

BEDALE AND BEYOND

*Linking Church and Community in
Bedale, Burrill, Leeming,
and Thornton Watlass*



Lent

Feb & Mar 2026

BENEFICE DIARY

February

1st Epiphany 4	8:00	Bedale - Holy Communion BCP
	9:15	Bedale - Parish Communion
	10:45	Thornton Watlass - Parish Communion
	11:00	Leeming - Parish Communion
	16:00	Bedale - Evensong
2nd Monday	18.30	Benefice PCC in St Gregory's
5th Thursday	10:30	Bedale - Holy Communion BCP
8th Plough Sunday	9:15	Bedale - Parish Communion
	10:45	Thornton Watlass - Parish Communion
	16:00	Burrill - Evensong
12th Thursday	10:30	Bedale - Holy Communion BCP
15th Sunday Before Lent	9:15	Bedale - Parish Communion
	10:45	Thornton Watlass - Parish Communion
	11:00	Leeming - Parish Communion
	16:00	Thornton Watlass - Evensong
19th Thursday	10:30	Bedale - Holy Communion BCP
22nd Lent 1	9:15	Bedale - Parish Communion
	10:45	Thornton Watlass - Parish Communion
	16:00	Leeming - Evensong
26th Thursday	10:30	Bedale - Holy Communion BCP

MARCH

1st Lent 2	8:00	Bedale - Holy Communion BCP
	9:15	Bedale - Parish Communion
	10:45	Thornton Watlass - Parish Communion
	11:00	Leeming - Parish Communion
	16:00	Bedale - Evensong
5th Thursday	10:30	Bedale Holy Communion BCP
8th Lent 3	9:15	Bedale Parish Communion
	10:45	Thornton Watlass Parish Communion
	16:00	Burrill Evensong
12th Thursday	10:30	Bedale Holy Communion BCP

15th Lent 4/ Mothering Sunday	9:15 10:45 11:00 16:00	Bedale - Parish Communion Thornton Watlass - Parish Communion Leeming - Parish Communion Thornton Watlass - Evensong
17th Tuesday 19th Thursday	18.30 10:30	Benefice PCC in St Gregory's Bedale - Holy Communion BCP
22nd Lent 5	9:15 10:45 16:00	Bedale - Parish Communion Thornton Watlass - Parish Communion Leeming - Evensong
26th Thursday 27th Friday	10:30 10.30	Bedale - Holy Communion BCP St Gregory's Spring Clean <i>(Many hands make light work!!)</i>
29th Palm Sunday	10.30	Benefice Service at Thornton Watlass No Evensong

Tuesday Togetherness meet for coffee, cake & lunch
each Tuesday in Chantry Hall—all welcome.

The Rector Write

The English word Lent is a shortened form of the Old English word 'lencten', meaning "spring season". This perhaps may give us an insight into the meaning and practices of Lent.

Beginning with the very season of spring has a wealth of images as the lengthening days remind us of the themes of renewal and rebirth. This significant season of renewal, new growth and greening can be overlayed as we think of Lent. It need not be a time of doom and gloom and holding back in life, nor our faith. Remember, it is also the preparation for Easter that festival of resurrection, the truest renewal in Jesus.

So, how about making Lent even a modicum of 'spring renewal' for you? This is why I try and encourage people to actual take on something during this time before Easter as a challenge to grow, rather than a time to withdraw or abstain. To prove a point, I had a friend who



gave up cabbage during Lent. Not particularly significant sacrifice? I have never felt chocolate or other luxury is far behind cabbage in its efficacy.

The Ash Wednesday service of 'Ashing' encourages us to a Holy Lent by "self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy word". Each of these activities are encouragement to positivity, of actively seeking God, as we say in our regular confession prayer on a Sunday, "in thought and word and deed."

Fasting on one hand has a bad press and yet is also a modern rediscovered form of self-discipline. Some Christians still practice fasting during Lent, and is where abstaining from certain foods or meals is undertaken (chocolate or cabbage perhaps.) Sensible norms in Catholic typically allow one full meal and two smaller meals that do not equal a full meal on fasting days. Others promote limited calorie intake on selected days. Still others would only look to festival or solemn days to fast, while Fridays during Lent are in some quarters seen as days of abstinence from meat.

Lent should be seen as time for increased prayer and reflection. We are encouraged to deepen their relationship with God through personal prayer, reading Scripture, and participating in communal worship. There is a short order of prayer, along with resources in this magazine and available from the back of church. Set a time, morning, noon, evening or night. Stop, take notice of the moment and use the prayer and words supplied. Also we have Lenten reflection groups on a Monday at Bedale and District Methodist Church and in Chantry Hall on Tuesdays at 2pm. We will be looking at the senses, the senses Jesus experienced and relating them to our own spirituality. (See article in this Bedale and Beyond)

Almsgiving, or charitable giving, both of time and money, is another essential aspect of Lent. This practice emphasises sharing one's resources with those in need, reflecting the Christian call to charity and justice. Speaking on the phone with someone, smiling at a neighbour or passerby, pay it forward, drop in on someone; one of this random acts of kindness is worth more than money; although a donation to charity may be within your ability.

Self examination is perhaps the first part of this 'spring renewal'. Recall the sheep and the goats parable of Jesus. And so dwell on when you have done one of the Christian imperatives, for we are asked to do it for Jesus. Lent should serve as a period of spiritual renewal and preparation for Easter, the celebration of Christ's resurrection. It is a time for Christians to reflect on their lives, seek forgiveness, and commit to following Christ more closely. The practices of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving are intended to foster a spirit of humility and self-discipline, helping believers to grow in faith and compassion.

Simon

'May the Lord Bless You and Keep You' Explained

This prayerful blessing is packed with meaning for worshipers and divides into six parts:

May the Lord Bless You...

Here, the blessing summarizes the covenant between God & His people. We are truly blessed only in our relationship with God with Him as Father.

...and Keep You

God's protection keeps us in covenant relationship with him. As the Lord God kept Israel, Jesus Christ is our Shepherd who will keep us from getting lost.

The Lord Make His Face Shine Upon You...

God's face represents His presence. His face shining upon us speaks of His smile and the pleasure He takes in His people.

...and Be Gracious to You

The result of God's pleasure is His grace toward us. We don't deserve His grace and mercy, but we receive it because of His love and faithfulness.

The Lord Turn His Face Towards You...

God is a personal Father who pays attention to His children as individuals. We are His chosen ones.

...and Give You Peace. Amen.

This conclusion affirms that covenants are formed to secure peace through a right relationship. Peace represents well-being and wholeness. When God gives His peace, it is complete and eternal.

FEB & MAR '26 PRAYER DIARY

Intercessions for the streets, roads and lanes within the Benefice and specific themes for daily prayer during the months covered by this magazine.



1	Sergeant Bank	Charlcot	Tom Hall Court	Bedale
2	Snape Road	T/Watlass	Tornado Close	Bedale
3	South End	Bedale	Tutin Road	Leeming Bar
4	South End Avenue	Bedale	Vasey Close	Bedale
5	South End Terrace	Bedale	Victoria Terrace	Bedale
6	Sparrow Way	Aiskew	Water Lane	Leeming
7	Spruce Gill Avenue	Aiskew	Watlass Lane	T/Watlass
8	Spruce Gill Drive	Aiskew	Watlass Moor Cottages	Bedale
9	St John's Crescent	Leeming	Watlass Moor Lane	T/Watlass
10	St. John's Road	Leeming	Wensleydale Close	Bedale
11	Stapleton Close	Bedale	Westfield Lane	Exelby
12	Stubbing Nook Lane	Burrill	Willow Close	RAF Leeming
13	Sussex Close	Bedale	Willow Drive	Aiskew
14	Sussex Street	Bedale	Willow Gardens	Leeming Bar
15	Sussex Terrace	Bedale	Woodland Drive	RAF Leeming
16	Swaaledale Drive	Bedale	Wren Close	Aiskew
17	Sycamore Avenue	Aiskew	Wycar	Bedale
18	Sycamore Drive	Bedale	Wycar Terrace	Bedale
19	Sycamore Lane	Leeming	Aiskew Bank	Aiskew
20	The Bridge	Bedale	Albert Row	Bedale
21	The Coppice	RAF Leeming	Alder Close	RAF Leeming
22	The Court	Bedale	Alexandra Court	Bedale
23	The Crescent	Aiskew	Alexandra Court	Bedale
24	The Grange	Leeming	Anvil Gardens	Leeming Bar
25	The Haven	Bedale	Arkengarthdale Way	Bedale
26	The Paddock	Aiskew	Ascough Wynd	Aiskew
27	The Spinney	RAF Leeming	Ash Tree Close	Bedale
28	The Square	RAF Leeming	Ash Tree Road	Bedale
29	The Wynd	Bedale	Ash Tree Walk	Bedale
30	Thirn Village	T/Watlass	Back Lane	Aiskew
31	Tofts Lane	Exelby	Badger Hill Drive	Aiskew

1	For the Archdeacons in the Diocese.
2	For the sides-persons, welcomers and bell ringers.
3	For new members to come into our church family and them to be welcomed.
4	For Simon, Lee, and their families.
5	For the musicians and choirs who help to lead us in our worship.
6	For all involved in the administrative support of the Benefice.
7	For all who minister & attend the Methodist, Catholic, & Pentecostal Churches in our Benefice
8	For doctors, home helpers, the Macmillan nurses, hospices & Marie Curie nurses.
9	For the retired clergy and their support in the ministry within the benefice.
10	For all involved in home visiting and who administer home communion.
11	For our ministry with children & young people both in school and in outside activities.
12	For Michelle and her work with the families in the Benefice.
13	For those who provide and maintain our utility services.
14	For all who help provide refreshments after services, and at other functions.
15	For all who suffer from addiction in its many and varied forms.
16	For all who use the Chantry Hall, both the church and for private functions.
17	For our local prayer and study groups, the leaders and those who attend them.
18	For residents and staff of the residential and care Homes in the benefice.
19	For the mission and ministry of our churches in their respective parishes
20	For people suffering from mental health issues, and those who care for them.
21	For the families who come for baptism, and those involved in this ministry.
22	For all who volunteer help in the many and varied ways in the local community.
23	For the staff and children in the pre-school groups.
24	That we will be a praying benefice and strengthened through that prayer.
25	For the health centres, and those involved in private practice
26	For all who help provide the Meals on Wheels service from Chantry Hall.
27	For the uniformed organisations in all our churches.
28	For Local Government, Town & Parish Councils, Forums, & the local Councillors.
29	For those whom you find it difficult to pray for.
30	For the clergy and volunteers at Ripon Cathedral.
31	For the visitors to our churches, and for those leaving prayer requests.

**Lord Jesus, during these 40 days, I desire to grow closer to You.
 Help me to spend more time in prayer, silence, and reflection.
 Let my heart be open to Your voice, guiding me in Your ways.
 Amen.**

Lent Course 2026

Christ has no body now but yours



The Churches Together in Bedale invite you to reflect on two key prayers of the tradition “Christ has no body but yours” - attributed to Teresa of Avila; and God be in my head from the Sarum Primer. These two prayers build on the central Christian theme of the Church - us - as the Body of Christ. As we reflected, we were aware that through the body - and the imagery of God’s body we could explore something of the characteristics of God and of the invitation to follow and work with God each day.

Christianity is an incarnate faith, we bless and serve through our bodies we live our faith through our bodies. We follow Christ, often without big gestures, but through small every day moments of grace. In our bodies we experience our frailties and infirmities, and we often struggle to ‘love’ our bodies, as we live in a culture which emphasises certain ‘good’ bodies or ‘beauty’. However, it is through our bodies that we show love, that we build community, that we experience changing health and aging, and it is our bodies and their development that teach us dependency both in childhood and in old age.

Together, as the church, we are formed into the Body of Christ - each of us using the bodies we have been given, which are then transformed into God’s Body together. Although clearly God does not have a body in a literal sense, we follow a God who so values and loves the human body that God came to us as a human. The imagery of being human relies on imagery of God’s body and in Scripture we can discover how God in Jesus used his body.

Through Lent the discussion will help you to take these prayers to heart and perhaps to hear where your next steps in discipleship may be. We also hope that through it you may come to love and value this amazing resource that God has given you - with all its ‘imperfections’ and grow in understanding about how God is calling you to serve with this body .

Mondays at Bedale and District Methodist Church 7pm
Tuesdays in Chantry Hall on at 2pm.

LIFE OF A CURATE

Advent felt especially meaningful this year as I experienced it for the first time as clergy. It was a busy blessing — full of services, conversations, and those small, holy moments that remind me why I'm so grateful to be serving here. In the midst of it all, I had a check in with Bishop Anna, who wanted to see how my family and I are settling in and how curacy is unfolding. It was encouraging to pause, reflect, and feel supported as we continue finding our rhythm in this new season.

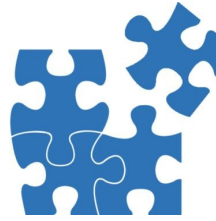
Alongside parish life, we've enjoyed some really precious family time. One highlight was visiting Knaresborough Exotic Rescue to deliver the donation raised at our Dessert Island Discs event. They were incredibly grateful, and it was wonderful to see how our community's generosity makes a real difference. Moments like that remind me how connected we all are — and how small acts of kindness ripple outward.

I've also been preparing for Candlemas with the Goth Ministry team, which I've had the joy of being part of for three of its four years. Usually our services take place only at Whitby Goth Weekend, but this year brought something new: our first ever service in Bradford, hosted at St James's Church. We expected perhaps ten people... and instead ended up packing the place out for a BCP communion with a twist. It was a huge success and a real encouragement to see how this ministry continues to grow and surprise us.

And finally, Christmas brought a new level of joyful noise to our home. Our children were delighted to unwrap a set of drums, a steel pan, and an accordion — because clearly things weren't loud enough already. Life is full, musical, and occasionally ear splitting, but we wouldn't have it any other way.



From the Registers



Baptisms

St Gregory's, Bedale
5th Oct 2025 Joseph James Robinson
8th Nov 2025 Sienna-Mai Silcox
8th Nov 2025 Lyla-Hollie Silcox
8th Nov 2025 Rosie-Esmai Silcox
8th Nov 2025 Poppie-Lyra Silcox
8th Nov 2025 Daisy-Mai Silcox
22nd Nov 2025 Ellie Kate Liddell
22nd Nov 2025 Ruby Tuesday Liddell
22nd Nov 2025 Phoebe Florence Liddell
22nd Nov 2025 Daisy Martha Liddell
6th Dec 2025 Jacob Stanley Graham Allamby

St Mary's, Thornton Watlass

23rd Nov 2025 Charlie Thomas Lonie

Funerals

St Gregory's, Bedale

16-Aug-25 John Murray
1-Sep-25 Margaret Richardson
12-Sep-25 John Megson
11-Sep-25 Brian Hall
05-Oct-25 Anne Hall
25-Sep-25 Avril Gray
09-Oct-25 Jean Hall
11-Oct-25 Joan Gilfillan
02-Nov-25 Alexander Nicholson
08-Nov-25 James Milligan
20-Sep-25 Ken Springate
25-Nov-25 Renee Stagg
22-Nov-25 Alistair Bain
21-Nov-25 Jean Marshall

25-Nov-25 Margaret Graeme
28-Nov-25 Robert Turnbull
9-Dec-25 Stephen Madsen

St John's, Leeming

13-Aug-25 Elizabeth Pratt

Prayers During Lent

+indicates that you may make the sign of the cross.

+In the name of the Father,
and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Opening Sentences

One thing I have asked of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life; to behold the beauty of the Lord and to seek Him in His temple.

Who is it that you seek?

We seek the Lord our God.

Do you seek Him with all your heart?

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Do you seek Him with all your soul?

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Do you seek Him with all your mind?

Amen. Lord, have mercy.

Do you seek Him with all your strength?

Amen. Christ, have mercy.

Declaration of Faith

To whom shall we go?

You have the words of eternal life,
and we have believed and have come to know
that You are the Holy One of God.

Praise to You, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory.

Today's Scripture Readings

Use one or all of the reading for the day on the list following

Meditation

Remain quiet with yourself.

Prayers for Others

In the morning, or at noon-tide or in the evening, O Lord,
You hear my voice, I lay my requests before you
and wait in expectation.

Pray for the church and the world, for situations and people

Prayer for the Church Community

O God, who alone brings life and growth to your church
Send your Holy Spirit to give vision to our planning,
Wisdom to our actions and power to our witness.
Help our church to grow in numbers, commitment to you,
And service to our community, through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen

Canticle

Christ, as a light illumine and guide me.
Christ, as a shield overshadow me.
Christ under me; Christ over me;
Christ beside me on my left and my right.
This day be within and without me,
lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.
Be in the heart of each to whom I speak;
in the mouth of each who speaks unto me.
This day be within and without me,
lowly and meek, yet all-powerful.
Christ as a light; Christ as a shield;
Christ beside me on my left and my right.

Blessing

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with me,
wherever He may send me.
May He guide me through the wilderness,
protect me through the storm.
May He bring me home rejoicing
at the wonders He has shown me.
May He bring me home rejoicing.

+ In the name of the Father,
and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen

Readings During Lent

Ash Wed, Feb 18, 2026

Thu Feb 19, 2026: Psalm 51; Jonah 3:1-10; Romans 1:1-7

Fri Feb 20, 2026: Psalm 51; Jonah 4:1-11; Romans 1:8-17

Sat Feb 21, 2026: Psalm 51; Isaiah 58:1-12; Matthew 18:1-7

First Sunday in Lent, Feb 22, 2026

Mon Feb 23, 2026: Psalm 32; 1 Kings 19:1-8; Hebrews 2:10-18

Tues Feb 24, 2026: Psalm 32; Genesis 4:1-16; Hebrews 4:14-5:10

Wed Feb 25, 2026: Psalm 32; Exodus 34:1-9, 27-28; Matt 18:10-14

Thu Feb 26, 2026: Psalm 121; Isaiah 51:1-3; 2 Timothy 1:3-7

Fri Feb 27, 2026: Psalm 121; Micah 7:18-20; Romans 3:21-31

Sat Feb 28, 2026: Psalm 121; Isaiah 51:4-8; Luke 7:1-10

Second Sunday in Lent, Mar 1, 2026

Mon Mar 2, 2026: Psalm 128; Numbers 21:4-9; Hebrews 3:1-6

Tues Mar 3, 2026: Psalm 128; Isaiah 65:17-25; Romans 4:6-13

Wed Mar 4, 2026: Psalm 128; Ezekiel 36:22-32; John 7:53-8:11

Thu Mar 5, 2026: Psalm 95; Exodus 16:1-8; Colossians 1:15-23

Fri Mar 6, 2026: Psalm 95; Exodus 16:9-21; Ephesians 2:11-22

Sat Mar 7, 2026: Psalm 95; Exodus 16:27-35; John 4:1-6

Third Sunday in Lent, Mar 8, 2026

Mon Mar 9, 2026: Psalm 81; Genesis 24:1-27; 2 John 1-13

Tues Mar 10, 2026: Psalm 81; Genesis 29:1-14; 1 Cor 10:1-4

Wed Mar 11, 2026: Psalm 81; Jeremiah 2:4-13; John 7:14-31, 37-39

Thu Mar 12, 2026: Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 15:10-21; Ephesians 4:25-32

Fri Mar 13, 2026: Psalm 40:5-10; Isaiah 7:10-14; Luke 1:26-38

Sat Mar 14, 2026: Psalm 23; 1 Samuel 15:22-31; Ephesians 5:1-9

Fourth Sunday in Lent, Mar 15, 2026

Mon Mar 16, 2026: Psalm 146; Isaiah 59:9-19; Acts 9:1-20

Tues Mar 17, 2026: Psalm 146; Isaiah 42:14-21; Colossians 1:9-14

Wed Mar 18, 2026: Psalm 146; Isaiah 60:17-22; Matthew 9:27-34

Thu Mar 19, 2026: Psalm 130; Ezekiel 1:1-3; 2:8-3:3; Rev 10:1-11

Fri Mar 20, 2026: Psalm 130; Ezekiel 33:10-16; Revelation 11:15-19

Sat Mar 21, 2026: Psalm 130; Ezekiel 36:8-15; Luke 24:44-53

Fifth Sunday in Lent, Mar 22, 2026

Mon Mar 23, 2026: Psalm 143; 1 Kings 17:17-24; Acts 20:7-12

Tues Mar 24, 2026: Psalm 143; 2 Kings 4:18-37; Ephesians 2:1-10

Wed Mar 25, 2026: Psalm 143; Jeremiah 32:1-9, 36-41; Mat 22:23-33

Thu Mar 26, 2026: Psalm 31:9-16; 1 Samuel 16:11-13; Phil 1:1-11

Fri Mar 27, 2026: Psalm 31:9-16; Job 13:13-19; Philippians 1:21-30

Sat Mar 28, 2026: Psalm 31:9-16; Lam 3:55-66; Mark 10:32-34

Tuesday Togetherness and Beyond

Christmas and Advent went very well, and the events were gratefully received

We had a fantastic concert by the Thornton Watlass Choral Group with mulled wine and mince pies, while the Christmas lunch was a big success, despite the electric going off. Simon also presided a Eucharist one Tuesday and we are grateful to Christine Carruthers for her carol sing-a-long.

Our Burns lunch took place on Tuesday the 27th of January, and plans are underway for the annual Yorkshire Day bus trip. We are asking for suggestions for this year's outing.

The Yorkshire Decibels have also asked if they can come and give a Springtime Concert, the date is to be arranged. Lent Lunches will begin in February, and invited charities will be supported through these.

Despite numerous technical issues, I am settling into the role of Foundation Governor at Thornton Watlass School. *Michelle*

BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION, WEDDINGS & MEMORIALS

BAPTISMS Anyone who is wanting a child christened please contact the parish office or via admin@bedale.church. Remember, that baptisms can happen any day of the week or evening as well as Saturday or Sunday.

CONFIRMATIONS Contact the parish office admin@bedale.church.

WEDDINGS Weddings are taking place throughout the benefice. The churches are usually available during the week and most weekends. Basic legal primaries need a month's notice although there are other means of marrying with less notice.

Contact the Rector directly or via the office admin@bedale.church

FUNERALS & MEMORIALS Funerals are usually organised though an undertaker or by contacting the Rector directly. Memorial services can be organised through the parish office admin@bedale.church

Let me be the kind who weeps

I don't want to be a Christian
who forgets how to feel—
who hides behind answers,
quotes verses like shields,
and silences sorrow with a song.

I don't want a faith
of romanticised abstraction,
where resurrection is polished
and the cross is theory.
Give me something real—
flesh and blood, grief and grace.

I want to weep with eyes wide open.

Tears that speak truth.
Tears that rise
from the ground of compassion,
from the jagged knowledge
that the world is not
as it was meant to be.

I have seen it—
the wounded souls, the haunted eyes,
the bruises beneath the surface.
I have felt the weight of injustice
that crushes and isolates,
while the world looks away.

These are not tears of despair—
but of resistance, of aching love,
of holding the pain
when no one else will.

I want a hope that isn't saccharine.
Not hopium.
Not denial in disguise.

But a defiant,
dirt-under-the-fingernails
kind of hope—
the kind that walks through the valley,
sits in the ashes, and still whispers,
“Even here... God.”

I want a gospel
that holds the wound.
A Christ who draws close,
a Spirit who groans,
a God who gathers
every tear in a bottle,
holds every sorrow
like a fragile flame,
and knows what it is to break.

I want to believe—
not cheaply,
not loudly—
but with trembling trust,
that one day,
every tear
will be wiped away.

Not erased, but remembered,
redeemed, and transfigured.

Until then,
let me be the kind who weeps.

Who walks in holy realism.
Who holds vigil
in the shadow of the cross
and waits,
with aching hope,
for the dawn.

Rev'd Jon Swales
Lighthouse West Yorkshire - Leeds

WHO'S WHO AROUND THE BENEFICE

Rector

Rev'd Canon Simon Moor samoor@bedale.church 01677 988175

Clergy

Rev'd Lee Finnegan Lee.Finnegan@leeds.anglican.org

Rev'd Robin Brown robin.stel1@btinternet.com 07960 277495

Rev'd Philip Carrington philipjcarrington@gmail.com 01677 425077

Rev'd Canon Adrian Gatrill adrian.gatrill@gmail.com 07920 837256

Readers

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Family Chaplain

Michelle Dearlove michelle@bedale.church 07483 296927

Parish Administrator

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Benefice Safeguarding Officer

Linda Collingwood safeguarding@bedale.church 07944 599351

Chantry Hall Lets

Sarah Ryder admin@bedale.church 01677 425985

Bulletin and Magazine

Via the Rector or Parish Administrator

ST GREGORY, BEDALE

Church Wardens

Phillip Witty cw.phillip@bedale.church 07891 537082

Linda Collingwood cw.linda@bedale.church 07944 599351

Treasurer

Paul Carnell treasurer@bedale.church 01677 422503

PCC Secretary

Sarah Ryder admin@bedale.church 01677 425985

Organist

Richard Boyton rickdomino47@aol.com 01677 425800

Bell Ringers

Me? A Pharisee?

We tend to talk about the Pharisees like they were cartoon villains. Like they woke up every morning, adjusted their robes, and said, “Ah yes, another beautiful day to misunderstand God.” But Scripture never actually says that.

What it does show is a group of people who took God very seriously. They knew the Scriptures. They studied them. They memorized them. They built their lives around them. And while we cannot know their exact motivations, it is at least worth pausing long enough to ask a very human question.



What if they honestly thought they were doing what they were supposed to do?

Israel’s history gives us some context, even if it does not give us a neat explanation. They did not end up conquered and exiled to Babylon because they tried too hard to obey God. They ended up there because they ignored the law, chased idols, dismissed warnings, and treated covenant like a suggestion instead of a lifeline. Prophets spent generations saying, “Please stop,” and the nation responded with a collective shrug.

Then Babylon happened. The temple was destroyed. Jerusalem fell. Families were ripped from their land. Everything that made them feel secure vanished. That kind of loss does not just disappear from a people’s memory. It lodges itself deep.

So what if, somewhere along the way, a mindset formed that said, “Never again”? Never again will we be casual about obedience. Never again will we drift. Never again will we assume grace means consequences will not come.

What if strict rule-following felt like faithfulness? What if drawing hard lines felt like protection, not pride? What if being meticulous felt like love for God, not control over people? We do not know for sure. But it is not a ridiculous theory.

And then Jesus shows up and refuses to fit neatly into their framework. He does not throw out the law, but He does not use it the way they expect either. He heals on the Sabbath. He touches people everyone else avoids. He eats with sinners like it is not a scandal. He talks about mercy like it is not optional. He forgives without making people jump through all the visible hoops first. Which is deeply unsettling if your entire sense of faithfulness is built on getting it right.

Because grace messes with systems. Mercy cannot be measured. Redeeming love does not come with a checklist.

And this is where it stops being about the Pharisees and starts getting uncomfortable for us. Because we do this too.

We read the Bible. We underline it. We learn what good Christians are supposed to do and not do. We follow the rules. We stay inside the lines. And somewhere along the way, we start trusting our obedience more than His grace.

We start correcting instead of redeeming. Policing instead of loving. Measuring faith instead of extending mercy.

We can be technically right and spiritually cold at the same time. We can know Scripture well enough to quote it and still miss the heart of Jesus standing right in front of us. The Pharisees were not confronted for caring about holiness. They were confronted for losing sight of why holiness existed in the first place.

The law was never meant to replace God. Obedience was never meant to outrank love. Faith was never meant to become a fence that keeps people out. Jesus did not come to abolish the law or turn faith into chaos. He came to fulfil it with grace, truth, and redeeming love.

And the uncomfortable question is not, "How could they miss Him?"

The more honest one might be, "Where do we do the same thing, absolutely convinced we are being faithful...while quietly forgetting who Jesus actually is?"

The Wittering Watlass Warden



I don't know what you believe or whether you ever give any time to think about what you actually believe. Every fortnight I meet with fellow Christians to spend time on Bible study. We meet in an open, safe, secure environment to look at some part of either the Old Testament or the New Testament. We study, very often in some depth, a passage of scripture or a theme in scripture to try to understand what the Bible is trying to say to us so that we are in a better position to understand God's word and enable us to share that word with others. At the beginning of this year, we decided that we would take a different direction and spend some time looking at "What We Believe" rather than studying scripture passages per se. This is a daunting subject and is already making us think hard and literally search our souls.

Those of you of a certain age might remember looking at the Catechism as you prepared for confirmation, some of you may even have learnt it off by heart, no mean task! Nevertheless, it might be a starting point for us to try to understand our faith and come to understand better what we believe. This in turn will help give us confidence when it comes to sharing our faith with others. Every day we are faced with a rapidly changing world in which we try to live out our faith. Thinking about what we believe will help us all better understand and express the beliefs that draw us together as a faith community and shape our lives so that rooted and grounded in faith, we might seek to proclaim the love of God in Christ. We are all workers in the field where we try to do our part in bringing God's purpose to fruition. Do not forget that at the end of Matthew's Gospel we are all given the command to "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations." We can't do that if we do not give some thought from time to time to what it is that we believe.

We have only just started this journey of “self-examination” and already we know that we can’t go very far without going back to our Bibles to look at what it teaches us about what it means to be a follower of Jesus and how if we come close to Him then God comes closer to us.

Some of the questions we have already looked at are things like: What is a Christian? What does it mean to be called to follow Christ? What is sin and what are the effects of sin? What is repentance? What is the Good News? and, What is salvation?

I think you will agree that these are not easy questions to be faced with but they are questions that we should all think about from time to time. I’ll keep you updated on other topics as they arise.

Chris Carruthers

THORNTON WATLASS DIARY DATES

Feb	8th	10.45am	Plough Sunday Service in church
	9th	7.30pm	Parish Council in Village Hall
	10th	7.30pm	Tuesday Club AGM at School House
	12th		W.I.
	17th	7.30pm	Gardening Club in Village Hall
			Ben Braithwaite “135 years of Braithwaites At Leeming Bar.” Visitors welcome.
Mar	10th	7.30pm	Tuesday Club.
			Details from Christine Carruthers 01677 423519
	12th		W.I.
	17th	7.30pm	Gardening Club in Village Hall
			Sue Haley “Nematodes”
	29th	10.30am	Benefice Service for Palm Sunday
			Meet on the Village Green
Apr	2nd	7pm	Maundy Thursday Service in church

On two Saturdays between 28th February and 21st March we hope to hold Lent Lunches with soups and sweets. Dates to be confirmed.

ST. MARY'S CHURCH THORNTON WATLASS 100

As you may know St. Mary's Church Thornton Watlass runs a 100 Club draw each year. The time has come to renew memberships of the 100 Club for another year or for new members to join for 2026. Subscriptions of £12, £1 per month, are now due. There are two prizes drawn each month. The first draw for this year will take place on Sunday 15th February when prizes for January and February will be awarded. If you would like to join for 2026 then please let Chris Carruthers (01677423519) have your cheque (payable to "P.C.C. of St. Mary's Church Thornton Watlass"), or cash. at your earliest convenience.

Thanks. Chris.

Burrill News

We held our annual Christmas Dinner at the Buck Inn Thornton Watlass with 10 individuals able to come. Later in the December we enjoyed Carols and mulled wine in the church, again with Simon leading on guitar.



This is only the second time we have used the church for this event, as in the past we have walked around the village. However this format seems to work very well with around 30 people attending. We will certainly repeat this again next year.

In January Simon asked if we would host the Churches Together service . Last Saturday Burrill was one of the staging points on the Unity walk around the benefice, thanks to Margaret for the home made shortbread!!!

As I write this the rain is pouring down making me think of the Burrill's Car Boot on the 1st August this year .Lets hope for a fine day as it is such an important fund raiser

Happy New Year to everyone

Words From Leeming



Sitting here thinking of what's been going , and around St John's, two things immediately spring to mind. Firstly, we've noticed no sign of our normal display of snow drops emerging in the churchyard. Secondly, in our garden at least, the Great Tits have started nesting, seems a bit early for that!!

It seems such a long time ago now, but I must mention how pleased we were with the attendances over the Christmas services. That and yet another lovely, well attended, performance by the schools, proves that we are far from the doom mongers prediction that the "church" is falling out of fashion, this is really encouraging. Despite the recent unpleasant weather, our attendances remain steady and the third Thursday of each month Coffee Morning seems to be well appreciated. Thank you all who support it. Any suggestions, as to anything else we could do, to encourage a little more involvement by the local population, would be welcome.

Hopefully, the weather will soon improve, and we can resume our continuous job of renovating a lot of the paintwork that desperately needs attention (volunteers are more than welcome!). Our "keeper of the clock" has truly mastered the intricacies of the settings etc, and now it's almost as accurate as the "Speaking Clock" (does that still exist!).

We are actively looking into installing some form of lighting for the pathway. Possibly motion activated, solar powered lights. Navigating it in the dark is not pleasant for anyone, especially for our aging congregation during the winter months.

Now for my regular moan regarding irresponsible dog owners allowing their animals to roam free all around, and over, the Graveyard. Should you see anyone allowing this, please, please just mention politely that this is Consecrated Ground, and should be treated with respect.

So, I have to end on a very sad note. By now you all will be aware that we have “lost” Bishop Bill. On behalf of all of us from St John’s, may I pass on our deepest condolences to his family. He will always be remembered in our thoughts and prayers. A truly lovely, gentle man, who will be sorely missed.

