

BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

19th February 2023

The Sunday Next Before Lent

OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

Ross, Gaynor, Toni and Eric Kent, Bel Newman, Lesley Hall, Delma Bode, John Hall, Barbara Pike, Chris, Lynne Riddlestone, Olive Robinson, Harry Scorer, Kath Finkill, Harry Lillystone, Pauline, and Mark Newman.

RIP

Virginia Finkill, David Disney, Enid Farrow and Kathleen Wilson.
May they rest in peace and rise in glory

Praying for Edwin in Bolivia

Please pray for Edwin, for his teachers and workers at the project.

COLLECT AND READINGS

Collect

Almighty Father, whose Son was revealed in majesty before he suffered death upon the cross: give us grace to perceive his glory, that we may be strengthened to suffer with him and be changed into his likeness, from glory to glory; who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

First Reading - Exodus 24.12-18

The Lord said to Moses, 'Come up to me on the mountain, and wait there; and I will give you the tablets of stone, with the law and the commandment, which I have written for their instruction.' So Moses set out with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up into the mountain of God. To the elders he had said, 'Wait here for us, until we come to you again; for Aaron and Hur are with you; whoever has a dispute may go to them.' Then Moses went up on the mountain, and the cloud covered the mountain. The glory of the Lord settled on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it for six days; on the seventh day he called to Moses out of the cloud. Now the appearance of the glory of the Lord was like a devouring fire on the top of the mountain in the sight of the people of Israel. Moses entered the cloud, and went up on the mountain. Moses was on the mountain for forty days and forty nights.

Second Reading - 2 Peter 1.16-21

For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we had been eyewitnesses of his majesty. For he received honour and glory from God the Father when that voice was conveyed to him by the Majestic Glory, saying, 'This is my Son, my Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'

We ourselves heard this voice come from heaven, while we were with him on the holy mountain. So we have the prophetic message more fully confirmed. You will do well to be attentive to this as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by human will, but men and women moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 17.1–9

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and his brother John and led them up a high mountain, by themselves. And he was transfigured before them, and his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became dazzling white. Suddenly there appeared to them Moses and Elijah, talking with him. Then Peter said to Jesus, 'Lord, it is good for us to be here; if you wish, I will make three dwellings here, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah.' While he was still speaking, suddenly a bright cloud overshadowed them, and from the cloud a voice said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved; with him I am well pleased; listen to him!' When the disciples heard this, they fell to the ground and were overcome by fear. But Jesus came and touched them, saying, 'Get up and do not be afraid.' And when they looked up, they saw no one except Jesus himself alone. As they were coming down the mountain, Jesus ordered them, 'Tell no one about the vision until after the Son of Man has been raised from the dead.'

Post Communion Prayer

Holy God, we see your glory in the face of Jesus Christ: may we who are partakers at his table reflect his life in word and deed, that all the world may know his power to change and save. This we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMENTARY ON THE READINGS

Today's readings concentrate on the wideness of God's salvation in Christ, and the calling of a community united under God.

The one glorious and terrifying God is also the God of gracious self-revelation. Here we have a rare case where all the texts describe a mountain God who communicates with his creation and involves himself in the affairs of his people. God is the one who is enthroned on his holy hill and his glory is terrifying and troubling. But he brings Moses into his presence to receive his wisdom and guidance (Exodus 24.12-18). Aaron as priest and Samuel as judge were also permitted to receive counsel from God (Psalm 99.6). Jesus, in Matthew's Gospel, takes his inner circle of disciples up to a high mountain and transforms before them (17.1-8). They are given a message from God himself that Jesus is the 'Beloved Son' that should be obeyed. Finally, in 2 Peter 1.17-21, we learn that the disciples who were privileged enough to be witnesses of the Transfiguration were also entrusted with the responsibility of proclaiming the return of the Lord in glory and power. What strings together these scattered texts in the Bible is the recognition that the holy God who sits up on high desires to make himself known – a transformative experience that brings wisdom and illumination. It is ultimately revealed that Jesus represents the very presence of God, a glimpse of which is revealed in his Transfiguration and consummated at his Parousia.

Old Testament Exodus 24.12-18

Following the sealing of the covenant, the Lord invites Moses up to the mountain. While he ascends with Joshua, the Lord calls Moses alone into the theophanic cloud of glory. In plain sight of the people (v. 17), the Lord's glory has an ominous appearance: like an all-consuming inferno. And, yet, Moses is permitted to be with God inside the cloud and remain with him for a

long time (v. 18). The imagery of the fiery cloud is probably meant as an allusion to the appearance of the glory of God that guided Israel through the wilderness. The implication, then, is that the One who brought them out of Egypt and led them through the wilderness is the One giving Torah – a word that means something like direction or guidance. The mentioning in verse 16 of Moses waiting six days before being called into the cloud could be a symbolic repetition of the days of Creation. The giving of Torah (or a representative portion of it) would be an act of bringing harmony and order where there was only chaos and darkness, themes prominent in Genesis 1.

New Testament 2 Peter 1.16-21

While many scholars are hesitant to accept Peter as the author of this epistle, in this passage the author defends himself against claims of fabricating a story about the return of Christ by appealing to his own witnessing of the transfiguration. ‘Cleverly devised myths’ (v. 16) are a human-made production, but the apostles relied on the Jewish Scriptures that were inspired by God’s Spirit and prophesied about what was to come.

Gospel Matthew 17.1-8

The famous story known as Jesus’ ‘transfiguration’ reflects images from Exodus and Moses going up to the mountain and returning with his gleaming countenance. As Moses ascends with his companions, so Jesus takes Peter, James, and John. Indeed, even Moses (along with Elijah) appear and chat together (v.3). What appears to be distinctive is that Jesus does not shine like the sun as a direct result of contact with God (as Moses did), but the radiance appears to be a glimpse of his immediate glorious self, an attestation that he is greater than Moses. Another sign of Jesus’ superiority is Matthew’s remark that, when the disciples looked up after receiving the affirmation of Jesus’ identity from God himself, they saw only Jesus (and not Moses and Elijah; v.8). This same language is used of Moses as the only one allowed to draw near to God (Exodus 24.2). Jesus not only represents a new Moses, but surpasses him as one with whom God is entirely pleased and who will carry out the will of God perfectly. It is no wonder that often this passage is paired with the hymn ‘Be thou my vision’.



ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

We will be holding an Ash Wednesday Service at St Gregory’s Church, *this* Wednesday, 22nd February 2023 at 6:30pm.

The service will be repeated on Thursday 23rd February at 10.30am

Service Times and Venues

Thursdays 10:30am 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>
19th Feb	9:15am St Gregory's #*F	10:45 St Mary’s Thornton Watlass #* 11am St John's, Leeming	St Mary’s Thornton Watlass *
26th Feb	9:15am St Gregory's #*F	9 am Burrill Church # 10:45 St Mary’s Thornton Watlass #*	St John's, Leeming *
5th March	8am St Gregory's # 9.15am St Gregory's #*F	10:45 St Mary’s Thornton Watlass #* 11am St John's, Leeming #*	St Gregory’s, Bedale *

Communion * conference call F Facebook

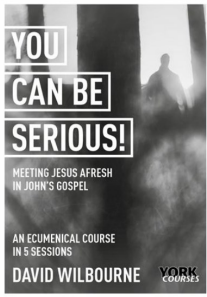
This week’s floodlighting is in memory of

Eric Mosley



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

Lent Course and Resources



This inspiring York Course on John's Gospel, the most mysterious of all the gospel accounts of the life of Christ, invites us to meet Jesus afresh.

This Lent has an ecumenical feel as we are sharing the material with our friends at Bedale and District Methodist Church. Each week will have three times, three venues and three different days.

Each Monday @ 7.30pm in Bedale and District Methodist Church

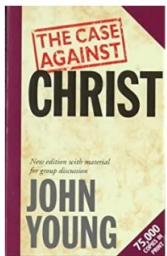
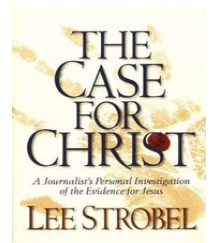
Each Tuesday @ 2pm in Chantry Hall

Each Wednesday @ 4pm in the home of Chris Carruthers

Please feel free to move between venues and if you cannot make a particular Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday go along to another day.

The Case for Christ by Lee Strobel Published by Zondervan

Using the dramatic scenario of an investigative journalist pursuing his story and leads, Lee Strobel uses his experience as a reporter for the Chicago Tribune to interview experts about the evidence for Christ from the fields of science, philosophy, & history.



The Case Against Christ by John Young Published by Hodder and Staunton

This straightforward book provides a defence of the Christian faith for atheists, agnostics, enquirers and Christians alike. It answers the questions - what keeps people in the Church and is the Christian faith worth investigating?

Risen (2006 Sony Pictures)

A detective is summoned to his chief's office, where he's read the riot act. Get some results and get them fast – the head of the entire department will be here in a matter of days! Lean on your informants if you have to, just solve this case and solve it now! It's a scene from a thousand different cop movies, only this time the detective is a Roman tribune, his angry boss is Pontius Pilate, the ticking clock is a visit from Emperor Tiberius and the missing person is Jesus of Nazareth, the risen Christ.



Copies of these books and films will be on offer to borrow from each of the Benefice Churches. Please take one and bring back the following week. Or you might even indeed purchase your own copy.

The film will be shown on Tuesday of Holy Week in Chantry Hall beginning at 2pm.