



# BENEFICE BULLETIN

*Church News for*

*Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass*

**Sunday 2nd June 2024**

## First Sunday after Trinity

### OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

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

### RIP

Kathleen Wharton, Margaret Fowler and Kath Finkill.  
*May they rest in peace and rise in glory*

### Collect

**O God, the strength of all those who put their trust in you, mercifully accept our prayers and, because through the weakness of our mortal nature we can do no good thing without you, grant us the help of your grace, that in the keeping of your commandments we may please you both in will and deed; 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 - Deuteronomy 5.12-15

Observe the sabbath day and keep it holy, as the Lord your God commanded you. For six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, or your son or your daughter, or your male or female slave, or your ox or your donkey, or any of your livestock, or the resident alien in your towns, so that your male and female slave may rest as well as you. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day.

### Psalm - Psalm 139.1-5, 12-18

O Lord, you have searched me out and known me; you know my sitting down and my rising up; you discern my thoughts from afar. You mark out my journeys and my resting place and are acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word on my tongue, but you, O Lord, know it altogether. You encompass me behind and before and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, so high that I cannot attain it. For you yourself created my inmost parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I thank you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvellous are your works, my soul

knows well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was made in secret and woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes beheld my form, as yet unfinished; already in your book were all my members written, As day by day they were fashioned when as yet there was none of them. How deep are your counsels to me, O God! How great is the sum of them! If I count them, they are more in number than the sand, and at the end, I am still in your presence.

## **Second Reading - 2 Corinthians 4.5 - 12**

For we do not proclaim ourselves; we proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord and ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake. For it is the God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness', who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be made visible in our bodies. For while we live, we are always being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our mortal flesh. So death is at work in us, but life in you.

## **Gospel - Mark 2.23 - 3.6**

One sabbath he was going through the cornfields; and as they made their way his disciples began to pluck heads of grain. The Pharisees said to him, 'Look, why are they doing what is not lawful on the sabbath?' And he said to them, 'Have you never read what David did when he and his companions were hungry and in need of food? He entered the house of God, when Abiathar was high priest, and ate the bread of the Presence, which it is not lawful for any but the priests to eat, and he gave some to his companions.' Then he said to them, 'The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.' Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. They watched him to see whether he would cure him on the sabbath, so that they might accuse him. And he said to the man who had the withered hand, 'Come forward.' Then he said to them, 'Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the sabbath, to save life or to kill?' But they were silent. He looked around at them with anger; he was grieved at their hardness of heart and said to the man, 'Stretch out your hand.' He stretched it out, and his hand was restored. The Pharisees went out and immediately conspired with the Herodians against him, how to destroy him.

## **Post Communion Prayer**

**Eternal Father, we thank you for nourishing us with these heavenly gifts: may our communion strengthen us in faith, build us up in hope, and make us grow in love; for the sake of Jesus Christ our Lord . Amen.**

## **COMMENTARY ON THE READINGS**

"Then the Pharisees went out and immediately plotted with the Herodians against Jesus, how they might destroy him." After just two chapters of his Gospel St Mark records that powerful parties were bent on getting Jesus killed. Why? Did they think that he was a terrorist? No.

They thought that he was a danger to their religion and to their national identity. His actions and teaching threatened the foundation of their faith and nation. Jesus seemed to them to be rejecting the Law of God as it had been handed down by Moses.

The fourth Commandment states: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days you shall labour and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord your God. In it you shall do no work..." Ex 20.8ff

From Moses to the present day in Israel this law has been observed meticulously. To give an example a friend recalled when staying in a hotel in Jerusalem it was time to take the lift to go down to the restaurant on a Friday evening. Standing by the lift were a Jewish couple and out of deference to them my friend felt he should not press the button to call the lift. They all waited long minutes and no lift appeared. Then the Jewish couple went round the corner of the lobby, out of sight, and so he pressed the button. The lift came straight away and as the bell chimed and the doors opened the Jewish couple returned, smiling in gratitude because this Gentile had done what they, on the Sabbath, were not allowed to do. Pressing a lift button to call a lift was regarded as doing work.

Jesus was condemned because he allowed his disciples to pluck ears of corn to eat the grain on the Sabbath because they were hungry. The Pharisees thought that was equivalent to harvesting, which was forbidden. When Jesus himself on the Sabbath healed someone by stretching out his hand towards him the Pharisees regarded that as doing medical work which was breaking the fourth commandment. For this he deserved death.

Psalms 119 is an amazing hymn in which God's Law is praised as a gift of blessing. The psalm has 176 verses, divided into 22 stanzas, one stanza for each letter of the Hebrew alphabet. Each of the stanzas has 8 verses and each verse in a stanza begins with the same Hebrew letter. Finally almost every verse contains a synonym for the word 'Law': for example, testimonies, decrees, precepts, statutes, commandments, and so on. No wonder that Hebrews had an awesome respect for God's Law and detested with horror those who broke it.

But most law codes and customs are made by human societies to ensure their good order. The extent to which these requirements are followed varies within and between societies. It is sometimes said that in our country laws are meant to be kept and those, which are no longer observed should be abolished. In some countries, however, laws are regarded as setting an ideal standard of behaviour but no one expects everyone to achieve it. Attitudes to Law vary from age to age. We live in a tolerant society which allows people freedom in many matters which are thought to be a personal, private matter, which society shouldn't regulate. It was not always so even in this country.

In today's Gospel Jesus says 'The Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath'. The principle applies to all laws. They are made or ought to be made for the common good not for the good of a particular class or religion or nation. 'America first!' is a bad basis for making laws, or for that matter 'Britain first!'

Some laws are contrary to God's law. When the high priest ordered the apostles not to teach in the name of Jesus, Peter and the apostles replied, 'We ought to obey God rather than men'. (Acts 5.29) From then until now the magnificent army of martyrs have obeyed God at the cost of their lives.

In the Gospel Jesus also said, or perhaps it was a Christian commentator, 'Therefore, the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath.' He meant that Jesus Christ is the Author and Ruler who has the right to decide every law, and exceptions to those laws, including those about Sabbath observance. This surely applies to all laws governing human behaviour and activity. Ultimately God is Lord of All because he has created and sustains all in existence and knows what is for the good of all. Jesus Christ, the Word and Wisdom of God has revealed to us the fundamentals of God's Law. God grant that we may live by them.

## 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>
<b>9th June</b>	9.15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Burrill Mission Church
<b>16th June</b>	9.15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	St Mary's, Thornton Watlass
		11am St John's, Leeming #	
<b>23rd June</b>	9.15am St Gregory's #F	9:00am Burrill Mission Church #	St John's, Leeming
		10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	

# Communion F Facebook

### Ringling for peace



With the bells of thousands of other churches, on Thursday 6th. June at 6pm the bells of St. Gregory's will be ringing out as a call for peace. This is at the request of the Central Council of Church Bell Ringers and various authorities, including the Town Council. In the midst of many commemorations of past events, it is an invitation to pause and reflect on the central importance of peace: peace in our hearts, in our homes, in our community, in our broken world.

"Let there be peace on earth - and let it begin with me."

