



Immeasurably More – the Return of

'Immeasurably More' is the process whereby we gather as a church family to listen to God and each other. Out of that process we'll plan for St Barnabas in the next few years. *'Immeasurably More'* has been disrupted by coronavirus, but is getting back on track.

Across three evenings on Zoom during June (or via a paper questionnaire) we'll look at three big questions:

Who are we ?

Where are we ?

Where are we going ?

Who are we ? We need to think about who we are as a church. What are the core values we hold? That may sound obvious – we're a church ! But organisations have a nasty habit of forgetting the core beliefs they have – and then they drift, or worse, they parrot the culture around them.

Where are we ? We need to think about the specific parish we serve and the wider area of

Middlesbrough and Teesside – as St Barnabas has long had a wider ministry across the Tees Valley. Some of us are new to the area and have a lot to learn. But even if we have always lived here, we need to look hard. How has the area changed? How might it change in the future, given plans for things like a freeport on the Tees?



Photo by [Vlad Bagacian](#) on [Unsplash](#)

And then there is coronavirus. There has been an avalanche of commentary about COVID-19. The virus is certainly changing us, but how? What changes during corona will prove lasting? Which changes will be temporary?

Where are we going ? This is probably the question we all want to ask, but we can't ask it until we've clarified (a) who we are and (b) where we are. Two thoughts. First, in the long run, we are each of us going to meet our maker. If that sounds sobering, let's remember that as followers of the risen Jesus, we take that journey with hope and have that hope to offer others. Second, as followers of the risen Jesus, how do we act hopefully in the future?

The details of the *Immeasurably More* programme are as follows:

Weds 17 June, 7.30 to 9 pm ZOOM

SESSION ONE: Who are we ?

Weds 24 June, 7.30 to 9 pm ZOOM

SESSION TWO: Where are we ?

Weds 1 July 7.30 to 9 pm ZOOM

SESSION THREE: Where are we going ?

Questionnaires will be sent out by post to members the church family who have no access to the internet, so that everyone can feed in their thoughts.

Based on these conversations, the PCC, wardens and staff team will oversee the drafting of a Mission Action Plan (MAP), which will be shared with the wider congregation in September.

In the meantime, you remain in my prayers. Please keep Lindsey and myself in yours.

David

Update from Rachel, June 2020

Rachel, our link partner working in South-East Asia, is likely to remain in the UK on extended home leave until at least July due to international border closures. She is enjoying the extra time and space in the meantime. Thank you for your continued support and encouragement.

Earlier this month, in an area of Rachel's host country that has never known our Friend, seven young people heard and decided to follow Him. The following week six chose to be dunked to affirm their commitment, and a few days later they were taken for questioning. Their families were told that unless the young people gave up on our Friend, all of their families would be forced to leave the village - a very severe prospect. Wonderfully, all of the young people stood firm and refused to change their minds. Even more wonderfully, after a few days those who were pressuring them relented.

Like many of us, many of Rachel's friends on the other side of the world are struggling with the present circumstances, facing challenges with health, family situations or difficult decisions. There are also opportunities, though – colleagues in the neighbouring country have been organising community efforts to distribute facemasks and share rice with those who didn't have enough. Now that they are emerging from this period of limited social contact, they are planning further training events for other local leaders.

Thanks for...

- clarity about not yet being able to return to South-East Asia
- work that is able to continue post-lockdown in the countries where Rachel works

Please ask for...

- continued safety and protection for friends and leaders post-lockdown
- strength, understanding and encouragement for new followers and those sharing the good news
- clarity about Rachel's return to South-East Asia

Rachel will be hosting a Zoom call to share more about her work on Saturday 6th June, 10:30am-12:00noon UK time. She'll share a few stories and pictures for 30 minutes or so, after which there'll be a chance to ask questions (or to leave if you have other engagements that morning)! If you would like more information about how to join the Zoom call, please email the church office: office@st-barnabas.net.

PCC in April and May



The PCC met via zoom in April and May. Updates on the various taskgroups set up in response to coronavirus were received. The PCC discussed the need for a worship leader and approved the vicar and churchwardens advertising the post. The PCC talked about the new programme for Immeasurably More.

Online Giving

The website now has a donate button so that gifts can be given online via JustGiving. See <http://www.st-barnabas.net/giving/>.



From the Registers

Funerals at the Crematorium

11th March

Elizabeth Walsh

aged 85



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