

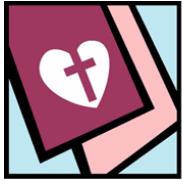
THE ENCOURAGER – FEBRUARY 2012

“There was a Levite, a native of Cyprus, Joseph, to whom the apostles gave the name Barnabas (which means ‘son of encouragement’).” Acts 4:36



International Sunday

**Sunday, February 12,
2012**



FROM THE RECTOR

Part of me finds it amusing, and a little sad, that as soon as the Christmas rush is over (and sometimes even a few days before) retailers pack away the garland and tinsel and put out the hearts and roses for Valentine's Day. While the legend and lore of St. Valentine is trumped up for secular culture – he doesn't have a feast day in the Church calendar – this "holiday" does help us focus on love and those whom we love.

We are created out of love and seek to love and be loved our whole lives. To me, there is little more proof needed that we are made in the image and likeness of a loving God. At our very core, we have the same needs and wants as our triune God, a relational being that choose to create the world out of love. It is that same God who loves us so much that God sent Jesus to show us in the most personal way that we are loved, to the point of death and beyond.

The Church season of Lent, which recalls the forty days Jesus spent in the wilderness and tempted by the devil prior to his public ministry, begins on Ash Wednesday, February 22nd. Although Lent is a time for fasting and self-reflection, I also invite you to continue the celebration of love expressed on Valentine's Day during this season. What does it mean for us to be loved by God? How do we love God and how do we express that love? Can we share that love we others and not feel awkward or intrusive?

We will explore those questions and others during our Lenten Program on "Discerning our Spiritual Gifts." Through God's love, we all have been given gifts, though we just might not think of them that way. Let's help empower each other and our entire community by celebrating our gifts and using them to express God's love for us and our love for God.

You are invited to join us for the Wednesday evening tradition of a simple soup and salad dinner followed by the program. We hope you will join us as many times as your schedule allows. While each session builds on the others, they also stand alone, so you will benefit from attending any one or all. We will gather on 2/29, 3/7, 3/14/, 3/21 & 3/28 from 6:30 to 8:15 PM. [FYI, on Wednesday in Holy Week we will have a Tenebrae service.]

In Christ's Love,

Rev. Valerie+

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

"Now you are **the body of Christ** and individually members of it." *1 Corinthians 12:27*

One of the great blessings of the Church is that we are a part of a community of people who care for and about each other. Our Rector Emeritus, Frank Hubbard, had a wonderful way of expressing this sentiment: "Through our Church community, we divide our sorrows and multiply our joys." The strength we receive



**Living
in Christ**
as a
**Church
Family**

from our family's and friends' faith to deal with life's difficulties is powerful, especially when we feel we don't have the strength to do it ourselves. And the opportunities to celebrate the good things in life allow us to see God at work in the world all the time.

This pastoral part of our life together is powerful and intrinsic to who we are as the Body of Christ. It is an important part of our Fellowship as well as an expression of our faith. It is also the opportunity for us to encounter God's grace – that free gift we don't

do anything to deserve or have to pay back. For many, it is much easier to give support than to receive it, but we all will probably need that support in our lives at some point.

While none of us want to think about when things aren't going well, it is helpful to consider how you want to deal with such a crisis situation, whether it is physical or spiritual. Who do you want to call or let know what is happening? Do you want to share it with the Prayer Chain or be included in the Prayers of the People at St. Barnabas? If you are in a hospital, do you want me to come to offer prayers? If you are unable to come to church, would you like communion brought to you? These are good questions to ask when you are feeling well so that in times of emergency, your friends and family will know your wishes and can make the appropriate arrangements.



If you have a petition for the Prayer Chain, please send an email to prayer@stbarnabas-sbnj.org and that concern will be sent out. If you would like to join the ministry of the Prayer Chain, to uphold others'

cares and concerns in prayer, please talk with Rev. Valerie or Bryan Botch to discern your participation in that ministry.

If you want to add someone to Sunday's Prayers of the People, please send an email to Kitty or me with that request. We will not assume to put a name in the Prayers of the People from a message to the Prayer Chain. We will include names for 4 weeks unless we know on-going prayers are needed.

You can use a service like Caring Bridge (www.caringbridge.org), which is a web based service that you or your friends and family can use to offer updates about someone's health and well-being. It is a true blessing to be able

to write a single update to connect to a wide group of people.

If you are in need of pastoral support, such as in the hospital or other crisis, please feel free to call my cell phone at any time. Please take one of my business cards and put it on your refrigerator or in your wallet so you have my contact info with you. Let your family know where it is as well. For your convenience, there is a version



of my card in this newsletter that you can print and cut out. I am here for your spiritual support, but unless I know you are in need, I cannot respond. When you call me, please let me know it is an emergency and I will do all that I can to support you.

Similarly, you need to decide what you want to share with your community. Please know that as a priest, I am honored to be with you when you are ill, but I am not allowed to share any details of what is happening unless you tell me I can. That is to protect your privacy. You also need to be able to tell others what support you are able to accept, such as food or visits. While it is great to have a loving community, sometimes we simply do not have the energy for visits, but you need to be willing to say that and know that our feelings won't be hurt. We all need to remember the power of prayer and offering a prayer is just as important as visiting. If you need to do something, send a card or an email saying you are praying!

If you have any questions about these guidelines for organizing our pastoral life together, please let me know. I give thanks to God for our mutual love and support of each other as Christ's body.

In Christ,
Rev. Valerie+

ANNUAL MEETING

At the January Annual Meeting the following people were elected: **Vestry**, Jr. Warden – Paul Pospiech, Members – Jonathon Pitt, Gwyneth Haynes-Rodman, Maureen Beebe

Diocesan Convention – Sandy Johnson, Bobbi Gorman, Bill Armstrong

Northern Convocation – Lillian Ashie, Bobbi Gorman, Monica Devanas, Laurie Merris, Carolyn Hales, 1 open position

YOUTH MISSION TRIP



The Mission Trip Meeting on February 5 from 12noon – 1PM starting will be the

upstairs classroom. We will finalize the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner Schedule and decorate the bulletin board in Hubbard Hall. Attendance is a must for all going on the trip. Call Jeff Flick if you have any questions (732-438-0006).

There is 1 spot still available if you are interested in our 3rd Annual Youth Mission Trip which will occur on June 25 through June 30, 2012. This year, we will be returning to Rutland, Vermont to assist a community in which many live below the poverty level (including 21% under the age of 18). Jeff Flick, Maureen Beebe and Rev. Valerie will lead our team of youth in grades 6-12 who will join with other churches to serve under the direction of YouthWorks! (See www.youthworks.com for further information).

BRIEFLY STATED

▪ **International Sunday:** On Sunday, February 12th, we will celebrate our rich heritages in worship and fellowship. Everyone is encouraged to wear clothing or other items from their counties of origin or ancestry. We will also celebrate with food during Coffee Hour.

▪ **Organizational Meeting for Vacation Bible School:** Following Coffee Hour on February

12th (around 12:30 PM), we will meet in an upstairs classroom to discuss timing, resources needed and curriculum. If you have any interest in the VBS program, please consider attending. In order for the program to work, we need lots of support.

▪ **Ash Wednesday Services:** We will have a joint Ash Wednesday Service at 7:30 PM on February 22nd at St. Barnabas as we welcome our friends in ministry from Christ the King Lutheran Church. The Rev. Kim Carlson will be preaching.

For those unable to attend an evening service, Rev. Valerie will offer a 12 noon service.

If there is interest, Rev. Valerie is willing to offer a Children's Ash Wednesday Service at 4:30 PM. Please let her know if you would like such a service.

▪ **Lenten Soup Suppers and Program:** Starting on Wednesday, February 29th, we will gather at 6:30 PM to enjoy a simple dinner followed by a program on "Discerning Spiritual Gifts". If you would like to bring soup, salad or bread, please sign up on the sheet in Hubbard Hall.

▪ **Calling all Prayers of the People Writers:** We will continue the practice from last year and invite any individual, family or group that would like to write Prayers of the People to be used during our Sunday Worship during Lent. A sign-up sheet is in Hubbard Hall for each Sunday in Lent. Traditionally there are 6 intercessions:

1. for The Universal Church, its members and mission
2. The Nation and all in authority
3. The welfare of the world
4. The concerns of the local community
5. Those who suffer and those in any trouble
6. For those who have died.

If you need any assistance, Rev. Valerie, Deacon Cathy and Fr. Breedlove are happy to help.

CONFIRMATION: If you or someone you know wants to be confirmed (i.e. take on personal responsibility for their baptismal covenant), that individual needs to write a letter to Rev. Valerie explaining why she or he wants to be confirmed. This letter should include a personal understanding of who Jesus is in his or her life, why she or he feels called to be confirmed at this point in her or his life, and what he or she would like to learn during the preparation classes. The letter should be received by Rev. Valerie by Sunday, February 12th. After she receives the letter, Rev. Valerie will review it and decide if the person is ready to participate in the Confirmation program.

Confirmation classes will begin during Lent and meet through May. Once the class is formed, the participants will work with Rev. Valerie to find convenient times to meet. There will be 10 sessions, with a retreat component on Maundy Thursday into Good Friday (April 5 & 6, 2012). Participants may have 1 excused absence.

The Confirmation ceremony will be in June, either at Rahway or at the Cathedral in Trenton. Details for the specific time and place will be given as soon as they are established.

If you have any questions about this process, please talk with Rev. Valerie.

THE FIRST FRIDAY BOOK CLUB:

We meet at 7:30 PM in the Bolmer Room each month. Participants usually gather at



“Confectionately Yours” at 5:30 PM for dinner and fellowship beforehand. All are most welcome to join us. Please contact Monica Devanas or Carolyn Hales

with any questions. Here is what the Book Group has planned for the next few months:

2/3/12: *90 Minutes in Heaven: A True Story of Death and Life* by Don Piper

3/2/12: *The Dovekeepers: A Novel* by Alice Hoffman

SHROVE TUESDAY



Come celebrate Mardi Gras and support the Youth Missions Trip - Enjoy “carbo-loading” before Lent with **SHROVE TUESDAY** pancakes, sausages & ice cream! The **Shrove Tuesday pancake supper** this year is on February 21st from 5-7pm. The cost is \$7 per adult, \$4 per child 10 years and under. Please sign up in Hubbard Hall to help the Youth Group with the event or to attend the supper.

MRD NEWS

The Ministry of Racial Diversity's (MRD) annual planning meeting was held on January 14 to chart the direction of team activities for the year 2012. We affirmed our carry-over activities from 2011 and determine our primary course for this year. During the meeting a team discussion was lead by Pam Lubber about the book *Seedfolks*, by Paul Fleischman.

By consensus we decided on the following as outlined:

- Completion of the STB Cookbook, which has been delay due to time pressures
- Lead planning for International Dinner as part of Fall Auction/Fund Raiser
- Develop specific plans and proposals to present to the vestry and partner with Diocesan mission
- Promote and encourage training and educational opportunities related to race and culture
- Plan team involvement in celebrating International Sunday
- Possibly organize parent/youth book discussion
- Continuation of monthly meetings that are open to all parishioners on Sundays from 12 Noon - 1:30 PM in the church upstairs (February 26, March 25, April 29, June 3, September 23, October 7, November 11, December 9).

Leon Merriweather

Holy Land Pilgrimage



On July 23rd, Rev. Valerie will be leaving for a 14-day pilgrimage to the Holy Land sponsored by the Diocese of NJ and hosted by Bishop George Cuccell. The cost of the Pilgrimage is \$2524 for double

occupancy (\$385 extra for single occupancy). Contact Kitty if you would like her to email you a copy of the flyer or an application form. The registration date for this trip has been extended to February 15.

Coffee Hour

If you enjoy sitting with a cup of coffee and a snack after Sunday services, please consider signing up to host a Coffee Hour. Instructions are available beneath the sign-up sheet in Hubbard Hall.



Blessings on your special day!

Birthdays:

Daniel Joseph	2/4
Brenda Evans	2/5
Richard Loehr, Jr.	2/9
Nick Hrinkevich	2/10
Marguerite Atherton	2/11
Juliette Pitt	2/12
Ashley Doryumu	2/14
Paul Garrin	2/16
Jonathan Louison	2/21
Shirley Bowers	2/22
Pauline Devonish	2/22
Namita Ipe	2/23
Joseph Alfano	2/24
Emily Ezzo	2/25
Donna Goselin	2/27
Arend Lubbers	2/27
Joy Epting	2/28

Baptismal Anniversaries:

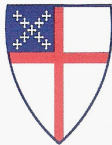
Barbara Moreno	2/1
Kyle Johnson	2/10
Joseph Alfano	2/18
Nick Hrinkevich	2/24
Emmanuel Ilogu	2/28
Muna Ilogu	2/28

Wedding Anniversaries:

Richard & Theresa Loehr	2/3
David & Theresa Bemiss	2/20

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ST. BARNABAS EPISCOPAL CHURCH



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If your special day is missing from this list please email Kitty at kitty@stbarnabas-sbnj.org or call the church office at 732-297-4607.