

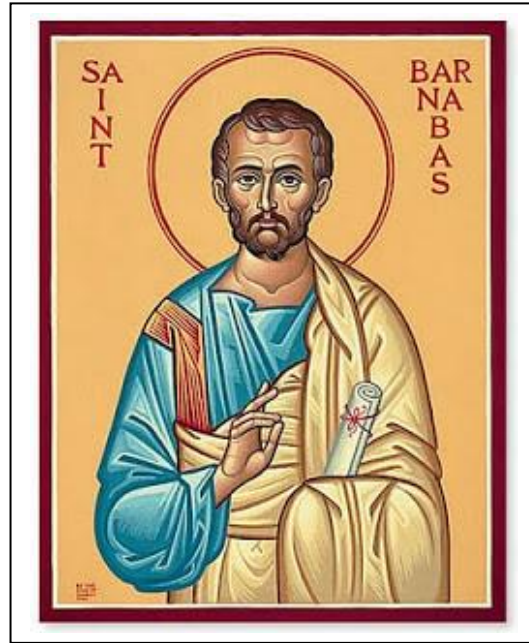
The Encourager

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

Saint Barnabas Church
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December 2021



Some FatherLee thoughts . . .

“Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water . . . toward Jesus. But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and beginning to sink, he cried out, ‘Lord, save me!’” (Matthew 14:29-30)

There are a lot of people who want to completely dismiss the story of Peter walking on the water. It is unusual, and it’s a little more supernatural that we might be comfortable with; however, this story teaches us a lot about God and about ourselves.

Jesus miraculously fed the five thousand then sends the disciples back across the sea. As they begin the voyage, our Savior retreats to be alone and pray. One of the secrets we often overlook is the fact that prayer is how Christ both recharged from what was done and how he prepared for the next incredible event. How do you recharge? How do you prepare for what you must do next? Does our Savior’s example seem more effective than your strategies?

On the sea, the disciples encounter a violent storm. This was not uncommon. Storms like this happened all the time, and they often seem to come out of nowhere. What storms have come out of nowhere in your life? A cancer diagnosis? Relationship troubles? A heart attack? Loss of a job? CoViD? Often these storms appear suddenly. Though we all know these things can happen, it is impossible to be fully prepared, and it can leave us feeling powerless.

In the midst of their storm, the disciples see a figure in the distance. “It is a ghost,” one of them cries out. Do we often make the same mistake, thinking Jesus is just some sort of disembodied spirit?

“Take heart, is is I!” Christ assures them. “Do not be afraid!” Doesn’t our Savior make the same statements to each of us in the midst of our storms?

“If it is you,” Peter responded, “have me come out onto the water.” The magnificent here we often overlook is that Jesus is right smack-dab in the middle of the storm. Our Lord isn’t safely on the beach drinking a margarita in the sun waiting for the storm to subside. No! Christ is right there, in the center of our greatest fear and our most severe struggles.

Peter steps into the chaos of the storm. To be clear, the wind and the waves, the thunder and the lightning, these are all very real. In the same way, our struggles are very real, but sometimes there is no other choice. We have to enter that storm, no matter how frightening or insane it might seem. The biggest problem is that many of us try to do it all on our own. We fail to concentrate on our Savior who is coming towards us in the storm to help us find our way out.

The thing that has always stood out to me is that for a moment when Peter seemed to have courage in the face of those violent winds, enormous waves, crashing lightning and intense thunder. With his eyes fixed on Jesus, Peter had confidence. It is when he took his eyes off Christ and noticed the strong wind that he began to sink. Have you let your eyes drift from the loving gaze of our Savior? Are you fixated on the storm or the One who is with you in the storm? Are you sinking into the dark abyss?

As Peter began to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him. That may be the most powerful statement in this story. Christ is always only one step away, able to catch us when we start to sink.

This month we celebrate Christmas. It is God’s arrival into the chaos of this world. The Good News is that the Almighty is not afraid of the storms that occasionally arise in life. Even in the most violent of storms, Jesus is walking towards you to bring comfort, hope, and to catch us in those loving eternal arms if we begin to sink. May you have courage to face your storms, knowing God is with you in the midst of them.

Faithfully, Fr. Scott

Schedule of Christmas Services



Christmas Eve, December 24th

4:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist (Rite II)

Weather permitting there will be a brief moment at the outdoor creche

10:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist (Rite II)

Christmas Day, December 25th

10:00 a.m.

The First Sunday after Christmas Day, December 26th

8:00 a.m. Rite I

10:00 a.m. Rite II

Annual Christmas Giving Tree



As the Christmas season approaches and our Christmas shopping begins, it's important to remember that some trees won't have presents beneath them on Christmas morning without our help. This Christmas St. Barnabas Church is continuing to support our neighbors at The House of Hope by collecting gifts for 10 children, and similar to last year, we are also collecting gift cards that The House of Hope can share during the holidays and into the new year.

On the first Sunday in December, our annual Christmas Hope Tree will be set up in the back of church. Each tag on the tree will represent a child's wish this Christmas. Please take a tag from the tree – take one or as many as you are able – and make a child's Christmas wish come true. Each tag identifies the child's age and gender and also the child's wish or particular interest. This year the children range in age from newborn to 16 years old. One little boy is 7 years old and loves to play with Legos. There's a little girl who likes arts & crafts and has also asked for a night light for her bedroom. There's a mom who's expecting a baby boy in December, and for the baby she's asked for diapers, wipes, and perhaps a walker or an infant seat. There's a 16 year old teenage girl who would love some nail polish and other teen beauty items. There's a little boy who's an avid Celtics fan and another boy who's a fan of all New England sports teams.

For the gift card drive, The House of Hope has asked for gift cards that will help supplement families during the holiday season and well into the new year. Below is a list of popular gift card options. Please purchase as many gift cards as you like in **\$20 or \$25 denominations only** so that they can most easily be distributed among House of Hope constituents.

Amazon	Stop & Shop	Burger King	Domino's
Target	Shaw's	McDonald's	Subway
Walmart	Cumberland Farms	Dunkin' Donuts	

All gifts and gift cards can be brought to church on Sunday mornings and either placed beneath the Christmas Hope Tree or in the alms basin, or they can be dropped off at church during office hours. Please wrap your gift and attach the tag that you take from the tree to the gift. That way we'll be sure your gift gets to the right child.

Also, if you'd prefer to make a monetary donation, please be sure to note Christmas Gift Drive on your check, and we'll use that money to purchase anything that might still be needed at the end of the Christmas Hope gift drive. ***All gifts and donations must be received by December 19.***

The House of Hope is so appreciative of our continued support. Thanksgiving baskets were distributed to Warwick families in need so they too could have a bountiful Thanksgiving celebration. We are pleased to show our continued support through the Christmas season as well. Each and every gift will mean more than we can imagine to those who receive them.

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions – Christmas Blessings to you and your family!

Heidi Seddon
(Call parish office if you need her contact information)

Parish Office Closed



The parish office will be closed Friday, December 24th, and Friday, December 31st.

Happy Birthday



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

Peter Schofield
Georgia Shuster
Thomas Chadwick
Richard Carr
Jeanne Bayles
Faith Thomson
Michael Nelson
Megan McGoran
Ralph Pratt
David Tyson

Stephanie Silva
Timothy McLaughlin
James Whittaker
Demetria Hammond
Doris Sherman
Donald Wheeler
Lexine Wiech
Audrey McIntyre
Joshua Monanhan

2022 Stewardship Pledge Drive



Our stewardship drive for next year is now underway, and you should have received a letter and pledge form asking for your pledge of financial support for 2022. As of today, we have received 49 pledges totaling \$67,729. This is a good start, and a big **thank you** to all who have responded already. Our goal is \$152,000 so we still have a long way to go. We hope you will be as generous as your situation allows. Please return your pledge as soon as possible, but by December 12 at the latest, so that the Vestry can finalize our budget for 2022. If you have any questions, please contact Parish Treasurer Stan Schofield at 401-556-1350 or by email at sws53@cox.net.

Church Calendars



Church calendars for 2022 are in. Look for them in the back of the church. You may also pick one up in the parish office during office hours.

Snow Angel Volunteers



With the weather beginning to change, St. Barnabas Church is looking for volunteers to aid in snow removal. Clear sidewalks, stairs, and doorways are required for the safety of our congregation. In the case of winter weather, Jr. Warden Heather Rodrigues shall notify volunteers and designate a meeting time at church. A volunteer sheet will be on the back table. Please sign your name and contact information for notifications. Thank you for your support! Volunteers please bring your shovels.

Warming Our Community



A big thank you to all who donated coats, hats, gloves & mittens during our annual coat drive. It was a huge success & many in our community will be warm this winter.

Donate Pull Tabs for Recycling



Did you know that we have donated many pounds of pull tabs? Minutes of expensive treatments and other support services for the children are supplemented by selling the recycled metal. Whenever you pop a top, say a prayer for the children and bring your tops to church and place in the collection containers! Keep those tab tops coming and transform them into a blessing instead of sending them to the landfill. Just another small way you can make a difference!

Thank You!!!



Prayer Chain

Prayer Requests

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.

Morning Prayer



On Tuesday mornings at 10:00 a.m. Fr. Scott holds an abbreviated Morning Prayer Service. This gives us another chance to pray for this world, this nation, our church, our friends, family and even our enemies.



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. Thank you to Richard Carr who has volunteered to bring the donations to Westbay.

It Takes Many People to Run a Church



As we are moving forward to our normal Church routine, there are many positions where we could use help. These include Ushers, Readers, Chalice Bearers, Acolytes, Altar Guild, Money Counters, Choir, lawn mowing, upkeep of flower beds, coffee hour. Please speak with Fr. Scott or call the parish office to find out about the opportunities where you can serve.

Missing Information



If your birthday has been omitted from the Encourager or Weekly Bulletin, or your address and/or email needs to be updated please call Robin in the office so that she may update your records.

Mid-week Eucharist & Bible Study



On Wednesdays, there is another opportunity for worship and study. At 10:00 a.m. there will be a Rite I Eucharist in the Parish Hall immediately followed by a Bible study. At 6:30 p.m. there will be a Healing Eucharist in the church, and then the same Bible study from the morning will be offered in the Parish hall at 7:00 p.m.

Happenings at St. Barnabas



Sunday Holy Eucharist

8:00 a.m. (Rite I)

10:00 a.m. (Rite II)

Morning Prayer

Tuesday & Thursday

10:00 a.m.

Worship and Bible Study

Wednesday

10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist

10:30 a.m. Bible Study

6:30 p.m. Healing Service

7:00 p.m. Bible Study

Wedding



Congratulations to Caitlyn Marie Donaldson & Michael Paul Taylor who celebrated the Sacrament of Marriage on November 6, 2021.



O God, who makest us glad by the yearly remembrance of the birth of thy only Son Jesus Christ: Grant that as we joyfully receive him for our Redeemer, so we may with sure confidence behold him when he shall come to be our Judge; who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

CHRISTMAS FLOWER MEMORIALS AND THANKSGIVINGS

Christmas is a time of beauty and celebration. Our worship space is decorated with beautiful foliage. These plants are given in memory and thanksgiving of loved ones. If you would like to donate towards these decorations, a \$25.00 gift is typical, but any amount is acceptable. Please print the names of those you would like to remember and submit no later than Sunday, December 19th.

In Memory of _____

In Thanksgiving for _____

Christmas Memorial and Thanksgiving Memorials Given By:

Name _____

Telephone _____ Pledge Number _____

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

