

Church News

Local pastors offer sermons

A Good Man Part 1

Scripture abounds with impacting figures who have captivated the hearts of readers for millennia.

If I were to ask you to list significant figures who appear in the biblical record you might posit primary characters like Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, Joseph and Mary, Peter or Paul. Yet the Bible is also full of notable secondary characters who, in their own way(s), can be just as affecting. In this series let us consider one man who may not be widely known, but who remains critical: Barnabas.

How does Scripture characterize this man?

Acts 11:24a (NIV)

24 He was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith . . .

There is much that this text begins to reveal about Barnabas. For instance, it indicates that he was a deeply spiritual man, who was reliant upon the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. Moreover, he was clearly a man of deep, enduring faith-faith that had been cultivated by both the passing of time and hardship (as we shall note). Yet I want to hone in on one aspect of his life noted by the inspired writer of the Book of Acts, being St. Luke (24a): “He was a good man.”

Upon first consideration this might sound contradictory when compared with other selections from the New Testament. After all, had not Christ Himself declared (Mark 10:18): “No one is good-except God alone.” Thus, how do we reconcile Acts 11 with such a text? Quite simply, Acts 11:24 is not claiming that Barnabas’s personal goodness was sufficient to save. Rather, as one who was saved by the grace of God, the Lord had cultivated goodness with the man via the Holy Spirit. Ultimately, is not goodness one aspect of the fruit of the Spirit? Consider what Paul proclaimed to the Christians of Galatia (Gal. 5:22b-23a): 22 . . . “the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control.”

Ultimately, we come at last to a key question: in what way(s) was Barnabas good? What does it mean to be good in kind?

In reply to this query, we do well to explore the meaning of the underlying term in the original language of the passage. The Greek word herein is “agathos,” meaning virtuous and beneficial. It, thusly, speaks to one who is excellent and distinguished as to character, constitution and nature (i.e., upright or honorable). Moreover, the word speaks to one who is disposed to helpfulness and charity. As we shall note in publications to come, Barnabas was genuinely a good man in that he displayed each of these qualities in abundance! For homework, read through the Book of Acts and take note of those segments in which he is present. You will see a fitting model of Christian goodness as you do-a model that is inspirational and, more importantly, aspirational. We will continue with an examination of Barnabas in the weeks to come.

Thank you for taking the time to read this publication. Should you have any comments or questions, feel free to contact me at your leisure using the information below.

Also, feel free to check us out online at www.NewLifeBarre.org or visit us each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. We hope to see you soon.

Pastor James Foley

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Second Sunday of Lent

“Jesus, Our Teacher, the Son of God.”

Scripture Reading: John 3 v 1-17

I. Introduction

Our busy lives often make it hard to discuss life’s meaning and its connection to God in depth.

Addressing current issues related to God, religion and spirituality often involves particular efforts like formal meetings and conferences where these topics can be discussed. Arranging prayer gatherings that address crises such as health problems or social challenges takes careful planning and thoughtful conversation.

It is my view that incorporating greater discussion of faith and increasing opportunities for prayer meetings may foster a more positive environment and help address some of the challenges facing our world. Let’s have a look at this conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus in John Chapter 3 and what it meant for this religious leader.

II. Jesus, Our Teacher, the Son of God

Nicodemus, as we know, was a member of the Pharisees and a member of the Jewish ruling Council. The Pharisees were known for their strict adherence to the Mosaic law and oral traditions. They were deeply devout and knowledgeable in religious affairs. While the Pharisees were not associated with the ruling elite, a few among them were, including Nicodemus. He was powerful, influential and played an important role in the Sanhedrin.

This conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus took place right after Jesus had cleared the temple and insisted that the House of God be respected. After being challenged by the Jews by what authority He was doing all this, He told them that if the temple were to be destroyed, He could raise it up in three days. He was talking about His body which would be killed and raised on the third day. The Jewish people were unable to grasp what He meant and now, this powerful leader visited Jesus during the night to challenge Him, seeking answers about the authority behind His actions. He stated that Jesus, the Rabbi, could only do these things if God is with Him. Jesus may have suspected that he came to secretly observe Him. Jesus responded with a spiritual explanation, stating that only those who are born again can see the kingdom of God. When Nicodemus didn’t understand this answer, and wanted to know how this

could happen, Jesus told him that no one can enter the Kingdom of God unless they were born of water and Spirit.

Again, when Nicodemus did not understand what He meant, Jesus began to reveal more of Himself to him, that He was sent by God to save this world that it was through God’s love for this world that God’s Son had to come, be crucified, died and would rise again. Jesus next describes Himself as the light of the world, explaining that people who do evil are opposed to the light.

This encounter with Jesus seems to have influenced Nicodemus immensely, as he is later seen defending Jesus when the Chief Priests and Pharisees questioned the guards about why they had not brought Him in. Nicodemus asked whether the law does not require hearing someone out before condemning the person.

We then later see how Nicodemus joined Joseph of Arimathea taking Jesus’ body away to be buried. Nicodemus brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes and they wrapped Jesus’ body and laid it in a new tomb in the garden, close to the place where Jesus was crucified. According to the Britannica encyclopedia, while it is not certain if he became a follower of Jesus, he was regarded as having sympathies toward Christianity.

During his conversation with Nicodemus, Jesus took the opportunity to patiently explain the purpose of his presence, preaching and performing miracles, thereby providing insight into his mission. Jesus, the Teacher and Son of God influenced the thoughts and behaviors of a prominent leader of the Pharisees.

III. Conclusion

As I stated at the beginning, it is sometimes difficult to bring into our conversations with others the message of God as it relates to certain issues, or questions we discuss. We see that Jesus, our Teacher, chose to interact with Nicodemus even though He was aware that the Pharisees and others were observing Him. He guided him into spiritual matters, revealing the contrast between light and darkness in the world, and that God sent Him to bring light where there was darkness.

Through this direct, but delicate conversation, Nicodemus heard the message of Jesus and saw something in Him that was worth respecting. While he did not save His life, one can only imagine that he was conflicted by the influence Jesus had on him. In the same way, as Christians, we are encouraged to openly share our faith, values, and beliefs with others. May Jesus’s conversation with Nicodemus encourage us to be disciples even as the world grows dimmer.

Amen

Pastor Margaret Keyser
Barre Congregational Church
30 Park St., Barre

Joshua Charles Holden, 51

Joshua Charles Holden 51, born Aug. 18, 1974, passed away in Portland Maine on Jan. 24, 2026. Josh grew up in Hardwick, Massachusetts along with his three siblings, Glen, Jason, and Amber Holden.



a 100-mile hike with friends along South Downs Way.

After graduation, he worked for Viacom in New York City as a graphic designer and animator for television channels including MTV and Nick at Nite. He later worked as a sought-after freelancer in the industry, which allowed him time to continue his personal painting projects. The love of art came at a young age fostered by his paternal Grandmother Shirley (Randlett) Holden.

Josh, who never lost his love of the outdoors, moved to Maine in the early 2000s, working remotely in television production while living in the Mid Coast area. When he wasn’t working, he enjoyed hiking, spending time at the beaches on Bailey Island and painting landscapes. He had an art studio in Bath, which he shared with the public during monthly art walks.

He was the proud father of Hudson, Bryce and Jemma. Josh was predeceased by his parents, Charles G. Holden

and Lillian (Champagne) Holden, as well as his brother Glen. He is survived by his three children Hudson, Bryce and Jemma. He leaves his brother, Jason and his wife, Donna and their son, Ty Josh’s godson; his sister, Amber and her daughter Jade and his sister-in-law, Renee and his niece and nephew, Rachel and Ben. He also leaves his lifelong friends, Josh Sinkoski, Kenny Ruggles and David Fleming.

In lieu of flowers the family asks for donations to be made in Josh’s memory to The Art Walk Via: Visitbath.com or The Hardwick Community Fair P.O. Box 1 Hardwick MA 01037. A private burial will be held at the family’s convenience at a later date.

To share memories of Joshua or to leave the family an online condolence, please visit www.athutchins.com.

DEATH NOTICE

Holden, Joshua Charles
Died Jan. 24, 2026
Private burial to be held at the family’s convenience at a later date.

Public Notices

NOTICE OF MORTGAGEE’S SALE OF REAL ESTATE

By virtue of and in execution of the Power of Sale contained in a certain mortgage given by Paul Muise, Sr. to Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as nominee for Mortgage Research Center, LLC dba Veterans United Home Loans, dated April 15, 2016 and registered at the Hampshire County Registry District of the Land Court as document number 19333, and noted on certificate of title number 2395, as modified by a certain modification agreement registered on November 8, 2021, and registered with the Hampshire County Registry District of the Land Court as Document No. 21243 as noted on Certificate of Title No. 2395, of which mortgage the undersigned is the present holder, by assignment from: Mortgage Electronic Registration Systems, Inc., as mortgagee, as nominee for Mortgage Research Center, LLC dba Veterans United Home Loans, its successors and assigns to PennyMac Loan Services, LLC, registered on May 5, 2021, Document No. 21027, as noted on Certificate of Title No. 2395 for breach of the conditions of said mortgage and for the purpose of foreclosing, the same will be sold at **Public Auction at 2:00 PM on April 14, 2026**, on the mortgaged premises located at 79 Pleasant Street, Ware, Hampshire County, Massachusetts, all and singular the premises described in said mortgage,

TO WIT: The land in said Ware, Hampshire County, Massachusetts bounded and described as follows:

A certain parcel of land situate in Ware together with the buildings thereon in the County of Hampshire and said Commonwealth bounded and described as follows:

SOUTHWESTERLY by the northeasterly line of Pleasant Street fifty and seventy-five one

hundredths (50.75) feet;

NORTHWESTERLY by land of Bridget Scheffer sixty-eight and seventy three one hundredths (68.73) feet;

NORTHEASTERLY by Lot C as shown on plan hereinafter mentioned fifty-seven and eighteen one hundredths (57.18) feet;

SOUTHEASTERLY by Lot A on plan above mentioned seventy-six and eighteen one hundredths (76.18) feet Being Lot B on sub-division plan numbered 609 B land in Ware, John T. Casey, Surveyor, January 1951. Sub-division plan filed in Registry District of Hampshire County November 2, 1951, Book 4, Page 13 1/2.

All of said boundaries are determined by the Court as shown on sub-division plan numbered 609 B as above referenced to. Subject to restrictions of record, if in force and effect.

For mortgagor’s(s’) title see deed registered with Hampshire County Registry District of the Land Court as Document No. 19332, as noted on Certificate of Title No. 2395. These premises will be sold and conveyed subject to and with the benefit of all rights, rights of way, restrictions, easements, covenants, liens or claims in the nature of liens, improvements, public assessments, any and all unpaid taxes, tax titles, tax liens, water and sewer liens and any other municipal assessments or liens or existing encumbrances of record which are in force and are applicable, having priority over said mortgage, whether or not reference to such restrictions, easements, improvements, liens or encumbrances is made in the deed.

TERMS OF SALE: A deposit of Five Thousand (\$5,000.00) Dollars by certified or bank check will be required to be paid by the purchaser at the time and place of sale. The balance is to be paid by certified or bank check at Harmon Law Offices, P.C., 150 California St., New-

ton, Massachusetts 02458, or by mail to P.O. Box 610389, Newton Highlands, Massachusetts 02461-0389, within thirty (30) days from the date of sale. Deed will be provided to purchaser for recording upon receipt in full of the purchase price. The description of the premises contained in said mortgage shall control in the event of an error in this publication.

Other terms, if any, to be announced at the sale.

PENNYMAC LOAN SERVICES, LLC

Present holder of said mortgage
By its Attorneys,
HARMON LAW OFFICES, P.C.
150 California St.
Newton, MA 02458
(617)558-0500 28437
03/12, 03/19, 03/26/2026



Please check the accuracy of your legal notice prior to submission (i.e., date, time, spelling). Also, be sure the requested publication date coincides with the purpose of the notice, or as the law demands. Thank you.

Barre Gazette

OBITUARY POLICY

Turley Publications offers two types of obituaries.

One is a free, brief **Death Notice** listing the name of deceased, date of death and funeral date and place.

The other is a **Paid Obituary**, costing \$275, which allows families to publish extended death notice information of their own choice (with a word limit of up to 500 words) and may include a photograph. **Death Notices & Paid Obituaries** should be submitted through a funeral home to: obits@turley.com.

Exceptions will be made only when the family provides a death certificate and must be pre-paid.

Are you having difficulty communicating with your partner, struggling with boundaries, and healthy relationships?

We invite you to join us Friday afternoons from 1-2:30 pm to explore these topics and more.

This group will be held in zoom, is educational, confidential, and free.

Please contact **Pat James 413-726-8661**.

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- 3 Find a quick link to the state of Massachusetts’ public notice web site to search all notices in Massachusetts newspapers.

Public notice deadlines are Friday at 3 p.m.

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