

# ST. BARNABAS CHURCH, SWANLAND

## SMALL GROUPS NOTES

*Sharing Christ through friendship*

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday before Advent/ Remembrance Sunday – w/beg 8 November 2009.

Song of Songs 8:6-7; John 15:9-17 Remembrance: The Greatest Love of All

<b>Welcome/ icebreaker</b>	Can you think of a time when you, or someone you know, had to make a big sacrifice for the sake of your family. Was it worth it?
<b>Worship</b>	Try and get hold of a ‘remembrance’ piece of music ( <i>iTunes could help here</i> ) – e.g. Elgar’s ‘Nimrod variations’, part of ‘Jupiter’ from Holst’s The Planets, or an appropriate hymn tune. With the music playing quietly (or in silence), have Song of Songs 8:6-7 read aloud, and then spend some time in quiet prayer as a group thanksgiving and prayer for peace. (Or sing a suitable set of songs*)
<b>Word (refs.↓)</b>	
John 15:9-13	Remembrance Sunday seems to have been marked more this year than in recent years. Is it still relevant over 60 years since the second world war? What about those who feel it should be declared “Peace Sunday”?
John 15:12-14	Jesus’ words in v.13, on their own, could be taken to mean that someone who has died in war, for example, is automatically ‘saved’ (goes to heaven). How do his words in v.12 and 14 make clear the relationship between salvation (being saved by faith) and showing love for others?
<i>John 15:13 (optional question)</i>	<i>In fact Jesus says nothing here about resisting oppression, only about self-sacrifice. By his manner of death he chose a path of non-violence in the face of oppression and there is a long Christian tradition of ‘conscientious objection’ at times of war. Is there a place for ‘Christian Pacifism’ on today’s modern world?</i>
John 15:15-17	Recall the last-but-one study on John 13, and the ways in which we as Christians are called to love each other as brothers and sisters in Christ as an act of willing obedience to him. How does our relationship with Jesus change once we start practicing this example of love?
<b>Witness</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>➤ Focus on people you are connected with who suffer as a result of war – either in this country (e.g. relatives of service personnel, war widows and their dependents, etc.) or abroad (e.g. those living in war zones supported by charities such as the Barnabas Fund, Tear Fund, Amnesty Christian Solidarity Worldwide, Christians Against Torture, etc.).</li><li>➤ Pray for them as specifically as you can and find some way of practical action to assure them of your prayers (e.g. writing to prisoners of conscience, getting more information about one such cause.)</li><li>➤ Consider whether you could commit as individuals or a group to prayer and/or action here on a regular basis.</li></ul>

possible songs:

Give thanks with a grateful heart; Make me a channel of your peace; O God beyond all praising (*to the ‘Jupiter’ theme, SOF 953*); Be still for the presence of the Lord.