



St Margaret's Church

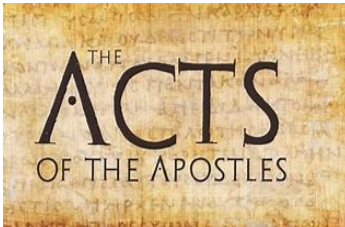
Together we aim to: Worship God, Proclaim Jesus, Grow in the Spirit and Serve the World

In Contact

19th January 2025

ACTS 1: 12-26

Making Good Choices



Have you ever been in a situation where you have had difficult choices to make? In today's passage we see the disciples making a choice about who should replace Judas Iscariot, the disciple who had betrayed Jesus and subsequently taken his own life.

The disciples have come down from the Mount of Olives after Jesus had ascended to heaven, to wait in the city of Jerusalem as Jesus had instructed. There they had devoted themselves to prayer in the temple and in the upper room which had become their base.

The fact that the subject of Judas Iscariot was linked with this time of prayer shows that he lay heavy on their hearts. Even now two thousand years later the actions of Judas don't make sense, and to the disciples this must have been one of those unanswerable enigmas which kept going round and round in their heads.

When we only have questions; the answer is to pray.

What do you think they were praying?

They had at their disposal a wide variety of set prayers: the Shema, which is a daily prayer ritual and the Abidah, a series of formal blessings, and they had the Lord's prayer along with the prayers of their hearts.

We know that prayer is many things: talking to God, asking God for things, expressing our love and gratitude. Prayer can be a conversation where we speak and listen for God's guidance and wisdom, and a way to seek His will and find peace in His presence.

Then Peter stands up, this is an indication that he is taking the leadership role that Jesus had planned for him, and in response to the subject of Judas, he quotes from the Psalms verses that refer to Judas:

'Let his homestead become desolate and let there be no one to live in it'; Psalm 69: 25

And *'Let another take his position of overseer.'* Psalm 109: 8

This combination, seeking the will of God in prayer, and Scripture, which is the word of God, is very powerful for what follows.

Then the believers acted. They decided that the right candidate should be someone who had been with them from the first and who had also witnessed Christ's resurrection.

Two men were found. They were obviously both suitable candidates: Joseph Barsabbas Justus and Matthias. However, rather than putting it to a vote of the assembly the disciples cast lots, like tossing a coin.

This sounds like a strange thing to do but, in those days, it was a valid way to seek out the will of God and it prevented any notion of favouritism on behalf of the assembly. The lot fell to Matthias, and he was added to the apostles.

Matthias and Joseph the Just were not heard of again but perhaps the important point is that neither was Judas Iscariot, which perhaps enabled the believers to move on to Pentecost and the birth and growth of the church of God.



Peter Miller

Bible Verse for 2025: *Philippians 4.4*

Rejoice in the LORD always. I will say again : Rejoice!

This week- Sunday 19th January 2025 :

Family Communion at 10.30am: Peter Miller will be preaching from Acts 1. 12-26 on the theme: **Making good Choices.**

Eco Stepping Stones: A four week exploration into how we can address the Climate Crisis across our churches, missions & communities, starting 23rd January, in person & on Zoom. Please see Chris Rogers for more information.

Next Week 26th January 2025:

Morning Worship at 10.30am: Matt will be preaching from Acts 2. 1-12 on the theme: **Ready for Growth.**

CW Communion at 3pm.

Prayer Service at 7pm.

January 19th – 25th, Please Pray for:

- People living in Calverley Avenue, Burnage Hall Road & Burnham Drive.
- Thoughtful discussions & wise decisions at PCC meeting on Monday.
- Funeral of Martin Gee from Western Circle on Tuesday at crematorium.
- Matt & Jane meeting Foodbank Project Manager on Wed to support her performance.
- Encouragement & prayers at Open Doors World Watch List online event on Wed.
- Matt doing peer review on Thursday of a clergy person for their Ministerial Review.
- Matt doing safeguarding training on Saturday.
- Jude Witt of Dignity & family as she recovers from a broken ankle.

Next Week:

New book to mark our 150th 'Continuing His-Story', the story of God's faithfulness to St. Margaret's over the last 25 years through the recollections of past and present members and reprints of **'Celebration 125'**, the history of the church 1875 – 2000 are available now. Books are £5 each and can be obtained from Susan Whittaker.

Work party: there will be a work party to do a tidy up and spring clean of church on Saturday 8th February, 10am to 12:30pm. If interested, please see Chris Rogers.

HOMEGROUPS– these are small groups that meet on Tuesday Evening and Wednesday afternoon and evening where they study the Bible, pray and support one another. If you would be interested , see Mark Stansfield.

Coming up:

Celebration of Marriages: 16th February. Who can you give an invitation to?

If you are visiting St Margaret's for the first time we hope you will enjoy worshipping with us today.

For more information please visit our website: www.stmargaretsburnage.org.uk

Come and join us for tea or coffee after the service.



Burnage Tesco, Burnage Library
(when open) and Asda Reddish

MOST NEEDED: Please concentrate on Long life milk, Long life fruit juice, Tinned meat, Cooking Oil. Basmati Rice plus some Sugar.