

A sermon delivered by Cameron Wade on May 20, 2012, Confirmation Sunday, at the First Congregational Church, UCC, Columbus, Ohio.

“Choices”

Acts 1:15-17; John 17:6-19

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Let us pray: May the words of my mouth and the meditations of each one of our hearts be acceptable in your sight, O Lord, our rock and our salvation. Amen.

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Today's lesson is about choice. The apostles try to decide who will take Judas' place after his betrayal and suicide. They gather all of the Christians at that time and narrow them down to two men. They then cast lots (similar to a biblical game of rock-paper-scissors) for which man would be the apostle, and the man named Mathias won. If only our election system were that efficient!

When first reading this passage, it sounds almost as if the apostles randomly chose Matthias for the exclusive title of apostle. It certainly doesn't sound as if the apostles interviewed or judged each one of the 120 Christians gathered around them! It is possible that they used the meaning of the people's names to select the replacement apostle, as Matthias means "given to our Lord," "a gift of our Lord," or "humble or little." Did the apostles really hand over the title of apostle based solely on a name, and a game of chance?

An almost obscene amount of time in our government is wasted because of long quarrels over the smallest issues. Maybe we should trust that God will see that the right decision is made. It worked for the apostles! Their trusting of God's judgment resulted in a transformation from their small group of 120 to a massive following of Christianity 2 billion members strong!

Confirmation, too, is all about choices. The confirmands must first choose to be confirmed, and at the end reevaluate their decision with the help of their mentor and God. When the confirmands choose whether or not to be confirmed, their mentors and Reverend Tim make no argument to change our decision. They simply let it be made.

For me, this year in particular was about choices. For the first time I was allowed to choose what classes I would take. I needed to choose how to manage my time, and, most importantly, I had to make choices about confirmation. I know that all of the confirmands had a wonderful confirmation experience. It is obvious that we bonded because of the many field trips and MANY lessons!

On behalf of the 2012 Confirmation class, I would like to thank Reverend Tim, Mark Williams and Jackie Dean for a wonderful confirmation journey.

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