

BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

11th January 2026

The Baptism of Christ/First Sunday of Epiphany

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

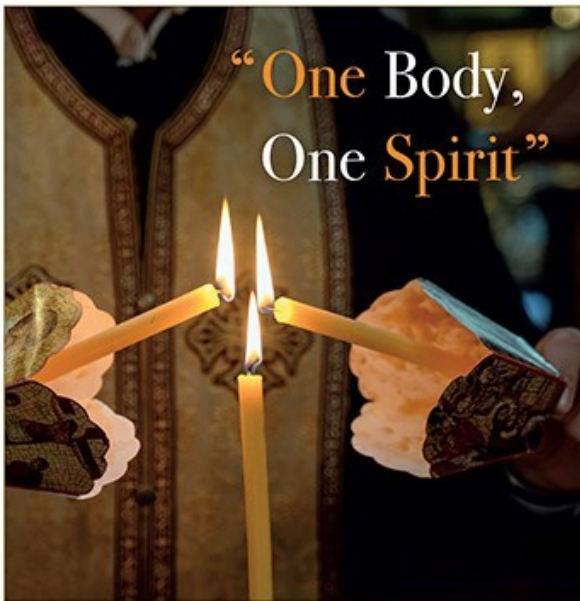
	<i>Morning Services - St Gregory's, Bedale</i>	<i>Morning Services - St Mary's, St John's and Burrill</i>	<i>16:00—Evensong conference call</i>
11th Jan	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Burrill
18th Jan	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass # 11am St John's, Leeming #	Thornton Watlass
25th Jan	9:15am St Gregory's #F	9am Burrill 10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Leeming

Communion F Facebook

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

NOTICES

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY 2026



Un Corff, Un Ysbryd
Aon Cholainn, Aon Spiorad
Aon Chorp, Aon Spiorad

18-25 JANUARY 2026



www.ctbi.org.uk/weekofprayer

Prayer for Christian Unity Service

Burrill Mission Church

on 18th January 2026 at 6:30pm

Everyone is welcome.

Walk for Christian Unity

There will be a walk on Saturday 24th January, starting at 12:30pm from the churches in Bedale, Thornton Watlass, and Leeming, walking to Ss Mary and Joseph in Aiskew for a 2pm service in the church. Please join us, it was a great time last year.

PRAYERS

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, Ann Madsen, and Claire Bell.

RIP

Bill Fox

May they rest in peace and rise in glory

Praying for Edwin in Bolivia

Lord God, we pray for Edwin to know your goodness and provision. We pray that he would place his identity in you. We ask that in the pressures of life, he would know you are his rock on which he can stand. We pray that through the challenges of school life, exams, and future decisions, you would lead him, guide him and bring him comfort. In Jesus' name, Amen

READINGS

Collect

Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant to us, who are born again by water and the Spirit, that we may be faithful to our calling as your adopted children; 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 - Isaiah 42.1-9

Here is my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights; I have put my spirit upon him; he will bring forth justice to the nations.

He will not cry or lift up his voice, or make it heard in the street; a bruised reed he will not break, and a dimly burning wick he will not quench; he will faithfully bring forth justice. He will not grow faint or be crushed until he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it:

I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness.

I am the Lord, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols.

See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

Second Reading - Acts 10.34–43

Then Peter began to speak to them: 'I truly understand that God shows no partiality, but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.'

Gospel Reading - Matthew 3.13–end

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, 'I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?' But Jesus answered him, 'Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness.' Then he consented. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.'

Gospel Reading—Matthew 3.13-end

Narrator: Jesus arrived from Galilee and came to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. But John tried to make him change his mind:

John: I ought to be baptized by you, and yet you have come to me!

Narrator: But Jesus answered him:

Jesus: Let it be so for now. For in this way we shall do all that God requires.

Narrator: So John agreed. (PAUSE)

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he came up out of the water. Then heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and alighting on him.

Then a voice said from heaven:

Voice: This is my own dear Son, with whom I am pleased.

Post Communion Prayer

Lord of all time and eternity, you opened the heavens and revealed yourself as Father in the baptism of Jesus your beloved Son: by the power of your Spirit complete the heavenly work of our rebirth through the waters of the new creation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMENTARY

Today is the first Sunday in the season of Epiphany. Epiphany means “manifestation” or “showing forth.” It is the season where we look at the stories of Jesus’ life to gain an unveiling of the mysteries once concealed. Different stories of Jesus are typically explored during this season as they help us see God’s revelation. The story we will explore for today is Jesus’ baptism. As we look at this story we are given an “epiphany” of who God is for us.

The passage begins with Jesus coming to John the Baptist to be baptized. This creates a challenge for John’s way of thinking and at first, he resists Jesus. We see this response played out in our lives and the world at large as Jesus comes to us. The gospel always elicits a response. God is the one who takes the initiative in coming to us and we are left with either resisting or accepting him. In John’s case, as we can often relate, he first resisted and then “consented.”

We can see a turn in how Jesus will do ministry compared to the way John the Baptist had been doing ministry. This tells us something about God’s heart. God is a sending God who comes to his people where they are. He doesn’t wait till we “find him.” He finds us in our wilderness. When we were lost and walking in darkness, that didn’t keep the Father from finding us and coming to us. This story gives us a glimpse into the Father’s heart. He loves us and moves towards us to make himself known.

We also see in John’s response an effort to “prevent” Jesus from being baptised by him. John knows he is not worthy to baptise Jesus. Notice that Jesus doesn’t throw up his hands and walk away. He speaks to John in such a way as to change his response of resistance to a response where he “consented.” So even our response to God’s coming to us is God’s work of grace. He doesn’t let our unworthy responses “prevent” us from being encountered by God. God works in Jesus to sanctify our response, turning our rejections towards receptions of his work in our life. This story begins by revealing to us God’s grace in coming to us and bringing us to himself.

As Jesus comes up “out of the water” we begin to see what this baptised life looks like. Heaven is opened, the Spirit descends and we hear the Father speak. We get a fully Trinitarian involvement in Jesus’ baptism. We have “a voice from heaven” speak. This is the Father’s voice speaking to his Son. This is the voice that spoke creation into existence and the voice we were created to hear. We may wonder what would God most want to say to us if he spoke to us. What words would he say? In this story, we have those words written down for us. Since Jesus is baptised for our sakes, we can hear the Father’s voice speaking not only to his Son, but also to us as adopted children. So, what is it the Father is saying to you today?

Seeing that this is the Creator, our creator, and God, we would do well to memorise and meditate on these words that he is saying to us in Jesus Christ. Can we reflect on and with this Gospel reading?