

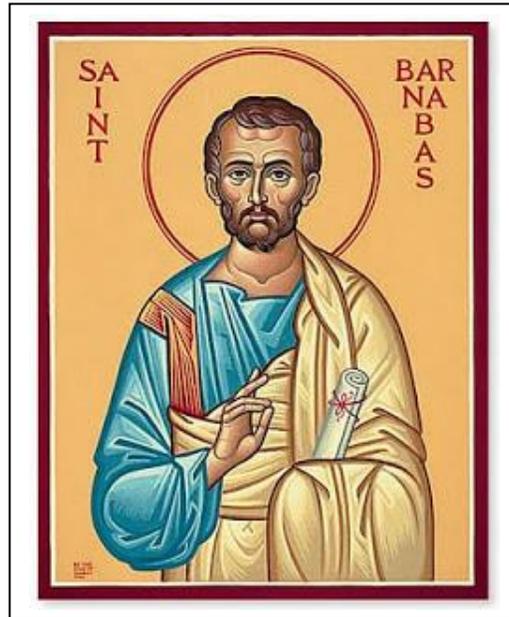
# The Encourager

*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

June 2021



## **Some FatherLee thoughts . . .**

*Restore our fortunes, O LORD,  
like the watercourses of the Negev. (Psalm 126:5 BCP)*

I had always wondered: What is the significance of the Negev? Other translations just call it, “streams in the south,” but it refers to river beds that are full of water when there is bountiful rain, but they completely dry up during times of drought. Psalm 126 is a declaration of God’s goodness by bringing the people out of Babylon, restoring them to a freedom and faith.

As the people of God returned from captivity, they prayed for life to return. They begged that things would return like a downpour of rain that immediately restored the rivers. This restoration would quickly replenish the land and bring life back to the people.

At the same time, however, an intense and instantaneous deluge could lead to flash flooding. The thought of dry river beds suddenly getting more water than they can handle was incredibly frightening, but it was what the people prayed for because it was what the people needed.

The conversation of praying for restoration “like the watercourses of the Negev” came to mind after the special Vestry meeting we had on Monday night. The discussion led us to decide to remove most of our restrictions in a fairly immediate way.

For some of you, this will be as frightening as standing on a river bank watching the water suddenly rise. I assure you: I will be standing side by side as we watch those waters return. The waters will not overflow the banks. The leadership of St. Barnabas will keep you as safe as possible, but as we prayed, we decided that what was really needed was for God to “Restore our fortunes . . . like the watercourses of the Negev.” We need this restoration sooner rather than later.

Nothing will change this week, so please wear a mask this Sunday. Beginning in June, masks will be optional for people who have been vaccinated. The key word is “optional”. You may keep your mask on as long as you would like. For those who have not been vaccinated, masks remain the expectation, but you will not be alone. Many people will stay masked for quite a while. You will notice at times that I will opt to wear one, too. As a fully vaccinated person, I will opt to not wear one at other times, like while I’m preaching from a safe distance.

You will notice that the pictures of the Saints marking pews that are “taken” will remain inside the church for a little while longer.

The middle pews will be set up so that every other row will be available to sit. The outside rows of the pews in the church will be set up at every third row. Therefore, if you would like a little more space, I encourage you to sit in the outside pews. Also in June, we will replace the prayer books and hymnals, so a small amount of singing will return at the 10:00 service.

Finally, I asked our Bishop a very direct question about handshakes and hugs. He responded that for people who have been vaccinated, it is safe to return to these appropriate signs of affection. As we discussed this among the Vestry, we acknowledge that some people are not comfortable with being that close while others crave it. Please, please ask a person before reaching out expecting a handshake or hug. Watch people’s cues. I give you all permission to put your hands up to say, “No, thank you.” You may even say that to me. On the other hand, if you need a hug or handshake, you can count on me to say, “Yes.”

Now, not everything will be completely back. As I mentioned, for example, there will still be pews unavailable for at least a few more weeks. Also, we will keep the 9:00 service in the park at least for the summer, but we will not work towards Sunday school, Bible Study, and coffee hour until closer to September. Finally, we will still only offer Bread during Communion, probably for a few more months.

These changes will be somewhat awkward and might feel uncomfortable for a while. I am confident, however, that the love of God that brings us together, will also give us the courage, kindness, and patience to move through this time with grace and hope.

Similar to the way the Lord restored the fortunes of our faith ancestors, the Almighty is restoring us to life as members of a community of faith. Like those we are descendants of, we can now proclaim the rest of that wonderful Psalm. We will be like those, “who dream dreams . . . our mouth filled with laughter . . . our tongues with shouts of joy . . . and we are glad indeed.”

Contact me if you have specific questions. This is merely an overview of the kinds of shifts you can expect at St. Barnabas. It is with confidence in the vaccines and in God’s great goodness that we are making these changes. They seem a little sudden, even to me, but I firmly believe that it is what we desperately need. God bless you all.

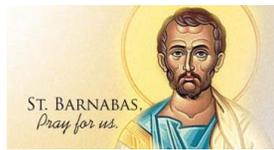
Faithfully,  
Fr. Scott

## It Takes Many People to Run a Church



As we get back to our Church routine, praise God, there are many positions where we could use help. It takes ushers, readers, acolytes, altar guild, and even regular lawn care to run the household of St. Barnabas. I invite you to prayerfully consider how you might be able to help, and let us know what you would like to do.

## St. Barnabas Day, June 13<sup>th</sup>



In celebration of St. Barnabas Day we will be celebrating the lives of those who died during the pandemic. Gratefully remembering the lives of Saints we cherish can help us live with love and boldness.

## June Birthday's



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

Ellen Wright	Jane Horridge	Gabriella Pari
Marilyn Morrow	Jack Turner	Cora Cardelli
BJ Lynch	Kara Lee	Rosalind Butziger
Katia Nichols	Ian Turner	Stephen J. Picard
Susan Campos	Keith Beauregad	Theodore Weber
Joseph Rodrigues Jr.		

## Confirmation



Bishop Knisley is working to reschedule a visit we missed last year. Tentatively, we are looking at a date near the end of September 2021. These visits are when members are confirmed in the Christian Church. It also offers anyone from a different denomination to be officially welcomed by our bishop into the Episcopal Church.

## Prayer Chain



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. Robin Beckwith, our 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.

## Summer Camp Is On!



Summer Camp at ECC is ON!!!! Register for camp today!

We are thrilled to be offering a modified and simplified version of overnight camp this summer at ECC.

Check out some of the practices we will be putting in place to ensure the safety of our campers and staff. See more detail about the camp sessions we are offering at <http://www.eccri.org/>

Money should never prevent you from attending camp, if you need financial assistance please speak with Fr. Scott.

## St. Barnabas Church Lawn Care



Calling all volunteers for St. Barnabas Church Lawn Care! Lawnmowers are provided. Volunteers will be scheduled for two weeks at a time. Mowing is requested as close to the weekend or Saturday mornings as possible, in lieu of any possible weddings or baptisms scheduled for the weekends. Please contact Jr Warden, Heather Rodrigues if you wish to volunteer. "Many Hands Make Light Work"

## Youth Ministry



We have resumed! All middle school and high school students are invited every week for free food, great fun, and meaningful conversations about faith. We gather in Schweitzer Hall on Sunday evenings at 5:30 p.m. and are finished between 7:30 p.m./8:00 p.m. depending on the topic of conversation. Please speak with Fr. Scott if you would like to volunteer or provide a meal.

## Father's Day, June 20<sup>th</sup>



Happy Father's Day to all the Dads, Grandfathers, Uncles, and Father figures in our parish. May you all have a wonderful day.

## Holy Baptisms



Congratulations to Cameron Anthony Melise, Zayden Robert Garcia, Nicole Nickerson, Sean Michael LoVerdi, and Olivia Grace LoVerdi who received the Sacrament of Holy Baptism here at St. Barnabas during the month of May.



Thank you to those who continued donating food for the Food Bank during these difficult times. They are much appreciated and help local residents in need. Now that we are having in person services, donations can be left in the bins at the back of the church. We are in need of a volunteer who could pick up the donations & bring them to Westbay Community Action which is located on Jefferson Blvd. If you would like to volunteer, please call Robin in the Parish office (737-4141) & she will be able to give you more information.

## Updates/Changes



To make sure that you continue to receive our emails, monthly newsletter, and birthday postcards please call the office at 737-4141 or via email at [parishadmin@stbarnabaswarwick.org](mailto:parishadmin@stbarnabaswarwick.org) with any updates or changes to your information.

## Education for Ministry



There are spaces available for EFM, a program that is similar to what priests are exposed to in seminary, but this is open to anyone. This particular group will begin September 13, 2021, and will be led by Mother Susan on Monday evenings (6:30-8:30 pm) at St. Marks Church in Warwick. It is up to a four year program, but you only commit to one year at a time. There is a recognized certificate upon completion. Old Testament, New Testament, Church History, and Theology are the different areas of study. The cost is a total of \$375 per year, but Fr. Scott can certainly help with the finances if this is something you are interested in. Please direct your questions to Mother Susan @ St. Mark's Church or Heidi Seddon.