



# BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for  
Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

20th February 2022

## Second Sunday before Lent

### 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

Barbara Hainsforth and Kevin Hamilton Sturdy  
*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 THE SECOND SUNDAY BEFORE LENT

#### Collect

**Almighty God, you have created the heavens and the earth and made us in your own image: teach us to discern your hand in all your works and your likeness in all your children; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit reigns supreme over all things, now and for ever. Amen.**

#### First reading - Genesis 2:4b-9; 15-25

These are the generations of the heavens and the earth when they were created. In the day that the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, when no plant of the field was yet in the earth and no herb of the field had yet sprung up - for the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was no one to till the ground; but a stream would rise from the earth, and water the whole face of the ground - then the LORD God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being. And the LORD God planted a garden in Eden, in the east; and there he put the man whom he had formed. Out of the ground the LORD God made to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight and good for food, the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it. And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.' Then the LORD God said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.' So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he

would call them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all cattle, and to the birds of the air, and to every animal of the field; but for the man there was not found a helper as his partner. So the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept; then he took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the LORD God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said, 'This at last is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh; this one shall be called Woman, for out of Man this one was taken.' Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed.

### **Second Reading - Revelation 2**

After this I looked, and there in heaven a door stood open! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.' At once I was in the spirit, and there in heaven stood a throne, with one seated on the throne! And the one seated there looks like jasper and cornelian, and around the throne is a rainbow that looks like an emerald. Around the throne are twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones are twenty-four elders, dressed in white robes, with golden crowns on their heads. Coming from the throne are flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and in front of the throne burn seven flaming torches, which are the seven spirits of God; and in front of the throne there is something like a sea of glass, like crystal. Around the throne, and on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like a lion, the second living creature like an ox, the third living creature with a face like a human face, and the fourth living creature like a flying eagle. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and inside. Day and night without ceasing they sing, 'Holy, holy, holy, the Lord God the Almighty, who was and is and is to come.' And whenever the living creatures give glory and honour and thanks to the one who is seated on the throne, who lives for ever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall before the one who is seated on the throne and worship the one who lives for ever and ever; they cast their crowns before the throne, singing, 'You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.'

### **Gospel Reading - Luke 8: 22-25**

One day he got into a boat with his disciples, and he said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side of the lake.' So they put out, and while they were sailing he fell asleep. A gale swept down on the lake, and the boat was filling with water, and they were in danger. They went to him and woke him up, shouting, 'Master, Master, we are perishing!' And he woke up and rebuked the wind and the raging waves; they ceased, and there was a calm. He said to them, 'Where is your faith?' They were afraid and amazed, and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that he commands even the winds and the water, and they obey him?'

### **Post Communion Prayer**

**God our creator, by your gift the tree of life was set at the heart of the earthly paradise, and the bread of life at the heart of your Church: may we who have been nourished at your table on earth be transformed by the glory of the Saviour's cross and enjoy the delights of eternity; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL

The so-called miracles of Jesus can be difficult for 21st-century Christians to understand. The term “miracle” suggests an event contrary to scientific fact, or confounding probability. This sits oddly beside the Jesus who criticises those who ask for a sign (Luke 11.29). Luke’s Gospel contains more than 20 such stories and actions. So we ought to tackle the issue, and not be tempted by fig-leaves of pietism (“Who are we to question?”) or minimisation (“There must be a natural explanation, embellished later”).

Up to this moment, the Gospel has been filled with calling, healing, and preaching. From chapter 3 on Luke elaborates a crescendo of revelation. The calming of the storm is a further step in Jesus’s journey to disclose his divine identity, as he moves in incremental stages from “simple” wisdom, healing, and teaching, into realms which associate him not only with royalty (as in 6.1-5), but (as here) with divinity itself.

As Luke tells the story (he is redacting an episode in Mark 4.35-41), we observe at almost the same moment Jesus’s humanity and his divinity. First, he falls asleep, probably exhausted by days of teaching. Then, moments later, he rebukes the wind and the waves, and a calm ensues. The ability to calm storms is characteristic of God himself, as Psalm 104.6-7 declares.

It is more than usually difficult to make sense of this episode in isolation from its context. It is followed by the healing of the man with the legion of unclean spirits; those spirits acknowledge Jesus as Son of God but, the man’s reaction after being healed, highlights a deeper truth of the Son’s relationship with the Father: ‘Jesus sent him away, saying, “Return to your home, and declare how much God has done for you”. So he went away, proclaiming throughout the city how much Jesus had done for him’ (8.38-39, emphases added). That is hardly a slip of the pen.

I doubt that the reading from Revelation was chosen for this Gospel simply because it mentions “flashes of lightning, and rumbles and peals of thunder”. This is not intended to be a storm-themed Sunday. There is a connection, though, because throughout Revelation — and, indeed, in the Jewish texts which inspired it — elements of stormy weather are reminders of the primal chaos when God created the world. Loud noise and blazing light stimulate awe and fear, the appropriate response to being close to the throne of heavenly majesty. God has these elements under control, but no other being can wield a like power.

Genesis 2 contains no lakes, storms, or heavenly epiphanies. What we do have is an aspect of the divine nature which appealed to those who wrote our scriptures, and still appeals to us who read them. That is the imprinting of order on the creation, to make it meaningful and explicable to us. It is the man’s task to begin this, under God’s direction. The man’s giving of a name to each creature was a sign of the governance over creation with which humankind was being entrusted (v. 2.19-20).

In Eden, before the Fall, there was no hierarchy; for God created them, male and female, in his image (Genesis 1.27). The man’s act of naming the woman does not create dominance or control between them; for he and she are the same flesh, the same substance: unashamed, because as yet they had nothing to be ashamed of. Our hope for a “help meet” (2.20, AV) of our own is just the same: if it is to prosper, it must eschew hierarchy; for the two ought to be one flesh.

The disciples knew that they and Jesus were not alike in the sense of being equals. He had powers that they did not possess. When they feared for their lives, they cried out “Master, master, we are perishing.” The word that they shouted is epistata: “captain”, “commander”. Jesus our captain is not our hierarchical “superior”: he is not our captain because he is the most assertive, ambitious, or alpha. He is our captain because he alone can save us from the storms of chaos which may sink even the most secure existence.

# Service Times and Venues

## Thursdays 10am BCP communion at St Gregory's

|           | <i>Morning Services - St Gregory's, Bedale</i> | <i>Morning Services - St Mary's, St John's and Burrill</i> | <i>16.00—Evensong conference call</i> |
|-----------|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| 20th Feb  | 9:15am St Gregory's #*F                        | 10:45 St Mary's TW #*                                      | St Mary's Thornton Watlass *          |
|           |  | 11am St John's, Leeming                                    |                                       |
| 27th Feb  | 9:15am St Gregory's #*F                        | 9 am Burrill Church #                                      | St John's, Leeming *                  |
|           |  | 10:45 St Mary's, TW#*                                      |                                       |
| 6th March | 8am St Gregory's #                             | 10:45 St Mary's TW   | St Gregory's, Bedale *                |
|           |  | 11am St John's, Leeming #*                                 |                                       |

# Communion \* conference call F Facebook

## PRAYER AND PRAISE

Sunday 20th February 5pm —Preparing for Lent

**ASH WEDNESDAY - - 2nd March 2022**

**12pm Midday Service at St Gregory's**

### Helpers needed

Help is needed to clear the kitchen cupboards of crockery, pans etc in Chantry Hall prior the renovations. Please come at 10am, on Saturday 5th March in Chantry Hall. Thank you.



### 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** or ring **07514 244158**

**We are here to help**

### Tuesday Wellbeing and Togetherness

**No coffee morning next week, we are back with pancakes on Shrove Tuesday, 1st March.**

