

BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

30th October 2022

Fourth Sunday before Advent

OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

Bel Newman, Marge Craddock, Lesley Hall, Delma Bode, John Hall, Jenny, Chris, Elise, Lynne Riddlestone, Olive Robinson, Barbara Jaques, Harry Scorer and David Disney.

RIP

Michael Potter, Margaret Exelby, Malcolm Stokoe, Roy Hyde, & Sandra Lowe

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

COLLECT AND READINGS

Collect

Almighty and eternal God, you have kindled the flame of love in the hearts of the saints: grant to us the same faith and power of love, that, as we rejoice in their triumphs, we may be sustained by their example and fellowship; through 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. Amen.

First Reading - Isaiah 1.10–18

Hear the word of the Lord, you rulers of Sodom! Listen to the teaching of our God, you people of Gomorrah! What to me is the multitude of your sacrifices? says the Lord; I have had enough of burnt-offerings of rams and the fat of fed beasts; I do not delight in the blood of bulls, or of lambs, or of goats. When you come to appear before me, who asked this from your hand? Trample my courts no more; bringing offerings is futile; incense is an abomination to me. New moon and sabbath and calling of convocation - I cannot endure solemn assemblies with iniquity. Your new moons and your appointed festivals my soul hates; they have become a burden to me, I am weary of bearing them. When you stretch out your hands, I will hide my eyes from you; even though you make many prayers, I will not listen; your hands are full of blood. Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean; remove the evil of your doings from before my eyes; cease to do evil, learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow. Come now, let us argue it out, says the Lord: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be like snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool.

Second Reading - 2 Thessalonians 1.1–12

Paul, Silvanus, and Timothy, To the church of the Thessalonians in God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. We must always give thanks to God for you, brothers and sisters, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing. Therefore we ourselves boast of you among the churches of God for your steadfastness and faith during all your persecutions and the afflictions that you are enduring. This is evidence of the righteous judgement of God, and is intended to make you worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are also suffering. For it is indeed just of God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to the afflicted as well as to us, when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. These will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, separated from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, when he comes to be glorified by his saints and to be marvelled at on that day among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed. To this end we always pray for you, asking that our God will make you worthy of his call and will fulfil by his power every good resolve and work of faith, so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel Reading - Luke 19.1–10

He entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax-collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.' So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, 'He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.' Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, 'Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.'

Post Communion Prayer

Lord of heaven, in this eucharist you have brought us near to an innumerable company of angels and to the spirits of the saints made perfect: as in this food of our earthly pilgrimage we have shared their fellowship, so may we come to share their joy in heaven; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMENTARY ON THE READINGS

“Come down, Zacchaeus, come down from the tree. Come down, Zacchaeus, give the Lord his tea,” a children’s chorus goes. Thanks to its arresting elements of tree-climbing and spontaneous hospitality, Zacchaeus’s encounter with Jesus has been the subject of cheerfully reductive treatment. Further dramatic mileage can be drawn from the generally poor view of tax-collectors in the society where the events take place.

This approach engages the interest of people of all ages in scripture, but misses some of the most intriguing elements of the story, beginning with Zacchaeus’s reason for climbing the tree. It is not a case of the short man’s seeking a better vantage point for observing the famous teacher - in fact, he did not know who was drawing the crowd, and his intention was “to see who Jesus was” (Luke 19v3).

Jesus, whose ability to identify particularly needy individuals has been demonstrated before, in his treatment of the woman with the haemorrhage (Luke 8.40-48); does the unexpected and summons Zacchaeus down by name. It is one thing to climb a tree when the attention of a surrounding mob is elsewhere. Coming down, observed by a partly hostile gathering, is another matter. The dignity of the “chief tax-collector” (a unique title, perhaps inflated for narrative purposes) would have been severely compromised.

The general resentment against tax-gatherers spills over into resentment that Jesus should be intent on spending some time in the house of one of them (Luke 19v7). That provokes Zacchaeus, diminutive and mistrusted though he may be, to defend himself (Luke 19v8). Commentaries on this passage acknowledge that what follows is written in the Greek present tense, but disagree over whether it is to be taken as such, or understood as referring to the future. The NRSV takes its stand by translating Zacchaeus’s words as a promise to pay back fourfold anyone he has defrauded, and to give half his goods to the poor. The RSV retains the present tense, and it is in this way that Brendan Byrne insists the statement should be read. Zacchaeus may be part of an unpopular profession, but he is trying to be faithful to Jewish law and custom, too (*The Hospitality of God*, Liturgical Press, 2000). Jesus is ready to bless that effort, not only by accepting the explanation, but by offering something even better. Byrne notes that, unlike some other meals at which Jesus has been present - for example, two dinners given by Pharisees (Luke 11v37-52, 14v1-24) - there is no element of parable or teaching at Zacchaeus’s table. Jesus has something direct and urgent to say: “Today salvation has come to this house” (Luke 19v9). Luke thus links the event to two other signal occasions: the inauguration of Jesus’s Galilean ministry, at which he reads from the scroll of Isaiah and concludes by proclaiming that “today” the great prophecy of liberation has been fulfilled (Luke 4v21); and the assurance that he gives to the dying thief: “Today you will be with me in Paradise” (Luke 23v43)

Salvation comes when it is seen, in the deep sense of grasping what Jesus is about, and following that vision. It is not easily pinned down within temporal parameters, and that is the problem addressed in the Second Letter to the Thessalonians. The First Letter to the Greek Christians at Thessalonica is believed to be the earliest of the New Testament writings, and is securely attributed to Paul. The Second Letter follows it closely in shape and theme, but is somewhat later, and was probably written by someone who used Paul’s name as a guarantee of authority. The opening chapter commends the audience for their faithfulness under trying conditions, and promises that, when the Lord Jesus comes in triumph, judgement will be meted out appropriately to persecutors and persecuted (2 Thes-salonians 1v6-10). The harder news comes in the second chapter, in which they learn that the Lord’s coming is not imminent, and that a struggle between God’s power and the power of evil must take place first.

Service Times and Venues

Thursdays 10:30am BCP communion at St Gregory's

	<i>Morning Services - St Gregory's,</i>	<i>Morning Services - St Mary's, St John's and Burrill</i>	<i>18.30—Evensong</i>
30th Oct	10:30am Benefice Service, St John's , Leeming		4pm All Souls, Bedale
6th Nov	8am St Gregory's #	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	St Gregory's, Bedale *
	9.15am St Gregory's #*F	11am St John's, Leeming #*	
13th Nov	9:15am St Gregory's #*F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #*	Burrill Church *

Communion * conference call F Facebook



This week's floodlighting is in memory of Gill Bushby

To sponsor the floodlighting in memory of someone then please get in touch with Sarah in the office on 07949 006681 or admin@bedale.church

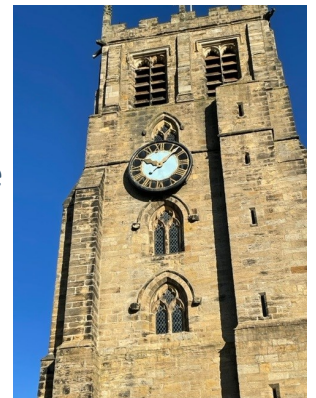


St Gregory's Church - Sunday 30th October at 4pm

A quiet service of remembrance, when names are read out and candles lit in memory. Names can be added by contacting admin@bedale.church or to the list available on the evening.

St Gregory's Clock Festival

Next year, the clock of St Gregory's Church will be 150 years old. We are going to have a three-day festival over the August Bank Holiday, for which we need volunteers. Can you spare some time to help with either a craft fair, a flower festival, or showing people around the church? Please speak to the churchwardens if you are able to help, no matter how much or little time you can offer - many hands make light work.



Sunday Morning Tea and Coffee at St Gregory's

We would love to restart tea and coffee after the service in Chantry Hall. To do this we need volunteers, the more people volunteer the less often you will have to be on the rota. Please speak to one of the wardens if you can offer occasional help.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



It's that time of year again, Samaritan's Purse are collecting shoeboxes for operation Christmas child. If you would like to contribute, shoebox leaflets are available in church or Chantry Hall please place your shoebox in the boxes located at the back of church near the font between 14th & 21st November.