



St Margaret's Church

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

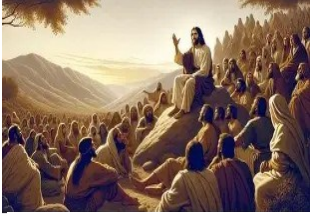
In Contact

1st February 2026

Matthew 5. 1 -12

Jesus revealed through his words

Psalms 15. 1-5



20th January 2009. The USA had elected their first ever Afro-American president. The crowds gathered. After being sworn in, Barack Obama stood up on a platform to make his inaugural address. The world watched.

It was by no means his first public speech, but it was his first as president. His first words: *"My fellow citizens, I stand here today humbled by the task before us, grateful for the trust you've bestowed, mindful of the sacrifices borne by our ancestors."*

A.D. 30. A new itinerant preacher has risen to fame in the often overlooked area of Galilee. Jesus of Nazareth has been revealed as the beloved Son of God and the Lamb of God, and has begun His public ministry. He has taught and He has healed many. The crowds gathered. Jesus sat down having climbed a mountain to enable as many as possible to gather round Him. The people watched. It was by no means His first speech, but it was His first to be recorded. His first words: *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

Unlike Obama, Jesus did not have a team of skilled speech writers producing draft after draft until they and the President Elect were satisfied. Jesus spoke from a deep knowledge of Scripture (eg. Psalm 1.1, 40.4, 128.1). Nowhere in Scripture or other Jewish literature is there a so long and so carefully constructed collection of such sayings. 8 clear sayings. Memorable. Powerful. Challenging. Radical. Transformative.

They are known to many of us as the 'Beatitudes'. This comes from the Latin word '*beatitudo*' used for the first word spoken by Jesus here. It is often translated as 'blessedness' or 'supreme happiness'. But Jesus would have spoken in Aramaic and Hebrew, and the text was written first in Greek. Scholars of New Testament Greek tell us that 'blessed' may not be the best translation. It is not the word used to describe one who is blessed by God but more, one who is fortunate. This is why some translations have gone for the word 'happy'. Sadly in English, 'happy' is more often seen as being in an upbeat state of mind. So it is perhaps best to stick with 'blessed'.

Each of these 8 sayings could make a sermon in their own right (and I have heard them done that way). Who are the blessed? The poor in spirit, the mourner, the meek, those hungry for righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peacemaker, and the persecuted. All the sayings are followed by a divine promise. Is there one that particularly speaks to you today? Thank God for this. Is there one that you would like to apply to you more? Ask the Lord for His help. Is there one that you are failing on? Seek the Lord's forgiveness.



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Bible Verse for 2026: *Isaiah 43.19, Philippians 3.14*

I am about to do a new thing... Press on towards the goal!

This week- Sunday 1st February 2026:

Holy Communion Service: at 10.30am. Matt will be speaking from Matthew 5. 1-12 on the theme: **'Jesus revealed through his words.'**

Next Week 8th February 2026:

Morning Worship Service: at 10.30am. Roger Dixon will be speaking from Exodus 24.12-18 on the theme: **'The Transfiguration'.**

BCP Communion at 3pm

February 1st – 7th, Please Pray for:

- People living in Lynton Drive, Orville Drive & Omer Drive.
- Interest, good attendance & openness to God at Youth Alpha starting February.
- Fresh inspiration of the Holy Spirit for the work of Open Doors.
- More people to join Tuesday Group.
- Motto 2026 - "I am about to do good things" – eyes to see what this is.
- Motto 2026 - "Press on towards the goal" – courage to forward Kingdom of God.
- Andrew Peart and Bishop Walter planning for church planting in Bolivia.
- Possibility of part-time fund raiser for Foodbank so become more self-sufficient.

Looking Ahead:

Ash Wednesday: 18th February at 7.30pm. Mission Community Communion at St. Elisabeth's Reddish. If you want a daytime service, go to St Paul's Heaton Moor for 9.45am for an informal Cafe style communion with ashes.

Pancakes quiz night: 21st February at 6pm.

Bible Readers and Prayer Leaders: As we are mostly having 2 readings each week, it would be lovely to have them read by other voices. Would you be interested in joining the rota? See Matt or message Fiyin. Also, we could do with more people to join the rota to lead our prayers on Sundays? Is this you? Would you value some training before? See Matt.

Streaming our Services: Please note that some of our services are live streamed to YouTube via a camera that films a range of views, mainly of the front of church. As a result, you may be included in this filming. If you have any concerns about this please speak to the Rector (Matt) or Warden (Jane).



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

WINTER SHOPPING LIST: Please concentrate on Long life juice, Cordial, Long life milk, Spaghetti hoops, Tinned Tomatoes, Tinned Sweet Corn/Peas, Tinned cold meat, Jam/Chocolate spread, Tea/Coffee/Hot chocolate, Shampoo, Deodorant, Razors, Nappies baby wipes.