

THE MILLAR'S TALE

'Thank God for the Church!'

Thanking God for the church may not be a statement we hear very often these days. If anything we tend to hear the negatives - 'the church has let me down', 'the church would be great if it wasn't for the people', 'the church is an irrelevant institution', 'the church is dying', etc, etc.

For sure, we can easily shoot arrows at the church, we can shoot arrows at St George's and how it fails to reach its potential. It is easy to do this but today let's stop to give thanks. Can you imagine what it would be like without the church? Where would the world be? Where would our nation be? Where would you be if it weren't for St G's?

For all its faults, we owe a great deal to the church, to our church. Having tried to be a Christian without it, (and failed!) I know how important the local church is to me. It 'feeds' and encourages and cares for and inspires me, it keeps reminding me of what is really important and keeps me accountable, it has shown me I matter and given me opportunities to serve, it has forgiven and restored me, it has provided me with fantastic friends. I could go on and on!

Do we stop to give thanks for the church often enough? Do we stop to think of our place in it often enough? I don't think so. I'm glad that we have an opportunity to do that today because I believe the church, our church, is worth celebrating!

There's a song that sums it up for me. We haven't sung it (it's a bit 70's!) for years. Nonetheless the words are still relevant. It's called **The Celebration Song** and it goes like this:

For our life together we celebrate, life that lasts forever we celebrate,
For the joy and for the sorrow, yesterday, today, tomorrow, we celebrate.

For your great creation we celebrate, for our own salvation we celebrate,
For the sun and for the rain, through the joy and through the pain, we celebrate.

Chorus: Ah, There's the celebration (x3) Celebrate, the whole of it!

For his body broken we celebrate, for the word he's spoken we celebrate,
For the feasting at his table, by his grace, we are able to celebrate.

For the Lord above we celebrate, for our Father of love we celebrate,
For the Son who is our brother, for his Spirit, for the 3 together, we celebrate.

Chorus: Ah, There's the celebration (x3) Ah! There's the celebration!