



BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

20th August 2023

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

Gaynor, Bel Newman, Mark Newman, Lesley Hall, Delma Bode, John Hall, Chris, Lynne Riddlestone, Olive Robinson, Harry Scorer, George, Kath Finkill, Barbara Cooper, Harry Lillystone, Anne Jardin, Amanda, Maureen Graham, Gordon, David, Liz, and Andrew Woodhouse.

RIP

Patricia Webster, Gerald Middleton *and* Susan Pollitt

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

Collect

O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may receive your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; 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 56. 1,6-8

Thus says the LORD: Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed. And the foreigners who join themselves to the LORD, to minister to him, to love the name of the LORD, and to be his servants, all who keep the sabbath, and do not profane it, and hold fast my covenant - these I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples. Thus says the Lord God, who gathers the outcasts of Israel, I will gather others to them besides those already gathered.

Second Reading - Romans 11. 1-2a, 29-32

I ask, then, has God rejected his people? By no means! I myself am an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, a member of the tribe of Benjamin. God has not rejected his people whom he foreknew. Do you not know what the scripture says of Elijah, how he pleads with God against Israel? for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable. Just as you were once disobedient to God but have now received mercy because of their disobedience, so they have now been disobedient in order that, by the mercy shown to you, they too may now receive mercy. For God has imprisoned all in disobedience so that he may be merciful to all.

Gospel - Matthew 15. 10-28

Then he called the crowd to him and said to them, 'Listen and understand: it is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but it is what comes out of the mouth that defiles.' Then the disciples approached and said to him, 'Do you know that the Pharisees took offence when they heard what you said?' He answered, 'Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted. Let them alone; they are blind guides of the blind. And if one blind person guides another, both will fall into a pit.' But Peter said to him, 'Explain this parable to us.' Then he said, 'Are you also still without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into the mouth enters the stomach, and goes out into the sewer? But what comes out of the mouth proceeds from the heart, and this is what defiles. For out of the heart come evil intentions, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a person, but to eat with unwashed hands does not defile.' Jesus left that place and went away to the district of Tyre and Sidon. Just then a Canaanite woman from that region came out and started shouting, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is tormented by a demon.' But he did not answer her at all. And his disciples came and urged him, saying, 'Send her away, for she keeps shouting after us.' He answered, 'I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.' But she came and knelt before him, saying, 'Lord, help me.' He answered, 'It is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs.' She said, 'Yes, Lord, yet even the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' table.' Then Jesus answered her, 'Woman, great is your faith! Let it be done for you as you wish.' And her daughter was healed instantly.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord of all mercy, we your faithful people have celebrated that one true sacrifice which takes away our sins and brings pardon and peace: by our communion keep us firm on the foundation of the gospel and preserve us from all sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMENTARY ON THE READINGS

Isaiah 56.1, 6-8

The link between the command to 'do what is right' and the promise that God's 'deliverance will soon be revealed' is closer than appears in the NRSV, since each uses the same Hebrew word. When God delivers the righteous, he 'does right', he demonstrates his own righteousness. The prophet realises that what God requires from his people is a response to God's own nature.

As the prophet looks forward to the return from exile, he considers the status of foreigners who wish to worship the Lord. In contrast to many who would exclude Gentiles, the prophet declares that they, too, may worship in the Temple and offer sacrifice, provided that they observe the Sabbath and hold fast the covenant. The omitted verses, which declare that eunuchs (hitherto banned, cf. Deuteronomy 23.1) are also welcome, indicate that this did not mean that they were expected to observe every precept. The final verse promises that God will continue to bring back exiled Jews.

Romans 11.1-2a, 29-32

Paul spells out the problem that is so important to him. If the Jews have failed to respond to the gospel, does this mean that God has rejected his people? The fact that few Jews accepted the gospel was not only painful to Paul, but presented a theological problem: had God's promises failed, and was he unfaithful to his people? His readers might suppose that the fact that he, Paul, was preaching to Gentiles implied that God had abandoned Israel. Paul is adamant that this is not so; it is not God who is unfaithful, but Israel. Moreover, there are still some Jews who have responded – Paul himself, for example! But he is not alone. His words echo those of Elijah, whose story is spelt out in verses 2b-4. A remnant has been chosen to be faithful.

Talk of a remnant might suggest a scaling-down of God's promises: never mind the many – a few, at least, will be saved. For Paul, however, the remnant is a promise of something greater. Israel's fall has led to salvation for the Gentiles (v. 11); the branches cut out of the olive tree can (contrary to normal horticultural practice!) be grafted in again (vv. 17-24). God has hardened Israel for a purpose – to bring in the Gentiles – but that will bring Israel herself to repent. In the end, all Israel will be saved (v. 26).

So Paul ends triumphantly. Israel has not been rejected, for God is faithful to his words, and his gifts and calling are irrevocable. He is able to use even their disobedience for his purpose.

Matthew 15 (10-20), 21-28

Jesus' teaching in verses 10 to 20 arises from an incident described in verses 1 to 9, where some Pharisees object because Jesus' disciples do not wash their hands before eating. Their complaint had nothing to do with hygiene, but sprang from a concern about possible contamination of the hands by something regarded as 'unclean'. Jesus protests that the Pharisees are so concerned with their own strict interpretation of the law that they have lost sight of the law itself. He insists that what really defiles a person is the evil within him. The various forms of evil listed in verse 19 were all forbidden in the law. The declaration that, 'to eat with unwashed hands does not defile', accords with the law.

So far, then, Jesus is presented as orthodox. But how would Matthew's community have understood the saying in verse 10? Did it perhaps mean that it was permissible to eat foods which had been forbidden by the law? It is clear from Acts that this issue became an important one when Gentiles were converted.

Linked to this incident is the story of the Gentile woman who requests healing for her child. Jesus ignores her and the disciples want to get rid of her. Jesus understands his mission as to Israel alone (v. 24, cf. 10.5-6, 23), and refuses to help. 'Dogs' was a term typically used of Gentiles by Jews. Her answer outwits him, and he agrees to help her because of her remarkable faith. She has acknowledged him as 'Lord, Son of David', and persisted in the face of opposition: she is therefore allowed to share the children's bread. The story would have been important for Matthew's community. Could Gentiles be included in the Church? A story in which even Jesus apparently changed his mind on this issue suggests that opinions were shifting and new insights being seen.

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>
20th Aug	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass # 11am St John's, Leeming #	St Mary's Thornton Watlass
27th Aug	9:15am St Gregory's #F	9 am Burrill Church 10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Flower Festival Choral Evensong St Gregory's, Bedale
3rd Sept	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 #	

Communion F Facebook

St Gregory's Clock Festival

Come along for all the events we have planned, tower tours, try your hand at bell ringing on the wobble/one bell, flower festival and organ recitals in the church, book/DVD stall and refreshments in Chantry Hall. There will be a Community Service at 6pm on Saturday 26th. The festivities will culminate with a Harp Recital by Lucinda Taylor on the Monday evening.

We need volunteers to help throughout the festival. Can you spare some time to help with either showing people around the church or with refreshments? Please speak to the Churchwardens.

HAMBLETON FOODSHARE

We would really be grateful for anything as our stocks are going down so quickly at the moment. Our current list of **very urgent shortages** are:

UHT Milk; Toilet Roll; Spaghetti Hoops; Tinned soups and ready meals;
Boxes of porridge; Cereal; Cereal bars; Washing up liquid; Baby wipes; Soap;
Corned Beef; Tinned fruit; Custard; Jars pasta sauce; Beans; Tinned Vegetables;
Smash; Sugar; Antibacterial spray; J cloths; Deodorant; Toothpaste; Handwash;
Tins of tomatoes; Sponge puddings; Instant noodles; Washing Powder

Thank you for your help