

BENEFACTIVE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

30th April 2023

Fourth Sunday of Easter

OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

Ross, Gaynor, 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, and Trevor.

RIP

Barbara Jaques, Elaine Seagrove, David Hirst, Stephen Dale, James (Jim) McCormack, Amos Mutasa, and Alan Burns.

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

COLLECT AND READINGS

Collect

Almighty God, whose Son Jesus Christ is the resurrection and the life: raise us, who trust in him, from the death of sin to the life of righteousness, that we may seek those things which are above, where he reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

First Reading - Acts 2. 42–47

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Second Reading - 1 Peter 2. 19–25

For it is to your credit if, being aware of God, you endure pain while suffering unjustly. If you endure when you are beaten for doing wrong, where is the credit in that? But if you endure when you do right and suffer for it, you have God's approval. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you

should follow in his steps.

‘He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.’ When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed. For you were going astray like sheep, but now you have returned to the shepherd and guardian of your souls.

Gospel reading - John 10.1–10

‘Very truly, I tell you, anyone who does not enter the sheepfold by the gate but climbs in by another way is a thief and a bandit. The one who enters by the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens the gate for him, and the sheep hear his voice. He calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow a stranger, but they will run from him because they do not know the voice of strangers.’ Jesus used this figure of speech with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them. So again Jesus said to them, ‘Very truly, I tell you, I am the gate for the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and bandits; but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the gate. Whoever enters by me will be saved, and will come in and go out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.

Post Communion Prayer

Risen Christ, faithful shepherd of your Father’s sheep: teach us to hear your voice and to follow your command, that all your people may be gathered into one flock,

COMMENTARY ON THE READINGS

The focus of the 'lead' reading is on the characteristic actions and commitments of the earliest believers in their life together. Other readings reflect on Jesus through the theme of the shepherd, the sheep and suffering.

Acts 2.42-47

This short passage is a summary, with verse 42 as the summary of the summary! The verses act as a 'heading' before more specific examples are given of the earliest communities of followers of Jesus (long before the term 'Christian' is appropriate). The picture in Acts 2 has often been said to be idealised, but the stories to come fill out the difficulties as well as the details of community life. The passage describes the enthusiasm of believers and their deep commitment to one another in terms familiar to spiritual renewal movements throughout history. Four elements of the daily actions and commitments of the new believers are highlighted in verse 42 and explained further in the following verses: the apostles' teaching, fellowship, breaking bread and prayers. The

apostles teach and do 'signs and wonders'. As the Early Church developed, faithfulness to the apostles' teaching was the key to distinguishing proper developments and wrong turnings. Faithfulness to apostolic teaching is interpreted by some as faithful, orthodox believing in certain religious doctrines, but by others as much more about continual learning and exploration in the faith. In the following verses, that teaching is also linked to seeing what God is doing mightily through the apostles. 'Fellowship' is a key Pauline word: not just a vague feeling of togetherness but a commitment to a common enterprise. It is illustrated by 'having all things in common' - not selling up from the beginning but using goods and possessions for one another as the need arose. The narrator does not explain whether 'breaking of the bread' means meals in general or Eucharistic gatherings in particular; in view of the reference to homes and eating food gladly in the following verses, it probably bears both meanings. The prayers the believers shared may also refer both to their (Jewish) public prayers in the Temple and to the spontaneity of their praying together in gatherings of Jesus' followers. This brief passage has remained a challenge to the Christian Church through the centuries, inspiring those who have fought against social division and injustice and who call on the Church to act out the coming kingdom of justice and value for all, as well as interpreting how God is working in the world and worshipping through Christ.

1 Peter 2.19-25

The Epistle also links with the Gospel reading, particularly John 10.14-15. The passage begins with the possibility of believers' innocent suffering, then focuses on the death of Jesus interpreted through Isaiah 53. What the lectionary compilers conceal, by leaving verse 18 out of the set lesson, is that this passage is advice to slaves. It is part of the household code in 1 Peter, urging non-retaliation in the face of unjust treatment, following on from the call to submit to authorities. This context ought not to be ignored. On the other hand, it is also teaching which addresses slaves as people who have moral responsibility and who can be treated unjustly - both of which could have been denied in their social context. The teaching which is first directed to slaves becomes, for the letter-writer, teaching for Christian believers in general in the context of communities facing local persecutions and the sufferings they entailed. Such suffering is given meaning by being linked to the suffering of Christ.

John 10.1-10

The Gospel passage pictures 'the door of the sheep' and 'the good shepherd'. John 10.1-5 consists of one (or possibly two) parables. Following from chapter 9, they imply criticism of the religious leaders who cast people out and fail their responsibilities. Verses 6-10 use motifs from the parable(s) to focus on Jesus and how he fulfils the role given him by God. From these pictures come the teaching that people are invited 'into the sheepfold' and 'out to the pasture' through Jesus. A further picture is of the intimate relationship between the sheep and the shepherd. This echoes the story of the lost sheep

in Luke and Matthew, and also Jesus seeking out the man he has healed in the previous chapter of John. The passage ends with the promise of abundant life, a constant theme of John's Gospel referring to 'eternal life' which begins now. In recent years this theme has been used to focus on life before death, inspiring work for abundance and quality of life for those who do not have it.

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>18.30—Evensong conference call</i>
30th April	10:30am - Benefice Service - St Mary's, Thornton Watlass #*		
7th May	8am St Gregory's #	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Civic Service - St Gregory's, Bedale *
	9.15am St Gregory's #*F	11am St John's, Leeming #*	
14th May	9:15am St Gregory's #*F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #*	Burrill Church *

Communion * conference call F Facebook



Christian Aid Week runs from 14th May and we are looking for additional volunteers to deliver envelopes. That's all you have to do. If you could help, please contact John Critchlow on 07746 970420.



Current shortages

We are currently seeing a huge increase in demand for our service, so if you are wanting to donate to the foodshare, at the moment we just need more of everything. Thank you so much

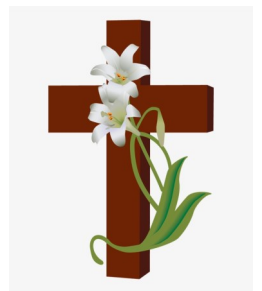


All donations are gratefully received if you need a food parcel email:

info@hambletonfoodshare.org.uk or ring 07514 244158

We are here to help

Thank you everyone who has given donations for Easter Lilies.



Thank you Val Gill, Pam Nicholson for the lovely Font arrangements and Mal Rowland for his welcome to spring flowers.

I appreciate all the help I can get throughout the year with the flower arrangements.

Christine Isbister