

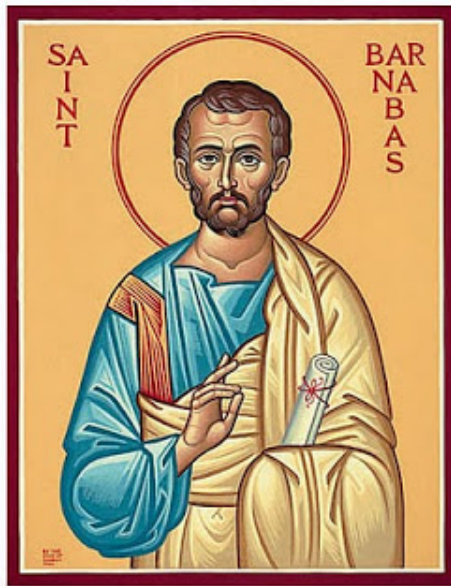
The Encourager

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
www.stbarnabaswarwick.org

401-737-4141

October 2020



Pilate said to the Jews, "Here is your King!" They cried out, "Away with him! Away with him! Crucify him!" Pilate asked them, "Shall I crucify your King?" The chief priests answered, "We have no king but the emperor." John 19: 14-15

The more I study Scripture, the more I realize just how difficult it is for someone to live a completely devoted life of faith. When you read the 10 Commandments, for example, they seem pretty straight forward, right? But, the stories in the Bible reveal that it is almost impossible out those guidelines in the complicated world in which we live.

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" means "Don't make any idols," but the first thing the people do at the base of Mount Sinai after being delivered from the Egyptians through the Red Sea was to make an idol of a golden calf to worship.

"Thou shalt not commit adultery," is pretty straight forward. But King David, a man after God's very own heart, could not resist the beautiful Bathsheba.

Then we see the chief priests. Now, they dedicated their entire life to faith, but they were still a mess of contradictions and compromises. "Thou shalt not kill," is one of the big 10, but we see the faith leaders screaming, "Crucify him!" They also failed on that first Commandment, "You shall have no other gods." When they shout, "We have no king but the emperor," they are submitting to Caesar with the kind of devotion that is intended only for God.

I bring this up for two reasons: 1) We need to take a thorough look at ourselves, being honest about the inconsistencies between our faith and our life, and 2) Please, please give yourself grace when you fall short of the faithful person you strive to be. With the exception of Jesus, every person has failed in some way, but that's why we need the grace that God so freely gives us.

In the past several months, in my opinion, all of us have fallen short on the “no other gods” commandment. There is a virus, shaped like the crown for a king that has demanded our submission. Now, I am not suggesting that we ignore the coronavirus. However, I do wonder: Have we been worshipping this virus?

Similarly, it is important to ask the question: Are we worshipping a Presidential candidate? I am not picking a side at all. I am just wondering if we are expecting a savior to be elected? Do we look for someone other than God to be a god?

I do not have any answers to these questions. I am simply looking at myself, honestly, and realizing that I am not all that different from those chief priests. My opinions have been forced by a roaring crowd, and fear has forced me into compromises and contradictions.

I have heard Jesus say, “Do not judge,” but I find myself being awfully judgmental at times. Christ says, “Love your enemies,” but I am not responding with love to those with whom I disagree. Maybe you’re handling the coronavirus and our political climate better than I am. If so, tell me your secret.

I suspect, however, that most of us are really struggling to be sane during this insane time. The only advice I can give is to ask yourself what I ask myself every day: Am I living faithfully? Truthfully, in some ways the answer is “yes,” in some ways “no.” Where my faith seems strong, I pray God helps me continue to grow in that area. Where I fall short, I humbly ask Christ to send the Holy Spirit to guide me towards becoming the loving, joyful, peaceful, patient, kind, good, gentle, faithful, and self-controlled person that I wish to be. Most important, in all of this, I rely heavily on God’s grace to forgive all that is past and to strengthen me for what is to come.

May you bravely examine yourself. See the many ways your faith is beautiful and wonderful. May the Spirit reveal any blind-spots you may have. In those areas where your belief seems inconsistent with your actions, may you be strengthened in faith. Finally, may you receive the fullness of grace. “My grace,” God declares, “is sufficient for you,” (2 Corinthians 12:9) and Almighty power is made perfect in our weakness.

Faithfully,
Fr. Scott Lee

"Grace to you and Peace from God"

A Friendly Reminder

Fr. Scott will be back in Rhode Island September 29th, but is required to quarantine for 14 days. We will continue with Morning Prayer in the park on October 4th & October 11th, the reservation email will be sent each week.

Morning Prayer service in the park as well as a 10:00 a.m. streamed via Facebook. Please continue to sign up for services in the park.

The 11:00 a.m. service in the park has been discontinued.

We are anticipating opening the church for the 10:00 a.m. Morning Prayer on Sunday, October 18th. More details will be forthcoming regarding our reopening plan. Any questions please contact the parish office.

Episcopal Diocese Covenant for Regathering

I promise, to the best of my ability with God's help, to abide by the guidelines of the Diocese of Rhode Island for participation in church as we regather during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In faithfulness to the Baptismal Covenant (BCP p. 304-305), I will strive to:

Love my neighbor as myself, I will...

- Wear a mask or scarf over my nose and mouth at all times in church buildings, except momentarily to receive the sacrament or lead worship by an assigned speaking part, and follow public health guidelines for hand sanitizing and disinfecting.
- Only attend worship if I am non-symptomatic for the COVID-19 virus or any other transmittable disease that could compromise the health of another person also attending.
- Abstain from attending if doing so would put me at greater risk due to my own health status.

Respect the dignity of every human being, I will...

- Make no physical contact with people beyond the members of my own household.
- Maintain a six foot or more distance from other members of the congregation.
- Respect any requests for distance, masking, cleaning, and disinfecting to ensure the safety and comfort level of others.

Seek and serve Christ in all people...

- Support the decisions of my diocesan and congregational leaders.
- Stay connected with others in my community by telephone, video chat, mail, or other means.

This is our expectation for all those who wish to worship with us in person. By participating in our worship, you assume responsibility for following the above, and acknowledge the risks of participation in an in-person gathering.

Dear Parish Friends

Thank You

I hope everyone is well and observing the coronavirus precautions to stay safe and healthy.

Although we have resumed in-person worship services outdoors in the park, many of us are not yet comfortable with or able to attend, so we continue in asking everyone, as you are able, to mail in your pledge and other offerings to the parish office. Your response to this ongoing request has been very generous and we are asking that you continue this practice, until you are able to resume coming to services in-person.

We understand that many of you may have been impacted by job reductions and layoffs due to the coronavirus crisis, so if you are in that situation, please do not worry about trying to pay your pledge right now. The parish does have a small fund of money, known as the Discretionary Fund that is to be used to assist those in financial need. Please contact Fr. Scott if you need assistance from this fund. As always, please feel free to contact me directly with any questions or concerns you may have.

Faithfully, Stan Schofield – Parish Treasurer

Church Holiday Bazaar



It is with a heavy heart that the decision was made that St. Barnabas will not hold our Bazaar this year. In the interest of everyone's health and safety, it seems best to wait for 2021 to resume this wonderful opportunity for fellowship and fundraising.

Happy Birthday

We would like to wish those celebrating birthdays in the month of October a Happy Birthday!

Alexa Page	Ashley Lee
Bill Williams	Richard Budlong
Gabriella Bracken	Lisa Godfrey-Maio
Heather Rodrigues	Monica Nichols
Jeremy Seddon	Edwin Fielder
Kerri Hinz	Arnold Butziger
Laura Drew	Margaret Anderson
Sandra Fletcher	Corrine Berry
Shawn Pratt	Brooke Mitchell
Wendy Norris	Christopher Seddon

Blessing of the Animals



On Sunday, October 4th from 1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. Mother Susan at St. Mark's Church, 111 West Shore Rd. will celebrate the gift of animals in the manner St. Francis taught us. Please bring your pets for this short service of blessing. With Fr. Scott having to quarantine we are not able to hold this at St. Barnabas this year.



Our prayer chain is organized to meet the prayer needs of our parish family as well as those in our community of family, friends and neighbors. It functions as a rapid response to anyone in need of prayers. Because prayer requests are communicated by e-mail, the Prayer Chain is available 24/7. The coordinator keeps a list of voluntary prayer intercessors, and we always welcome new volunteers! Please contact Robin Beckwith our prayer chain coordinator if you have a prayer request or would like to volunteer. Contact Robin Meunier in the office at 737-4141 or by email at parishadmin@stbarnabaswarwick.org for Robin Beckwith's contact information or to simply take your prayer request.

Prayer is the lantern that will light our way through the darkness.

Baptism



Congratulations to Lillian Paisley Marin who received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism here at St. Barnabas on Saturday, September 5, 2020.

Office Closed



The parish office will be closed on Monday, October 12th in observance of Columbus Day.

Social Media



If you haven't already, please like our Facebook page (St Barnabas Episcopal Church, Warwick, RI), and our Instagram page (stbarnabaschurchwarwick). With everything going on, you won't miss out on any parish news.

Daylight Savings



We return to Eastern Standard Time at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 1st. Remember to set your clocks back one hour before going to bed on Saturday night (Halloween) Enjoy the extra hour of sleep!