



# BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

10th March 2024

## Mothersing Sunday

### OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

Gaynor, Bel Newman, Mark Newman, Lesley Hall, Delma Bode, John Hall, Donna Bradley, George, Olive Robinson, Harry Scorer, Terry Gregory, Jack, Kath Finkill, Amanda, David, Chris, Liz, Tracey, Sue, Pam Kenyon, Arthur Lightfoot, Alison, Robin, Kath Moore, Tim, Dan, and John Pickard.

### RIP

Gary Hurworth, John Kitching, Margaret Carling,  
Brenda Saunders, Timothy Clapham, and Stuart Smyth.

*May they rest in peace and rise in glory*

### Praying for Edwin in Bolivia

*Lord God, we pray for Edwin to know your goodness and provision. We pray that he would place his identity in you. We ask that in the pressures of life, he would know you are his rock on which he can stand. We pray that through the challenges of school life, exams, and future decisions, you would lead him, guide him and bring him comfort.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen*

### Collect

**God of compassion, whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary, shared the life of a home in Nazareth, and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself: strengthen us in our daily living that in joy and in sorrow we may know the power of your presence to bind together and to heal; 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 - 1 Samuel 1.20-28

In due time Hannah conceived and bore a son. She named him Samuel, for she said, 'I have asked him of the Lord.' The man Elkanah and all his household went up to offer to the Lord the yearly sacrifice, and to pay his vow. But Hannah did not go up, for she said to her husband, 'As soon as the child is weaned, I will bring him, that he may appear in the presence of the Lord, and remain there for ever; I will offer him as a Nazirite for all time.' Her husband Elkanah said to her, 'Do what seems best to you, wait until you have weaned him; only—may the Lord establish his word.' So the woman remained and nursed her son, until she weaned him. When she had weaned him, she took him up with her, along with a three-year-old bull, an ephah of flour, and a skin of wine. She brought him to the house of the Lord at Shiloh; and the child was young. Then they slaughtered the bull, and they brought the child to Eli. And she said, 'Oh, my lord! As you live, my lord,

I am the woman who was standing here in your presence, praying to the Lord. For this child I prayed; and the Lord has granted me the petition that I made to him. Therefore I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives, he is given to the Lord.’ She left him there for the Lord.

### **Second Reading - 2 Corinthians 1.3-7**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all consolation, who consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction with the consolation with which we ourselves are consoled by God. For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ. If we are being afflicted, it is for your consolation and salvation; if we are being consoled, it is for your consolation, which you experience when you patiently endure the same sufferings that we are also suffering. Our hope for you is unshaken; for we know that as you share in our sufferings, so also you share in our consolation.

### **Gospel Reading - Luke 2.33-35**

And the child’s father and mother were amazed at what was being said about him. Then Simeon blessed them and said to his mother Mary, ‘This child is destined for the falling and the rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be opposed so that the inner thoughts of many will be revealed—and a sword will pierce your own soul too.’

### **Post Communion Prayer**

**Loving God, as a mother feeds her children at the breast you feed us in this sacrament with the food and drink of eternal life: help us who have tasted your goodness to grow in grace within the household of faith; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **COMMENTARY ON THE READINGS**

The lectionary from Common Worship offers an additional set of options for churches who will be celebrating the Fourth Sunday of Lent as ‘Mothering Sunday’.

These include two possible Old Testament passages – the story of the baby Moses being found in the bulrushes (Exodus 2.1-10) and of Hannah’s dedication of her longed-for son, Samuel, to God (1 Samuel 1.20-28). They also include two Gospel passages – Simeon’s prophecy to Mary that her child is destined for the falling and rising of nations and that ‘a sword shall pierce your own heart also’ (Luke 2.33-35) and Jesus’ commending of his mother and the beloved disciple into one another’s care (John 19.25-27) as they stand at the foot of his cross.

The first thing to observe about these four stories is how unsentimental they are. These four Biblical stories all involve pain and disruption. Behind the story of Moses in the bulrushes is the fear that if the child’s true race and identity is known, his life will be in danger. Behind the joy of Hannah are many years of childlessness – and the complex feelings ‘Mothering Sunday’ may provoke in those who long for their own children. Luke 2 contains the much-loved Nunc Dimittis (used in many churches and cathedrals each

evening) where Simeon prays ‘Lord, you now let your servant go in peace...for my eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared before the sight of every people...’ In offering Luke 2.33-35, the lectionary reminds us that after these words of rejoicing and comfort, Simeon offers Mary a prophecy of pain. That prophecy is fulfilled in John 19, as we see Mary standing at the foot of the cross with the beloved disciple, as her son is executed as a common criminal.

Questions for reflection; for each of these stories present a challenge to us as congregations and as individuals:

1. They are honest about the challenges facing parents and children, and those longing to be parents. Do we – as individuals and as a church – help people to be honest about these challenges – or do we encourage people to keep up appearances, and to hide their difficulties behind facades? How can we support one another, honestly and generously, in the challenge and joy of family life?

2. They warn us against a rush to judge and stigmatise. In both Gospel readings, the reality of Mary’s faithful obedience contrasts with the way outsiders might have perceived and judged her. How do we nurture faithful, costly obedience to God’s call – and resist judgementalism?

3. They speak of God’s presence and action in families on the margins of society. The lives of Jesus, Mary and Joseph are marked by their existence under a violent occupying power: in the flight to Egypt in his infancy, the beheading of Jesus’ cousin and forerunner, and most of all at Calvary.

In maternal compassion expressed by her presence [at her Son’s crucifixion], Mary is so close to the drama of so many families, of so many mothers and children, reunited by death after long periods of separation for reasons of work, illness or violence at the hands of individuals or groups. (John Paul II)

The story of the Holy Family embraces, and draws our attention to, the plight of refugees and those living with persecution and violence in our own day. How do we discern, and serve, Christ in those children and parents who live through persecution and exile today?

4. They call us to be a community of nature and mutual care: In his words from the cross in John 19 we see Jesus’ compassion and his concern for his mother. Entrusting Mary and the beloved disciple to one another as mother and son, Jesus teaches us that the community of his disciples needs to have that same spirit of mutual care and concern. He is inviting us to acknowledge a responsibility for one another, whether or not we have ties of biological kinship. What (perhaps small) step can our church take this Lent to be a community which nurtures those who lack security and love – whatever their age and background?

## 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>
10th Mar	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Burrill Church
17th Mar	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	St Mary's Thornton Watlass
		11am St John's, Leeming #	
24th Mar	9:15am St Gregory's #F	9 am Burrill Church #	St John's, Leeming
		10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	

# Communion F Facebook

***This week's floodlighting is in memory of***

***Eithné Summers***



To sponsor the floodlighting in memory of someone then please get in touch with Sarah in the office on 07949 006681 or [admin@bedale.church](mailto:admin@bedale.church)



Everyone is invited to the final Thornton

Watlass Lent Lunch to be held in Thornton

Watlass Village Hall on Saturday 23rd March from

12 noon—1:30pm. Soup and sweets will be served.



There is a new letter from Edwin on the notice board, please do read it. There are letters and envelopes to send a letter in reply, we would love more people to write to Edwin. For more details please see Sarah in the office on 07949-00668 or [admin@bedale.church](mailto:admin@bedale.church)