

BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

7th December 2025

Second Sunday of Advent

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—Evensong conference call
7th Dec	8am St Gregory's #	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Evensong—
	9.15am St Gregory's #F	11am St John's, Leeming #	
14th Dec	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass -	No Evensong at Burrill Church
20th Dec	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



Advent Appeal

Mary's Meals provides life-changing school meals to children living in some of the world's poorest communities. For our Benefice advent appeal we will be collecting coins and notes from any country, as well as old UK currency no longer in circulation. This can be used to fund the work of Mary's Meals, and is an easy and meaningful way to recycle unused money while supporting their mission. There will be leaflets at the back of each church, and donations can be given to any of the church wardens, or brought to the office.

ADVENT and CHRISTMAS SERVICES

Sun 7th 2pm

Carol Choices & Christingle *Thornton Watlass*

Fri 12 5pm

Bedale Primary School Christingle

Sat 13 4pm

Masons Carol Service in St Gregory's

Sun 14 4pm

Thornton Watlass Carol Service

Coffee Morning St John's Church Leeming
Thursday 11th December - 10:00 - 12:00



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, Mal Rowland, Michelle Hammond, Terry and Marion, Caleb, Bailey Cuthbert, Brenda, Adrian, Pam and Mike Ryder, Ann and Steve Madsen, and Claire Bell.

RIP

Renee Stag, Alistair Bain, Bob Turnbull, Jean Marshall, and Margaret Graham.
May they rest in peace and rise in glory

ADVENT WREATH

Second Sunday of Advent (Focus: Isaiah 40:1–11)

Reader 1: O God, we light the second candle of Advent.
(The second candle is lit.)

Reader 2: We seek your comfort. Both mighty and tender, you come.
Prepare our hearts to be transformed by you.

Reader 1: Isaiah announced God's coming to a people exiled in a broken & parched wilderness. He declared that God's redemption would make a highway in the desert and change the rough places into plain. God would come as a shepherd—feeding, leading, and cradling the weary flock. This Advent, we seek such a God.

**Saving God, look upon your world and heal your land and your people.
Prepare us to be changed.
This Advent, teach us to be tender and just, as you are. Amen.**

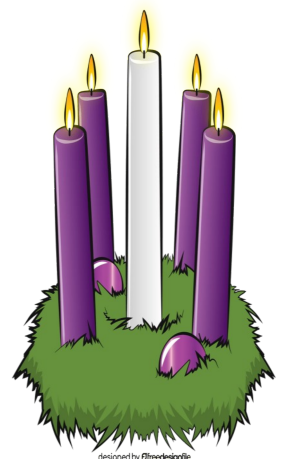
Sing - Tune - Love Divine

Shine on us, O God of justice;
Guide our path through gloom of night;
Bear within us Wisdom's glory;
Come to us, O Christ the Light.

Collect

O Lord, raise up, we pray, your power and come among us,
and with great might succour us; that whereas,
through our sins and wickedness we are grievously hindered
in running the race that is set before us, your bountiful grace and mercy
may speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
to whom with you and the Holy Spirit, be honour and glory, now and for ever.

Amen



First reading - Isaiah 11.1–10

A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord. His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

Second Reading - Romans 15.4–13

For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, so that by steadfastness and by the encouragement of the scriptures we might have hope. May the God of steadfastness and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, in accordance with Christ Jesus, so that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God. For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the circumcised on behalf of the truth of God in order that he might confirm the promises given to the patriarchs, and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written, 'Therefore I will confess you among the Gentiles, and sing praises to your name'; and again he says, 'Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people'; and again, 'Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples praise him'; and again Isaiah says, 'The root of Jesse shall come, the one who rises to rule the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles shall hope.' May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Gospel Reading - Matthew 3.1–12

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.' This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, 'The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

"Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." '

Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, ‘You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, “We have Abraham as our ancestor”; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the axe is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

‘I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing-floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.’

Commentary

It’s time for our annual Advent trip to the banks of the Jordan River and to come to terms with whether we are ready—prepared—to repent and receive the kingdom of heaven. We can do this when we keep Jesus, front and centre. John the Baptist did so as prophesied by Isaiah: a voice crying out in the wilderness, both as a prayer and a call to action.

“Kingdom” is a large scale, social, word. Even though John is speaking to individuals about the need to change their lives, he is not speaking to them as individuals, but as a community—we might even say as the community that has been set apart by God for God’s purposes in the world. In other words, individuals need to change but the responsibility for transformation does not end at the edge of one’s own heart. Keeping Christ focussed is a joint effort beginning with us.

John is praying and equipping the people for is repentance. Think in Ezra-Nehemiah in the Old Testament, when the people encounter the law again for the first time in a long time. They weep and cry out for grace; they are ready to be different because of what they encounter. And here on the banks of the Jordan River, John the Baptist invites the people of God to the same sort of turn in purpose and way of living. He preaches the law of God, God’s picture of how to live for the good of all, and he offers them an experience to capture the essence of their renewal.

The Spirit of God was using John’s to make things different. As Jesus will later do as well, John’s spiritual movement is outside the boundaries of the establishment and has gained enough traction that it’s caught the attention of the official leadership.

Not only do these leaders go out to the river to see what’s going on for themselves, they appear to come looking to gain some credibility by participating in the events. John sees them coming and the fact that they are not there to prepare themselves and the people of God: “You brood of vipers!” John’s words help us remember that though the Kingdom is a social idea and not exclusive to individuals, they cannot count on simply belonging to the community by birthright: they must live the message (the law) and therefore bear good fruit.

Preparation means knowing what is at stake and getting clarity about what it is that is required of you. Of course, we know that with God, there will always be more: a growing life with God is built on continuously asking “What’s next, God?” But as we sit under the shouts of John the Baptist this Advent, we remember not only that Jesus came in the flesh two-thousand-some-odd years ago, but he will come again. So, remember to see what Jesus would do in your words and actions this week, pure preparation.