



# BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

1st September 2024

## Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity

### Service Times and Venues

Daily Morning and Evening Prayer conference calls at 8:30am and 4:30pm

Thursdays 10:30am BCP communion at St Gregory's

	Morning Services - St Gregory's, Bedale	Morning Services - St Mary's, St John's and Burrill	16:00—Evensong conference call
1st 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 #	
8th Sept	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Burrill Church
15th Sept	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	St Mary's Thornton Watlass
		11am St John's, Leeming #	

# Communion F Facebook \* conference call

Conference Call Tel 03330110945 and enter when prompted Room No.66307496# PIN 9498

## NOTICES



**Sponsored Hymns at  
St. Mary's Church,  
Thornton Watlass.  
Sunday 1st September,  
from 3 - 5pm,**

Come and listen to your favourite hymn, or sing along. Proceeds for church funds. Teas/coffees and scones. Details from Christine Carruthers

**AN EVENING WITH**  
 Anna Weister Andersson    Andreas W Andersson    Rob Halligan

Tuesday 24th September  
**BEDALE**  
 St Gregory's Church  
 North End, DL8 1AF  
 Doors: 7pm - Free Entrance - Donations  
 (Booking advised)  
 for booking call 01677 425985 or text/Whatsapp 07949 006681  
 email: admin@bedale.church

*Stories & Songs*

Prayer and Praise  
 20th September  
**CANCELLED**

## PRAYERS AND READINGS

### OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

Bel Newman, Mark Newman, Lesley Hall, Delma Bode, John Hall, David, Chris, Donna Bradley, George, Olive Robinson, Harry Scorer, Justin, Amanda, Tracey, Sue, Alison, Tim, Dan, Jeff Betts, John Pickard, George Carling, and Doris Pearson.

### RIP

Stephen Proctor, Gaynor Allen, David Russell, Ken Hunt, Mary Gourlay, and Tony Morris.

*May they rest in peace and rise in glory*

### Praying for Edwin in Bolivia

*God, we thank you for the gift of knowledge. We praise you that you provide us with brains to think and question the world around us. We pray that you would help Edwin learn well and flourish. May he discover his unique talents and giftings. Give him a passion for the world around him. Amen*

### Collect

**Almighty God, whose only Son has opened for us a new and living way into your presence: give us pure hearts and steadfast wills to worship you in spirit and in truth; 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 4.1-2, 6-9

So now, Israel, give heed to the statutes and ordinances that I am teaching you to observe, so that you may live to enter and occupy the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. You must neither add anything to what I command you nor take away anything from it, but keep the commandments of the LORD your God with which I am charging you. You must observe them diligently, for this will show your wisdom and discernment to the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, 'Surely this great nation is a wise and discerning people!' For what other great nation has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is whenever we call to him? And what other great nation has statutes and ordinances as just as this entire law that I am setting before you today? But take care and watch yourselves closely, so as neither to forget the things that your eyes have seen nor to let them slip from your mind all the days of your life; make them known to your children and your children's children

### Second Reading - James 1.17-27

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. In fulfilment of his own purpose he gave us birth by the word of truth, so that we would become a kind of first fruits of his creatures. You must understand this, my beloved: let everyone be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger; for your anger does not produce God's righteousness. Therefore rid yourselves of all sordidness and rank growth of wickedness,

and welcome with meekness the implanted word that has the power to save your souls. But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. For if any are hearers of the word and not doers, they are like those who look at themselves in a mirror; for they look at themselves and, on going away, immediately forget what they were like. But those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing. If any think they are religious, and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress, and to keep oneself unstained by the world.

### **Gospel Reading - Mark 7.1-8, 14-15, 21-23**

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles). So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, ‘Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?’ He said to them, ‘Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, “This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines.” You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.’ Then he called the crowd again and said to them, ‘Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.’ For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.’

### **Post Communion Prayer**

**Lord God, the source of truth and love, keep us faithful to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, united in prayer and the breaking of bread, and one in joy and simplicity of heart, in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **COMMENTARY ON THE READINGS**

Living faithfully is about much more than simply ticking off a list of dos and don'ts – but it is very easy to slip into that way of thinking. Although Deuteronomy does contain statutes and ordinances, it is the spirit in which they are observed that is all important. Mark has Jesus supporting the values enshrined in the law but challenging the human traditions that had attached themselves to it. Acting on the word and improving ones self is emphasised in James. The psalmist reminds us that even participation in worship demands right living.

### **Deuteronomy 4.1-2, 6-9**

The introductory verses of this reading set out the emphases of the rest of Deuteronomy,

which is about the way a people can live together in just and authentic community in a relationship with God. Faithful living has practical consequences for individuals and communities. Statutes and ordinances provide the framework for the structure of Israel as a national community. The rules for living order public behaviour, religious practices and political affairs. They also provide a witness to the nations around of the greatness of this nation, a greatness which comes from God.

### **James 1.17-27**

The passage opens with a focus on the creativity of God. We are the result of God's decision and all that is good also comes from God (vv. 17-18). People's responsibility for both hearing God's word and acting on it is not a new thought but the consequence of what James has just said about God. The advice on listening, speaking and not quickly getting angry (v. 19) are traditional Jewish wisdom placed here in a particular context. What is said next about acting depends first on listening. Ridding oneself of wickedness (v. 20) has similarities to the constant refrain in Ephesians in previous weeks bidding readers to remember who they once were. For faith to be real, it must be translated into deeds (v. 22-25). The illustration of looking into the mirror may be confusing to us. The original readers may well have been familiar with the notion of the mirror as a tool for self-improvement. The mirror shows us as we are and this was the role of the moral teacher. In James' illustration the one who looks into the mirror and forgets what he was like is one who does not want to change - to turn hearing into doing, The 'perfect law', on the other hand, reflects an image of what one ought to become. The 'pure and undefiled', in the moral rather than ritual sense, religion is essentially active for the vulnerable, including one's own vulnerability (v. 27). Readers were to live out what they had heard, not merely to do the occasional good deed.

### **Mark 7.1-8, 14-15, 21-23**

We can understand the whole passage in the light of the struggle of the Early Church with the observance of the Jewish law. Matthew pictured Jesus as the authoritative interpreter of the law. Paul can be seen as denying the law as the basis of salvation and behaviour. Mark, as in this passage, presented Jesus as upholding the basic principles of the law but challenging the traditions that had grown up around it. For the religious leaders of the time, the situation was simple; if Jesus did not teach his disciples to observe the rules of piety, then he could not be a religious teacher. The two key words in the opening verses are defilement and tradition (vv. 1-3). It wasn't that Jesus was against hand washing or the things on the list of forms of evil behaviour (vv. 21-22). People had confused the external with the internal. Defilement was from within (vv. 21 and 23) and could not be dealt with by external rituals. In v6 Jesus' quotation from Isaiah 29.13 puts a finger on the issue. Defilement was a lack of active relationship with God. This allowed the 'evil intentions' (v. 21) to come from the heart. We can often see in the Church the same tendency that Jesus criticised – holding on to human traditions as though they were required by God. The basic principles become overlaid, even obscured, with practices and ways of thinking. What may have been proper contextual responses in their time have become absolute. As in this passage, such traditions and practices can be fiercely protected because they become marks of identity and orthodoxy. Jesus wanted to transform living and believing, not just to adapt religious practices.