nouwen, a fellow Dutchman, shares his personal meditation that led him to discover the place within which God had chosen to dwell. It's a story of a homecoming, and one which is deeply profound, typified by the epilogue at the end of the book entitled, 'Living the painting'.

### **Pray, Love, Remember: Michael Mayne £7.95**

Michael Mayne is Dean Emeritus of Westminster, and in the foreword by Alan Bennett, Bennett suggests that this book is a Lenten book which is not a dutiful read with the devotional instruction arising from the illumination and reflection on Mayne's ministry. Pray, Love, Remember, three words which sum up the essence of the Christian life, offers insightful and reflective material which is broken up into weekly sections and is perhaps the most literary of the books reviewed here.

## 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

### **Elsie Purser**

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

## Rest in Peace



**The funeral of Miss Elizabeth (Betty) Lord** will take place at St Mark's on Tuesday 15th January at 11am.

**The funeral of Sylvia Yockney** will take place on Tuesday 15 January at 12 noon at Putnoe Heights Church. This will be followed by burial at St Albans Woodland Burial ground.