



St Margaret's Church

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

In Contact

21st April 2024



THE DAY OF ATONEMENT

In our "Foundations" series, from the Old Testament, we come, this week, to the Day of Atonement and Leviticus chapter 16. I have a few questions which are helping me prepare for my sermon and I will list them here, with basic answers. I plan to give you fuller answers on Sunday, without running overtime.

Our service is, after all, a Communion service, and we then aim to start our Annual Meeting at midday.

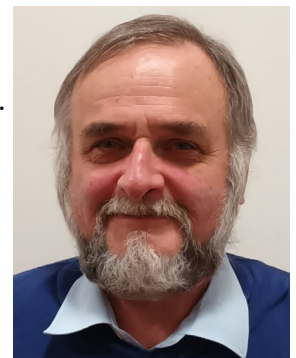
1. What is the context of this passage? Leviticus is written about the life of the people of Israel, travelling from Egypt to the "Promised Land", under the leadership of Moses. We are talking about roughly 1250-1210 B.C. and the first Temple was not built, in Jerusalem, until approximately 965 B.C. The sacrifices and other ceremonies, mentioned in today's passage, took place outside, or inside, the Tabernacle. More about that on Sunday.

2. What does "atonement" mean? Here are some definitions. Firstly it is the "action of making amends for a wrong or injustice". In religious contexts it is "reparation or expiation for sin" and I leave you to look up "reparation" and "expiation", if you need to, in a dictionary. There is a third definition, for Christians, but I want to leave that until our next section. I will, however, repeat what many others have said; that "atonement" is the restoration of "at-one-ment" so that we are, again, at one with one another, and with God.

3. If Old Testament ceremonies are "foundations" on which New Testament events are built, what do we think of here? The first Day of Atonement saw Aaron (as the first "High Priest") making sacrifices, and sprinkling the shed blood in the Tabernacle's Most Holy Place. Later on in the Old Testament, once a year, the High Priest repeated this ceremony and sprinkled blood in the Temple's "Holy of Holies". Jesus died, sacrificially, on the Cross, shedding his own blood that we might be forgiven. His sacrifice took place once and for all and, for Christians, "atonement" is "the reconciliation of God and human beings through Jesus Christ". Why not read Hebrews chapters 9 and 10 for an in depth comparison between the Old Testament sacrifices and Jesus' death?

4. Are there any helpful thoughts here as we prepare for our Annual Meeting? I struggled at first to come up with anything better than the fact that the Day of Atonement and our Annual Meeting are both significant annual events. Here, however, is something I have since discovered.

Although there has not been a Temple, in Jerusalem, since 70 A.D., Jews still celebrate the Day of Atonement, or "Yom Kippur", annually. For more traditional Jews the emphasis is on repentance for past failings, fasting and prayer. For more liberal Jews, apparently, there is more of an emphasis on positive aims/ how to be "better" in the future. Maybe Annual Meetings could learn from both of these emphases, looking both backwards and forwards, in God's presence.



Roger Dixon

Parish Office Tel: 0161 432 4606 E-mail: M19stmargarets@gmail.com

Rector Matt Calladine Tel: 0161 432 1844

Bible Verse for 2024: 1 Peter 2:5

“..You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house... acceptable to God” .

This Week– Sunday 21st April 2024:

Family Communion at 10.30am. Roger Dixon will be preaching from Leviticus 16:1-34 on the theme: **‘The Day of Atonement.’**

Annual Meeting (APCM): This year’s APCM will be immediately after the service on **Sunday 21st April.** Nomination forms for Churchwarden, Deanery Synod and PCC members are @the back of church. There is one unfilled vacancy on Deanery Synod and THREE vacancies on PCC. Many thanks to Karen Dring, Pearl Hardy and Catherine Iddin for their work on PCC and Jane Franklin and Chris Rogers as Wardens over the last year. The paperwork for the meeting will be distributed via email and some copies put at the back of church.

Next Week 28th April 2024:

Morning Worship at 10.30am. Matt will be preaching on the theme: **‘Crossing the Jordan’** from Joshua 3:1 – 4:24.

CW Communion at 3pm.

April 21st to 27th, Please Pray for:

- People living in Thornfield Road, Rosevale Avenue, Holcombe Gardens & Oasis Close.
- Creative Prayer on Tuesday as they pray for our community as they “Travel Locally”.
- Inspiration & wisdom for the Holiday Special team on Tues planning the summer event.
- The right people to agree to hold responsibilities in the next year of Church life.
- Good celebration of 2023 at APCM on Sunday (28th) & for any voting.
- Wise decisions at IEM Trustees meeting on Saturday (Chris & Pearl at meeting).
- Selection & appointment of new Trustees to Board of Falconer Home.
- Christians in Libya to be able to communicate with & encourage each other.

Looking Ahead:

Parish Boundary Prayer walk (part 2) on **Saturday 27th April**, starting at the corner of Grangethorpe Drive and Kingsway at 10.30am. Finish at church.

Prayer for Growth: Sunday 28th is our 2nd day of prayer for growth this year. Prayer guides will be available in church on Sunday 21st. There will be a gathered focused prayer service at 7pm for about 45 minutes in the evening. Please set aside time to pray for growth.

MOST NEEDED: Long life Orange Juice, Pasta Sauce Jars, Curry Sauce Jars, Tinned Chicken /Ham Tinned, Tuna, Tinned Corned Beef, Tinned Carrots Tinned Sweetcorn, Coffee *Shampoo*****

