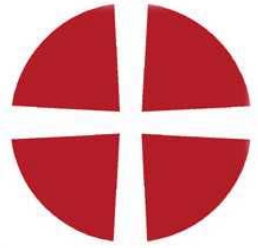




Putnoe Heights & St. Mark's Church

The Church of England and the
Methodist Church in Partnership



Candlemas

Family Service

31 January 2010

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.

**A light for revelation to the Gentiles
and for glory to your people Israel.**
Luke Chapter 2 verse 32

INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

Minister:

Dear friends: forty days ago we celebrated the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now we recall the day on which he was presented in the Temple, when he was offered to the Father and shown to his people. As a sign of his coming among us, his mother was purified, as we now come to him for cleansing. In their old age Simeon and Anna recognised him as their Lord, as we today sing of his glory. Today we celebrate both the joy of his coming and his searching judgement, looking back to the day of his birth and forward to the coming days of his passion.

All:

Almighty Father, whose Son Jesus Christ was presented in the Temple and acclaimed the light of the nations: grant that in him we may be presented to you and in the world may reflect his glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and for ever. Amen.

The following responses are used as the church candles are lit

Minister: The Lord is the strength of my life
The Lord is my light and my salvation

Minister: Jesus Christ is the light of the world
All: A light which no darkness can quench

HYMN

Christ is made the sure foundation 73

CONFESSION

Minister: Jesus says, 'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me shall not walk in darkness but will have the light of life.' Let us then bring our secret sins into his light and confess them in penitence and faith.

All: **Father eternal, giver of light and grace,
we have sinned against you
and against our neighbour,
in what we have thought,
in what we have said,
in what we have done
and in what we have not done.
We have not loved you with our whole heart
we have not loved our neighbours as ourselves.
we are truly sorry
and turn away from what is wrong.
For the sake of your Son,
Jesus Christ, who died for us,
forgive us all that is past;
and lead us out from darkness
to walk as children of light. Amen.**

The minister will declare the words of forgiveness

PRAISE

The congregation will stand

Minister: O Lord open our lips
All: **And our mouth shall proclaim your praise**
Minister: Let us worship the Lord
All: **All praise to his name**

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son,
and to the Holy Spirit.
As it was in the beginning,
is now and shall be for ever. Amen.**

HYMN 99 Mission Praise

THE OFFERING

*After the offering is collected it may be brought forward.
The people stand as it is presented and say*

Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours. All things come from you, and of your own do we give you

THE MINISTRY OF GOD'S WORD

The Collect of the Day



Almighty and ever-living God, clothed in majesty, whose beloved Son was this day presented in the Temple, in substance of our flesh: grant that we may be presented to you with pure and clean hearts, by your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

The reader introduces the reading and announces the page number in the pew bibles. At the end of the reading the following words are used

**Malachi 3:1-5, Hebrews 2:14-18 &
Luke Chapter 2 : verses 22-40**

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

HYMN 125 Mission Praise
(sung to tune faithful vigil)

THE SERMON
The Reverend Stephen Copson
STATEMENT OF FAITH

**All I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.**

**On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.
Amen**

HYMN

BLESSING AND DISTRIBUTION OF CANDLES

Simeon calls Jesus "a light to enlighten the Gentiles." Accordingly this day was made into Candlemas, 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 are reminded of the need to be prepared to burn brightly ourselves in the midst of this dark world. We take a light away this morning, 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 could overcome. Jesus was a light to lighten the gentiles, all the nations and races and culture of people. Bless these candles Lord, that through the prayer we offer as we light them, your light may shine brightly in our lives.

The Candlemas Prayer

Lord God, you are the source of everlasting light.
Your son, our beloved Lord Jesus
was presented in the temple 40 days after his birth.
He was recognised by Simeon and Anna,
and welcomed as the promised Messiah.
May we like them, behold the glory of the Lord Jesus.
Grant that we may stand before you
with hearts cleansed by your forgiving love.
May we serve you all our days
and make your name known
as we worship you as our Lord.
So may we come by your grace
to eternal life .
Amen.

PRAYERS

This response may be used:

Leader: Lord, in your mercy:

All: **hear our prayer.**
ending with

Leader: Merciful Father,

All: **Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Collect for the morning
(said together)

Almighty and everlasting Father, we thank you that you have brought us safely to the beginning of this day. Keep us from falling into sin or running into danger; order us in all our doings; and guide us to do always what is right in your eyes; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN 302

THE BLESSING

Minister: Go in the light and peace of Christ
to love and serve the Lord.

All: **Thanks be to God. Amen.**

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