



BENEFICE BULLETIN

Church News for

Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass

17th May 2026

Sunday after Ascension

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>18:30—Evensong conference call</i>
17th May	9:15am St Gregory's #F	10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass # 11am St John's, Leeming #	Thornton Watlass
24th May	9:15am St Gregory's #F	9:00am Burrill 10:45 St Mary's Thornton Watlass #	Leeming
31st	10:30am Benefice Service - Leeming		No evensong

Communion F Facebook

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



Coffee Morning

St John's Church Leeming

Thursday 21st May 10:00 - 12:00



May - Office Opening Hours

Tuesday 19th May - Closed—working from home in the afternoon.

Thursday 21st May - Closed—working at Leeming Church.

Tuesday 26th May - Closed for school holidays

Thursday 28th May - Closed for school holidays

The office will re-open with normal opening times on Tuesday 2nd June at 9:30am.

For non urgent enquiries please contact the administrator on admin@bedale.church or 07949 006681. For anything urgent please contact the Rector directly..

PRAYERS

OUR PRAYERS ARE ASKED FOR

Bel Newman, Mark Newman, Olive Robinson,
Justin, Alison, Dan, John, Doris Pearson, Mal Rowland,
Bailey Cuthbert, Claire Bell, Christina, Elizabeth, and Christine.
We continue to pray for our local schools and care homes.

RIP

Marion Hutchinson, Delma Bode, Rachel Oysten, and Clara Hobbs.
May they rest in peace and rise in glory

READINGS

Collect

O God the King of glory, you have exalted your only Son Jesus Christ with great triumph to your kingdom in heaven: we beseech you, leave us not comfortless, but send your Holy Spirit to strengthen us and exalt us to the place where our Saviour Christ is gone before, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

First Reading - Acts 1.6–14

So when they had come together, they asked him, 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to Israel?' He replied, 'It is not for you to know the times or periods that the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.' When he had said this, as they were watching, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight. While he was going and they were gazing up towards heaven, suddenly two men in white robes stood by them. They said, 'Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking up towards heaven? This Jesus, who has been taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven.'

Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a sabbath day's journey away. When they had entered the city, they went to the room upstairs where they were staying, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. All these were constantly devoting themselves to prayer, together with certain women, including Mary the mother of Jesus, as well as his brothers.

Second Reading - 1 Peter 4.12–14; 5.6–11

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice in so far as you are sharing Christ's sufferings, so that you may also be glad and shout for joy when his

glory is revealed. If you are reviled for the name of Christ, you are blessed, because the spirit of glory, which is the Spirit of God, is resting on you.

Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, so that he may exalt you in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him, because he cares for you. Discipline yourselves; keep alert. Like a roaring lion your adversary the devil prowls around, looking for someone to devour. Resist him, steadfast in your faith, for you know that your brothers and sisters throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you. To him be the power for ever and ever. Amen.

Gospel Reading - John 17.1–11

After Jesus had spoken these words, he looked up to heaven and said, 'Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son so that the Son may glorify you, since you have given him authority over all people, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. And this is eternal life, that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. I glorified you on earth by finishing the work that you gave me to do. So now, Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had in your presence before the world existed.

'I have made your name known to those whom you gave me from the world. They were yours, and you gave them to me, and they have kept your word. Now they know that everything you have given me is from you; for the words that you gave to me I have given to them, and they have received them and know in truth that I came from you; and they have believed that you sent me. I am asking on their behalf; I am not asking on behalf of the world, but on behalf of those whom you gave me, because they are yours. All mine are yours, and yours are mine; and I have been glorified in them. And now I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them in your name that you have given me, so that they may be one, as we are one.

Post Communion Prayer

Eternal God, giver of love and power, your Son Jesus Christ has sent us into all the world to preach the gospel of his kingdom: confirm us in this mission, and help us to live the good news we proclaim; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMENTARY

Acts 1.6-14

Luke begins his second volume by retelling the story that concluded his first (see Luke 24.50-53). The ascension of Jesus is not only the event which declares Jesus' true identity as God's Messiah and Son; it is the event that inaugurates the story of the Church and its mission to the world. The scene uses images that speak of God's glory seen in the risen Jesus: the cloud of chapter 1 verse 9 symbolises the presence and power of God. (Compare this with the transfiguration story in Luke 9.34-35 and its background in Old Testament texts like Exodus 16.10 and Ezekiel 10.3-4). The

Mount of Olives is the location of God's final victory and the 'men in white robes' are angelic figures (compare with Luke 24.4).

Note how the account in Acts 1.6-14 is full of the language of movement. The disciples come together (v. 6), Jesus promises that the Holy Spirit will come upon you (v. 8), Jesus is lifted up (v. 9) but will come again in the same way (v. 11). These highly compressed descriptions of ascension, Pentecost and Jesus' return are deliberately brief, because at this stage, Luke is more interested in the response of the disciples themselves. The glory of God that they now see in the risen and ascending Jesus could be the basis for a life of waiting and gazing and contemplation (v. 11).

Instead, they witness this event so that they can be transformed (in verses 6-8 their assumptions about the meaning of Jesus' resurrection are overturned) and become witnesses themselves. Now that Jesus has been lifted up they are to be taken out in the power of the Spirit, to the ends of the earth. Note how they take the first obedient steps in verses 12-14 by going to Jerusalem and waiting for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Further steps are described in the rest of Acts: work in Jerusalem in Acts 2-7; in Judea and Samaria in Acts 8-9 and to the ends of the earth in the remaining chapters, Acts 10-28. For Luke, then, there is a right kind of waiting for the Spirit and of watching for Jesus' return. Both are focused on the call of disciples to be witnesses, a key theme in Acts. In the opening chapters the witness call recurs many times. (See, for example, Acts 1.22, 2.32, 3.15, 4.20,33; 5.32.) Luke wants to make sure that the believers get on with the task of living and proclaiming the gospel. To this end he consistently removes the idea of Jesus' 'imminent' return. Disciples are not to concern themselves with 'times or periods set by the Father'. In verse 14 he also gives an early indication of the kind of new community that Jesus has formed for this task, a community in which women and the family of Jesus receive special mention. The role of women in the Church is a favourite theme in Acts. The ascension vision is only given to 'men of Galilee' but the new community called to mission is soon inclusive of women, and, at Pentecost, of all nations.

1 Peter 4.12-14, 5.6-11

In 1 Peter 4 and 5 the Church is encouraged to live faithfully in the midst of suffering and persecution (the reference to the devil as a 'prowling lion' in 1 Peter 5.8 is probably an allusion to Christians being killed by wild beasts in the Roman arena). However, their present struggles are set within the context of a larger story of God who is a faithful Creator (1 Peter 4.19) and who will provide everything they need: the Holy Spirit (4.14), support and strength (5.10) and the promise of final glory (4.13-14; 5.6, 10).

John 17.1-11

John 17 is all about the glorification of Jesus and in many ways is the Johannine equivalent of the ascension story. At times it seems here that Jesus has already been 'lifted up' to the Father. In John 17.4 he speaks in the past tense of having finished the work given to him and in verse 11 he can say that he is 'no longer in the world'. In this Gospel, Jesus' glorification through death, resurrection and return to God leaves the disciples 'in the world', equipped with the words of Jesus and a living relationship with the Father and the Son (v. 11). While not explicitly mentioned here, the gift of the Holy Spirit will also be given to those who, having seen God's glory in Jesus, are now called to God's life in the world.