



St Margaret's Church

Together we aim to:

Worship God, Proclaim Jesus,

Grow in the Spirit and Serve the World

In Contact

Acts 1: 14-26

Restored Apostle

16th May 2021



How do you make decisions? Are you impulsive or do you procrastinate, putting off making the decision as much as you can? This incident in the Bible led Jesus' apostles to make a decision.

It starts and finishes with prayer, but different kinds of prayer.

Prayer (1)

"All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer" (verse 14). The mixed crowd included 11 apostles, women and the mother and brothers of Jesus. The number grew to 120. Jesus had told them to wait for the Holy Spirit. Their prayer was a waiting prayer. Many don't find waiting easy. But it is good to pray, waiting for God to speak to us. We may use a psalm, words of a hymn or song or music and give God time to speak to us.

Need

We often omit the waiting and start with need. The Apostles' need was to fill the place left vacant by Judas who had betrayed Jesus and committed suicide.

Scripture

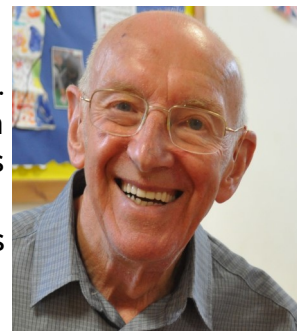
Peter, their spokesman, uses Scripture. He points out that what happened to Judas had been foretold in the Old Testament quoting Psalm 41:9 *"Even my bosom friend in whom I trusted who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me"*. Jesus used that verse on the night before He died. Peter also quoted Psalms 69 and 109:8 *"may another seize his position"*. When faced with a decision it is good to see if Scripture (the Bible) can help us. This may be by our regular reading of the Bible or something we hear in a sermon.

Criteria

Like a 'Person Specification' from an employer looking for an employee, the Apostles had criteria for the replacement. Verses 21-22 show he had to have been with them from the beginning and to have witnessed Jesus' resurrection. They had a short list of two. When faced with a decision we need to consider the options – even writing down 'for' and 'against' may help.

Prayer (2)

"Show us which one you have chosen". They prayed more specifically. Having gone through similar steps to the Apostles with our decision we may pray more specifically about our decision. They cast lots as they waited for the Holy Spirit. We have the Holy Spirit to guide us. Mathias was chosen – they had a Restored Apostle. A decision was made. Following these steps may help us make decisions.



Bible Verse for 2021:

I am about to do something new; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?

I will make a way in the wilderness, rivers in the desert.

Isaiah 43: 19



Daily Hope is a free phone line which offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

Delivering to Streets prior to prayer: We are starting this week to deliver a letter to all the homes we will be praying for from 23rd May. This informs the residence that we are praying for them and gives them the opportunity to reply with specific prayer requests. It is a big undertaking but is something we can do while restrictions still apply. If you would like to be a part of this, please let Matt know.

Next Week Sunday 23rd May Pentecost

We continue our sermon series theme of Restoration as Peter Miller preaches on Pentecost Restoring our Direction.

May 16th to 22nd Pray for:

- ♦ People living in Shawlea Ave, Woodlea Ave, Sunnylea Ave & Briarlea Gardens.
- ♦ Patient listening and wise decisions at PCC meeting on Monday.
- ♦ Helpful Diocesan Clergy Day Conference on Thursday.
- ♦ Useful involvement of TearFund with Christian "The Justice Conference" on Thursday.
- ♦ Spirit-filled celebration of Pentecost next Sunday (23rd).
- ♦ All church groups assessing what they have done, are now doing & can do in the future.
- ♦ Seeking for, & openness to, new things God is going to do amongst us. (Is 43.19)
- ♦ Couple in Santa Cruz reaching out to children and young people on the streets.

Television & Radio this Sunday:

BBC 1 - 10.30am: Sunday Morning Stories. Kate Bottley hears from people who have given up their time to help others, including a couple who offered their home to a Syrian refugee so he could pursue his dream of becoming a doctor.

BBC 1 - 13.15pm: Songs of Praise. Aled Jones explores the cathedral town of Exeter and in Dementia Action Week, Yolanda Brown meets one local woman helping people with dementia remain active.

BBC Radio 4 - 8.10am: The Rt Rev Jan McFarlane reflects on the Ascension of Christ in live worship from Lichfield Cathedral with the cathedral choir singing Ascensiontide hymns and anthems.

Help is available if you need it: **Call 0800 234 6123**

Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm & Saturday: 10am to 2pm