



Partnership News

31 January 2010

Candlemas



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 - The Rev Stephen Copson
Leadership - Mrs Laura Farthing
Intercessions – Mr Warwick Holden

11.00am Putnoe Heights – Morning Worship

Preacher – The Rev Stephen Copson
Leadership – Mrs Sam Ware
Intercessions – Mrs Sue Allen

7 February 2010

Second Before Lent

9.30am St. Mark's – Family Worship

Preacher - Mrs Wendy Waters
Leadership - Mrs Jean Bank
Intercessions – Mrs Wendy Waters

11.00am Putnoe Heights – Family Worship

Preacher – Mrs Wendy Waters
Leadership – Mrs Jean Kirk
Intercessions – Mrs Claire Peck

Readings 1.Gen 2: 4b-9,15-end 2 Rev 4 .
3. Luke 8:22-25

Thank You

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

The flowers at Putnoe Heights Church this week have been given by Keith, Glynis, Edward and Carina Armstrong in memory of their beloved mum and nanna, Vera Marsh, on her birthday.

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

Prayer for Sunday

Lord give us the eyes of faith,
to see your presence in the world.
Where fear closes our eyes, help us.
Where tears blind us, heal us.
Where busyness keeps us from noticing, slow us.
Where pride gets in the way, release us
Set us free to see your love at work in the world.
Amen

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
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.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
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 273628

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
- 8.15pm Bedford Advanced Dancers** at St Mark's 1st week in the month. Mrs Sadler ☎01767 651767

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 Tea and Chat. 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 9 'Pride in Bedford' Debra. Details from Audrey Wilkins ☎365068 or Margaret Gentle ☎309043
- 8.15pm - 10.15pm Bedford Advanced Dancers** St. Mark's 1st week. 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. Contact Janet King ☎313946
- 12.30pm Luncheon Club.** Putnoe Heights fortnightly. Next - 3 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 February 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 – 9 February
St Mark's Leadership Team –
Putnoe Heights Leadership Team – , 8 Feb at 70 Brecon Way
Putnoe Heights Management Meeting ; 24 May
St Mark's Church Forum Meeting - 16 Mar 2010,
Putnoe Church Council - 15 February
Pastoral Group Meeting -
Churchyard Committee -
Putnoe Heights Mission Group—
Partnership Council—TBA
Brickhill Parish Council Meetings
Deanery Meeting 4 February
Circuit/Treasurers Review meeting 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.

Candlemas

Opening Verse of Scripture - Luke Chapter 2 verse 32

A light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.

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

God our creator, who in the beginning commanded the light to shine out of darkness: we pray that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ may dispel the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, shine into the hearts of all your people, and reveal the knowledge of your glory in the face of 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



First Bible Reading—Mal 3:1-5

See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Lord you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come," says the LORD Almighty. But who can endure the day of his coming? Who can stand when he appears? For he will be like a refiner's fire or a launderer's soap. He will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; he will purify the Levites and refine them like gold and silver. Then the LORD will have men who will bring offerings in righteousness, and the offerings of Judah and Jerusalem will be acceptable to the LORD, as in days gone by, as in former years.

"So I will come near to you for judgment. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud labourers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me," says the LORD Almighty.

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

Second Reading –Hebrews 2: 14-end

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil—and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

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

Gospel Reading - Luke 2: 22-40

When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every firstborn male is to be consecrated to the Lord"), and to offer a sacrifice in keeping with what is said in the Law of the Lord: "a pair of doves or two young pigeons." Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying: "Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel." The child's father and mother marvelled at what was said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." There was also a prophetess, Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was very old; she had lived with her

husband seven years after her marriage, and then was a widow until she was eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshiped night and day, fasting and praying. Coming up to them at that very moment, she gave thanks to God and spoke about the child to all who were looking forward to the redemption of Jerusalem. When Joseph and Mary had done everything required by the Law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee to their own town of Nazareth. And the child grew and became strong; he was filled with wisdom, and the grace of God was upon him.

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

Post Communion Prayer

Almighty Father, who's Son our Saviour Jesus Christ is the light of the world: may your people, illumined by your word and sacraments, shine with the radiance of His glory, that He may be known, worshipped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; for He is alive and reigns, now and for ever. Amen

Hymns (*Please distribute Mission Praise and Special Morning Worship sheet*)

1. Christ is made the sure foundation 73
2. Come on and celebrate 99
3. Faithful vigil ended 125
4. Like a mighty river 419
5. I want to walk with Jesus Christ 302

Commentary

Today Malachi warns the reader that God will come to cleanse the Temple of all impurity. There is going to be a radical change, such that it might be described as a refining fire.

So we read in Luke of the coming of the baby Jesus to the temple for his presentation. Here Simeon announces that in Jesus, God's salvation has been revealed. He is the light of revelation to the nations, the sign that will be contradicted, the strong and mighty king of glory who comes to the Temple, the faithful high priest who stands before God in the name of others. Because he comes in weakness, as a helpless child, he is recognized only by those who are strong in faith, like Simeon and Anna. Would we recognize him?

God continues to dwell in our midst, and even though we acknowledge this, we frequently miss the traces of God's presence in our lives. Do we believe that God is in our midst, eager to reform us?

Most of us are indistinguishable in a crowd, yet each of us carries great potential. By baptism we have been made temples of the Holy Spirit. Consequently, the integrity with which we live our lives manifests the presence of God in our midst. Is this obvious to others? Have we grown in wisdom over the years? Or do we still make the same self-centered demands? We may not be expected to spend all of our days in the Temple, but God has called us to make the world in which we live a truly sacred place.

Meditation

Simeon calls Jesus "a light to enlighten the Gentiles." Accordingly this day was made into a feast of candles. The warm candlelight is meant to be a tangible reminder of that greater light which, for and beyond all time, radiates from the figure of Jesus. We ourselves are reminded of the need to be prepared to burn brightly ourselves in the midst of this dark world. We take a light, but it is not our own light, no light of our own would be bright enough, rather it is the light of Christ. The light which at the beginning of creation shined in the darkness and which no darkness, no blindness, could overcome, and this light was a light to lighten the gentiles, the nations, all the nations and races and culture of people.

Prayers for Sunday and the Week Ahead

O Lord Jesus Christ, as a child you were presented in the Temple and received with joy by Simeon and Anna as Redeemer of Israel: mercifully grant that we like them, may be guided by the Holy Spirit to acknowledge and love you until the end of our lives. Amen (Church of South India)

O God, who in the work of creation commanded the light to shine out of darkness: we pray that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ may shine into the hearts of all your people, dispelling the darkness of ignorance and unbelief, and revealing to them the knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. Amen.



Today is World Leprosy Day 31 January

Leprosy is a disease of our time - a disease of poverty caused by a bacillus *Mycobacterium Leprae* (a distant relative of the TB bacillus). Most people are naturally immune but over 90% of people affected by leprosy live in developing countries where resources are scarce. Life expectancy can be reduced by 50%, mainly due to economic hardship.

The Leprosy Mission Statement

Our mission is to minister in the name of Jesus Christ to the physical, mental, social and spiritual needs of individuals and communities disadvantaged by leprosy; working with them to uphold human dignity and eradicate leprosy. The Leprosy Mission is a leading Christian development organisation, founded in 1874 by Wellesley Bailey. The Mission works with leprosy-affected communities in around 30 countries. This work includes medical detection and treatment, education, development, rehabilitation, rights awareness, housing, advocacy and social justice. Leprosy is most prevalent in poor communities. It is easily curable with multidrug therapy, a combination of antibiotics taken for six to 12 months. Sadly, because of continuing stigma, many people still hesitate to seek help when symptoms first occur. A large part of The Leprosy Mission's work involves community health care and education to combat this. Leprosy is a human rights issue, so our work also goes beyond medical support. The Leprosy Mission's international family is made up of 28 implementing and supporting national councils. We employ more than 2,000 national and international field staff, partnering with other non-government organisations, churches and government agencies. Our work in the field is regarded very highly in the countries where we operate. We are reliant on contributions and prayer support from individuals, churches, trusts, legacies and government agencies to continue our work.

What is leprosy?

It is the least contagious communicable disease, not highly infectious, but symptoms can take up to 20 years to show. Leprosy starts by damaging the smaller nerves that control feeling on the skin's surface. The first outward sign of leprosy is loss of feeling in patches on the skin. If treated during these early stages there will be no further damage. If left untreated, leprosy damages peripheral nerves (the cooler places) in the hands, feet and face. The resulting anaesthesia leads to tissue and nerve damage causing shortened digits, clawing of fingers and drop foot. Ulcers can also develop. Loss of sensation in hands, feet and eyes means that everyday activities are fraught with danger - burns go unrecognised, wounds untended, stones in shoes and grit in the eyes go unnoticed. Leprosy can damage the eye nerves so that the eyelid muscles stop working, causing blindness. Work is still being carried out to develop a preventative vaccine for leprosy.

This is a suggested prayers for the day

God our loving heavenly Father, because of Your compassion and faithfulness, Your will for all people is health and salvation. We thank You and worship You, O Lord. Grant Your healing grace to all those affected by leprosy, that they may be made whole. Bless the leprosy work in Nepal we pray. We ask for good access to services, especially for those living in very rural areas. We pray for Your blessing on the staff and programmes of The Leprosy Mission. Please give them success in combating the causes and consequences of leprosy and may they glorify Your name through the work. In Jesus' name, Amen

Lent Home Groups

Putnoe Heights New Year Lunch

Thanks to all who contributed in many ways to the annual lunch on January 10th. The snow and ice did not spoil the occasion and a profit of £320.00 has been added to church funds. The catering team are planning a salmon and strawberries lunch in the summer, watch out for the date.

Footprints Our next walk will begin at 2.00pm on Sunday 7 February from the signposted car park at

Moggerhanger Park. The 3 mile route passes through the snowdrop woods then out into open country with wide views across the Ouse valley. Details from Sue & Gerry Allen Tel 407264

Bedford Deanery Synod. You are invited to St Andrew's Church on Thursday 4 February at 7.30pm to hear a presentation by Rev Canon Stephen Lake, Sub Dean of St Albans Abbey and Chairman of the Diocesan Liturgical Committee to listen to a presentation 'Transforming Worship.'

Newly New Sale at Putnoe Sunday 31 January following Morning service. Please bring in your unwanted items to the office for Liz or Carolyn. Proceeds to Samaritans Purse to support their children's work in Haiti.

Luncheon Club at Putnoe urgently needs a regular driver to transport the less mobile to and from the fortnightly Wednesday lunches. If you can help with much appreciated community outreach, please advise Putnoe Church Office or Peta Pearson. Tel: 356878.



Words of Challenge, Words of Life

'I'm giving up chocolate this Lent – I need to lose a bit of weight anyway.' Many people think that Lent is about simply giving things up, as though God delights in making our lives more difficult. The true focus of Lent is actually about making more space for God in our lives. We give things

up to get rid of the clutter that gets in God's way, so that He can inhabit us more fully. Lent is about hearing afresh God's life-giving words to us. It's about renewing our discipleship of Jesus Christ, which is why we are inviting Christians this Lent to engage in three things.

First, to join a Lent group and reflect with others on the gospel readings which are set for each Sunday.

We have written a course which we hope will both inspire and encourage you in your faith. If your church or chaplaincy is not arranging groups, see if you can find one or two other Christians (perhaps from other denominations) to meet together each week to follow this course. The course is set out below, along with some ideas about how you might use the material. For those who would like a bible commentary to give extra background material, we are recommending Wansbrough's Luke: The People's Bible Commentary published by BRF (£7.99). The course website is at: www.stalbans.anglican.org/Mission/Lent-Course-2010

Second, you may like to participate in Challenge, which complements the Lent Course. We are asking as many people as possible to join us during Lent in daring to make a difference by living the words of Jesus. The idea is to learn some of the words of Jesus Christ by heart each day and then pray that God will give us the chance to put them into action. Read it, learn it, pray it, do it! The short daily passages, all taken from the Gospel of Luke, will be downloadable from the internet and can be

distributed to members of the youth group or congregation (or in the case of schools, to the pupils). Alternatively you can opt to receive them by text message, email, Twitter or RSS. You will be able to register on the Challenge website at www.challenge2010.org from Advent Sunday. We hope that this challenge will be taken up by people in the churches, as well as seekers and enquirers who would like to explore the words of Jesus Christ. It would be great, for example, to advertise it at Christmas services. The Challenge website will give further details and ideas about how to make the Challenge a shared exercise within your congregation or among your friends. In particular you will be able to write comments on the website and upload short video clips, via YouTube, so that you can share with others what the passage means to you and how you have lived it out that day. **Third, you are invited to come and join** the Easter Monday Pilgrimage on 5th April at the Cathedral in St Albans. This year we are delighted that the community choir from South Oxhey (as featured on the television programme The Choir, led by Gareth Malone) will be with us. You can come by yourself, or with a group. We are inviting all the Lent Groups and those who have done the Challenge to be involved in the Pilgrimage and to make it a way to celebrate and to bring to God all that has been learned, all that has been done and pledges of future action. This will be a wonderful way to express our individual and our corporate commitment to our risen Lord and Saviour, in whose resurrection life we dare to make a difference in our communities and in the world. Details of the day may be found at www.stalbans.anglican.org/Mission/Easter-Monday-Pilgrimage, and on the Challenge website at www.challenge2010.org Written by the Bishops of St Albans, Hertford and Bedford

Bless to us, O God, the road that is before us, bless to us, O God, the family and friends who are around us, bless to us O God, the love that is within us, bless to us, O God, the light that leads us home.

Home Groups

Would you consider having a Homegroup meeting in your house this Lent? There are six sessions planned in the course, however you could do perhaps three and ask folks to do the others themselves at home? If you are interested then please speak with one of the ministers.

If you do not have time to visit a homegroup, then you can still participate by downloading the material from the Diocesan website www.stalbans.anglican.org

Haiti appeal passes £80,000 mark

Donations to the Church's World Mission Fund have reached more than £37,000 by this morning. The Fund gave an immediate grant of £20,000 on 13 January, and the money raised through this appeal will allow for continued support. So far, donations to MRDF have reached £46,000. Donations have come from the Methodist Church in Ireland and people all over Great Britain and will go directly to the Church in Haiti, which is distributing aid to those most in need.

Expressing his gratitude for the initial grant, Revd Gesner Paul District President of the Methodist Church in Haiti, said; "We thank you for standing near us at this time of severe difficulty and continue to count on your support by any means as we try to recover from this very traumatic disaster."

Revd Tom Quenet, Methodist Partnership Coordinator for the Americas and the Caribbean said; "We continue to be amazed by people's generosity. While Haiti will remain in the news for a little while, we are in it for the long haul. We will continue to work with the Methodist Church in Haiti, helping them to rebuild their lives and communities long after the news crews have gone."

In February, Tom hopes to lead a visit by a group of British Methodist representatives to the country. This will also include Lord Griffiths of Burry Port, who was ordained in Haiti, and Haitian minister Revd Marcus Torchon, whose family have been affected by the disaster.

Donations to MRDF will also support the work being carried out by the Methodist Church in Haiti, as well as the relief efforts of the charity's emergency partner, Action by Churches Together (ACT) International. ACT is providing counselling services and water and sanitation engineers, who will construct water purification systems and latrines that will help in the fight against cholera and other water-based diseases.

Donations through both ACT and the World Mission Fund will provide food, water, blankets and tents to thousands of people, as well as other essential support to those affected by the disaster.

Kirsty Smith, MRDF Director, said; "We are deeply grateful to everyone who has supported our appeal. These gifts will help to reinforce the relief efforts on the ground. The earthquake has caused major devastation to a country that was already battling extreme poverty. Key services and institutions have been totally destroyed. We will continue to do all that we can to make a difference."

People can donate via the Methodist Church by visiting www.justgiving.com/Methodist-Church-Haiti-Appeal, or sending a cheque payable to the World Mission Fund to Dave Bennett, Fundraising Coordinator, at Methodist Church House, 25 Marylebone Road, London, NW1 5JR. Postal donations should be labelled 'Haiti Appeal'. For further information visit www.methodist.org.uk or contact Revd Tom Quenet on 020 7467 5160.

To donate via MRDF, visit www.mrdf.org.uk or call 020 7224 4814 to give by debit or credit card, or send a cheque made payable 'MRDF (Haiti emergency)' and to MRDF, 25 Marylebone Road, London NW1 5JR.

Mission Coffee Morning on Saturday 13th February 10am to 12noon at the home of John and Sally Gunning, 23 Brecon Way. Raffle. Proceeds to Mission Projects. All Welcome.—Sylvia Cohen 343424

1st Putnoe Brownies are looking for adult size plain round neck t- shirts to decorate for the blue peter appeal "Operation Smile". The T shirts are to be used as operation gowns for children undergoing cleft palate surgery in India. Please leave for Liz.

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.

Vera Marsh
Violet Merryman

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 Hubbard will take place at Putnoe Heights Church on Friday 5 February at 10.00am

The funeral of Mr John Grant will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Wednesday 3 February at 12.15pm

The funeral of Betty Zuckerman will take place at Bedford Crematorium on Friday 12 February at 11.30am