**Church as Team – People, Pain Purpose (Acts 1:12-26)**

**NMBC 17.9.23.**

**Key ideas:**

1. There are several moments in the Gospels when there is evidence that Jesus’ brothers did not believe he was the Messiah. But in the first chapter of Acts they are part of a church that is unified and devoted to prayer. When people encounter the risen Jesus their lives can be transformed and they can become part of God’s big family.
2. The disciples would have been distressed by Judas’ betrayal of Jesus. But Peter recognised that “the Scripture had to be fulfilled”. The rejection of Jesus by his people and the suffering he endured was prophesied in the Bible. The risen Jesus opened his disciples’ minds so they understood the Scriptures. We need to have our minds opened so we can see our place in God’s plans for his creation.
3. The church wanted to choose a replacement for Judas but they wanted God to make the decision. They selected two men and then cast lots. Like the first Christians, we should recognise that God knows the secrets of our hearts and has greater wisdom and knowledge than we could ever possess.
4. From the very beginning of the church, God’s people have had to deal with events that look like disasters and cause real hurt. But we are called to let the world see that we are his disciples by our love for one another. The church depends on forgiveness and grace, and must demonstrate forgiveness and grace.

**We should not be surprised when we and fellow Christians sin but we should remain committed to one another and to our mission of sharing the Good news about Jesus**

**Key verses**

Acts 1:14 – “All these with one accord were devoting themselves to prayer, together with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brothers.”

Acts 1:16 – “‘Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke beforehand by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.’”

Acts 1:24 – “You, Lord, who know the hearts of all, show which one of these two you have chosen to take the place in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas turned aside to go to his own place.”

**Important words and phrases**

* Devotion
* Prayer
* Prophecy
* Witness
* Resurrection
* Apostle