



## Worshipping together

It has been great to have worship back in church on Wednesdays for some weeks now and Sunday worship at St Barnabas restarts on Sunday 6 September. It is going to feel different to before, but it will be really good for those who are able to gather face to face to worship.

Can I share some practicalities – and then say a little about how we approach worship.

### Practicalities

The levels of COVID-19 in Middlesbrough are way down, as I write – thank God. But the disease has not gone away. So we must follow all government and church guidance in restarting Sunday worship. This includes staying away if you have symptoms or have health reasons why you should self-isolate.

From 6 September, there will be two Sunday services – one at 9 am (which will be similar to the existing 9.30am service) and one at 11.15am, which will be akin to the existing 11.15am service and is designed for the needs of families in particular. Each service will last about 45 minutes.

Please notify the church office on [office@st-barnabas.net](mailto:office@st-barnabas.net) if you intend coming to Sunday worship. We hope to accommodate everyone who wishes to come, but this cannot be guaranteed, since the capacity of the church is reduced due to social distancing.

The 9am service will be live-streamed on the internet and can also be watched afterwards via Youtube and Facebook. Those unable to attend church in person can worship online.

During September, our 6.30 Sunday service will continue online via Zoom. But we hope to have the 630 service in church before too long.

### **How we Approach Worship**

It is really important for Christians to worship God *together*. You can no more be a Christian on your own than be a football team or an orchestra on your own.

The last few months have been a reminder of how precious Christian fellowship is, as we have had to 'fast' from much to do with church.

Worship is primarily about who God is, not our personal preferences. Of course, we each find some things more and less helpful as we worship. But worship is about what truly is of

'worth'. It is the essential setting of a compass (or the sat nav) that precedes any journey. No matter how battered the compass/sat nav, it ensures we know where we are going. No matter how bright and shiny we seem on the outside, if we lack direction in our lives, we go round in circles until we conk out.

We need to be like St Barnabas himself. I grow more and more attracted to the saint after whom this church is named. Barnabas was a man of deep and positive faith. He was always looking for ways to take forward the gospel and encourage his fellow believers. Here is a good challenge for each of us. Even as lockdown eases, who is there that you or I could be contacting? What word of encouragement could we give - even if it is the encouragement of silently listening to someone as they share how things are for them.

We are returning to Sunday worship which is great, but, sadly, not returning to normality, yet. Gathering together to worship is immensely precious. Thank God we can do more than we could. Let's pray for God to give us grace to grow in love for Him in these demanding times.

David

# Immeasurably More—an update

'*Immeasurably More*' is the process whereby we gathered as a church family to listen to God and each other and plan for St Barnabas in the next few years. '*Immeasurably More*' has been disrupted by coronavirus, but is back on track. The PCC, wardens and staff team will oversee the drafting of a Mission Action Plan (MAP), which will be shared with the wider congregation later in September – and then we will set about putting it into action!

## Alpha



The next Alpha starts on Thursday 8 October at 7 pm.

The last few months have raised all kinds of things and

Alpha is a great place to discuss how the Christian faith offers us life-giving ways to handle the many troubles and perplexities that life throws at us.

Please consider signing up and please pray and ponder if there is anyone you know whom you could invite to go on Alpha.

## Life Groups—new members welcome!

Recent events have reminded us of the value of belonging to small groups - whether that be one of our Life Groups, Young Adult Groups or Beta Group. As our Life Groups start up again we would love to encourage more people to join them! Life Groups meet on the first and third week of the month in various locations, generally on a Wednesday evening. We also have groups meeting Tuesday morning, Sunday afternoon and on a Thursday evening. Each group is slightly different but all groups spend time chatting, praying and reading the Bible together.

We warmly encourage anyone not in a group to think about joining one. For more information then please email Lindsey Goodhew on [lindsey@st-barnabas.net](mailto:lindsey@st-barnabas.net)

# Thanks

Thank you to our lovely church family for the generous gifts and your encouragements and good wishes as we step down from our responsibilities for music and audio-visual ministries and prepare for parenthood. We really appreciate your support and your prayers, and look forward to sharing about the newest member of the St Barnabas family when he/she arrives.

*Naomi and Cameron Smith*

## Church APCM

The church has an Annual Meeting every year. This was delayed due to COVID, but it will be happening on 23 November at 7.30pm

## Church on the phone

As you may know, you can listen to the St Barnabas Sunday service on the phone, 01642 130011, for the cost of whatever you pay for a local call. This will continue to be available as we return to church, but it will not be updated with the latest service until Sunday evening.

### From the Registers

#### Funerals at St Barnabas

7th August	Beryl Lappin	aged 81
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#### Funerals at the Crematorium

4th June	Elizabeth (Betty) Rice	aged 86
15th June	Olive Long	aged 94
27th July	Deanna Judith Adams	aged 78



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