



# BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for  
Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

Sunday 30th January 2022

## Candlemas

### OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

Bel Newman, Marge Craddock, Lucy, Geordie, Lesley Hall, David & Delma Bode, John Hall Fr Simon Gurd, Lynne Riddlestone, Olive Robinson, & Barbara Jaques

### RIP

Kathleen Marshall, Sid Blanchard, and Chris Walker.  
*May they rest in peace and rise in glory*

Remember in your prayers our schools, the staff, pupils and head teachers.:  
Leeming and Londonderry - Nikki Rayner , Aiskew and Leeming Bar - Bethany Stanley,  
Thornton Watlass - Jane Wood, Bedale Primary School - Liz Turnbull,  
Bedale High School - Tom Kelly and Mowbray School - Jonathan Tearle

### COLLECT AND READINGS FOR CANDLEMAS

#### Collect

**God our creator,  
who in the beginning commanded the light to shine out of darkness:  
we pray that the light of the glorious gospel of Christ may dispel the darkness  
of ignorance and unbelief, shine into the hearts of all your people,  
and reveal the knowledge of your glory in the face of Jesus Christ  
your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.**

#### First Reading - Ezekial 43:27—44:4

When these days are over, then from the eighth day onwards the priests shall offer upon the altar your burnt-offerings and your offerings of well-being; and I will accept you, says the Lord GOD. Then he brought me back to the outer gate of the sanctuary, which faces east; and it was shut. The LORD said to me: This gate shall remain shut; it shall not be opened, and no one shall enter by it; for the LORD, the God of Israel, has entered by it; therefore it shall remain shut. Only the prince, because he is a prince, may sit in it to eat food before the LORD; he shall enter by way of the vestibule of the gate, and shall go out by the same way. Then he brought me by way of the north gate to the front of the temple; and I looked, and lo! the glory of the LORD filled the temple of the LORD; and I fell upon my face.

## **Second Reading - 1 Corinthians 13:1-13**

If I speak in the tongues of mortals and of angels, but do not have love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give away all my possessions, and if I hand over my body so that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing. Love is patient; love is kind; love is not envious or boastful or arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice in wrongdoing, but rejoices in the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. But as for prophecies, they will come to an end; as for tongues, they will cease; as for knowledge, it will come to an end. For we know only in part, and we prophesy only in part; but when the complete comes, the partial will come to an end. When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child; when I became an adult, I put an end to childish ways. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then we will see face to face. Now I know only in part; then I will know fully, even as I have been fully known. And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.

## **Gospel - Luke 2:22-40**

When the time came for their purification according to the law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord (as it is written in the law of the Lord, 'Every firstborn male shall be designated as holy to the Lord'), and they offered a sacrifice according to what is stated in the law of the Lord, 'a pair of turtle-doves or two young pigeons.' Now there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon; this man was righteous and devout, looking forward to the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit rested on him. It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Messiah. Guided by the Spirit, Simeon came into the temple; and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him what was customary under the law, Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, 'Master, now you are dismissing your servant in peace, according to your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel.' And the child's father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, 'This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.' There was also a prophet, Anna the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, having lived with her husband for seven years after her marriage, then as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the temple but worshipped there with fasting and prayer night and day. At that moment she came, and began to praise God and to speak about the child to all who were looking for the redemption of Jerusalem. When they had finished everything required by the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favour of God was upon him.

## Post Communion Prayer

**Generous Lord, in word and eucharist we have proclaimed the mystery of your love: help us so to live out our days that we may be signs of your wonders in the world; through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.**

## COMMENTARY ON CANDLEMAS

Do gates have heads? According to Psalm 24, they do. The fact is reiterated in a refrain. It is common enough for the term “head” to apply to the chief, or the topmost, part of something; less common is the personification of gates and doors. Those entrances into the city stand symbolically for all its inhabitants, eager to welcome “the King of glory” (a description of the Lord found only here in scripture, yet important enough to be repeated four times in two verses). The fact that the doors are ancient is significant: the city has awaited this arrival for a long time. “Lifting up your head” is a Hebrew way of expressing hope and expectation (also found in Luke 21.28).

“Doors need walls,” I once heard a sermon begin (it was preached by an engineer). A door cannot do what doors do unless it is first part of a structure that defines a space, thus creating an inside and an outside. The doors and gates of a walled city are its weakest point when it is attacked from without. They are also its strongest point when we think about its dynamics within: a meeting point; a mixing point; the concrete expression of a belonging in a place that is not a prison (no way out), but a refuge (doors open to let us in).

Our “going out and coming in” is a biblical expression, familiar from the last verse of Psalm 121. That psalm is popular at Christian funerals, when verse eight becomes a prayer on the threshold between mortal life and eternal life. A threshold is exactly what Simeon faces on this day, when Mary comes to be “purified”. Through the Holy Spirit he has learned that — as the Gospel phrases it — he will “not see death before he [had] seen the Lord’s Messiah”.

In art, Simeon is often pictured as elderly, perhaps to contrast with the very young child; or because of the parallel proclamation that comes from Anna. I could not find this in the text, though some of my commentaries on the Gospel did assume that Simeon was old. It took Wikipedia to enlighten me about a splendid Eastern legend that the revelation had come as Simeon was translating Isaiah 7.14 from Hebrew into Greek; so he was at least 200 years old!

Simeon had been waiting for “the consolation of Israel”. Anna spread the good news among those who were “looking for the redemption of Jerusalem”. For the prophetess, the arrival of Jesus was a reason to look to the future. For Simeon the righteous, meeting his Messiah was an ending. The poignancy of his situation has never been expressed better than in T. S. Eliot’s “A Song for Simeon”. Anna and Simeon together encapsulate the lifelong experience of encountering Christ which is common to all of us who follow him. Anna reveals the redemption, Simeon the consolation, which Christ makes available to us, too.

Christians have sometimes taught that death is neither something that they should fear happening to themselves, nor something that should cause them grief when it happens to others. The writer of Hebrews has this in mind when he explains Christ as destroying the power of death, and liberating us from the fear of death. This might be seen as placing a heavy yoke on the shoulders of the faithful (despite Matthew 11.30). Not many of us (not even great saints such as Augustine) have faith strong enough to insulate us from sorrow at the death of loved ones. It may help to remember the kindly wisdom of Jeremy Taylor: “It is not a sin to be afraid.”

The song of Simeon — known by its Latin incipit, Nunc dimittis (“Now you send away”) — belongs to all our eventides. We sing it at the ending of the day. We sing it at the end of human journeys. Its use in Christian funerals has always been, for me, the acme of that mysterious mingled expectation and consolation that is the consigning of a human person to the deep waters of death, and all that lies beyond.

As I was writing this, news happened to come to me of someone’s death. It was expected, and peaceful. So it was as natural as breathing for me to put down the phone and pray, “Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.”

## Notices

### Service Times and Venues. (Thursday 10am Holy Communion - St Gregory’s)

	<b>9.15am—Communion Facebook and Conference Call</b>	<b>*—Communion Conference Call</b>	<b>16.00—Evensong Conference Call</b>
6th Feb	St Gregory’s Bedale 8am and *9.15am	10.45 T/Watlass *11am Leeming	*St Gregory’s Bedale
13th Feb	St Gregory’s Bedale	*St Mary’s Thornton Watlass	*Burrill Church



### Andrew’s Adventures Reunion Party

Saturday 19th  
March

The Buck Inn,  
Thornton Watlass,  
7pm start.



### Current shortages

- Washing up liquid
- Washing powder
- Tinned meatballs
- Tinned meals
- Tinned veg
- Sponge puddings
- UHT milk
- Coffee



All donations are gratefully received  
if you need a food parcel email:

[info@hambletonfoodshare.org.uk](mailto:info@hambletonfoodshare.org.uk) or ring 07514  
244158

We are here to help