BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

1st March 2026

Second Sunday of Lent

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—Evening Prayer*
1st Mar	8:00am St Gregory's #	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Bedale
	9:15am St Gregory's #F	11am St John's, Leeming #	
8th Mar	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Burrill
15th Mar	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Thornton Watlass
		11am St John's, Leeming #	

Communion F Facebook

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

NOTICES

This week's floodlighting is in memory of

Eithné Summers

To sponsor the floodlighting in memory of someone then please get in touch with Sarah in the office on 07949 006681 or admin@bedale.church

Please join us for the World Day of Prayer

On **Friday 6th March** from **2pm**

at St Mary and St Joseph's Church, Aiskew.

Everyone is welcome.

Lent Groups

This year's Lent Course topic is 'Christ has no body but yours'.

Mondays - at 7pm in Bedale Methodist Church, Wycar and Tuesdays at 2pm in Chantry Hall

St Mary's Thornton Watlass welcome you to

Lent Lunches

Soups and puddings on Saturday 7th March and Saturday 21st March from 12 noon to 1:30pm in Thornton Watlass Village Hall. Everyone is welcome.

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, Claire Bell, and Christina.

We continue to pray for our local schools and care homes.

RIP

Bishop Bill Godfrey, Malcolm Bramham, Alan Firth, and David Rayner.

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

Readings

Collect

Almighty God, you show to those who are in error the light of your truth, that they may return to the way of righteousness: grant to all those who are admitted into the fellowship of Christ's religion, that they may reject those things that are contrary to their profession, and follow all such things as are agreeable to the same; through our Lord 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 - Genesis 12.1–4a

The Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' So Abram went, as the Lord had told him; and Lot went with him.

Second Reading - Romans 4.1–5, 13–17

What then are we to say was gained by Abraham, our ancestor according to the flesh? For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the scripture say? 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.' Now to one who works, wages are not reckoned as a gift but as something due. But to one who without works trusts him who justifies the ungodly, such faith is reckoned as righteousness.

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his

descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation.

For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, ‘I have made you the father of many nations’)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Gospel Reading - John 3.1–17

Now there was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a leader of the Jews. He came to Jesus by night and said to him, ‘Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do apart from the presence of God.’ Jesus answered him, ‘Very truly, I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above.’ Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can anyone be born after having grown old? Can one enter a second time into the mother’s womb and be born?’ Jesus answered, ‘Very truly, I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be astonished that I said to you, “You must be born from above. ”The wind blows where it chooses, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit.’ Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can these things be?’ Jesus answered him, ‘Are you a teacher of Israel, and yet you do not understand these things?

‘Very truly, I tell you, we speak of what we know and testify to what we have seen; yet you do not receive our testimony. If I have told you about earthly things and you do not believe, how can you believe if I tell you about heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven except the one who descended from heaven, the Son of Man. And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

‘For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.

‘Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

Post Communion Prayer

Almighty God, you see that we have no power of ourselves to help ourselves: keep us both outwardly in our bodies, and inwardly in our souls; that we may be defended from all adversities which may happen to the body, and from all evil thoughts which may assault and hurt the soul; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Commentary

Old Testament Genesis 12.1-4a

With the story of Abram we encounter the patriarchs and begin an encounter with a history of Israel. We find an account of an emerging awareness of the relationship between God and the individual and read of promises that will shape the rest of the biblical account. This is a move from the story of fall, begun in chapter 3 into a redemption story.

The story begins, in Genesis 11.30, with an account of barrenness resulting in no hope for the future. In Chapter 12 God promises a future. The emphasis is on God as the source of promise and Abram as the channel of God's activity. God's command to go will lead to fulfilment. The emphasis is on what God will do through Abraham. Abraham's obedience is not to do the blessing, but to go where God sends.

New Testament Romans 4.1-5, 13-17

Paul is discussing the place of the Jews and their Law in the new kingdom inaugurated in Christ. He is unwilling to say that the Law can be abandoned. However, he does not allow trust in the Law itself, but argues that the Law, and its symbol, circumcision, is a sign of the relationship with God, not a cause of it. By appealing to Abraham, Paul returns to the founding father of Israel, arguing that what was right for him is right for all those after him. Central to his argument is his conviction that anybody's standing, Jew or Gentile, before God, is by grace, rather than attainment.

The Gospel John 3.1-17

The account of Nicodemus' visit to Jesus follows the first of Jesus' conflicts with the Jewish authorities, a major theme in John's Gospel. In telling the story of the encounter between Jesus and a leading teacher, John demonstrates that the conflict is not absolute. Nicodemus comes to Jesus by night. There is a literal secrecy in this: as a significant leader, Nicodemus cannot be seen to visit. But, as always in John's Gospel, symbolism is equally important. Nicodemus comes in darkness, and the story moves from the darkness of human understanding to the light of God. Nicodemus claims Jesus as a colleague, calling him Rabbi, and acknowledging his mission. Jesus refuses this: he has not come to fit into existing traditions. He brings something new.

There are three interchanges. The answers move from being addressed to Nicodemus alone to a wider audience. In verse 7, 'you' is plural. In the third answer, Jesus uses the formula 'Amen, amen' (v. 11 translated 'Truly, I tell you'), a regular indication of a revelation formula, and public speech. The discussion focuses around the nature of God's kingdom. Jesus makes it clear that entry to the kingdom is not by moral achievement but by God's transforming power.

There are two plays on words: the adjective used about birth, 'from above/anew' and 'wind/spirit'. Verse 14 is typology, referring to Numbers 21.9. For John, lifting up is glorification made present in the crucifixion. Where, in verse 15, John uses the term 'eternal life' he means life in God now, not simply in the future. Verses 16-17 emphasise the wideness of God's salvation.