



St Margaret's Church

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

In Contact

21st December 2025

ADVENT 4 SUNDAY

Isaiah 7. 10-16

Mary and Joseph

Matthew 1.18-25



Were you ever in a school nativity play? There are often a few made-up characters for children to play because not everyone can be chosen to play Mary and Joseph. But have you ever wondered why Mary and Joseph were chosen to be the parents of the Son of God?



If we look at the different family trees of Jesus in Luke and in Matthew, we see that the two join together at King David. Joseph's line follows the line of the kings of Israel through David's son Solomon while Mary's line continues through David's other son Nathan. It was prophesied that the Messiah would be from David's line, so the first reason they were chosen might have been that they were both descended from King David.

What other reasons were there to choose **Mary**? She was a young girl, a teenager who was engaged to be married and she was a virgin. Her virginity was so important that we refer to her as the 'Virgin Mary'. Her virginity speaks of her character and purity. Her virginity fulfilled the prophecy from our first reading from Isaiah, that 'a virgin will be with child and will bear a son...' A miraculous conception brought about by God to show that her child would be the Son of God.

The angel Gabriel also called her 'highly favoured'. The qualities which God found favourable in this teenage girl would become even more apparent in the future: her humility, faith, courage, obedience, her compassion and her love and support of her Son.

But Mary was not the only one chosen by God. Why was **Joseph** chosen?

Joseph is often overlooked and seems to have a minor part in the story of Jesus' birth. After all he was not the father of Jesus, and it would be easy to think that only Mary and Jesus mattered. He was a poor carpenter, but he was chosen by God to be the earthly father in His place, to love, care for, and protect Mary and God's Son and to nurture Jesus as he grew.

Matthew 1:19 tells us that he was a righteous man. He also had a deep faith and love of God, who seemed to communicate to Joseph through dreams. After each of the 4 dreams that Joseph had around the birth of Jesus, we read that he acted immediately in obedience to what God told him to do. It can't have been easy to be a father to this special child, but we know that Joseph brought Jesus up in the ways of his people; every year Joseph took the family on pilgrimage to celebrate Passover in Jerusalem.

But what about us? Throughout the Bible, we read how God chose people for specific tasks. Since Pentecost God now pours out His Spirit on everybody who turns to Christ, no longer just for specific tasks but to help us tell others about Jesus.

We have been chosen by God. So let's serve God and His purposes as readily as Mary and Joseph.



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Bible Verse for 2025: *Philippians 4.4*

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

This week- Sunday 21st December 2025:

Advent 4: Holy Communion Service at 10.30am. Peter Miller will be speaking on the theme: 'Mary and Joseph'

Carol service at 6.30pm. Mince pies needed. Please bring.

Church Family Christmas Card 2025: If you would like to send Christmas greetings to the church family, please attach your Christmas card to the board at the back of church and make a donation to Open Doors' 'Unwrap Hope' appeal helping children and families persecuted for their faith in Jesus.

24th December: Family Fun Worship at the manger at 3pm
Quiet Carols and Communion at 7pm.

25th December: Family Communion service at 10.30am

Next Week 28th December 2025:

Holy Communion Service: at 10.30am. Roger Dixon will be speaking on the theme: 'Saint Stephen.'

December 21st – 27th, Please Pray for:

- People living in Barcroft Road, Redcroft Gardens & Whitecroft Gardens.
- Good attendance, fun & worship in wonder at Family Special Service 3pm Wed.
- A peace-filled special time with God at Quiet Communion at 7pm Wednesday.
- Involvement of all ages in celebrating the birth of Jesus on Christmas morning.
- Foodbank clients to be able to access emergency parcels during holiday period.
- Protection of believers gathering worldwide over Christmas.
- HMP inmates & staff coping with pressures of Christmas in prison.

Looking Ahead:

Church History Book: If you've not yet bought the latest church history book 'Continuing His-Story 2000-2025' or you're looking for Christmas presents, there are still copies available at £5 each. See Susan Whittaker.

Prayer Ministry at St Margaret's: God wants us to talk to Him about all our needs : physical or emotional healing, problems we may be having to deal with. He may have spoken to us during a service, or we may long for a fresh touch of the Holy Spirit. Nothing is too small or insignificant for God, who is always waiting to hear from us. Each Sunday there are 2 people from our trained Prayer Ministry Team in the Quiet Space available to pray with anyone during communion, and after every morning service, if you would find that helpful.

Deanery Synod: Motion sent by our PCC was discussed at the October meeting saying that the new deanery system was not working, If you want to know the outcomes of this discussion, please see Mark Stansfield or Andrew Foulkes.



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

WINTER SHOPPING LIST: Please concentrate on Festive Treats, 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,