

First Presbyterian Church of Santa Rosa
Sunday, June 27, 2021 ~ Scripture Reading
Text: Verses from Acts 4, 11, 13, & 15 (New International Version)

[*Narration of Acts 4.33-37*: In Acts chapter 4, Luke describes how God's grace was upon the early church such that there were no needy persons among them. People who owned property sold it and brought the proceeds from the sale to the apostles for them to use as needed. Luke identifies one such person who exemplified generosity and care for the community in verse 37]:

Joseph, a Levite from Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas (which means "son of encouragement"), sold a field he owned and brought the money and put it at the apostles' feet.

[*Narration of Acts 11.23-26*: In Acts chapter 11 Luke reports that some Gentiles in Antioch heard the gospel and came to faith. When news of this reached the Jerusalem Church they sent Barnabas there. Listen how Luke describes the character and actions of this church leader in verses 23-26]:

When Barnabas arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, and a great number of people were brought to the Lord.

Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul, and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

[*Narration of Acts 12.25-13.3*: When the Church in Antioch learned of a famine in Judea, they raised money and sent Barnabas and Saul to deliver it to the Jerusalem Church. When the two returned they brought with them John, also called Mark. Luke tells us what happened next In Acts 13.2-3]:

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

Acts 15.36-41

[*Narration of Acts 15.36-41*: It was on this first missionary journey to Asia Minor that Luke tells us Saul began to be referred to as Paul and the listing of the two leaders shifted from Barnabas and Paul to Paul and Barnabas. After returning to Antioch Paul felt led to make a return visit. Barnabas agreed, but they disagreed about who should accompany them. Here is how Luke describes it in Acts 15:36-41]:

Some time later Paul said to Barnabas, "Let us go back and visit the believers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord and see how they are doing." Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them, but Paul did not think it wise to take him, because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus, but Paul chose Silas and left, commended by the believers to the grace of the Lord. He went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. . . . The Word of the Lord!