



St Mark's Church Bedford



St Mark's Church is The Church of England
and the Methodist Church in Partnership

Family Service 6 March 2005

Welcome

We welcome to our service today especially the family and friends of Madeline Grace Foster and Katie Jo Reynolds who have been brought for baptism.

Verses from Scripture

How often have I longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. *Matthew Chapter 23:37*

Where can I go from your spirit? If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. *Psalms 139.7, 9-10,*

(please join with words in bold type)

We praise you, our God, for all mothers who have loved and laughed and laboured as they cared for their children.

Blessed be God for ever.

We praise you, our God, for all mothers who have wept in sorrow and joy for their children.

Blessed be God for ever.

We praise you, our God, for Jesus,
born of a woman and nurtured in her love, and for Mary,
a reminder of your patient, waiting love.

Blessed be God for ever.

HYMN

Praise, my soul, the King of heaven,
to his feet thy tribute bring;
ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
who like me his praise should sing?
Alleluia, Alleluia,
praise the everlasting King.

Praise him for his grace and favour
to our fathers in distress;
praise him still the same as ever,
slow to chide, and swift to bless:
Alleluia, Alleluia,
glorious in his faithfulness.

Father like, he tends and spares us,
well our feeble frame he knows;
in his hands he gently bears us,
rescues us from all our foes:
Alleluia, Alleluia,
widely as his mercy flows.

Angels, help us to adore him;
ye behold him face to face;
sun and moon, bow down before him,
dwellers all in time and space:
Alleluia, Alleluia,
praise with us the God of grace.

CONFESSION

Let us call to mind our sin, our failure to value the love of others and our failure to love as Christ has loved us.

All

Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and repent. Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin. Renew a right spirit within us and restore us to the joy of your salvation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

The Lord enrich *you* with his grace, and nourish *you* with his blessing; the Lord defend *you* in trouble and keep *you* from all evil; the Lord accept *your* prayers, and absolve *you* from *your* offences, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour.

All **Amen**

All Blessed is the Lord
for he has heard the voice of our prayer

All therefore shall our hearts dance for joy
and in our song will we praise our God

THE OFFERING

*After the offering is collected it is to 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.

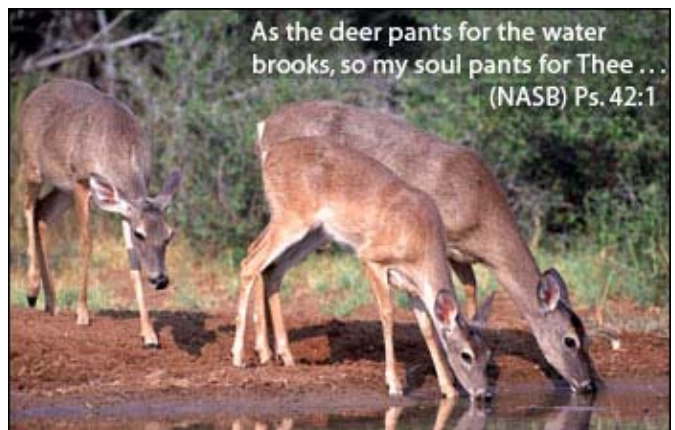
HYMN

As the deer pants for the water, so my soul longs after you.
You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you.

*You alone are my strength, my shield, to you alone may my spirit yield.
You alone are my heart's desire and I long to worship you.*

I want you more than gold or silver, only you can satisfy.
You alone are the real joy-giver and the apple of my eye.

You're my Friend
and you are my Brother,
even though you are a king.
I love you more than any other,
so much more than anything.



THE BAPTISM

We bring these children whom God has entrusted to us and claim for them all that Christ has won for us. Christ loves them and is ready to receive them with the arms of his mercy and to give to them the blessing of eternal life. Children are brought to be baptized with water as a sign of the new life in Christ and to be made members of God's family the Church.

THE WATER IS BLESSED

Almighty God whose Son Jesus Christ was baptized in the River Jordan: we thank you for the gift of water to cleanse and revive us. Bless this water that your *servants* who are washed in it may be made one with Christ in his death and in his resurrection, to be cleansed and delivered from all sin. Send your Holy Spirit upon them to bring them to new birth in the family of your Church, and raise them with Christ to full and eternal life. For all might, majesty, authority and power are yours, now and for ever. **Amen**

THE PROMISES OF THE CHURCH

Congregation, please stand

Members of the Body of Christ, who are now in his name to receive these children, will you so maintain the common life of worship and service that they and all children in this church may grow in grace and in the knowledge and love of God and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord?

With God's help, we will

Congregation say

Heavenly Father, in your love you have called us to know you, led us to trust you, and bound our life with yours. Surround these children with your love; protect them from evil; fill them with your Holy Spirit and receive them into the family of your church; that they may walk with us in the way of Christ and grow in the knowledge of your love. Amen.

THE PROMISES OF PARENTS AND GODPARENTS

The parents and godparents will be invited to gather around the font, Please bring with you your service sheets.

Those who bring children to be baptized must affirm their allegiance to Christ and their rejection of all that is evil. It is your duty to bring up this child to fight against evil and to follow Christ. Therefore I ask these questions which you must answer for yourselves and for this child.

Minister	Do you turn to Christ?
Parents and godparents	I turn to Christ
	Do you repent of your sins?
	I repent of my sins
	Do you renounce evil?
	I renounce evil

The Minister says to the parents:

Do you then present your child to be baptized?

Parents please respond

We do

The Minister takes the child to be baptised and says:

(Name) I baptize you in the name of the Father,
and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.
I sign with the cross, the sign of Christ.

Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

The minister will invite the congregation to say:

Fight valiantly under the banner of Christ against sin, the world and the devil, and continue his faithful soldier and servant to the end of your life.

THE GIVING OF A LIGHTED CANDLE

*A lighted candle is given to each child. The minister says,
Receive this light...this is to show that you have passed
from darkness to light.*

The congregation will be invited to respond:

Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father.

THE WELCOME

Representing the whole Church we all welcome the newly baptized children.

Minister: God has received you by baptism into his Church.

All say: **We welcome you into the Lord's family.**

We are members together of the Body of Christ:

We are children of the same heavenly Father:

We are inheritors together of the Kingdom of God.

We welcome you.



THE COLLECT PRAYER & BIBLE READINGS

*Please turn to the collect prayer and
Bible readings in Partnership News*

HYMN

- 1 The Spirit lives to set us free, walk, walk in the light.
He binds us all in unity, walk, walk in the light.

*Walk in the light, walk in the light,
walk in the light, walk in the light of the Lord*

- 2 Jesus promised life to all, walk, walk in the light.
The dead were wakened by his call, walk, walk in the light.

- 3 He died in pain on Calvary, walk, walk in the light,
to save the lost like you and me, walk, walk in the light.

- 4 We know his death was not the end, walk, walk in the light.
He gave his Spirit to be our friend, walk, walk in the light.

- 5 By Jesus' love our wounds are healed, walk, walk in the light.
The Father's kindness is revealed, walk, walk in the light.

- 6 The Spirit lives in you and me, walk, walk in the light.
His light will shine for all to see, walk, walk in the light.

THE SERMON

The Reverend Neil Bramble-Chapman

Prayer and Distribution Of Flowers

O God bless these flowers, bless us and bless our mothers. May these flowers remind us how much our mothers have done for us; may they remind our mothers that we love them; and may they remind us all that God cares for each one of us, because we are all his children. Amen.

PRAYERS

Gathering our prayers and praises into one,
let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

The 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.**

HYMN

Go forth and tell! O church of God awake!
God saving news to all the nations take.
Proclaim Christ Jesus, Saviour, Lord and King.
That all the world His worthy praise may sing.

Go forth and tell! God's love embraces all.
He will in grace respond to all who call.
How shall they call if they have never heard,
the gracious invitation of his word.

Go forth and tell! Some still in darkness lie.
In wealth or want, in sin they live and die.
Give us, O Lord, concern of heart and mind.
A love like yours which cares for all mankind.

Go forth and tell! The doors are open wide.
Share God's good gifts with people long denied.
Live out your life as Christ, your Lord, shall choose,
Your ransomed powers for His sole glory use.

THE BLESSING

May the Lord who brought us to birth by his Spirit,
strengthen us for the Christian life.
May the Lord who provides for all our needs
sustain us day by day.
May the Lord whose steadfast love
is constant as a mother's care,
send us out to live and work for others.

And the blessing of God Almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be with you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

*Thank you to all those who have helped make ready our churches,
prepared flowers or helped us in our worship this morning.*