

Parish Church of St. Barnabas, Swanland *Sharing Christ through friendship.* **Group notes**  
*Week beg. St Barnabas' Sunday, 10/6/12.* Acts 11:19-30 (& John 15:12-17). "Encouragement."

<b>Welcome</b>	Share one thing that has encouraged you this week, or where you have been able to encourage someone else.
<b>Worship ideas</b>	<i>Suggested songs: Songs of Fellowship 433 O Lord your tenderness; 510 Spirit of the living God; 544 There is a redeemer; 629 You are the vine; 2034 Strength will rise (NB: 20 files containing about 30 'newer' songs are still available to borrow from the office for groups)</i>
<b>Word (refs.↓)</b>	<i>some suggestions for discussion here – you might prefer to focus on just 2 or 3 questions</i>
<b><u>Read</u></b> Acts 11:19-30	<p>First have two people read Acts 4:36-37 and Acts 9:26-28. What do we already know about Barnabas from these verses?  <i>Acts 11:24 describes Barnabas as 'a good man'. In the questions that follow, try to see the evidence for this in what he saw, felt, said and did and in who he was.</i></p> <p>v. 19-22. Why do you think the apostles sent someone to Antioch?          Why did they choose Barnabas specifically?          What do you think he was expecting to find there?          v.23a – what did he actually see? What can we learn here about looking for and seeing the best in others rather than the worst?</p> <p>v.23b (i) – how did Barnabas <u>feel</u> when he saw the grace of God at work?          What is our response when we see God blessing others?</p> <p>v. 23b (ii) - Barnabas “encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord”.          What did Barnabas <u>say</u> (in general) to the church in Antioch? What might he have said in practice – to the new believers, to those facing persecution, to those tempted to give up their faith?          What could you say to encourage others this week? – for example to a new Christian whose initial enthusiasm may be waning, or to someone who has experienced disappointment, or to someone who feels God is far away?          (You might like to see how these verses might help in such situations: Hebrews 10:25; 1 Corinthians 15:58; John 15:4-5; Hebrews 12:2)</p> <p>v.25-26 – With Barnabas joining the leadership, the church in Antioch grew substantially (v.24b). What was his response and how does this show his humility and willingness to let others share the 'limelight'? Are we similarly gracious in inviting others with greater gifts than ourselves to work with us – or are we sometimes threatened by them?</p> <p>v.24 – Barnabas was not perfect (see e.g. Acts 15:36-39) but he will always be known as someone who was 'full of the Holy Spirit'. Could this be said of us? In what ways can we seek to be 'full of the Holy Spirit' in what we see, say and do and in who we are?</p>
<b>Witness</b>	<p><b><u>Pray</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ for your mission link person(s) or project</li> <li>❖ for opportunities to be 'Barnabases' in your place of work, friendship groups, family or neighbourhood</li> </ul> <p><b><u>Plan</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ to be an active encourager this week for someone you know who would appreciate it!</li> <li>❖ an activity as a group during June or July to which you can invite those who are not yet Christians (eg summer barbecue, garden party, etc.) – perhaps linked with events coming up locally</li> </ul>