



# St Margaret's Church

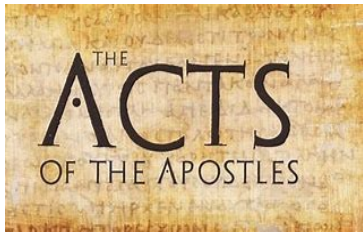
Together we aim to: Worship God, Proclaim Jesus, Grow in the Spirit and Serve the World

## In Contact

23<sup>rd</sup> February 2025

**ACTS 4: 23 -27**

## Boldness and Generosity



Last week, Matt preached on a very long passage (Acts 3:1 – 4:22) and made it easier, for himself and us, by dividing it into sections.

This week, our passage is much shorter and divides, very clearly, into two parts. The first (verses 23-31) focuses on Christian boldness and the second (verses 32-37) on Christian generosity. We do need, however, to look back at last week's passage and remind ourselves

of the background to today's passage.

Firstly, the apostles Peter and John, were in Jerusalem and Peter's prayer led to the miraculous healing of a lame beggar (Acts 3:1-10). The man leapt for joy and a crowd gathered. Secondly Peter preached to the crowd (Acts 3:11-26), focusing on Jesus' death and resurrection, Jesus' (not Peter's) healing of the lame man, and how the crowd needed to respond and come to faith. Finally Peter and John are arrested and imprisoned, because of their preaching about the resurrection. The next day (Acts 4:1-22) Peter and John are brought before the Sanhedrin and questioned about their actions and preaching. Peter responds boldly and ends by proclaiming "*Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God. For we cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard*". After further threats, the two apostles are released and today's passage begins with them reporting back to the other believers.

The first section (verses 23-31) focuses on their bold response, and particularly their boldness in prayer. We might have expected a desperate prayer, based on fear rather than boldness. We might have expected the prayer to begin with a cry for help but it doesn't. It begins (verse 24) with a focus on how great God is, and a quotation from Psalm 2 (verses 25 & 26) where David faced opposition from national leaders of his day. Finally, in verse 29, they make their specific request to God.

Are you reminded here, as I am, of different kinds of prayer.

**Firstly**, think of **ACTS** (Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving and finally Supplication).

Secondly, and especially for children, we have teaspoon prayer (**TSP**): thanks, sorry and please.

In his commentary on Acts 1-12, Tom Wright summarises their request as "Now, Lord, look on their threats, let us go on speaking boldly; and will you please continue to work powerfully."

How bold was that? What would our prayer have been, and what can we learn from this? Can the Holy Spirit embolden, equip and empower us in 2025?

**Secondly**, we have a section about generosity (verses 32-37) and the way that the early Church lived. This is similar to an earlier passage (Acts 2:42-47, particularly verses 44 and 45). There is an emphasis on sharing and giving to the needy. As we focus on generosity, are there lessons we can learn both individually, and as a Church? How can we apply these lessons in 2025?



Roger Dixon

## Bible Verse for 2025: *Philippians 4.4*

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

### This week- Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2025 :

**Morning Worship at 10.30am:** Roger Dixon will be preaching from Acts 4.23-37 on the theme: '**Boldness and Generosity.**'

**CW Communion at 3pm.**

### Next Week 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2025:

**Holy Communion at 10.30am:** Peter Miller will be preaching from Acts 5. 17-42 on the theme: '**Persecution.**'

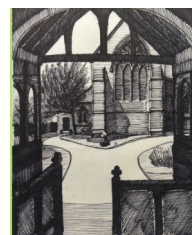
### February 23<sup>rd</sup> – 1<sup>st</sup> March Please Pray for:

- People living in Kingsway east side (Burnham Drive to Barcicroft Road).
- Creative Prayer on Tuesday exploring different ways to celebrate our wonderful God.
- Our sermons from Acts to inspire us all to work towards church growth.
- Wisdom about what to do next about low numbers at Kids' Club.
- Three or four families to join us in worship.
- The verse for 2025 to remind us this year "to rejoice in the Lord always". Phil 4.4
- CMS & TearFund helping victims of civil war in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo.
- "Arise Africa" campaign raising awareness of Christians displaced from their homes.

### Looking Ahead:

**Thank You:** A big thank you to all those who helped out at our Celebration of Marriage. It was well received and attended. Beth Chalk was our official photographer, Sue Stansfield baked an awesome cake, the flowers were fabulous, and many others helped with refreshments. Alan played some great love tunes on the piano and then the organ during the little service we had. Thanks to everyone.

**Lychgate:** Limited print copy of Tom Musgrove's painting of Lychgate and church available at £10 each. All numbered and signed by Tom.



**Ash Wednesday:** 5th March, service at St. Peters, Levenshulme, details to follow.

**Celebration Weekend:** 15th and 16th of March.

**Church Exhibition:** 'For our exhibition on the history of St Margaret's in March, we are looking for photos of our activities as a church over the years. A list of photos we are looking for is available from Ruth and Peter Miller.'

*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](http://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.