



# BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for  
Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

1st June 2025

## The Seventh Sunday of Easter

### Service Times and Venues

**Daily Morning and Evening Prayer conference calls at 8:30am and 4:00pm**

**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>1st June</b>	8:00am St Gregory's #	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	<b>CANCELLED</b>
	9.15am St Gregory's #F	11am St John's, Leeming #	
<b>8th June</b>	9.15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Burrill
<b>15th 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 #	

# Communion F Facebook

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

### NOTICES

#### Dates for your Diary:

**Tonight - Choral evensong has been CANCELLED**

**15th June** - Benefice Confirmation Service at St Mary's, Thornton Watlass with a 10:30am start.

**28th June** - our Assistant Curate, Lee, will be ordained deacon in Wakefield Cathedral. Please pray for Lee and his family as they prepare for his ordination.

**29th June** - Lee's first service will be in St John's Leeming, Sunday 29th June at the Benefice

#### *BEDALE AND BEYOND*



*June & July 2025*

*Out Now — your new copies of the magazine are available at the back of our churches, please pick up your copy.*

#### **Help Required**

Diane Crisp and Elizabeth Pratt are organising a finger food buffet for after Lee's first service on 29th June. Small plates of food are needed, please see your church warden for the items that are needed. Thank you.

## PRAYERS AND READINGS

### OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

Bel Newman, Mark Newman, Lesley Hall, Delma Bode, John Hall, Chris, George, Olive Robinson, Chris, Justin, Amanda, Alison, Tim, Dan, George Carling, John, Rachel Oysten, Doris Pearson, Kevin, and Pam Conway.

### RIP

William Wallis, Gerald Bunting, Elizabeth Rushby, and James Constantine.  
*May they rest in peace and rise in glory*

### Praying for Edwin in Bolivia

*Father God, I thank you that you made us to be in relationship with others. We pray for Edwin to know great care and support from those around him. May he be encouraged by his friends at school, and may he show your love and care to his friendship circle. Amen*

### Collect

**O God the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: we beseech you, leave us not comfortless, but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.**

### First Reading - Acts 16.16-34

One day, as we were going to the place of prayer, we met a slave-girl who had a spirit of divination and brought her owners a great deal of money by fortune-telling. While she followed Paul and us, she would cry out, 'These men are slaves of the Most High God, who proclaim to you a way of salvation.' She kept doing this for many days. But Paul, very much annoyed, turned and said to the spirit, 'I order you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her.' And it came out that very hour. But when her owners saw that their hope of making money was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market-place before the authorities. When they had brought them before the magistrates, they said, 'These men are disturbing our city; they are Jews and are advocating customs that are not lawful for us as Romans to adopt or observe.' The crowd joined in attacking them, and the magistrates had them stripped of their clothing and ordered them to be beaten with rods. After they had given them a severe flogging, they threw them into prison and ordered the jailer to keep them securely. Following these instructions, he put them in the innermost cell and fastened their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was an earthquake, so violent that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were unfastened. When the jailer woke up and saw the prison doors wide open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, since he supposed that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul shouted in a loud voice, 'Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.' The jailer called for lights, and rushing in, he fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. Then he brought them outside and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' They

answered, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.' They spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. At the same hour of the night he took them and washed their wounds; then he and his entire family were baptized without delay. He brought them up into the house and set food before them; and he and his entire household rejoiced that he had become a believer in God.

### **Second Reading - Revelation 22.12–14, 16, 17, 20, 21**

'See, I am coming soon; my reward is with me, to repay according to everyone's work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.' Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life and may enter the city by the gates. 'It is I, Jesus, who sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.' The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' And let everyone who hears say, 'Come.' And let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift. The one who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming soon.' Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints. Amen.

### **Gospel Reading - John 17.20–26**

'I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one. As you, Father, are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me. The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I desire that those also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory, which you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

'Righteous Father, the world does not know you, but I know you; and these know that you have sent me. I made your name known to them, and I will make it known, so that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.'

### **Post Communion Prayer**

**Eternal God, giver of love and power, your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world to preach the gospel of his kingdom: confirm us in this mission, and help us to live the good news we proclaim; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **COMMENTARY ON THE READINGS**

Today's readings focus on the life and freedom which come only from faith in Christ. Acts tells of the slave girl released from a demonic spirit in the name of Jesus, a jailer liberated from fear, and Paul and Silas set free from prison. The Gospel presents Jesus' words on the unity with God and with others that characterises the life of faith. In Revelation, the image of water is used to represent God's free gift of life.

## Acts 16.16-34

Oracles were an important part of Graeco-Roman religion. One of the most respected was at the shrine of Apollo at Delphi, where a prophetess known as the Pythia prophesied under the inspiration of the god. It is indicated here that the slave girl encountered by Paul and his companions has a similar spirit (v. 16). There is thus no suggestion that she is a sham, but what for Graeco-Roman religion is a divine gift, is treated by Paul as demonic and he casts the spirit out (v. 18). The girl's cries are the truth but not the whole truth. They do indeed have a way of salvation to proclaim, but what she omits is that the way is that of Jesus Christ. Paul could have used her cries in order to gain a public hearing for his message, but he refuses to compromise its integrity by exploiting the girl. Instead it is in the name of Jesus that the spirit is cast out, setting the girl free and making plain the distinctiveness of the gospel.

For his integrity Paul attracts opposition. Infuriated by their financial loss, the girl's owners exploit popular prejudices against Jews and foreign customs (vv. 20- 21) to have Paul and Silas beaten and sent to prison (v. 23). Ironically, the supposed corruptors of Roman customs are in fact Roman citizens, whom Roman law forbids to be treated in such a way. Having publicly shamed and beaten them, the magistrates are subjected to the humiliation of coming to their own prison to ask the prisoners to leave (16.38-39). Meanwhile, salvation comes to the jailer in charge of the prison. Again, Paul's integrity is crucial. He and Silas are able to forestall the suicide of the terrified jailer who presumably fears the disgrace the loss of prisoners would certainly bring. His famous question, 'What must I do to be saved?' (v. 30) probably reflects these fears. Paul and Silas are able to tell him that salvation comes from Jesus alone (v. 31). The chaos of human circumstances cannot frustrate God's purpose. He brings good out of what was a painful experience for Paul and Silas. Their faith in God, expressed in prayer and praise even at the very lowest point (v. 25), is vindicated.

## The Gospel John 17.20-26

Jesus has commanded his disciples to love (John 13.34-35), and now he prays that they be given unity. This prayer extends beyond the first disciples to all who will believe as the result of their witness (v. 20). This unity will serve as a compelling witness to the world that Jesus was sent by the Father (v. 23). It is not a natural human unity like that derived from common ethnicity, nationhood, gender or status. Rather it is unity of the Trinity. Believers participate in the harmony between the Father and the Son, sharing the love (the Spirit) that exists.