

# The Encourager

*The Mission of St. Barnabas Church is to live and spread the Gospel of Christ as disciples making disciples.*

Saint Barnabas Church  
3257 Post Rd., Warwick, Rhode Island 02886  
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401-737-4141

December 2016

## **Prayer for the Selection of Our Next Rector**

Almighty God, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your Church, and so guide the hearts and minds of those who shall choose a rector for this parish, that we may receive a faithful pastor, who will care for your people and equip us for our ministries; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*

## **A Message from Father Jim**

In some six weeks I will be ending my tenure as your Priest-in-Charge here at St. Barnabas Church. It has always been difficult for me to leave a parish family where I have been involved in so many of the important events in the lives of individuals and families and established warm, loving relationships with so many people.

For a little over three years I have been your priest and pastor. I have ministered to some of you when you have been ill or hospitalized. I have sat with some of you as a loved one lay dying. I have had the joy and pleasure of preparing many of you for baptism, confirmation and marriage. I have raked leaves with you, polished pews with you, cooked parish suppers for you, worked with you at the Holiday Bazaar and simply listened to many of you when you needed to talk or ask questions about God and your faith. I have experienced the joy of preparing many of your children to receive Holy Communion. I have heard the confessions of some of you who felt the need to reconcile yourself with God. I have had the honor and privilege of commending some you to final rest in God's heavenly kingdom. I have had the blessing of celebrating the mystery of the Eucharist with you and the incredible experience of administering the Body of Christ to you at the altar rail. I will always treasure these shared experiences and you will all always hold a special place in my heart and mind. But there is a proper protocol for a priest leaving a parish which the Diocese insists on and it is often difficult for parishioners to understand the reason for this.

Once I leave St. Barnabas we will no longer have a pastor/parishioner relationship. That honor and privilege will go to your new rector, whoever he or she may be. And to put it bluntly, I am simply supposed to "get out of the way" so that you have the opportunity to get to know and forge that same kind of relationship with your new priest. That is why it is not allowed for me to visit you in the hospital, or come back to officiate at your wedding or to baptize your child. That is why you should not call me about questions of faith. That is why you should not keep in touch with me socially, at least for a couple of years. I need to give you the opportunity to bond with your new priest and unless I am completely gone he or she cannot be here for you in the fullest way possible.

When the time comes that Barbara and I leave you I hope you will always remember us in your prayers as we will remember you in ours. And may God grant you and your new priest the same kind of loving relationship we have shared these past three years.

## **Search for Our New Rector**

Over the last several weeks, the Discernment Team has been conducting in-person visits to Rhode Island with the final group of candidates for the rector position. On Tuesday, November 22nd, our team met to decide if we will recommend one of these final candidates to be called as our next rector. Any selection we make must be approved by Bishop Knisely and the Vestry before we contact that candidate to obtain their acceptance of the position. Please continue to keep our team in your prayers as we move through this important process for our parish.

Stan Schofield, Discernment Team Convener

## Schedule of Christmas Services



**Christmas Eve, December 24<sup>th</sup>**  
4:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist (Rite II)  
10:00 p.m. Choral Eucharist (Rite II)

**Christmas Day, December 25<sup>th</sup>**  
9:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist (Rite I, with music)

After conversation with the Vestry, Fr. Jim is discontinuing the Station at the Outdoor Crèche after the 4:00 o'clock service on Christmas Eve. There is simply not enough room for the entire congregation to gather in around the crèche. Instead we will have a Station at the Crèche in the church at the beginning of the service. Also, please remember that Christmas Day falls on Sunday this year and there will be only the one service at 9:00 a.m.

## Annual Christmas Giving Tree



St. Barnabas is adopting and providing Christmas gifts for seven families this year. As you have entered the church you probably saw the tree in the back of the church. It is decorated with tags indicating the item each child, or mom and dad needs. We have done well in the past and I believe we will once again make seven families very happy. We can all wake up Christmas morning knowing we did what the Lord would want us to do. We will also know that seven families have smiles on their faces and happy hearts. Here's how the Giving Tree works:

1. Pick your tag or tags off the tree
2. Purchase your item(s)
3. Wrap each gift and attach the tag to gift
4. Bring back to Church and leave under the tree by Dec. 18<sup>th</sup>

I do understand that it seems like a short time period and if you can't bring the gift to church by that date, I will gladly pick it up. Just give me a call. The gifts need to be delivered to the school by December 20th. Thank you in advance for your generous donations. If you have any questions please call me: Beth Marsh (401) 739-4298 or (401) 263-7380

## Music Notes



I once heard it said that Christmas carols are the “Visiting relatives of the musical world: they show up at the same time every year and stick around a little longer than one might prefer!” Sometimes it can even be said that they bring along other relatives we don’t know and have never met before, only to be seated next to us and therefore we are forced either to simply endure their presence or enjoy the pleasure of getting acquainted with a new member of the family.

I grew up with Christmas carols – not only singing them in church, but also in school. They have been a big part of my musical lifetime – they introduced me to people and places I would otherwise have never experienced. They relate to me and I to them. Continuing to play a big part in my life, they help to define who I am and what I do - true relatives. Many of us have a similar relationship to carols. We would find it difficult to imagine what Christmas would be like if we weren’t surrounded by the familiar carols. When we speak of the “Christmas spirit” it is often sparked by the sound of a carol or the familiar words of *peace on earth and goodwill to all*. As people of faith, Christmas carols are so much a part of our life, we might even say they are in our DNA.

If Christmas carols are indeed the visiting relatives of the musical world, are they not something which ought to be treasured? These musical guests can be treasured for their wisdom of life, for the comfort of continuity, for the pleasure of returning to the essence of the familiar (family), and a knowledge that not everything will one day disappear.

We all have our favorite carols – and I’m almost certain we will be singing many of them at St. Barnabas this Advent and Christmas season. And if a carol might show up that you are not familiar with, remember that the song the angels sang to the shepherds in Bethlehem was a completely *new* carol! Perhaps that’s the best visitor that we might receive – unexpectedly – this Christmas. Something entirely new, but still part of who we are: a new story, a new song, a new hope, a new joy, a new baby lying in a manger.

Gloria in excelsis deo!

**Ted Platt**

Director of Music

## Parish Clean-up Day December 3<sup>rd</sup>



The leaves are finally starting to fall from the trees so we have scheduled a “Parish Clean-up Day” for next Saturday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Please be at church at 9:00 a.m. and bring rakes, leaf blowers and whatever tools you might want to use. The parish will supply the leaf bags. Many hands make light works. Kids can especially have fun with this project.

## Healing Prayers on December 4<sup>th</sup>



If you feel you are in need of healing prayers and the laying on of hands and anointing, we give you this opportunity on the first Sunday of the month. At the end of each service simply move to the front pews of the church. After the priest greets those leaving church he will go to the altar rail and invite you forward for prayers and anointing.

## 2017 Stewardship Update

Thank you to all who have already made your pledge for 2017. As of “Commitment Sunday,” November 20th, we have received 60 pledges, totaling \$75,798. That means we still have about 50 people or families who pledged in 2016 that have not yet made their pledge for 2017. If you are in that group or perhaps are someone who has not pledged in the past, we hope you will make that important decision of faith in God's gifts to us by making a pledge for 2017 to support your parish. This is critically important at this particular time if we are going to be able to call a new rector to our church while still maintaining a balanced budget as we have for the last nine years. At a minimum, we need to receive another \$60,000 in pledges to make this happen. Pledge forms are located on the table behind the last pew at the rear of the church for your convenience. Please complete and place in the offering plate, give to an usher, or to Treasurer Stan Schofield. Thank you for your generous support.

## Advent Program Continues

Our Advent Program, “Not a Silent Night” continues to meet on the following dates:

Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, Monday, December 5<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, chapters 3 & 4  
Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup>, Monday, December 19<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, chapter 5

## Feed the Hungry While You Feed Your Soul

An article in the *Providence Journal* on November 21<sup>st</sup> reported that a significant gap in food assistance means thousands of Rhode Islanders go hungry each day, missing an estimated 33 million meals per year, according to a new report on hunger compiled by the Rhode Island Community Food Bank. The households, says the report, miss out on the other 15 percent of meals because there is no other cash or aid to provide the food.

This Advent we are offering you the opportunity to take some time each day to feed your soul while you feed the hungry. Father Jim has purchased boxes for each family in the parish. You will find them at the back of the church. Some are made up or you can take a flat one if you would prefer. There is an Advent Calendar for each box. When you open a window in your Advent Calendar or light a candle on your Advent Wreath or say your morning or evening prayers, place one canned good or dried food item in the box. If you do this each day from The First Sunday in Advent until Christmas Eve you will have 28 items of food in your box. Bring it with you to church on Christmas Eve or Christmas Day and place it in the back of the church. If you want to take part in this but cannot get to church for a box let us know and we will get one to you. If you cannot physically take your box of groceries to church we will make arrangements to have it picked up if you call the church. We will split the food between the West Bay Community Food Bank and the food pantry at our sister parish of St. Mark's Church in Warwick. Even though we are well into Advent, it is still not too late for you to pick up a box and participate.

## Christmas Warmth



If you have ever spent a single hour in biting cold weather you know how crucial dry socks, a hat and a pair of gloves can be to a person's health. This year we are once again collecting socks, hats and gloves for House of Hope and Crossroads Rhode Island. Please purchase white cotton socks (athletic socks, etc.), knit hats and gloves in men's women's and children's sizes and put them in the big Christmas stocking that will be hanging in the back of the church beginning November 27<sup>th</sup>, the first Sunday in Advent. We will collect these items for the four weeks of Advent and then distribute them before Christmas.

## Nominating Committee



It is once again time for the parish Nominating Committee to prepare a slate of candidates willing to run for election as Officers and Vestry at the Annual Meeting in January 2016. We want to impress upon you the fact that this is a very important time in the life of St. Barnabas. As you know, Fr. Jim will be leaving us for retirement in mid-January. So those who will serve as Officers and Vestry for 2017 will be responsible for working closely with the new Rector when he or she arrives. The committee will be composed of Heidi Seddon, Joe Rodrigues, David McIntyre and Bonne Simonian; they will present candidates for the positions of Treasurer, Parish Clerk, two two-year Vestry positions and one one-year unexpired term. Current Treasurer, Stan Schofield, current Parish Clerk Robin Beckwith, and current Vestry member Bonne Simonian are eligible to be elected for another term if nominated.

Again, this is a very important time in the life of St. Barnabas Church so if you would like to be nominated to stand for election or wish to nominate someone else for election please speak to a member of the Nominating Committee. Please do not suggest anyone to be nominated if you have not already spoken to that person.

## Office Closed



The parish office will be closed on Monday, December 26<sup>th</sup>.

## Mid-week Eucharist and Bible Study Cancelled

Please Note There Will Be No Mid-week Eucharist and Bible Study on Wednesday, December 28<sup>th</sup>.

## Help for the Hearing Impaired

Please remember that we have installed our new "Hearing Assistance System" in the church. The ushers will know how this system works. You can use either regular headphones or a loop if you have a hearing aid. Those who have used it are amazed at how well they can hear the entire service.

## Rector's Discretionary Fund

A gift has been given to the Rector's Discretionary Fund by Richard Urquhart.

### CHRISTMAS FLOWER MEMORIALS AND THANKSGIVINGS



The Sanctuary is decorated at Christmas time with beautiful plants and greens given as memorials for our deceased loved ones or in thanksgiving for significant events or persons in our lives. Christmas Memorials and Thanksgivings are typically \$25. However, we graciously accept any donation you wish to make. Please print the names of loved ones whom you would like remembered or those persons or events you would like to give thanks for this Christmas.

**Please submit no later than Sunday, December 18th**

In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

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In Thanksgiving for \_\_\_\_\_

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Christmas Memorials and Thanksgiving Memorials Given By:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Pledge Number \_\_\_\_\_

*Kindly make check payable to St. Barnabas Church and note  
"Christmas Memorial" on memo line.*

# December 2016

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				<b>1</b> 7:00 pm Boys Scouts	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b> 9:00 Parish Fall Cleanup
<b>4 2 Advent</b> 8 am Holy Eucharist 10 am Holy Eucharist 11:45 am Advent Program Laying on of hands and anointing for healing will follow each service.	<b>5</b> 6:30 am Advent Program 7:30 am AA Meeting	<b>6</b> 7:30 am AA Meeting	<b>7</b> 10 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Exploring Sunday's Scriptures 11:30 am Advent Program 6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>8</b> 7:00 pm Boys Scouts	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>11 3 Advent</b> 8 am Holy Eucharist 9:45 am Sunday School 10 am Holy Eucharist	<b>12</b> 6:30 pm Vestry Meeting 7:30 am AA Meeting	<b>13</b> 7:30 am AA Meeting	<b>14</b> 10 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Exploring Sunday's Scriptures 6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>15</b> 7:00 pm Boys Scouts	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>18 4 Advent</b> 8 am Holy Eucharist 9:45 am Sunday School 10 am Holy Eucharist 11:45 am Advent Program	<b>19</b> 6:30 am Advent Program 7:30 am AA Meeting	<b>20</b> 7:30 am AA Meeting	<b>21</b> 10 am Holy Eucharist 10:30 am Exploring Sunday's Scriptures 11:30 am Advent Program 6:30 pm Choir Rehearsal	<b>22</b> 7:00 pm Boys Scouts	<b>23</b>	<b>24 Christmas Eve</b> 4 pm Holy Eucharist 10 pm Holy Eucharist
<b>25 Christmas Day</b> 9:00 am Holy Eucharist	<b>26</b> Parish Office Closed 7:30 am AA Meeting	<b>27</b> 7:30 am AA Meeting	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> 7:00 pm Boys Scouts	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>