



**St Mark's Church
Bedford**



An Order of Service for Christian Baptism

**Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,
baptising them in the name of the Father
and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
and teaching them everything
I have commanded you.**
Matthew Chapter 28 Verse 20

Presentation of Children for Baptism

The child is brought forward and the minister says to the congregation

Jesus said, "Let the children come to me and do not stop them". So I ask you all: Will you help this child (*these children*) to become part of God's family?

All With the help of God we will.

The minister then says to the parents and godparents

You have brought this child to baptism and speak for them today. As we trust God for their growth in faith, will you promise to care for them, pray for them, and help them to follow Christ?

All We will.

The Decision

The minister addresses the parent and godparents

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him. Therefore I ask:

Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against God?
I reject them.

Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?
I renounce them.

Do you repent of the sins that separate us from God and neighbour?
I repent of them.

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?
I turn to Christ.

Do you submit to Christ as Lord?
I submit to Christ.

Do you come to Christ, the way, the truth and the life?
I come to Christ.

Prayer over the Water

The minister stands before the water of baptism and says

All Praise God who made heaven and earth,
who keeps his promise for ever.

All Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give thanks and praise.

We thank you, almighty God, for the gift of water to sustain, refresh and cleanse all life. Over water the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through water you led the children of Israel from slavery in Egypt to freedom in the Promised Land. In water your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us from the death of sin to newness of life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, in joyful obedience to your Son, we baptize into his fellowship those who come to him in faith.

All Now sanctify this water that, by the power of your Holy Spirit, they may be cleansed from sin and born again. Renewed in your image, may they walk by the light of faith and continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Lord; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be all honour and glory, now and for ever.
Amen.

Profession of Faith

The minister addresses the congregation

Brothers and sisters, I ask you to profess together with these candidates the faith of the Church. Let us affirm, together with these who are being baptized, our common faith in Jesus Christ.

Do you believe in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

All **I believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

All **I believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

All **I believe and trust in him.**

This the faith of the Church.

All **This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

The minister pours water on the child saying

N, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All **Amen.**

Signing with the Cross

The minister makes the sign of the cross on the forehead saying

Christ claims you for his own.
Receive the sign of his cross.

The minister says

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

All **Fight valiantly as a disciple of Christ
against sin, the world and the devil,
and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.**

May almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness, restore in you the image of his glory, and lead you in the light and obedience of Christ.

All **Amen.**

The minister says

May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church, pour upon you the riches of his grace, that within the company of Christ's pilgrim people you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit, and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory.

All **Amen.**

The Giving of the Lighted Candle

The minister says gives a lighted candle

Receive this candle, this is to show that you have passed from darkness to light

All **Shine as a light in the world,
to the glory of God the Father**

Commission

The minister addresses the congregation, parent and godparents

We have brought this child to baptism knowing that Jesus died and rose again for them and trusting in the promise that God hears and answers prayer. We have prayed that in Jesus Christ they will know the forgiveness of their sins and the new life of the Spirit.

As they grow up, they will need the help and encouragement of the Christian community, so that they may learn to know God in public worship and private prayer, follow Jesus Christ in the life of faith, serve their neighbour after the example of Christ, and in due course come to confirmation.

As part of the Church of Christ, we all have a duty to support them by prayer, example and teaching. As their parents and godparents, you have the prime responsibility for guiding and helping them in their early years. This is a demanding task for which you will need the help and grace of God. Therefore let us now pray for grace in guiding these children in the way of faith.

**All Faithful and loving God,
 bless those who care for this child
 and grant them your gifts of love, wisdom and faith.
 Pour upon them your healing and reconciling love,
 and protect their home from all evil.
 Fill them with the light of your presence
 and establish them in the joy of your kingdom,
 through Jesus Christ our Lord.
 Amen.**

Christian Baptism

Most parents feel a need to say 'thank you' to someone for the wonderful gift of their child, that 'someone' is of course the God who gives life to us all. Jesus told his disciples to baptise people who wanted to become Christians and join the church. The Bible tells us that whole households were being baptised and of course soon parents wanted their children to be baptised too.

Baptism is not like an insurance policy which you take out to make sure that your baby goes to heaven, God loves your child just as much now as after the baptism service. However it does make sense to give your child the very best start in life and what could be better than to encourage them from the very earliest days to be open to God and to know of His love for them.

Some churches do not baptise children until they are old enough to understand everything for themselves. However we do make all kinds of decisions on behalf of our children including schools and medical treatment as we do our best to encourage them in the best way for their lives. We are pleased that you have decided to give your child the benefit of being welcomed into the church family, now please take the effort to bring them along to church throughout these early years so that they can have the Christian start that they deserve. In the baptism service we also pray that one day they will want as adults to stand up for themselves to confirm the baptism vows which have been made on their behalf at Confirmation.

If you would like a chance to think more about the Christian faith then you may like to join one of our beginners groups which attract people of all ages and can lead to confirmation. Please ask the ministers for more details.