

# St. Barnabas Church Warrington

## Parish Profile



### About The Parish

The parish of St. Barnabas consists of 4 areas- Whitecross, Sankey Bridges, Bewsey and Dallam. Within the parish there are 5 primary schools- 3 community schools, 1 Roman Catholic school and 1 C of E primary (St Barnabas school). There are private nurseries as well as nurseries attached to the schools. We have Warrington Hospital and St. Rocco's Hospice within our parish.

There are 4 free church communities, 1 Roman Catholic church, Warrington Islamic centre and at least 1 Prayer House (a mini mosque) Warrington Disability Partnership is also based in the parish.

The housing in our parish is a mixture of Victorian Terraces ( 2 up 2 down with bathrooms often in a downstairs extension) 1920/30s council estates, 1960/70 council estates & 2 housing estates consisting of mainly privately owned houses built in the late 1980s & early 2,000s. Very close to the church itself there is an asylum hotel, an addiction shelter, housing association properties ( old council estates) many have private landlords, HMOs & private ownership properties. The church itself is in a socially deprived area where many of the families are on very low wages or are on benefits.

However the area is quite well served by shops with a Lidl Supermarket & several smaller convenience supermarkets, corner shops & takeaways. We also have Car dealers, industrial units, 3 public houses, playing fields, bowling greens & 4 community centres run by the council including Dallam Hub. 3 doctors surgeries & a dentist.

### The vicar we want

We are prayerfully seeking someone to lead our church family in the next stage of our spiritual journey. We aspire that, with support, our new priest will have the willingness and desire to challenge and take us further on our journey. We need someone who can love the whole community as it is, not what they think it should be. A humble person who can encourage & support those who are left behind by society. Someone who will understand the needs of a traditional Eucharistic community, value their spirituality and help them grow in learning to share their love of God. A person of fun & respect, who will not patronise but value the people who they serve. They will need to have the skills to engage with people of all ages and develop them according to their gifts and qualities.

As part of our continuing development at St. Barnabas, we will need someone that is able to support those within our church family who are able to lead ministry to be proactive & develop roles within the church. We will need someone who encourages growth of the church through the younger generations & especially by working with our school.

We need him/her to continue to help us to take the message of Christ into the community, recognising where people are, both in location and spirituality and to encourage us in our welcome to those who come to us. Whoever God calls to St Barnabas will need to be a Team player, both to work with the other Clergy in the Deanery of Warrington as part of the new Fit for Mission Parish, but also with the people of St. James.

## Our Style of Worship

St Barnabas is a Eucharistic community with the main service on a Sunday being a choral Eucharist with organ music, followed by tea/ coffee and biscuits and with a said Eucharist on Wednesday followed by tea & toast.



We are of the Anglo-Catholic /liberal catholic tradition with vestments worn & the celebration of the festivals of the Christian Year. We follow the Lent, Holy Week & Easter services keeping Ash Wednesday, stations of the cross during Lent, processions, foot washing vigils, veneration of the cross, mass of the pre sanctified on Good Friday & Easter Day. The Christingle service is managed by the school but held in church & on Christmas Eve we sing carols to patients on the wards at the local hospital joining hospital staff. Families join us for the making of our crib early on Christmas Eve & we celebrate Midnight mass. All of the services between Christmas Day & New Year's Day are observed.

At St. Barnabas we have members of the congregation that read lessons, lead intercessions & are chalice administrators and in the past have had members who have taken home communion to the housebound. There are people with a pastoral heart who continue to stay connected with people who are ill or elderly this has been a result of Covid when each member of the PCC was responsible for keeping in touch with a number from the Electoral Roll. On occasion one member of the church (the warden) has led Morning Prayer.

We have in the past had a reader & NSM curate & have been a placement post for those needing to learn about Anglo Catholic Worship

## About our Church and buildings

The church was built in 1879 but was never completed. It is built of red brick with an extension built in 2005 which includes a meeting room, kitchen, toilets and office and is in good repair. A new heating system was installed in 2011. The quinquennial repairs are up to date but being such a tall building we have to replace slates annually & it is cold during the winter months.

We hope in the future to install secondary glazing to the west window & also to the clerestory windows as well as to renovate the choir vestry so that it can be used as another meeting room during the week. There is a small garden of rest for cremated remains & a sensory garden in the grounds.

## About the people in the Parish

The parish of St. Barnabas comprises of mixed ethnicity, 60% of the children at St. Barnabas Primary have English as a second language. Many races, languages and religions live happily together peacefully. Relations are good at the school with children of alternative beliefs able to attend church & take part in worship especially surrounding the Christian holidays. However, other schools within the parish do not follow the same protocols. In some school's parents of different faiths have opted to take the children out of religious classes that do not follow the same faith to prevent any confusion.

Next to the church is a halfway hostel which cares for people with addictions, sex offenders & ex-prisoners. Their behaviour from time to time around the churchyard & area can be challenging. We are able to call on the warden to remove people & if they are leaving unacceptable rubbish. These problems are seasonal or when new residents arrive.

## The Church and its people

At St. Barnabas we are a diverse, interesting, and lively group of people who gather regularly not only to worship Christ but to support & care for each other together with our beautiful church.

We accept newcomers and make them feel welcome. We offer an open baptism policy, marry divorcees & affirm & encourage those who have disabilities.

Although some members of the parish feel we cannot offer blessings for same sex couple's other members are open to the idea of this changing. We do welcome everyone into our church, and we are happy to be led by a clergy person who may conduct these services elsewhere & here in the future.

Baptisms are held twice a month after the Sunday morning service. These are generally large affairs, as they have replaced couples getting married as the big celebration. About 20 take place each year (35 pre-Covid).

We usually have one or two weddings a year & pre-covid 20 funerals a year, however now most funerals take place at the crematorium with only church families & those with a historic connection with the church preferring to come to church first.



" I have grown up at St. Barnabas Church & went to the school. I went to Sunday school, was confirmed there, became a server, & eventually got married there & finally had my child baptised there. Having attended with my family for many years the congregation have watched & supported me in growing up & now they support my little boy" Stacey



We range in age from 1 to mid-nineties, several of the congregation are housebound but since Covid have been reluctant to receive communion at home or visits. We have a few children but only 1 family (3 young children) who attend weekly. We provide Sunday School activities for the children and involve them in worship whenever possible.

We encourage children to become servers if they would like to but have one main server at every service. Most of the congregation are retired with only about 8 in employment. There are usually about 30 in the congregation on Sunday and 20 at the Midweek service. The electoral roll presently stands at

69, many members do not attend every week.

Our church organ is not only used for Sunday Worship but by another member of the congregation who is learning to play the organ and so practises midweek and is now able to deputise when our main organist is unavailable.

### The church and the community

Once a month we hold a 'Barnie's Lunch' where people decide beforehand what they would like to order from the posted menu. As an alternative to a lunch, we began making afternoon teas to take away during Covid and these have continued so people collect their tea after the Sunday service and can enjoy them at home with their families.

We hold a Spring Fair & a Christmas Fair in church each year and the general public look forward to them and from time to time we have concerts. We join with St Elphin's Church & Holy Trinity Church once a year to host -what has become the annual Warrington Jigsaw Festival and looking forward to 2025 we are planning a School's Art Gallery for the summer. Our fundraising is essential as our Parish giving does not cover our running costs, members work hard at all our events as we make paying our Parish share in full a priority. We are very frugal in our spending, only spending when needed. Once a fortnight we have a morning history club for the local area & one Jigsaw group.



" My husband has a heart condition, on suffering from depression was advised by the GP to join a club. He joined the St. Barnabas Jigsaw group & he loves it" Jackie & Bryan.



### The church and the school

We have a close relationship with our Church School. The aim is to have two Eucharist services a term, one in church and one in school. The vicar does

assemblies and helps run themed lessons throughout the school with visits to church from individual classes. Members of the congregation are active on the governing body and as regular helpers in school. They listen to the children reading, help on trips, help when going to swimming lessons, SATS exams & running stalls at the summer fair as well as attending the monthly coffee morning for new parents.

The school has produced many art installations in the church & grounds over the years giving us a focal point for people passing by with the Easter Cross and Nativity scene. The school staff can often be found helping with fundraising events in church. A few members of the congregation support the vicar by helping to run an after-school History club one half term a year.



## Social Outreach and Justice Work

Each year St. Barnabas congregation raises money for various charities and collects for the Warrington Foodbank at Harvest & Warrington Open Door at Christmas. As well as volunteering in school, members of the congregation also volunteer at St. Rocco's Hospice, The Foodbank, Rotary and with Blood Bikes. They serve on committees for The Boteler Trust and The Citizen's Advice.

Our big event every year is to mark Down's Syndrome Awareness week & fundraise by wearing odd socks & putting up our odd socks washing line along the church railings.

"Lots of people at church support me by wearing odd socks on Down's Syndrome Awareness day to show everyone that having Down's Syndrome doesn't stop me doing things" Lindsay



## The church and the environment

At St. Barnabas we encourage everyone to recycle and compost, we use reusable plates or cups as we are trying to reduce the use of plastic in any way possible, reducing air miles by using local shops and products wherever possible. The congregation save jam jars to be used again for jam making, empty plastic chocolate tubs, spectacles, egg boxes, blister packs & stamps to be sent on to charities that can benefit from recycling them. As a church we are working on our bronze eco award and now don't use floral foam in our flower displays but find alternative ideas. This also includes trying to source locally grown flowers from gardens close by whenever possible.

We go out on litter picks from time to time to help keep our area tidy and 3 of our church members are part of Warrington Litter Networks.

There is a small team of people that meet fortnightly to clean & do small maintenance jobs. There is a volunteer who mows the lawns and there are usually 2 gardening mornings a year where a group comes together to tend the Church gardens.



" It's not just about cleaning, it's the company for those living alone- a chance to get together & have a chat" Norma & Jean.