



Parish of
St Peter Woking
St Peter's · St Mark's · All Souls'



Sunday 12th July Barnabas

PREPARATION

Welcome

Leader Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you

All and also with you.

Leader This is the day that the Lord has made.

All Let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Hymn 200 Great is thy faithfulness

Great is thy faithfulness,
O God my father
There is no shadow
of turning with thee
Thou changest not,
thy compassions they fail not
As thou hast been
thou forever wilt be

*Great is thy faithfulness
Great is thy faithfulness
Morning by morning
new mercies I see
All I have needed
thy hand hath provided
Great is thy faithfulness
Lord unto me*

Summer and winter,
springtime and harvest
Sun, moon, and stars
in their courses above
Join with all nature
in manifold witness
To thy great faithfulness,
mercy, and love

Great is thy faithfulness...

Pardon for sin
and peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence
to cheer and to guide
Strength for today
and bright hope for tomorrow
Blessings all mine
with ten thousand beside

Great is thy faithfulness...

Opening activity ~ Learning to walk

Confession

Leader Barnabas was an encourager, getting the best out of people.
Let's reflect on when we have discouraged others for whatever reason and seek God's forgiveness.

**All Lord God, we have sinned against you;
we have done evil in your sight.
We are sorry and repent.
Have mercy on us according to your love.
Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us from our sin.
Renew a right spirit within us
and restore to us the joy of your salvation,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen**

Absolution

Leader May the Father of all mercies cleanse *you* from *your* sins,
and restore *you* in his image to the praise and glory of his
name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Leader Blessed is the Lord,
All For he has heard the voice of our prayer;
Leader Therefore shall our hearts dance for joy!
All And in our song will we praise our God.

Collect (5th Sunday after Trinity)

Leader Almighty God, send down upon your Church
the riches of your Spirit,
and kindle in all who minister the gospel
your countless gifts of grace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

This time @home – Lynda Salmond, All Souls'

Hymn **O praise the name**

I cast my mind to Calvary
Where Jesus bled and died for me
I see His wounds, His hands, His feet
My Saviour on that cursed tree
His body bound and drenched in tears
They laid Him down in Joseph's tomb
The entrance sealed by heavy stone
Messiah still and all alone

*O praise the name of the Lord our God
O praise His name forevermore
For endless days we will sing Your praise
Oh Lord, oh Lord our God*

And then on the third at break of dawn
The Son of heaven rose again
O trampled death where is your sting?
The angels roar for Christ the King

O praise the name of the Lord our God

He shall return in robes of white
The blazing sun shall pierce the night
And I will rise among the saints
My gaze transfixed on Jesus' face

O praise the name of the Lord our God

Bible readings

Luke 1:39-45 ~ Tamara Pike, All Souls'

³⁹ At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea, ⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: 'Blessed are you among women and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³ But why am I so favoured, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfil his promises to her!'

Acts 11:19-26 ~ Mark Lemprière, St Mark's

¹⁹ Now those who had been scattered by the persecution that broke out when Stephen was killed travelled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, spreading the word only among Jews. ²⁰ Some of them, however, men from Cyprus and Cyrene, went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. ²¹ The Lord's hand was with them, and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord.

²² News of this reached the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. ²³ When he arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their

hearts. ²⁴ He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

²⁵ Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, ²⁶ and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

Sermon A man called Barnabas – *Jacquie Still, churchwarden*

I have a friend who is very encouraging, and we've known each other for many years. When we were young (some time ago!), she encouraged me to follow her example of throwing a shuttlecock over the garage roof which joined our garden. She demonstrated this feat and when I looked, I could see no shuttlecock in sight. I duly took my stance and threw with all my might Only to find it landing barely inches onto the roof of the garage. I turned bewildered to find both my friend, and now my mum falling about laughing at my gullibility. Of course, the shuttlecock I thought had made the vast leap over the garage was in fact behind my friend where she had dropped it before pretending to throw it. It never left the garden. As the saying goes, with friends like that well, you know the rest. I can help feeling that's not the type of wheeze Barnabas would have pulled.

We first come across Barnabas, or Joseph which is his birth name, in the earlier chapters of Acts where he comes with money that he lays at the apostle's feet from the sale of a field. We learn that he was a Levite and a native from Cyprus. We can only wonder and marvel at the Holy Spirit at work in this man of learning and priestly duty who has heard the Good News and responded by "throwing in his lot"

with this new faith. What would his family think as leaves his life so ordered to join this wandering band of rebels whose leader has been killed? Come to think of it – how did he manage to have property to sell? Perhaps the laws of ownership for Levites on Cyprus were more relaxed. Why was it only a field? Did he have others? It puts the story that follows of Ananais and Sapphira under the microscope a bit more, doesn't it? Anyway, however the field came into his possession, he sells it willingly to support



the fledgling church. He must have already been well known to the apostles as he has already been given the nickname “Barnabas” or Son of Encouragement. It must have heartened them greatly to see someone so learned doing an about turn to follow Jesus.

Our next encounter with Barnabas happens when Saul returns to Jerusalem after his life changing encounter with Jesus on the Damascus Road. Having stayed in Damascus proclaiming the Good News of Jesus, Saul finds he is at the centre of a plot to kill him. To avoid this, his disciples lower him out of the city at night in a basket. He then makes his way back to Jerusalem. Having left it with murderous intent, he now finds himself seeking the early church. I can't say I blame the brothers there for being wary of Saul. After all he'd stood by at the stoning of Stephen and persecuted the church before leaving for Damascus. He could just be drawing them in to an elaborate trap. Not for nothing does Jesus remind his disciples in Matthew's Gospel when he sends them out to be as shrewd as snakes and as innocent as doves. To be on their guard as they will be handed over to the local councils and be flogged in the synagogues. So, what is it that causes Barnabas to bring Saul to the apostles. What risk did he take to meet with Saul alone and hear his story for we read of no angelic assurance, but somehow the Holy Spirit must have convinced him. Perhaps in the place of a once proud Pharisee he finds a broken, humble man; one who now knows what it is to be on the end of murderous intents, to be hunted, alone and afraid, save for Jesus. Perhaps he finds a fellow man of the “cloth”. For whilst Barnabas comes willingly to faith, Saul has vehemently opposed Jesus, yet both have a strong upbringing in learning, and the Jewish Faith. Both had years of expectation and waiting turned on its head, both had reputations to lose, both had to strike out away from every fabric of their lives before – their homes, their roles, their family – to do what? Follow a broken Saviour. What an encouragement it must have been for Saul to find someone whose journey had also meant such sacrifice. Very much like our first reading in Luke's Gospel – it is Mary seeking her cousin Elizabeth – the only one who would understand the message she too had received from Gabriel, the miracle news to both these women who suddenly found themselves centre stage at this point of God's amazing plan. Barnabas is trusted by the apostles and can vouchsafe for Saul's genuine conversion to Jesus and his boldness to proclaim the Good News.

In the book of Acts, the early church is going from strength to strength with miraculous healings and Peter's vision before he visits Cornelius, a Gentile. The Good News is growing and spreading out through the persecutions of

the church and even Saul has travelled to Tarsus to avoid more threats to kill him. We hear of a community of believers in now in Antioch who are proclaiming the Good News of the Lord to all. Word of this wonderful community reaches those in Jerusalem, and they decide to send Barnabas to visit and in our reading we hear that on reaching them and seeing the Grace of God he was glad and encourages them to stay faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose for he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith.

What a blessing it must for the church both at Antioch and Jerusalem to have as one of its brothers one who was so encouraging, faithful and full of the Holy Spirit. He also does not seek the limelight for himself, but rather seeing the need, goes off to fetches Saul now close by in Tarsus to come and help teach the new Christians in Antioch.

In our own walk with the Lord, its' good to find those who journey with us and become our "Barnabases".

- Those who encourage us when the going gets tough, where we are misunderstood or need someone to build a bridge that enables us to say sorry.
- Those that through their daily lives perhaps quietly and unassumingly live out the Gospel Faith, who seem so sure footed when giving reply to our questioning hearts.
- Who look at us and tell us of the moments of grace they see in our lives
- Who encourage us to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast purpose

When the time comes for the church in Antioch to rally to the needs of the church in Jerusalem, I'm sure the generosity of Barnabas which we first see in the money raised from the selling of that field, must have encouraged generous hearts in the Christians there.

Many of you will know how the story of Barnabas and Saul continues. For it is just a few short chapters until we see them seemingly irreconcilably falling out over whether their fellow traveller John Mark can return to travel with them on their next journey, even though he came home part way through the first. It does seem strange that, having found Barnabas the bridge builder for Saul when he arrived in Jerusalem, the Apostle Paul as he now is called cannot give John a second chance to travel again with them.

Perhaps as we've journeyed today with Barnabas you've been thinking of someone who has been your Barnabas in Faith both past and present.

Maybe if you haven't already you could let them know this week. At any rate, we can certainly give much thanks to God for raising them up in our lives at the right time. Perhaps you may find yourself being contacted and find you are the one who is a Barnabas to many – a good and generous person, full of the Holy Spirit and faith. Perhaps these are the lessons we can carry through in our daily walk – how can we surrender our riches to the Lord (which after all are his in the first place), lay them at His feet and in return receive His Holy Spirit to make us good and generous and an encouragement to all – Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, over the course of our lives whether short of long, thank you for the brothers and sisters of faith you surround us with, that encourage us and keep us true to your way. Thank you for your every present Holy Spirit who accompanied the early church into lands yet to hear the Good News. Thank you that he comes with us each day into the harvest fields of our workplaces and our schools and home, to enable us to grow in your Grace – thank you Lord, In Jesus name – AMEN.

Hymn 224 He who would valiant be

He who would valiant be
'gainst all disaster,
let him in constancy
follow the Master.

There's no discouragement
shall make him once relent
his first avowed intent
to be a pilgrim.

Since, Lord, thou dost defend
us with thy Spirit,
We know we at the end,
shall life inherit.

Then fancies flee away!
I'll fear not what men say,
I'll labour night and day
to be a pilgrim

Who so beset him round
with dismal stories
do but themselves confound
his strength the more is.
No foes shall stay his might;
though he with giants fight,
he will make good his right
to be a pilgrim.

Apostles' Creed

**All I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Open the Book and Engage Update

Our Open the Book Team that usually acts out bible stories at Kingfield and Westfield schools, has been unable to do so for many weeks, but now that schools have reopened we have videoed ourselves acting out a number of stories including the calling of Samuel, David and Goliath and Jonah. These are being played to classes in school and have been appreciated. They are being made available on our YouTube channel for anyone to see.

The Engage charity that we support as a parish, which works with many schools in Woking, has continued its work during lockdown doing virtual Christian Unions, supporting staff through these challenging times and delivering the "It's Your Move" books to Year 6 pupils to help them with the move to secondary school next year.

Prayers ~ Sue Harvey, St Peter's

Father God, We still our hearts, our minds and our bodies before you.

As we focus on you, on your love, on your truth, and on your promises we turn from the things that trouble us. We take each trigger for anxiety and lay it at your feet.



We choose to hear songs of praise and allow our hearts to breathe. We choose to wait for your Holy Spirit to stir our souls. We rest here knowing that whatever we face, you will hold us safely. **Amen.**

O God, we thank you for the gift of life and for the faculties which enable us to enjoy it. You have given us our eyes to see the beauty of your world, our ears to hear speech and the sound of music, our lips with which to speak in friendship to others, and our hands with which to minister to their needs. May we always feel your love and grace, your caring hand and encouraging support. Help us to use all that we have in your service and for your greater glory through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Lord God, so often in different situations we stand and can't take the first steps and make decisions. We can be stuck in such circumstances for a long time, so we ask for your encouragement and help. Lord, please encourage us through our life's journey. Please ensure that we don't feel fear or uncertainty. Let all our decisions be according to your will. Don't let us give up in any situation we face but teach us to find the right way and make the right decision. Lord, encourage and guide us in all the actions we take in our lives. For the sake of your Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Let us pray to the Lord, who is our refuge and stronghold. For all who are affected by coronavirus, through illness or isolation or anxiety, that they may find relief and recovery:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For those who are guiding our nation at this time, and shaping national policies, that they may make wise decisions:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For doctors, nurses and medical researchers, that through their skill and insights many will be restored to health:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For a blessing on our local community, that our neighbourhoods may be places of trust and friendship, where all are known and cared for:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For our homes and families, our schools and young people, and all in any kind of need or distress:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

For those who are unwell, including Mary and Bob Baker, Eileen and Peter Bliss, Trevor Lloyd and Mary McAvoy and anyone else known to us personally.

For the vulnerable and the fearful, for the gravely ill and the dying, that they may know your comfort and peace:

Lord, hear us,

Lord, graciously hear us.

We commend ourselves, and all for whom we pray, to the mercy and protection of God.

Lord, you are the wind in my sails,

You guide me as I steer and find direction.

You give me the strength to keep on going.

You watch over me as I navigate stormy seas.

You are the harbour where I stop for rest.

You are my encourager when I lose hope.

You are the lighthouse that keeps my path safe.

You are with me always.

Thank you.

Amen.

Gathering our prayers and praises into one, let us pray with confidence the prayer that Jesus taught us:

The Lord's Prayer

**All Our Father in heaven,
 hallowed be your name,
 your Kingdom come,
 your will be done,
 on earth as in heaven.
 Give us today our daily bread.
 Forgive us our sins
 as we forgive those who sin against us.
 Lead us not into temptation
 but deliver us from evil.
 For the Kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours
 now and for ever.
 Amen**

Notices *(See Notes & News)*

Hymn **51 Be thou my vision**

Be Thou my Vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best Thought, by day or by night,
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light.

Be Thou my Wisdom, be Thou my true Word;
I ever with Thee and Thou with me, Lord;
Thou my great Father, and I Thy true son;
Thou in me dwelling, and I with Thee one.

Riches I heed not, nor man's empty praise,
Thou mine Inheritance, now and always:
Thou and Thou only, first in my heart,
High King of Heaven, my Treasure Thou art.

High King of Heaven, my victory won,
May I reach Heaven's joys, O bright Heaven's Sun!
Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my Vision, O Ruler of all.

The dismissal

The peace of God,
which passes all understanding,
keep your hearts and minds
in the knowledge and love of God,
and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.

All **Amen.**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Worshipping ▶ Loving ▶ Sharing ▶ Growing

