

June/July 2021



Reconnecting

What single word could we use to describe what we should be doing ?

How about 'reconnect'. There has been so much disruption of life in the past and that disruption isn't over. We need reconnection to overcome the barriers that such disruption causes.

We need, first and foremost, to reconnect with God. Faith is not easy at the best of times. And faith has been hard during the difficult 16 months of COVID. When we are hit by troubles, we start asking 'is God there, does he care?'

The psalms, which we will study this summer on Sundays, are songs of reconnection. And Psalm 34, in particular, can help us. It is a psalm about the goodness of God. But look at verse 19, which speaks of how 'The righteous may have many troubles'. In other words, following God is the opposite of what we often think. In a fallen world, good people doing good suffer and may suffer a lot. But

this verse also has an answer to our doubting. 'The righteous may have many troubles, but the LORD delivers them from them all.' Christian faith is not an exemption ticket from trouble. Christians will suffer. But there is a redeemer. He will deliver us. We have a God who seeks connection with us, who comes to us, in Christ.

And because we can reconnect with God through Jesus, we can live lives of reconnection.

That means reconnecting with church members. In the coming weeks and months, there will be more freedom to meet for worship and meet with fellow church members. It remains just as important to follow carefully all health guidance and it may not be right for some to return to in-person church – so the streaming of worship will continue. But reconnecting with fellow members of St Barnabas is really important. With whom you've fallen out of touch? How could you reconnect with them this summer? COVID has harmed the fellowship, which is so



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central to Christian life. Can I challenge you to a season of 'reconnecting' this summer!

And as well as reconnecting with God and with the church fellowship, we need to reconnect with our wider community. COVID has atomised society. And in the process, the poorest and most vulnerable have suffered the most.

St Barnabas' church council (the PCC) is working on a range of ways in which we can share the good news of Christ, by word and deed, in the coming months. Please be praying for these initiatives, that they connect with our wider community and its many needs.

David Goodhew

Community Grocer



The church council have approved St Barnabas' involvement in an exciting new project to support hard-pressed families and individuals called a 'Community Grocery', working with the charity The Message Trust. Come along to an evening on Zoom on Monday 19th July, at 7.30pm to find out more and meet staff from the Message Trust.

Meeting ID: 814 8438 4968 Passcode: grocer

Congratulations

We congratulate those who are getting married soon and pray for them as they begin their married life.



Hannah Turner and Adam Goodwin will be married at St Barnabas on 30th July.

Edward Hutchings and Lauren Williams will be married at St Barnabas on 31st July.

Henry Downs and Olivia Backhouse will be married at St Oswald's, Durham on 14th August.

PCC in June



The new PCC met for the first time at the beginning of June. David welcomed new members to the PCC. There was a presentation of a report about 'greening the church' from Hugh Alberti. The PCC approved the proposal to move forward with the setting up of an agreement with the Message Trust to run a community grocer.

David outlined plans for a mission in February/March 2022.

Message from the Vicar and Churchwardens

The news of the lifting of many COVID restrictions from 19 July will give us mixed feelings - joy at the chance to do things we haven't been able to do, unease that the virus could do more damage.

As vicar and churchwardens, we want to assure you that:

- all through the pandemic St Barnabas has carefully followed the relevant health guidance and, (thank God!), the church has not been a site of transmission. We are currently awaiting further guidance from the Church of England on how best to navigate the coming weeks.
- St Barnabas will continue to take great care over health measures.
- St Barnabas will seek to use well the new opportunities available from 19 July
- St Barnabas will remain a 'hybrid church'. Worship will continue to be streamed online as well as being held in-person in the church.
- St Barnabas will continue to share the good news of Jesus by word and deed with the wider community.

For different people, the news of the easing of restrictions is encouraging, or worrying. Let's pray for grace as we talk with and support each other and wisdom to know how we should act as individuals and as a church. And let's keep praying for the wider community of Middlesbrough and Teesside in these days.

And if you have concerns or thoughts about anything, please feel free to contact Mel, Andrew or David

From the Registers



Baptism

20th June

Evlynne Groves

Funeral at St Barnabas

24th June

David Richardson

Funeral at the Crematorium

25th June

Roland Verrill