

BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

8th October 2023

Eighteenth Sunday After Trinity

OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

Gaynor, Bel Newman, Mark Newman, Lesley Hall, Delma Bode, John Hall, Chris, George, Olive Robinson, Harry Scorer, Terry Gregory, Kath Finkill, Anne Jardin, Amanda, David, Liz, Patricia Jacklin, and Sue.

RIP

Judith Winpenny, Kate Hamilton-Sturdy, Sam Hesketh, Dorothy Wreghitt, Stan Surtees, Pam Davison and Suzanne Rudd

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

Collect

Almighty and everlasting God, increase in us your gift of faith that, forsaking what lies behind and reaching out to that which is before, we may run the way of your commandments and win the crown of everlasting joy; 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 5.1–7

Let me sing for my beloved my love-song concerning his vineyard: My beloved had a vineyard on a very fertile hill. He dug it and cleared it of stones, and planted it with choice vines; he built a watch-tower in the midst of it, and hewed out a wine vat in it; he expected it to yield grapes, but it yielded wild grapes. And now, inhabitants of Jerusalem and people of Judah, judge between me and my vineyard. What more was there to do for my vineyard that I have not done in it? When I expected it to yield grapes, why did it yield wild grapes? And now I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard. I will remove its hedge, and it shall be devoured; I will break down its wall, and it shall be trampled down. I will make it a waste; it shall not be pruned or hoed, and it shall be overgrown with briars and thorns; I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the Lord of hosts is the house of Israel, and the people of Judah are his pleasant planting; he expected justice, but saw bloodshed; righteousness, but heard a cry!

Second Reading - Philippians 3.4b–14

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of

Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless. Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on towards the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 21. 33–46

‘Listen to another parable. There was a landowner who planted a vineyard, put a fence around it, dug a wine press in it, and built a watch-tower. Then he leased it to tenants and went to another country. When the harvest time had come, he sent his slaves to the tenants to collect his produce. But the tenants seized his slaves and beat one, killed another, and stoned another. Again he sent other slaves, more than the first; and they treated them in the same way. Finally he sent his son to them, saying, “They will respect my son.” But when the tenants saw the son, they said to themselves, “This is the heir; come, let us kill him and get his inheritance.” So they seized him, threw him out of the vineyard, and killed him. Now when the owner of the vineyard comes, what will he do to those tenants?’ They said to him, ‘He will put those wretches to a miserable death, and lease the vineyard to other tenants who will give him the produce at the harvest time.’ Jesus said to them, ‘Have you never read in the scriptures: “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone this was the Lord’s doing, and it is amazing in our eyes”? Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls.’ When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them. They wanted to arrest him, but they feared the crowds, because they regarded him as a prophet.

Post Communion Prayer

We praise and thank you, O Christ, for this sacred feast: for here we receive you, here the memory of your passion is renewed, here our minds are filled with grace, and here a pledge of future glory is given, when we shall feast at that table where you reign with all your saints for ever. Amen

COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL READINGS

What Does this Parable Teach Us about Ourselves?

If this parable is about the chief priests and Pharisees, what does it teach us about ourselves? We can see what it teaches us about God. What about us? Well, Jesus seems to be teaching us that we are now the tenants, the stewards, of God's vineyard. We have been entrusted with this world, with all that we have, and are now called to care for it well, and to give our creator the fruits of our harvest.

And this parable is also warning us not to take any of this for granted. Our world, our life, our salvation – it is all grace, all a gift from God. We, too, can be tempted at times to think that we can keep the fruits of God's vineyard for ourselves. We work hard, making our living and providing for ourselves and our family, and it's easy to forget that everything that we have is not ours, but the Lord's.

The landowner of this vineyard still hasn't returned, 2,000 years later. Judgment day still hasn't arrived. And whether or not we share the fruits of our harvest with those in need, we will probably not be struck down by lightning. And whether or not we are nice to our neighbours this week, we will probably not receive a visit from the owner of the vineyard to receive the consequences. Whether or not we have lived selfishly this week, we probably won't notice any immediate consequences from our Heavenly Father.

But then again, none of us are guaranteed tomorrow. Today is all that we can be certain of. So why would we put off living faithfully as God's steward until tomorrow, if we can do it today? Why would we tempt God to take the Kingdom of God away from us, and give it to a people who will produce the fruits of the kingdom, as Jesus warns us in this gospel reading?

Why would we do that? There can really only be one reason – we would do this only if we believed that the landowner would never return. When it comes right down to it, this is a parable about faith, about the importance of believing that God is very real. This world is a vineyard that is not owned by us. We have a landowner who has entrusted us with it, and will one day hold us accountable to this trust.

Our God is very real, and sent to us God's only beloved son, Jesus, not just to check on the vineyard, but to die for us, and for the sins of all the world. And after he died on the cross, he was raised from the dead and sits at the right hand of the Father. And one day he will come again to judge the living and the dead. To check on his vineyard, to see what we have done with the place, and to receive the fruit of our labour.

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</i>
8th Oct	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Burrill Church
15th Oct	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	St Mary's Thornton Watlass
		11am St John's, Leeming	
22nd Oct	9:15am St Gregory's #F	9 am Burrill Church #	St John's, Leeming
		10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	
29th Oct	10:30am Benefice Service - St John's, Leeming		16:30—All Souls Service, Bedale

Communion F Facebook



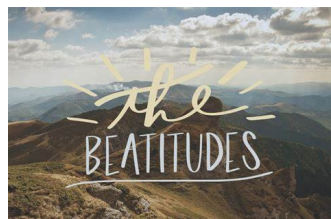
Prayer and Praise

Today — 8th October 2023

At 5pm online



Delving the Beatitudes for Today - A Short Study Revealing the Kingdom



Tuesdays at 1.30pm in the Chantry Hall on

3rd and 17th October

7th and 14th November



Harvest Festivals

St John's, Leeming on Sunday 15th October, at 11am, followed by a buffet lunch.

Benefice All Souls Service and Remembrance List

St Gregory's Church - Sunday 29th October at 4:30pm



The annual quiet service of remembrance is when names are read out and candles lit in memory. The list will automatically include all those who have died in 2022 and 2023. For any other names you would like remembering please write them on the sheet at the back of each church or send them to Sarah in the office at admin@bedale.church or on 01677 425985/07949 006681, or to the list available on the evening.

OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



It's that time of year again, Samaritan's Purse are collecting shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. If you would like to contribute, shoebox leaflets will be available in St Gregory's Church. Please place your shoebox in the boxes located at the back of church near the font between 13th & 20th November.