

St Mark's Church, Bedford

An Order of Service for the Celebration of Holy Communion

Christmas Eve



*Do this in remembrance of me
Luke Chapter 22 Verse 22*

**Awake ! For your sake God was made man !
Awake ! O sleeper, and arise from the dead,
and Christ shall give you light**

For your sake, I say, God was made man

Saint Augustine

THE PREPARATION

The minister welcomes the people using these or other appropriate words

Minister: God is made flesh and laid in a narrow manger
Tonight we see God as a new born child
The Lord is here.

All: His Spirit is with us.

**All: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

A HYMN may be sung

CONFESSION

Minister: Christ the Light of the World has come to dispel the darkness of our hearts. In his light let us examine ourselves and confess our sins

**All: Almighty God, our heavenly Father,
we have sinned against you
and against each other,
in thought and word and deed,
in the evil we have done
and the good we have not done,
through ignorance, through weakness,
through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry and repent of all our sins.
For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ,
who died for us, forgive us all that is past;
and grant that we may serve you in newness
of life to the glory of your name. Amen.**

The minister will declare the words of forgiveness

KYRIE ELEISON

(said)

Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.

THE OFFERING

Thank you to those who have presented their gifts by standing order, through the bank. If you are a tax payer please use Gift Aid envelopes to enable us reclaim tax.

After the offering is collected it may be brought forward with the bread and wine. The people stand as it is presented and say or sing

**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

Let us pray in the peace of this Christmas celebration that our joy in the birth of Christ will last for ever.

Almighty God, as we prepare with joy to celebrate the gift of the Christ-child, embrace the earth with your glory and be for us a living hope in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

FIRST & SECOND READING

Reader: The Epistle/Old Testament reading is taken from
..... (name of book)
chapterbeginning at verse.....

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-11, 16
Acts 13:16-26

At the end of the reading

Reader: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

GOSPEL READING *all stand*

Reader: The Holy Gospel is taken from the Gospel
according to Luke Chapter 1 Verses 67-79..

All: Glory to Christ our Saviour.

At the end of the reading

Reader: This is the Gospel of Christ.

All: Praise to Christ our Lord.

THE SERMON

AN AFFIRMATION OF FAITH :

THE APOSTLES' CREED *may be said*

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ,
God's 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.**

THE PRAYERS

The prayers may include the following or some other responses

Leader: Lord in your mercy.

All: Hear our prayer.

The prayers end with

Leader: Merciful Father.

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

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.**

THE MINISTRY OF THE SACRAMENT

THE PEACE

Minister: Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given;
and his name is called the Prince of Peace.

Minister: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All: And also with you.

*You may wish to exchange a sign of peace
and shake hands with those around you*

A HYMN *may be sung*

THE PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

Minister: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

Minister: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

Minister: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, it is our joy and salvation,
always and everywhere to give you thanks and praise
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

Through him you have created all things and made us in your own
image. Through his death on the cross and resurrection you freed us
from sin and opened the way to everlasting life.

Through him you have sent your Holy Spirit, calling us to be your
people, a community of faith.

Nothing can separate us from your love.

And now we give you thanks because in the incarnation of the Word,
a new light has dawned upon the world; you have become one with
us, that we might become one with you in your glorious kingdom.

Therefore with angels and archangels,
and with all the company of heaven,
we proclaim your great and glorious name,
for ever praising you and saying:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We praise you, Lord God, creator and sustainer of the universe. Grant that by the power of your Holy Spirit these gifts of bread and wine may be to us the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, who on the night that he was betrayed, took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying,

‘Take, eat; this is my body which is broken for you.
Do this in remembrance of me.’

In the same way, after supper, he took the cup and gave you thanks, and gave it to them, saying,

‘This is my blood of the new covenant poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.’

**Christ has died.
Christ is risen.
Christ will come again.**

Send down your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine may be for us the body and blood of Christ. Unite us with him for ever and bring us with the whole creation to your eternal kingdom.

**Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ,
in the power of the Holy Spirit,
we worship you in songs of everlasting praise.
Blessing and honour and glory and power
be yours for ever and ever. Amen.**

Minister: The bread we break
is a sharing in the body of Christ.

**All: Though we are many, we are one body
because we all share in one bread.**

Agnus Dei

(said)

**Jesus, Lamb of God, have mercy on us.
Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.
Jesus, redeemer of the world,
grant us your peace.**

Before the bread and wine is given we sit or kneel for the prayer of humble access

**Most merciful Lord,
your love compels us to come in.
Our hands were unclean our hearts were unprepared;
we were not fit even to eat the crumbs from under
your table.
But you, Lord, are the God of our salvation,
and share your bread with sinners.
So cleanse us and feed us
with the precious body and blood of your Son,
that he may live in us and we in him;
and that we, with the whole company of Christ,
may sit and eat in your kingdom. Amen.**

Draw near with faith. Receive the body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, and his blood which was shed for you. Eat and drink in remembrance that he died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith with thanksgiving. **Amen.**

AFTER COMMUNION

God our Father, in this night you have made known to us again the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ: confirm our faith and fix our eyes on him until the day dawns and Christ the Morning Star rises in our hearts. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.

THE PRAYER SAID AFTER COMMUNION

**We thank you Lord,
that you have fed us in this sacrament
with the body and blood of your Son
Jesus Christ
and given us a foretaste of the heavenly
banquet prepared for all people.
Through him we offer you our souls and
bodies to be a living sacrifice.
Send us out
in the power of your Spirit
to live and work
to your praise and glory. Amen.**

A HYMN *may be sung*

THE DISMISSAL

Minister: May Christ, who by his incarnation gathered into one things earthly and heavenly, fill you with joy and peace.

All: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.
In the name of Christ. Amen.

Information about Communion

Communion is now received and you will be invited forward. At the distribution the minister will say words of administration to which the communicant may reply, **AMEN.**

If you would like communion brought to you, please remain in your seat and inform the communion steward.

All are welcome, to receive the bread and wine, but if for any reason you do not wish to receive, then please bring this order of service with you and hold it in your hand. The minister will then know not to offer the sacrament to you and will say a prayer of blessing instead.

Children at Communion. Children are welcome to take communion. The Ministers will be pleased to speak with children and adults about growing our appreciation of the sacrament.

Confirmation. You do not have to be confirmed to take communion in our church.

If you would like gluten free bread. Please advise the minister at the administration.

If you wish to partake only of the bread, take the chalice or glass as it is presented and then give it back without drinking.

You are welcome to intinct, by holding the wafer and dipping the tip of the wafer into the chalice. Please ensure that you dip only the tip of the wafer, you must not allow your fingers to touch the wine.

Prayer for Christian Healing

In our services of Holy Communion everybody is offered the opportunity to receive a prayer for Christian healing. If you wish to receive this prayer please cross your arms over your chest when you come forward to receive the bread and the wine. Before administering the bread and wine the minister will pray the following prayer

'In the name of God and trusting in his might alone, receive Christ's healing touch to make you whole. May Christ bring you wholeness of body, mind, and spirit, deliver you from every evil, and give you his peace.'