

So many people have come and gone here at Turvey over the years, and the relationship that endures is friendship: so many people have become friends, here at Turvey, both of us and one another. It's so good to see them, even after periods of alienation or misunderstanding when we've grown apart in our growing up in different ways and only in maturity realised, perhaps, what we were missing. Sadly, this realisation has come too late for Judas – at least on earth – and the disciples gather to choose a successor, someone who, like Judas, was with the Lord from the beginning but has not grown apart in his own growth in understanding, in his own growing up. And of what does this friendship consist and how do we know it as friendship? Above all, perhaps, as an acceptance of each other so that the judgement which inevitably takes place in living as humans together – whether to do this or that and how best to do it etc – is somehow softened because we know the other person is more important to us than our differences so that, when we differ, the difference doesn't amount to a rejection. Humour helps and is a real indicator of where we are with each other. We can imagine that something of this sense of tolerating love was clearly present among the disciples as they grew to maturity in the following of Christ before his death and resurrection; a love made possible for them because of his love and example. And this subtle blend of discipleship and love, of friendship in the following of Christ, is now offered to all of Christ's disciples after his death and resurrection and, indeed, is a mark by which we are known, or should be. Matthias is chosen by lot and so, in a sense, are we. But as grace builds on nature so our own desire for God matters too: the desire, that is, to love one another.

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