BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

21st September 2025

The Festival of St Matthew

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

	Morning Services - St Gregory's, Bedale	*Morning Services - St Mary's, St John's and Burrill*	*16:00/18.30—Evensong conference call*
21st Sept	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass # 11am St John's, Leeming #	St Mary's Thornton Watlass
28th Sept	9:15am St Gregory's #F	9 am Burrill Church # 10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	St John's, Leeming
5th Oct	8am St Gregory's #F 9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass # 11am St John's, Leeming #	St Gregory's Bedale

Communion F Facebook

NOTICES

Harvest Festivals

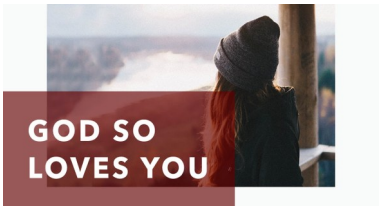
Burrill – Friday 26th September at 7pm; St Mary's, Thornton Watlass – Sunday 5th October at 4pm; St Gregory's, Bedale – Sunday 12th October at 9:15am; St John's, Leeming – Sunday 19th October at 11am, followed by a harvest lunch.

Floodlighting

Floodlighting of St Gregory's tower will recommence at the end of September. To sponsor the floodlighting in memory of someone please get in touch with Sarah in the office on 07949 006681 or admin@bedale.church

On Tuesday 23rd September TT will be supporting the national Macmillan Coffee Morning.

All proceeds will go to Macmillan.



Join us in Chantry Hall on Friday 26th Sept at 7pm for Prayer & Praise Live! Our speaker will be Phil Stone, Director of Scargill Movement in Kettlewell. Refreshments available from 6.45pm.

Everyone welcome!

Prayers and Readings

Our Prayers Are Asked For

Bel Newman, Mark Newman, Lesley Hall, Delma Bode, John Hall, Olive Robinson, Chris, Justin, Alison, Dan, John, Rachel Oysten, Doris Pearson, Adrian, Michelle Hammond, Terry and Marion, Bailey Cuthbert, Brenda, and Claire Bell.

RIP

John Murray and Wendy Richardson

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

Collect

O Almighty God, whose blessed Son called Matthew the tax collector to be an apostle and evangelist: give us grace to forsake the selfish pursuit of gain and the possessive love of riches that we may follow in the way of your Son Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

First Reading - Proverbs 3.13-18

Happy are those who find wisdom, and those who get understanding, for her income is better than silver, and her revenue better than gold. She is more precious than jewels, and nothing you desire can compare with her. Long life is in her right hand; in her left hand are riches and honour. Her ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace. She is a tree of life to those who lay hold of her;

Second Reading - 2 Corinthians 4.1-6

Since it is by God's mercy that we are engaged in this ministry, we do not lose heart. We have renounced the shameful things that one hides; we refuse to practise cunning or to falsify God's word; but by the open statement of the truth we commend ourselves to the conscience of everyone in the sight of God. And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. 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.

Gospel - Matthew 9.9-13

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, 'Follow me.' And he got up and followed him.

And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax-collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, 'Why does your teacher eat with tax-collectors and sinners?' But when he heard this, he said, 'Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.'

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

This Sunday we observe the Feast of the Saint Matthew. St. Matthew recorded Jesus' words that said, "No one can serve two masters. Either you will hate one and love the other, or you will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

Perhaps those words were a tad more significant to Matthew than most. Money was certainly in his wheelhouse. Counting coin and keeping accounts were his daily vocation. Tax-collectors know a thing or two about money and in Matthew's day tax-collectors knew a thing or two about making money. The tax-men back then were notorious for taking more than was owed and lining their pockets with the balance. However, there was little chance for the average-joe to prove Matthew or any other had taken advantage of him. The only recourse one really had was to despise them.

Now whether or not Matthew was an honest tax-man before he encountered our Lord is unknown to us. However, there's no doubt he was despised and there's certainly no doubt he kept company with some crooks. One thing is certain about Matthew, it wasn't likely that he was filthy rich, but neither was he poor. He certainly was above average and living a fairly comfortable life.

"Follow me." That's all it took for Matthew to leave it all behind. At least that's how Matthew recounts it. He was in his booth one moment and the next he's walking away from his secure living and steady (but possibly dishonest) income. At least in that moment that's all it took. The Lord Jesus spoke His Word and His Word affected what it commanded. "Follow me!" Matthew left one master, to follow another. How Christ's words must have struck his ears when he heard them later, "You cannot serve both God and mammon." Then he was beginning to understand what happened on that fateful day when he left his booth to follow the Christ.

Matthew is remembered as Saint, Apostle, Evangelist, and Martyr. There are countless things we can remember about him and we are indebted to him for preserving the Gospel of Jesus Christ. However, instead of reading off a "greatest hits" list of Matthew's good works I'd like us to remain with Matthew at the moment of his tax-booth conversion. For it's this single moment that changed Matthew's life forever. Did he know then that it was the difference between life and death?

There are plenty of well-off people who go to bed with hardly an anxiety or care. Secure and comfortable with all that they need, it's not as though they need to worry about anything, at least when it comes to their bodily needs. They're like the man of Jesus' parable who had earned enough to retire and told himself, "Soul, you have plenty laid up for many years. Eat, drink, and be merry." Content and certain nothing bad will happen to him he thinks now his soul can rest.

That is the great deception of riches. We often have this dumb tendency to believe that if anything were to take us away from faith in Christ then it's going to be the bad things that

happen to us that will do it. We stupidly forget that good things can be a threat too. Certainly, suffering can draw us away from God, but often that is not the case. In my time of ministry, I have seen more people draw closer to God because of adversity than I have seen people reach out to Him because they had a windfall of money or received a job promotion. Jesus frequently warns that when things are going well, we must be all the more watchful for complacency and hidden sin. Secure in things our souls become uncertain we need God and before we even know it we're not praying anymore, not worshipping, and not concerned with the things of God's kingdom. We know this is true. We know that mammon cannot ultimately satisfy our deepest need. Even the unbelieving world says money can't buy happiness. However, our sin still makes us weak to behave differently. We worry about many things that Jesus means by the word "mammon." Things like money, our careers, our job prospects, our retirement, our inheritance, or our legacy we leave our children, etc.

It is wise to remember what God said to the rich fool in Jesus' parable. "Fool, tonight your soul is required of you. Who will have the things you have prepared?" Serving money over God can only lead to one place, the grave. So The world seeks after wealth and all that mammon offers

> Yet is never content though gold should fill its coffers.
> I have a higher good, content with it I'll be:
> My Jesus is my wealth, what is the world to me!

Matthew sat in his booth with stacks of ill-gained coin and moneybags hidden under the table. However, he was soon to become the richest a person can ever become. The Saviour spoke and said, "Follow me." The path would first lead to his home where he would dine with his motley gang of tax-collectors with the man who would die for their sins. The Pharisees did what everyone did to tax-collectors, they despised them. Yet, when he heard it Jesus absolves the company he's keeping. He says, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go learn what this means, "I desire mercy, and not sacrifice." For I came not to call the righteous, but sinners."

Matthew would follow Jesus to learn what that mercy looked like. The Lord would die for his sins and yours. He would become poor to enrich us. He would enter the grave so we can live. He would earn wealth that we can never find on earth, an inheritance in God that leads to eternal life.

Money comes and goes. Matthew's example teaches us this truth. Money is a poor master. It demands much to earn and keep it and returns little in the end. "Master Mammon" doesn't care for your well-being in the end, he cannot save you when you have nothing, and he certainly cannot overcome sin and death. However, when the Lord is your wealth then you can use money for good purposes when you have it, but you can also leave it behind should the Lord will you to follow him elsewhere. Jesus is a master who always leads us for our good. He has delivered us from sin and death and the return is nothing short of eternal life.