



BENEFACTIVE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

27th August 2023

Twelfth 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, Susan Pollitt and Alan Gatenby

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, you are always more ready to hear than we to pray and to give more than either we desire or deserve: pour down upon us the abundance of your mercy, forgiving us those things of which our conscience is afraid and giving us those good things which we are not worthy to ask but through the merits and mediation of 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 51. 1-6

Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness, you that seek the LORD. Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many. For the LORD will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me, my nation; for a teaching will go out from me, and my justice for a light to the peoples. I will bring near my deliverance swiftly, my salvation has gone out and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me, and for my arm they hope. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats; but my salvation will be for ever, and my deliverance will never be ended.

Second Reading - Romans 12.1-8

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect. For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgement, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Gospel - Matthew 16.13-20

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered him, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.' Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Post Communion Prayer

God of all mercy, in this eucharist you have set aside our sins and given us your healing: grant that we who are made whole in Christ may bring that healing to this broken world, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMENTARY ON THE READINGS

Old Testament Isaiah 51.1-6

The prophet is speaking a word that divides his community. Those 'who pursue what is right' are those who are receptive to the idea of a return to Jerusalem. Many more were content to stay in Babylon, which was to remain a major centre of Jewish life and population for centuries to come.

Clearly many in the first group are worried by their small number. So the prophet reminds them that the whole people descends from a single couple (v.2). God can achieve great things from small beginnings. To encourage them, he paints a picture of a return that God will make easy. Jerusalem will flourish; God's power will ensure it. And there is nothing more reliable than God; it's more likely the earth will wear out than that God's promises will fail.

Listen to me! That's the invitation. People have to choose. Will they respond, or will they not?

Psalm 138

Given its position at the crossroads of the Ancient World, it is not surprising that many of the psalms composed for the use of kings and national leaders of Israel talk of being surrounded by enemies (v.7). This psalm follows a common pattern, beginning with praise, moving on to express confidence in God, then seeking God's help against enemies. The king's enemies are seen also as God's enemies, so for God to let the king be defeated would also be a defeat for God, entailing God 'forsaking the work of his hands'. Verse 6 also echoes a theme found elsewhere: God's preference for the lowly, and a hatred of arrogance. It was, no doubt, a useful reminder to put into the mouth of the king, since arrogance and power often go together. The Magnificat puts the same sentiments into the mouth of Mary.

New Testament Romans 12.1-8

This passage follows a brief poetic section (11.33-36) that dwells on the otherness of God. God's judgements and ways are not like ours, so discerning what God wants means thinking differently. Paul argues that such discernment comes only when God has renewed our minds. It therefore begins with offering ourselves to God. In Temple worship, sacrifices die. Paul looks for the opposite: sacrifices that live. This is worship not to appease God for what we have done wrong in the past, but to enable us to do right in the future.

Verses 4-8 go on to outline how in God's economy each has a role in enabling the other person in discernment. If each contributes the gifts they have been given, together all will be able to discern God's will and live as God requires.

Such mutual support needs mutual respect (verse 3). Roman society was based on honour. Pride of family and status was at the heart of the culture. Paul's message is strongly countercultural.

Gospel Matthew 16.13-20

Peter's exclamation is presented as a piece of divinely inspired wisdom. He has not engaged in a careful argument, ruling out all alternatives until left with 'Son of God' as the only remaining option. He has understood in a flash of insight.

What he has understood is not a sudden awareness of the virgin birth. That's not what 'Son of God' in this context means. It means 'the one who acts as God's agent', who is on intimate terms with God. Roman emperors used similar terms of themselves, as did many kings in the Ancient World. Peter is acknowledging Jesus as the emperor of an alternative empire – God's empire.

Matthew uses this story to discuss the role of Peter and the 'binding and loosing' power of the Church. This latter is clearly for the assembly of citizens of a self-governing city within the Roman empire. Churches, he implies, are cities in the kingdom of heaven.

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> |
|-----------|--|---|---------------------------------------|
| 27th Aug | 9.15am St Gregory's #F | 9:00 Burrill Mission Church 10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass # | St John's, Leeming |
| 3rd Sept | 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 |
| 10th Sept | 9:15am St Gregory's #F | 10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass # | Burrill Church |

Communion F Facebook

St Gregory's Clock Festival

Our Clock Festival is in full swing now, so come along to all the events we have planned for today and tomorrow: tour the tower, try your hand at bell ringing on the wombell/one bell , enjoy the flower festival and organ recitals in the church, complete the Clock Trail, browse the books and DVD stall and relax with refreshments in Chantry Hall.

The festivities will culminate with a Harp Recital by Lucinda Taylor on Monday evening.

If you have a little spare time to help out, please have a word with 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