



BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

9th April 2023

Easter Day

OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

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

RIP

Don Sissons, Barbara Jaques, Elaine Seagrove, David Hirst, Stephen Dale.
May they rest in peace and rise in glory

COLLECT AND READINGS

Collect

Lord of all life and power, who through the mighty resurrection of your Son overcame the old order of sin and death to make all things new in him: grant that we, being dead to sin and alive to you in Jesus Christ, may reign with him in glory; to whom with you and the Holy Spirit be praise and honour, glory and might, now and in all eternity. Amen.

First reading - Acts 10.34–43

Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ - he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

Second Reading - Colossians 3.1–4

So if you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is,

seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth, for you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is your life is revealed, then you also will be revealed with him in glory.

Gospel Reading - John 20.1–18

Early on the first day of the week, while it was still dark, Mary Magdalene came to the tomb and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, ‘They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him.’ Then Peter and the other disciple set out and went towards the tomb. The two were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. He bent down to look in and saw the linen wrappings lying there, but he did not go in. Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen wrappings lying there, and the cloth that had been on Jesus’ head, not lying with the linen wrappings but rolled up in a place by itself. Then the other disciple, who reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; for as yet they did not understand the scripture, that he must rise from the dead. Then the disciples returned to their homes.

But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb. As she wept, she bent over to look into the tomb; and she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had been lying, one at the head and the other at the feet. They said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping?’ She said to them, ‘They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him.’ When she had said this, she turned round and saw Jesus standing there, but she did not know that it was Jesus. Jesus said to her, ‘Woman, why are you weeping? For whom are you looking?’ Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, ‘Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away.’ Jesus said to her, ‘Mary!’ She turned and said to him in Hebrew, ‘Rabboni!’ (which means Teacher). Jesus said to her, ‘Do not hold on to me, because I have not yet ascended to the Father. But go to my brothers and say to them, “I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.”’ Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, ‘I have seen the Lord’; and she told them that he had said these things to her.

Post Communion Prayer

God of Life, who for our redemption gave your only–begotten Son to the death of the cross, and by his glorious resurrection have delivered us from the power of our enemy: grant us so to die daily to sin, that we may evermore live with him in the joy of his risen life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL

In the beginning . . . in the *new* beginning . . . John presents us with the narrative that lies at the heart of the Gospel. Jesus, who was crucified, has been raised. We watch as Mary, Peter, and an unnamed disciple discover that Jesus’ tomb is now empty; the outward and visible sign that

Jesus has conquered death and a new creation has begun. And we are witnesses to the moment when Mary meets her risen Lord. Her grief turns to joy and she brings to us the good news that has been proclaimed throughout the ages, “I have seen the Lord.” This portion of John’s gospel is a play that unfolds in three distinctive acts; a story about people searching, about sadness and fear, about action, about surprise, and joy. And it is a story that takes us full circle back to the opening of the gospel.

The scene opens on a solitary figure walking through the darkness. Mary Magdalene has broken through her fear in order to tend to the body of her teacher and friend. All gospel accounts of this moment vary on some points. But what is consistent is the day and that it is Mary Magdalene who is the first to go to the tomb. When Mary finds that the stone has been removed she jumps to conclusions. Her perception of what has happened is that someone has entered and stolen the body. But the author does not tell us if she entered or even looked in the tomb. Did she really know that the body of Jesus was not there? (How often do we jump to conclusions about God’s actions in our lives?) Nevertheless, she runs back to tell Peter what she believes has happened.

Act two shifts to the experiences of Peter and the unnamed disciple intriguingly identified only as “the one whom Jesus loved.” Over the years there have been many suggestions as to whom these two might represent: Jewish and Gentile Christians, Petrine and Johannine Christians. Could it be that the beloved disciple is unnamed because, as one Biblical scholar has suggested, this person is to represent us? Like Mary they run. The unnamed disciple, perhaps younger, arrives first. Since he could be the junior partner, he waits until the senior partner, Peter, arrives. He (or could it be she) allows Peter to be the first to enter. Inside, Peter discovers that the tomb is, indeed, empty. And unlike the four-day dead Lazarus, who stumbled out of his tomb hindered by his burial wrappings (John 11:44), the cloths are still in the tomb. The details are intriguing. The author describes the placement of the wrappings, but also notes that the cloth that had covered Jesus’ head has been rolled up and put in another part of the tomb. We should note that the tomb is truly empty when Peter and then the other disciple enter. There is no angel; no heavenly messenger.

John tells us that the beloved disciple “saw and believed.” But what did he believe? It could be that he believed Mary was correct — someone had stolen the body of Jesus. Or did he believe what Jesus had said the night of their last meal together, that Jesus had “conquered the world!” (John 16:33) Act two ends as the two go home. There are no shouts of joy, no celebration. The emptiness of the tomb does not seem yet to have made a difference. (How many people will not be feeling joy, hope, or certainty this Easter morning?)

The focus returns to Mary standing outside of the tomb. Weeping, she does, this time, enter the tomb. It would seem that neither Peter nor the disciple have offered any words of comfort or encouragement to Mary. But Mary does not find an empty tomb. While the body of Jesus is not there, like the synoptic gospel accounts, there are two angels. In response to their almost ridiculous question, (of course she should be weeping,) Mary repeats her interpretation of the situation; the theft of her friend’s body.

Finally she repeats the question once again to a man she believes is the gardener. This may not be as ridiculous an understanding as it seems. It could be that John is giving us clues on how we might understand what has happened. Two things drive us back to the beginning of John’s gospel encouraging us to view this, not as the end of the story, but a new beginning. First, in the opening of John’s gospel, Jesus’ first words are a question directed at the disciples of John the Baptizer. “What are you looking for?” (John 1:38) And here, in this beginning, this new creation, Jesus asks Mary the very same question, “Whom are you looking for?” (John 20:15) A new ministry is beginning, a new story. Is Jesus asking the same question of us this Easter morning? What are we looking for? It was when Jesus called her by name that Mary

recognized her beloved Rabbouni. Is Jesus calling our name? And when John’s disciples called out to this Rabbi, he invited them to “Come and see” (John 1:39). Are we being called to see the new things that God is doing in our lives and in our world?

Second, unlike the synoptic gospels that begin at dawn, John’s tale begins in the dark, the absence of light. This is the writer who, at the opening of his gospel took us not to a stable, but to the very opening of creation, “In the beginning.” Could it be that John is taking us back, once more, to that primordial darkness when “the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep” (Genesis 1:2). The author is echoing Paul’s declaration that in the death and resurrection of Jesus we are experiencing a new creation, “everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!” (2 Corinthians 5:17)

And where are we? In a garden. Without knowing it, Mary has correctly identified Jesus as the gardener who is bringing a new world, a new life, and a new creation into being, as he had done before: “All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it” (John 1:3-5).

In the first creation story God drove Eve and Adam out of the garden. But in this new creation Jesus sends Mary out of the garden rejoicing. She is sent out to tell everyone the darkness has not overcome the Word made flesh who had lived among us. She had seen her Rabbi, and she now understood that she has seen “the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14) “I have seen the Lord.” (John 20:18) Her message declares to us the new beginning that God has prepared for all of us.

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>
9th April	9:15am St Gregory's #*F	10:45 St Mary’s Thornton Watlass #*	Burrill Church *
16th April	9:15am St Gregory's #*F	10:45 St Mary’s Thornton Watlass #*	St Mary’s Thornton Watlass *
		11am St John's, Leeming	
23rd April	9:15am St Gregory's #*F	9 am Burrill Church #	18:30 pm - St John's, Leeming *
		10:45 St Mary’s Thornton Watlass #*	

Communion * conference call F Facebook

ELECTORAL ROLL & APCM

The electoral roll for Bedale and Burrill is being revised, if your details have changed then please fill in a form at the back of church and place in the post box outside the Old Grammar School. Thank you. The APCM will be held on Monday 24th April at 6:30pm in the Chantry Hall, everyone is encouraged to be there and most welcome to attend.



Prayer and Praise

Easter Day—9th April 2023

At 5pm online

