

The Encourager

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

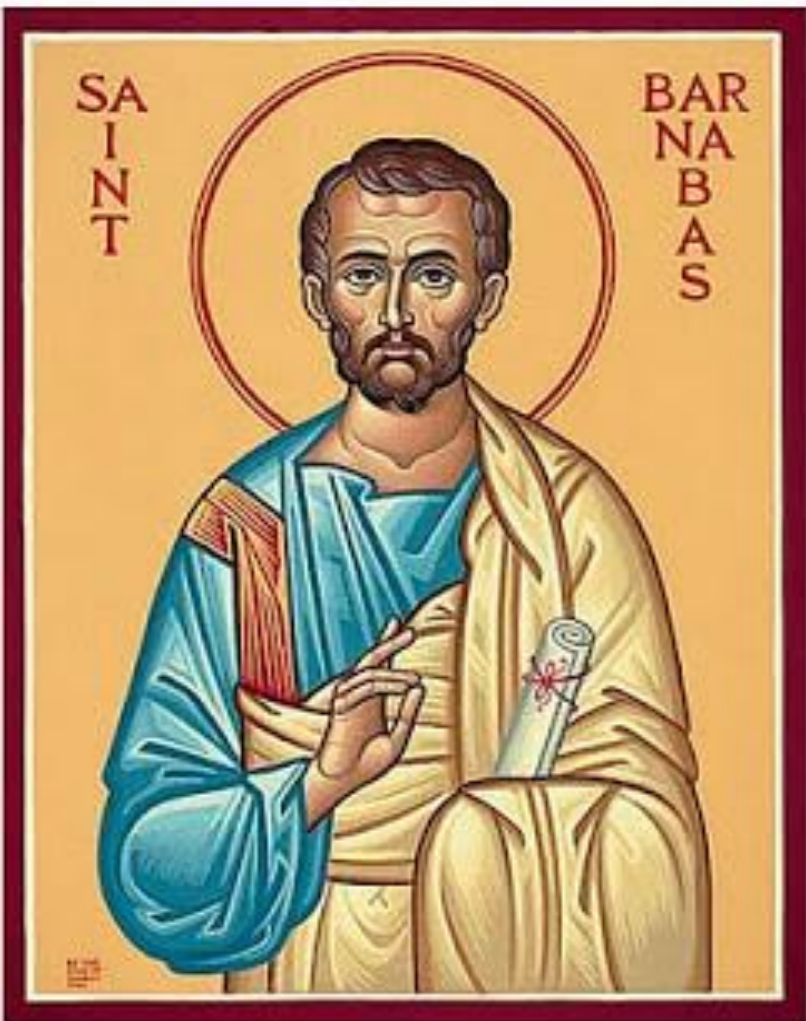
Saint Barnabas Church

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September 2026



Some FatherLee thoughts:

*“And all of us, with unveiled faces,
seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror,
are being transformed into the same image
from one degree of glory to another.”*

(2 Corinthians 3:18)

What is the goal of the Christian life? Take a moment to really consider that question. Is the goal to be nice to others? Live with integrity? Many people believe the goal is to get to heaven. While we are most certainly destined for eternal life, heaven is a byproduct of the Christian life, not the goal. What is the goal of the Christian life and faith?

When our Savior called to the disciples, “Follow Me,” it was an invitation to learn what it means to live a life of faith. In the Gospels, we see how much those disciples struggled to understand the revolution that is true faith. You see, religion is about following a bunch of rules. The disciples could comprehend rules, so can we, but faith is about more than rules. Sure, there are rules we must follow. “Thou shalt not kill,” is always a good law to keep. However, I hope that your faith is bigger than just rule-following. What is the goal of the Christian life and faith?

When the disciples agreed to follow Jesus as their rabbi, they understood their goal was to follow their teacher so closely that they would become more and more like their rabbi. They desired to be covered “in the dust of the rabbi”, which I is the title of a I read book I remember. Now, you have to follow really close to someone to be covered in the dust that comes from walking together. Do you follow so close to our Savior that you are covered in Christ’s dust? It’s like the bumper sticker on the back of a car, “Do you follow Jesus this closely?”

The goal of the Christian life and faith is transformation. We don’t like that word, do we? It sounds too much like change, and most of us adamantly oppose change. However, this transformation is to become more and more like Jesus.

It does not mean that God wants us to be little clones of Christ, nor does our Savior want us to become a different person. Quite the opposite! Christ simply desires for who we are to be perfected. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we are to become more fully ourselves. You see, we are created in the image of the Living God, and “Christ is the visible expression of the invisible God,” (Col 1:15) so when we become more like our Savior, we are closer to the likeness of our God in whose image we were made.

This idea is something that has grown over the Summer months. We have been hearing the stories of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob/Israel, the patriarchs of faith. There was occasionally a name change, but these individuals didn’t become someone new. Abraham was already a person of hospitality, but that hospitality is perfected when it welcomes many, many nations. Isaac was created with great faithfulness, which he demonstrated by allowing his father to bind him for sacrifice, then he grew in faithfulness because the more Isaac trusted in the Lord, the more he found our God to be worthy of his faith.

Then there is Jacob. That is a person I can relate to. How about you? Jacob knew the faith of Isaac and the hospitality of Abraham, but he really only trusted in himself. Then, he literally wrestled with how to hold life and faith in balance, especially since faith demands hospitality. Out of love for his spouse and children, Jacob grew in faith and grew in love. Israel is the name of a Jacob who has “struggled with God and with humans.” (Gen 32:28) He wrestled with how to live with faith in a world filled with all sorts of people. Are you wrestling with how to live with faith in a troubled world?

The problem is that many of us think that faith should fix all the problems in our lives and in the world. While I do believe that faith and prayer changes things in a beautiful way, faith isn’t a magic wand. Actually, faith is the assurance of two things: 1) that God is with us through the ups and downs of life in this world, “I am with you always,” (Mt 28:20) and 2) when

our time on earth is done, Christ has prepared for us a dwelling place, eternal in the heavens. (Jn 14:2)

So, we do our best to walk with faith. The question then becomes: Is my goal every day to follow Jesus more closely? Will I follow so close that I begin to look more and more like our Savior? For some of us, this transformation will be manifested as Wisdom, others will be filled with more of Christ's compassion, and I believe every one of us will grow in love for God and love for others.

There are a lot of people who complain that things are not as they should be in the world. I agree, but there comes a point when the Lord asks, "What are you going to do about it? I have wonderfully made you," declares the Lord, "and have called to you." Instead of settling deeper into the comfort of our complacency, will we let the Holy Spirit mold us more and more into the image of Christ, which is the very image of God.

That is the goal of the Christian life. And the transformation in us will have a transformative impact on our world. May we become so completely ourselves that we shine with the light of God's love.

Faithfully
Fr. Scott Lee

Healing Prayers September 6th



You have the opportunity to participate in prayers for healing, the laying on of hands, and anointing with Holy Oil. At the end of the service, simply move to the front of the church. After Fr. Scott greets those leaving church he will join you as we pray for ourselves and those in need.

Deacon's Greetings

Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; pursue hospitality to strangers. (Romans 12:12-13)

"Break 'em on down, break 'em on down. Break 'em on down - these walls between us." (sung in a round)

On Saturday August 8th, eight of us from St. Barnabas joined Church Beyond the Walls for an Afternoon of Service. We met at the Episcopal Cathedral of St. John on North Main Street in Providence (and caught the end of Bible Study as we were 1/2 hour early.) After that we helped pack a car with tables and all things necessary to serve food to a large group, plus liturgical items for the 2 p.m. outdoor church service. Many hands made light work, and we had time to chat before the service that would be followed by fellowship and the serving of a meal provided by India Restaurant with additions from CBW. Also, we were happy to offer a box of [Love Gives](#) baseball hats provided by Emily McMahon. The hats were received with smiles and gratitude on a hot summer day!

"Church Unwalled, Love Unbound"

As explained on the CBW website: "Church Beyond the Walls is a street-church community called to build solidarity among people from all walks of life –housed and unhoused, poor and privileged, churched and unchurched. We are a specialized mission of the Episcopal Diocese of RI in partnership with the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

A community life centered on the Eucharist. Equal hospitality to all guests. An altar where the broken become the Body of Christ.

With its roots in the Occupy movement, CBW has been, from its start, not a charity but a worshiping group of people that seeks to build Christian community where physical and spiritual hungers are fed on the street. Our diversity encourages

us to foster a culture of equality that transcends differences. Every week, no matter the weather, we head to Burnside Park seeking Christ in all those we encounter and reflecting Christ to all we encounter." (from churchbeyondthewalls.org)

While at the cathedral preparing for the service, I had the opportunity to talk with Virginia. She had experienced homelessness in the past and now serves as a CBW leader. As with the baseball hats, the church often packs needed seasonal items to share during fellowship. During our conversation I asked her thoughts about Blessing Bags - usually a ziplock bag filled with toiletries and snacks that can be donated to an organization or kept in the car for when you encounter someone in need.

There are pros and cons about Blessing Bags, because often, the choosing of contents assumes that we know what someone would need, and in our striving to respect the dignity of every human being by providing basic necessities we may unwittingly be pushing against that dignity by our assumptions.

For example, Virginia showed me a blessing bag that had been lovingly made and donated to the church. It was a gallon ziplock bag filled with full-sized soap, shampoo, and snacks. I looked at my little travel backpack and thought there's no way that would fit even in a full-sized backpack. It would be heavy and take up a lot of room. It was sad, though, because the bag looked carefully put together, even including a note of encouragement for the recipient.

So, when I asked her what items were truly needed, Virginia explained that smaller is better. Think of the travel-sized area of a store: mini-deodorants, toothpaste that comes with a travel toothbrush, a small package of tissues. Things that can fit easily into a purse or small pack and can be easily thrown away when empty. She said that what's needed most is socks. Socks, underwear, t-shirts, and sweatpants. But mostly socks. As she explained further, consider a load of laundry you'd bring to the

laundromat. You'd need to fill at least one bucket to make it worth your time and effort, right? But living unhoused has its unique challenges, because by the time you'd have enough dirty socks to bring to the laundromat, you'd surely want to put them in the trash instead! So, folks are looking for fresh socks. Ones that can be worn for a time and then thrown away, with hopefully a new fresh pair to be put on. So, while not discouraging the making of Blessing Bags, I offer this as a gentle reminder to first consider lists of recommended items, ask area organizations what would be best to include, and to remember smaller is better.

After the service we packed up and walked back to the cathedral to put things away and for a time of debriefing/reflection on where we saw God that day. I had to head home, so I missed that part, but I would say I felt the Spirit during the Eucharistic prayer. While Rev. Linda Forsberg was saying the words of the prayer, there were two people nearby having a heated argument. It reminded me that our fights and arguments will come and go, but the prayers that have been prayed for centuries will continue into the future, and the words of Hope and Love are more powerful than any argument.

[From the Eucharistic Prayer] "This is Christ's table. Come, you who feel weak, and unworthy, you who come often, and you who have stayed away. Come, you who love Jesus, and you who wish you could. Come sinners and saints, women and men, cis and trans, gay and straight. Come you who are sober and you who aren't. Come you who are homeless and you who have a place to rest your heads. Come you who are citizens of this land and you who are not. Here you are citizens of the Kingdom of God. Now join God's people at this feast prepared for you from the beginning of the world."

May we, too, be the church unwalled, love unbound.
In Peace,
Deacon Andrea

H.O.P.E.

Hospitality, Outreach, Pastoral Care, and Education

Hospitality: Thank you to our ushers and coffee hour volunteers, and for all who have been welcoming visitors to St. Barnabas. A Hospitality ministry meeting is in the plans for fall/winter. Date TBA.

Outreach: Outreach has started meeting, and in August, eight people participated in an Afternoon of Service with Church Beyond the Walls in Providence. The next opportunity is to volunteer as a group at the Epiphany Soup Kitchen in Providence on Saturday September 26. A sign-up sheet is on the back table.

Then in October, adults, kids, and dogs are encouraged to participate in the No More Hunger Walk on Saturday October 17th at St. Mark's Church. Further info is coming soon.

Pastoral Care: A first meeting is scheduled for Sunday September 20th after the 10 a.m. service. All are invited to attend.

Education: Thank you to our Sunday School teachers and helpers. Sunday School will begin on September 20th, and an Education ministry meeting is in the plans for fall/winter. Date TBA.

Earlier in the year some folks had added their names to the email list for one or more of these ministries. If you'd like to be on an email list, please send your contact info to Deacon Andrea. All are invited to attend the meetings to learn more about the volunteer opportunities and/or join a ministry.



Back to School Blessing

Sunday, September 13th at both services Fr. Scott will offer a blessing for teachers and students. If you wish to bring your planner and/or backpack he will bless you and those items in hopes for a safe and successful school year.

Michelle's Memos

Happy September my dear fellow parishioners, I want to thank all who helped and cooked for St Mary's Day luncheon. It was nice seeing you all and sharing a meal together. Everything was delicious. It was a great success.

We are planning the BAZAAR for November 21st. MARK YOUR CALENDARS. I am hoping we will have a good turnout from all who have volunteered in past and our community. I will be keeping all of you posted on items that can be donated and where to put them.

I hope you all had a wonderful summer. God's blessings to you as well.

Michelle Gilbert, Sr. Warden

Happy Birthday



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

Bonne Simonian
Gerri Fox
Ronald Bonenfant
Ivy Swinski
Jennifer Maloney
Karen Thornton
Kristy Marble
Laurie Furney
Michelle Gilbert
Nolan Hinz
Patricia Loftus
Richard Riley
Jenna Mixner
Wayne Pollard
Thomas Burdick Jr.

Heidi Seddon
Leonard Johnson
Michael Spearman
R. Peter Furney
Stephanie Van Patten
Jessica Mixner
Amey Tilley
Abigail Burdick
Maura Maloney
Jean Card
Iris Rogers
Savannah Lee
Scott Simonian
Joseph Burdick

Stewardship

Dear St. Barnabas Friends,

As we enter Autumn, we are only a few months away from the end of the year. That also means that we once again begin to talk about pledging for the year 2027. In a few weeks, we will be mailing you our annual letter requesting your pledge intent for next year. Please think about what you feel you can pledge to the church and more importantly, what this church can provide for you and others in the future.

Please understand that the pledge that you make today is not some type of contractual obligation. We will not berate you if you need to change your pledge midstream. Things like that happen. However, pledging is important for many other reasons, one of them being that it allows the Vestry to properly budget for the next year. This church has been financially responsible and disciplined such that we do not guess or hope when it comes to such matters; we use real figures. That is why we depend on you and your generosity.

When you do receive our letter about pledging and stewardship, please return the pledge card as soon as possible. October 18, 2026, will be Stewardship Sunday and we ask that your pledges be returned by then.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Stan Schofield.
God Bless, Dave Dolbashian

Happy Grandparent's Day, September 13th



To our parishioners who have the distinct pleasure of being a grandparent, Happy Grandparent's Day! Whether you have grandchildren, grand pets or are a Grandparent figure in someone's life, may you enjoy this special day.

St. Barnabas Sunday School



Come join us! 1st and 3rd Sundays at 9:45, children Ages 4 – 12 Beginning September 20th. For more information, please reach out to Bonne Simonian.

Coffee Hour



We hope you have been enjoying our time together on Sunday mornings. Volunteers are always needed and welcomed...from set up, to baking or buying treats, and cleaning up. Without volunteers for this ministry, we wouldn't be able to continue this wonderful fellowship hour. Please consider helping with this ministry. There is a sign-up sheet in the kitchen if you would like to volunteer.

What's going on...



Coffee Hour - Every Sunday after the 10:00 a.m. service. If you would like to bring a treat to share that would be great! There will be a notice in the bulletin if it is not being held.

Morning Prayer - Tuesdays & Thursdays mornings at 10:00 a.m.

Eucharist & Bible Study - Wednesdays, there is another opportunity for worship and study. At 10:00 a.m. there will be a Rite I Eucharist in Fr. Scott's office, immediately followed by a Bible study. All are welcome!

Save these Dates

Outreach Opportunities this Fall

Saturday, September 26th -- Epiphany Soup Kitchen

We'll be joining St. Stephen's soup kitchen to prep and serve food from 2:30-5:30 p.m. at 114 George St. in Providence.

Ages 12+ are invited to sign up using the clipboard at the back of the church.

We are making backpacks of personal care items to donate to guests at the Epiphany Soup kitchen later this month. Please consider taking a backpack and filling it with personal care items and returning it to church on Sept 20th. Our goal is to donate 40 bags. See Julie Mixner at the end of the service to help out and get details!

Saturday, October 17th

The 6th Annual *No More Hunger* Walk

The interfaith walk begins and ends at St. Mark's in Warwick. All ages (and dogs!) are welcome as we walk together and raise money for our local food pantries. The 2.5-mile walk begins at 10 a.m. Further details and sign-ups are coming soon.

Flowers & Sanctuary Candle



If you would like to have flowers on the Altar or the Sanctuary Candle lit in memory of someone special or in celebration of a special event, there is a calendar with envelopes located in the back of the church. Please complete and drop in the collection plate or hand it to an usher. You may also call Robin in the parish office, and she will get your information.

Holiday Bazaar Planning Meeting

Thank you to those who have volunteered their time to help with this year's Bazaar. The follow-up planning meeting will be on Sunday, September 13th in the Guild Room following 10:00 a.m. service.

Main Raffle Prizes (no particular order)	Sponsor
3 in one Breakfast station appliance	Michelle Gilbert
20' Kid's Bike & helmet	David Dolbashian
GC - Overnight Stay Rose Island Lighthouse	Doreen Kosciusko
2 Tickets - Boston Holiday Pops Concert with Keith Lockhart on 12-13-2026	Heidi Seddon, Jean Suppappola, Emily McMahon
Tables, Etc.	
Ad Book	Jim Turner & Heidi Seddon
Main Raffle	Bonne Simonian
Baked Goods	Jo Taylor, Liz Balkom, Marilyn Davis
Crafts Mystery Gift Bags (valued \$5-\$10)	Karen Thornton Kathy Richardson Doreen Kosciusko
Penny Social	Heidi Seddon
Religious Items	Joan Schofield
Theme Baskets (\$20 max value)	Add-on next to Religious Item Table
White Elephant	Susanne Berry, Cheryl Marble, Teagan Marble
Kitchen	Joan Newell, Julie Mixner,
Clean Up/Odds & Ends	Al Prata, Corey McMahon
Floater	Gail Frueh, Al Prata
Ornaments	
Kids Corner	Laurie Kirchmeyer
Christmas Food pantry cards	

Our Parish Story

Stained Glass Windows Part 1

The Four Fisherman

During services, sunlight often shines through the stained-glass windows, especially as Fr. Scott prepares The Holy Communion, creating a rainbow of colors like a prism on the High Altar. Have you noticed that too? Let's learn about the stained-glass windows on the right side of the church as you face the altar. This information was originally written by Fr. Bob Cummings called The Disciples of Christ As Depicted in the Windows of St. Barnabas Church, Warwick RI. Special thanks to Fr. Scott and Heidi Seddon for sharing this booklet, which allows me to share with you. This month highlights 4 of the 12. Starting with the Fisher of Men.



Window #1: St. Peter. Peter, also called Simon Peter, a Fisherman with his brother Andrew (later called James and John) were at the Sea of Galilee mending their fishing nets. Jesus spotted them. Jesus said to them: "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men." (Matthew 4:18-22) (Matthew 16:19) "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you lose on earth will be lost in heaven. (Matthew 26:75) Before the cock crows you will deny me three times. St. Peter is shown holding a fishing net in his right hand and the Key in his left; in the upper-right corner of the window is a red Crow.

Window #2: St. John (Son of Zebedee. Also known as the Disciple Jesus loved.) Following Matthew 4:21-22 respectfully, Jesus walked on after meeting with Peter and Andrew, he saw James, son of Zebedee and his brother John. They were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. The pen in John's right hand represents him as the Gospeller. This function is considered sacred, as the Gospeller conveys the teachings of Jesus Christ, aiming to inspire, instruct, and spiritually guide. St. John's symbol has always been the Eagle, seeing further into heaven than the other disciples. St. John died 100 AD of natural causes at 93 years old and was the only one of the original apostles not martyred.

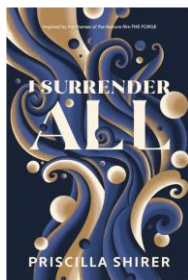
Window #3: St. James, Son of Zebedee, also known as James the Great Baptizer because of his missionary activities. The scallop shell is a symbol of baptism. (Matthew 4:21-22) James with his brother John were in a boat with their father Zebedee, preparing their nets. Jesus called them, and immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him. Tragically, James was beheaded by Herod Agrippa in 44 A.D. As the first apostle to be martyred, James stands as an example for the ages of devotion and passion for evangelism.

Window #4: St. Andrew (Mark 1:16-18) As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. "Come, follow me," Jesus said, "and I will send you out to fish for people." At once they left their nets and followed him. Andrew is said to have died around 60-70 AD crucified at Patras on the western coast of Greece, on a cross shaped like the letter X. That distinctive cross — called the crux decussata or the Cross of Saint Andrew. According to legend, Andrew requested to be crucified in this manner because he did not consider himself worthy to die in the same way as Jesus. This request reflects his humility and deep respect for his Savior, emphasizing his commitment to following the example set by Christ even unto death.

Would you know what year these new Stained-glass windows were installed and/or who created them? I'd love to hear from you!

Yours in Faith, Susan Federico

Adult Book Study
St. Barnabas Church
Saturday mornings – 9:00 – 10:30 am



I Surrender All is a book about choice – our choice to surrender all to Jesus. Priscilla Shirer teaches that salvation is a gift of God, and it's free. It's grace. Discipleship comes at a high cost. It's a surrender. It's a daily choice to lay down your life and follow His. Few believers choose this route, but the ones who do will experience the abundance that only the surrendered life can offer. Books can be purchased online or through most bookstores. For more info, please reach out to Heidi Seddon.

September 5	First – <i>All or Nothing</i> Chapter 1 – <i>Everything You Have</i> Chapter 2 – <i>Everything You Need</i>
September 12	Chapter 3 – <i>Everything You Are</i> Chapter 4 – <i>Everything You're Becoming</i>
September 19	Chapter 5 – <i>Everything You Want</i> Chapter 6 – <i>Everything You Face</i>
October 3	Chapter 7 – <i>Everywhere You Go</i> Chapter 8 – <i>Everything for Jesus</i>