



Partnership News

21 February 2010

First Sunday in Lent



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 – Holy Communion

Preacher - Mr. Richard Ledger
Leadership - Mrs. Avril Williams
Intercessions – Mr John Tatman

11.00am Putnoe Heights – Holy Communion

Preacher – Mr. Richard Ledger
Leadership — Mrs. Linda Hoar
Intercessions – Mr. Eddy Peck

28 February 2010
Second Sunday of Lent

9.30am St. Mark's – Morning Worship

Preacher - Revd. Dr. Sam Cappleman
Leadership - Mr. M. Ovenden
Intercessions – Mrs. Delia Shephard

11.00am Putnoe Heights – Holy Communion

Preacher – Revd. Dr. Sam Cappleman
Leadership – Mrs Sam Ware
Intercessions – The Nash Family

Readings 1.Gen. 15:1-12, 17-18
2. Phil. 3: 7- 4:1 3.Luke 13: 31-35

Thank You

The flowers at St. Mark's this week have been given by Jean Bank in loving memory of her mother, Gladys Kittredge.

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Christine and Peter Davies to celebrate their 51st Wedding Anniversary.

We are grateful when people make donations towards flowers perhaps to celebrate a special occasion such as an anniversary or in memory of a loved one. Please contact Miss Marion Prior 303254 (St Mark's) or Ann Hitt 404186 (Putnoe Heights) or add your name to the rota in the foyers.

Prayer for Sunday

As the days lengthen and the earth spends longer in the light of day, grant that I may spend longer in the light of your presence, O Lord, and may those seeds of your Word, which have been long buried within me, grow, like everything around us, into love for you and love for people; to become a visible declaration of your Lordship in my life. Grant, Father, that this Lent there may be a springtime for my life in Christ.

Dick Williams

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)

Deacon Jane Mason

12 Hartop Close, Bedford MK41 8HE
348091 Mobile 07807 146535
jane@thisischurch.com

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.ThisChurch.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
Youth & children's worker - Mrs Spavins 302349

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 273628
Treasurer - Mr Ian Farthing 210892 treasurer@thisischurch.com
Gift Aid Administrator Jim Williams 360605

Regular Weekly Activities - A Guide To Our Churches

Monday

- 9.15 -11.45 am 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 Mrs Berry ☎211955
- 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 February 15 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

- 9.30am Jo Jingles.** St. Mark's. Music & movement for pre-school children. Renu Elston ☎07790296016
- 9.30am Candlewicking** (Needlework). Putnoe Heights. Judi Staughton ☎341821
- 9.30am -12.30 & 4-9pm Slimming World** St. Mark's. Helen Folbigg ☎351223
- 10am Autism Beds Adult Support Group.** St Mark's. Sally Cripsley ☎350704
- 11.15am U3A Keep Fit Putnoe Heights** 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 February 23 'Liverpool Here I Come' Mrs. Anne Alderman. 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. Brian Ibberson ☎403497
- 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. Next meeting February 23. Talk about Details from Janet King 313946
- 8.15pm - 10.15pm Bedford Advanced Dancers St. Mark's 1st Tuesday in month. Shirley Sadler ☎01767 651767

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
- 10am U3A Card Making,** St Mark's Church. 4th week in the month.
- 12.30pm Luncheon Club.** Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next - 17 February 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 or 07910835994.
- 6-8pm Karate.** St Mark's Karen King ☎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 3 March 2010 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.
9.45am Yoga Putnoe Heights Denise Green ☎244970
9.45am Chat and Play St.Mark's. A group for Mums & toddlers. Emma Strangwick ☎211070
 11am-12noon Citizens Advice Bureau at Putnoe Heights.
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 01234 363283
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. Malcolm Smith ☎400741
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. Pauline Lynham ☎01525 714517
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. Julie Nicholson ☎353642

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

Saturday

10.00am Theatretrain St Mark's. Dancing acting, singing. Kate Howard ☎01234 782414
Young Embroiderers bi monthly Putnoe Heights Terry Fletcher ☎357198
2.15pm Society of Recorder Players at Putnoe Heights. G Parry 01462 674792
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 – 22 June, 8 November.
St Mark's Leadership Team – 7 June at the Manse, 18 October
Putnoe Heights Leadership Team –
Putnoe Heights Management Meeting ; 24 May
St Mark's Church Forum Meeting - 16 Mar 2010,
Putnoe Church Council - 21 June, 25 October.
Pastoral Group Meeting - 20th April at 4.30pm
Churchyard Committee - 24 February at 11am
Putnoe Heights Mission Group—
Partnership Council—TBA
Brickhill Parish Council Meetings
Deanery Meeting - 5 May, 17 June.
Circuit Property/Treasurers Meeting Feb 23rd 7.30pm at St. Mark's.
Circuit Meeting 8 March at Oakley
Woodland Burial Trustees – Sunday 21st March
Putnoe Heights Children & Youth –

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

First Sunday in Lent

Opening Verse of Scripture - Psalm 91:1

They who dwell in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty.

Collect Prayer for the Day -

Before we read we pray

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ fasted forty days in the wilderness, and was tempted as we are, yet without sin: give us grace to discipline ourselves in obedience to your Spirit; and, as you know our weakness, so may we know your power to save; 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.

First Reading – Deuteronomy 26 v 1 - 11

When you have entered the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance and have taken possession of it and settled in it, take some of the firstfruits of all that you produce from the soil of the land that the LORD your God is giving you and put them in a basket. Then go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his Name and say to the priest in office at the time, I declare today to the LORD your God that I have come to the land that the LORD swore to our forefathers to give us. The priest shall take the basket from your hands and set it down in front of the altar of the LORD your God. Then you shall declare before the LORD your God: My father was a wandering Aramean, and he went down into Egypt with a few people and lived there and became a great nation, powerful and numerous. But the Egyptians ill-treated us and made us suffer, putting us to hard labour. Then we cried out to the LORD, the God of our fathers, and the LORD heard our voice and saw our misery, toil and oppression. So the LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with great terror and with miraculous signs and wonders. He brought us to this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey; and now I bring the firstfruits of the soil that you, O LORD, have given me. Place the basket before the LORD your God and bow down before him. And you and the Levites and the aliens among you shall rejoice in all the good things the LORD your God has given to you and your household. (Reader: This is the Word of the Lord- **All: Thanks be to God**)

Second Reading – Romans 10 v 8b

The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart, that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame. For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile--the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. (Reader: This is the Word of the Lord. **All: Thanks be to God**)

Gospel Reading - Luke 4 v 1 – 13 *When announced* **All Glory to Christ our Saviour**

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the desert, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread. Jesus answered, It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone.' The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, I will give you all their authority and splendour, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours. Jesus answered, It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.' The devil led him to Jerusalem and had him stand on the highest point of the temple. If you are the Son of God, he said, throw yourself down from here. For it is written: 'He will command his angels concerning you to guard you carefully; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.' Jesus answered, It says: 'Do not put the Lord



your God to the test.' When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time. (Reader: This is the Gospel of Christ- **All: Praise to Christ our Lord**)

Post Communion Prayer

Lord God, you have renewed us with the living bread from heaven; by it you nourish our faith, increase our hope, and strengthen our love: teach us always to hunger for him who is the true and living bread, and enable us to live by every word that proceeds from out of your mouth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymns - Please distribute Hymns and Psalms and Holy Communion

- 1 All People that on earth do dwell 1
2. Forty days and forty nights 130
3. O love how broad how deep, how high 229 (At St. Mark's)
3. Love divine all loves excelling 267 (At Putnoe Heights)
4. The kingdom of God is justice and joy 139

Commentary The links between the lectionary readings

A theme of today's readings is dependence on God. In Deuteronomy God is seen to provide the fruits of the earth – the harvest. And in verses 5-9 there is the recollection of God's dealings with the people of Israel in their history. His saving acts in the deliverance from Egypt and the gift of the land "flowing with milk and honey". The people of Israel therefore are reminded of what God has done for them and are called to be grateful and to worship him. Are we grateful to God? Do we count our blessings?

In Romans just before the verses of today's reading Paul says "Christ is the end of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes" (v4). We are no longer faced with the task of satisfying God's justice; we need only to accept God's love. We no longer have to win God's favour; God freely offers us grace and love and mercy. And this is altogether different. God takes the initiative, He loves us, and it was while we were still sinners that Christ died for us. Verses 9 and 10 give us the basis of what is the first Christian creed. We are to confess with our mouth that "Jesus is Lord". The word is "Kurios" – ranking Jesus with the Emperor and with God. To call Jesus "Kurios" was to call him unique.

We are also to believe in our hearts that "God raised him from the dead" Resurrection is an essential of Christian belief – Christ not only lived but lives. Yes, there was sacrifice on Calvary – but if that is the end, then Christ is only another martyr. Resurrection points us to victory – God's love is the most powerful force in all creation, available to all who call on him. It is on this love that we depend from first to last. "We have a hope that is steadfast and certain" begins a modern hymn. May this be our experience too. In our gospel reading we see Jesus in the wilderness being tested and affirming his dependence on God.

Bishop Tom Wright says this:-

Jesus responds to the devil, not by attempting to argue (arguing with temptation is often a way of playing with the idea until it becomes too attractive to resist), but by quoting scripture. The passages he draws on come from the story of Israel in the wilderness: he is going to succeed where Israel failed. Physical needs and wants are important, but loyalty to God is more important still. Jesus is indeed to become the world's true lord, but the path to that status, and the mode of it when it arrived, is humble service, not a devilish seeking after status and power. Trust in God doesn't mean acting stupidly to force God into doing a spectacular rescue. The power that Jesus already has, which he will shortly display in healings in particular, is to be used for restoring others to **life** and strength, not for cheap stunts. His status as God's son commits him, not to showy prestige, but to the strange path of humility, service and finally death. The enemy will return to test this resolve again. For the moment, an initial victory is won, and Jesus can begin his public career knowing that though struggles lie ahead the foe has been beaten on the first field that really matters.

We are unlikely to be tempted in exactly the same way as Jesus was, but every Christian will be tested at the points which matter most in her or his life and vocation. It is a central part of Christian vocation to learn to recognize the voices that whisper attractive lies, to distinguish them from the voice of God, and to use the simple but direct weapons provided in scripture to rebut the lies with truth.

The Christian discipline of fighting temptation is not about self-hatred, or rejecting parts of our God-given humanity. It is about celebrating God's gift of full humanity and, like someone learning a musical instrument, discovering how to tune it and play it to its best possibility. At the heart of our resistance to temptation is love and loyalty to God who has already called us his beloved children in Christ, and who holds out before us the calling to follow him in the path which leads to the true glory. In that glory lies the true happiness, the true fulfilment, which neither world, nor flesh, nor devil can begin to imitate. *Richard Ledger*

Meditation

Seek ye first the kingdom of God,
and his righteousness,
and all these things shall be added unto you;
allelu-, alleluia.

Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, allelu-, alleluia!

Man shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word,
that proceeds from the mouth of God,
allelu-, alleluia.

Ask and it shall be given unto you,
seek and ye shall find,
knock and the door shall be opened up to you;
allelu-, alleluia.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart,
he shall direct thy path,
in all thy ways acknowledge him;
allelu-, alleluia.

Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

O Lord and heavenly Father, who has given us your people the true bread that comes down from heaven, even your Son, Jesus Christ, grant that throughout this Lent our souls may so be fed by him that we may continually live in him and he in us; and that day by day we may be renewed in spirit by the power of his endless life, who gave himself for us and now lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Federick B. Macnutt (1873-1949)

Almighty and everlasting God,
you hate nothing that you have made,
and forgive the sins of all those who are penitent.
Create and make in us new and contrite hearts
that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness,
we may receive from you, the God of all mercy,
perfect forgiveness and peace,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556), collect for Lent.

We thank you, Father, for those days in the desert when, through prayer and fasting, Jesus discovered your will for his life and overcame the temptations of the Evil One. Help us, during these days of Lent, to come close to you and to listen to your voice. Give us strength to overcome the temptation to please ourselves and live life without you. Teach us your way. For Jesus' sake. Christ give you grace to grow in holiness, to deny yourselves, take up your cross and follow him. *From the Alternative Service Book (1980)*

Loving father, today we start Lent. Over the next six weeks, with your help, we are going to prepare for Easter. From today we are making a new start with a bigger effort to be more loving and kind. Help us to show concern for the less fortunate, the hungry and the poor, and especially help us to speak to you more often. We ask this through your Son, Jesus, whose death and resurrection we will be thinking about in the next few weeks. Tony Castle

Almighty and everlasting God, you hate nothing that you have made and forgive the sins of those who are penitent: create and make in us new and contrite hearts that we, lamenting our wretchedness, may receive from you, the God of mercy, perfect remission and forgiveness; 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

Lord, Jesus Christ, help us to fashion in these Lenten days a season of inner redemption and holiness. Again and again, may we use these days to come quietly into your presence ever open to your prompting, ever ready to serve you and ever ready to reflect your coming Easter glory. Amen

Putnoe Heights. Thank you to all those supporting our Emergency Relief Fund. £150 has been sent to the Haiti Earthquake Appeal plus £50 from other Mission funds, as part of the Partnership donation.

We have 150 Christian Aid count your blessings leaflets. These leaflets are a great way to think about what is important in life and help raise money for Christian Aid.

Fashion Show and Nearly New Sale. Putnoe Conservative Branch at Putnoe Heights Church Thursday 25 February at 7pm. Price £3.50.

Whist Drive Many thanks to Judith Stanton and her supporters at the whist drive for their donation of £130.

Women World Day of Prayer Friday 5 March
2pm Bunyan Meeting— Mrs Jane Findley
7pm Priory Methodist—Rev. Sheila Morton.
Everyone welcome.

Julia Furnell thanks everyone at Putnoe Heights for the flowers sent at the time of her twin sister's death, they were very much appreciated.

Lent Materials



The Bishops of our Diocese have prepared excellent Lent Course materials for use in groups. These can be found at <http://www.stalbans.anglican.org/Mission/Lent-Course-2010>. You may obtain copies of these materials for your own use from the church offices.

You may also join two new Lent Groups which have been established over Lent. Other groups meet as usual.

Lent Group 1 led by Wendy Waters at 13 Farnham Way, Putnoe, 7.45pm on 22 February, 8 March and 22 March. Tel 401834.

Lent Group 2 at home of Eileen and Peter Brown 9 Buckfast Avenue. Feb.24, 3 March, 17 March. Mornings for a 10.30 start

Methodist Church offers weekly Prayer Help

Following a successful pilot, the Methodist Church is now offering free weekly prayer texts to help Methodists join in prayer with hundreds of others on topical and personal issues.

To receive the texts people simply send a text message reading PRAYNOW to 82088, which will be charged at their standard network rate. All of the prayer texts they receive will be free of charge.

Users of the pilot service were asked to text in their feedback and the result was overwhelmingly positive. June M texted in to say, "I welcome those prayer time texts, they make me stop & pray whatever I'm doing, where ever I am. Thank you 4 a valued service". Another user said, "Many thanks this service is of great value and helps to encourage focusing on what is important during what we consider to be our priorities."

"I feel moved by the idea that people across the country are being connected through the prayer text service," said David Webster, the Church's Internet Communications Coordinator. "Although many find the beeping of mobile phones annoying, for those signed up to PRAYNOW it will remind them that they are part of a growing community of prayer, whatever may be going on around them."

Thank you 'I send my sincere appreciation for the kind cards, thoughts, and beautiful flowers I received from my friends at Putnoe and St Mark's following my discharge from hospital. I am now recuperating after two major operations and look forward very much to being with you next Month.' (Eric Royden)

Bishops Pray Bishops will intercede for members of the public as part of a new Lent campaign launched by the Church of England this week, Say One For Me. The initiative will allow people to write their prayers and prayer requests anonymously on a new website, clicking "Amen" to post them. The prayers will then be submitted to several bishops, including the Bishops of Birmingham, Worcester, Huntingdon, Leicester, Manchester, and also the Archbishop of York, and will be remembered in their personal prayers.

The Bishop of Dudley, the Rt Revd David Walker, is also taking part in the prayer campaign, and said that priests were "well used to having people shout at us 'Say one for me'", and this underlined "the fact that people feel a need to pray".

In the first few hours of going live on Ash Wednesday, the Say One For Me website had received numerous prayer requests, ranging from sick friends and family to those affected by wars and natural disasters.

Don't give up in Lent - Take the Challenge instead

The Bishop of St Albans, The Rt Revd Alan Smith, says that the way Lent is observed is changing and he is encouraging this with a new project of his own – Challenge. Challenge sends participants a daily email or text during Lent containing some words of Jesus. Participants are asked to 'Read it, learn it, pray it, do it' in order to make a difference to another person, to their community or to the world at large. Thirteen hundred people have already signed up online to do this, a week before lent begins, with nearly four hundred joining in the last few days. The project has been promoted primarily to the Church of England in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, but the beauty of being online is that anyone can do it.

Already, a gap-year student going to New Zealand will be able to keep in touch with something his own church in Wheathampstead, Herts, is doing while he is away. Another student is going up the Amazon and is doing Challenge by text - until she loses her mobile signal, anyway. Prisoners at The Mount Prison in Hemel Hempstead have also signed up to the Challenge and will receive the verses on laminated cards from the chaplain the Revd Phil Abrey. He will run a group each Wednesday to discuss what the prisoners have learnt. He said: "What attracted me was the simplicity of the Challenge and 17 men so far have asked for the material."

The Bishop of St Albans, said:

"Giving something up for Lent is still widespread in our culture, usually chocolate or alcohol or maybe for the more eccentric, something like shoes. But it's easy to question what that's for. It works better for some if they take something up, either instead of or as well as giving something up and I think people are already discovering that for themselves. I am encouraging them."

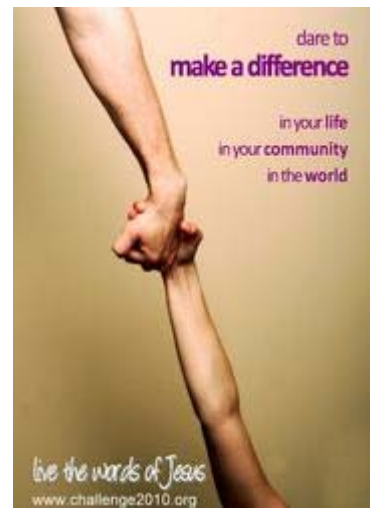
"There's nothing especially spiritual in itself about giving something up for its own sake although in a materialistic society it might be thought provoking. In these more austere times, many people have given up a lot already. I'm asking people to take up something this Lent that makes a difference to others by taking up my Challenge."

"Challenge is a chance to discover that the words of Jesus are transformative and as radical now as when they were spoken.

"It is based on the idea that although the Bible is the best selling book in the world, there are far too many Bibles unopened on bookshelves. Well, I've taken the words of Jesus out and brought people face to face with them, without anyone telling them what they mean, to let them encounter them at first hand."

People might be moved to do some small act of kindness like mowing the lawn for an elderly person next door when you do yours (ask first!) or refraining from joining in the character assassination of an unpopular person at work in response to Jesus words about loving others as he has loved us.

People have the chance to tell others what they were moved to do on our interactive website www.challenge2010.org A test verse posted la week ahead of Ash Wednesday immediately drew several comments and a video.



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.



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



Forthcoming Funerals

The funeral of Mr Richard James Norman

will take place at St Mark's Church on Monday 22 February at 11.00am in the chapel.

The funeral of Annie Duncan Beveridge Groom will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Wednesday 24 February 2010