# BENEFICE BULLETIN

*Church News for*

*Bedale, Burrill, Leeming and Thornton Watlass*

**15th November 2026**

## 2nd Sunday Before Advent

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| **15th Second Sunday before Advent** | 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 Christ the King** | 9.00 | Burrill Church Communion |
| | 9:15 | Bedale Parish Communion |
| | 10:45 | Thornton Watlass Parish Communion |
| | 18.30 | Leeming Evensong |
| 23rd Monday | 18:30 | Bedale PCC in the OGS |
| 26th Thursday | 10:30 | Bedale Holy Communion BCP |
| 27th Friday | 19.00 | Prayer and Praise – Chantry Hall |

## Christmas Tree Festival

During the Town Festival Weekend 28th and 29th November, Chantry Hall will be open serving coffee and other refreshments. Any help offered with serving would be gratefully received. Bedale Church members are setting up Chantry and looking after Saturday morning with Burrill Church undertaking the afternoon, then Leeming and Thornton Watlass churches are to be responsible for Sunday morning and afternoon respectively. Promise of cakes and buns are required for this Benefice Fundraiser.
Speak with your church wardens if you can help or contribute.

Also required are items of bric-a-brac for a stall and any Christmas Tree that you might have which is surplus to requirement to decorate as part of the Christmas Tree Festival display in St Gregory's over that weekend.

## PRAYERS

### Our Prayers Are Asked For

Bel Newman, Olive Robinson, Justin, Alison, Dan, Claire Bell, Christina, Elizabeth, Jean, Christine, Richard, Ann and Arthur Lightfoot, James, Laura and Shirley Woods

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

### RIP

Chris Huffington, Irene Kassell, Sue Stewart, James Cowpe and Deborah Dunn

**May they rest in peace and rise in glory**

# READINGS

## Collect

**Heavenly Father, whose blessed Son was revealed to destroy the works of the devil and to make us the children of God and heirs of eternal life: grant that we, having this hope, may purify ourselves even as he is pure; that when he shall appear in power and great glory we may be made like him in his eternal and glorious kingdom; where he is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.**

## First Reading – Zephaniah 1.7, 12–end

Be silent before the Lord God! For the day of the Lord is at hand; the Lord has prepared a sacrifice, he has consecrated his guests. At that time, I will search Jerusalem with lamps, and I will punish the people who rest complacently on their dregs, those who say in their hearts, 'The Lord will not do good, nor will he do harm.' Their wealth shall be plundered, and their houses laid waste. Though they build houses, they shall not inhabit them; though they plant vineyards, they shall not drink wine from them. The great day of the Lord is near, near and hastening fast; the sound of the day of the Lord is bitter, the warrior cries aloud there. That day will be a day of wrath, a day of distress and anguish, a day of ruin and devastation, a day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness, a day of trumpet blast and battle cry against the fortified cities and against the lofty battlements. I will bring such distress upon people that they shall walk like the blind; because they have sinned against the Lord, their blood shall be poured out like dust, and their flesh like dung. Neither their silver nor their gold will be able to save them on the day of the Lord's wrath; in the fire of his passion the whole earth shall be consumed; for a full, a terrible end he will make of all the inhabitants of the earth

## Second Reading - 1 Thessalonians 5.1–11

Concerning the times and the seasons, brothers and sisters, you do not need to have anything written to you. For you yourselves know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night. When they say, 'There is peace and security', then sudden destruction will come upon them, as labour pains come upon a pregnant woman, and there will be no escape! But you, beloved, are not in darkness, for that day to surprise you like a thief; for you are all children of light and children of the day; we are not of the night or of darkness. So then, let us not fall asleep as others do, but let us keep awake and be sober; for those who sleep, sleep at night, and those who are drunk get drunk at night. But since we belong to the day, let us be sober, and put on the breastplate of faith and love, and for a helmet the hope of salvation. For God has destined us not for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, so that whether we are awake or asleep we may live with him. Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing.

## Gospel Reading  Matthew 25. 14–30

Jesus told his disciples this parable: ‘For it is as if a man, going on a journey, summoned his slaves and entrusted his property to them; to one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. The one who had received the five talents went off at once and traded with them, and made five more talents. In the same way, the one who had the two talents made two more talents. But the one who had received the one talent went off and dug a hole in the ground and hid his master’s money.

‘After a long time the master of those slaves came and settled accounts with them. Then the one who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five more talents, saying, “Master, you handed over to me five talents; see, I have made five more talents.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.”‘ And the one with the two talents also came forward, saying, “Master, you handed over to me two talents; see, I have made two more talents.” His master said to him, “Well done, good and trustworthy slave; you have been trustworthy in a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.” ‘

Then the one who had received the one talent also came forward, saying, “Master, I knew that you were a harsh man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you did not scatter seed; so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.” ‘But his master replied, “You wicked and lazy slave! You knew, did you, that I reap where I did not sow, and gather where I did not scatter? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him, and give it to the one with the ten talents. For to all those who have, more will be given, and they will have an abundance; but from those who have nothing, even what they have will be taken away. As for this worthless slave, throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” ’

## Post Communion Prayer

**Gracious Lord, in this holy sacrament you give substance to our hope:**
**bring us at the last to that fullness of life for which we long;**
**through Jesus Christ our Saviour.**

## COMMENTARY

### The Old Testament Zephaniah 1.7, 12-18

Zephaniah appears to be prophesying during Josiah's reign (640-609 BCE) when an attempt was being made to undo a climate of apostasy. This prophecy appears to lie early in these reforms and focuses on Israel's adoption of foreign gods and foreign ways of worshipping. The purity of worship of Yahweh is at stake and the consequence of abandoning him is that he will take the initiative and bring about the day of the Lord.

Today's extract begins with an invitation to sacrifice, heavy with irony, for the guest is to be consecrated as the victim. Rather than bringing about salvation, this sacrifice is by way of punishment. Everything that seems safe and secure is being turned on its head. There is no room for complacency as God begins his devastating action. Destruction is wrought, beginning with nature, turning to buildings and finally humankind. Nothing to which the world ascribes value will make a difference. The language is highly coded but even that does not obscure the seriousness of the message. Its energy and uncompromising nature acts as a prism through which we can view the world around us and our part in it.

### The Epistle 1 Thessalonians 5.1-11

It may not be possible to attach a time or date to the coming of the Lord, but that heightens the sense of urgency rather than diminishes it. Paul picks up from Zephaniah the idea of the day of the Lord but adapts it to the new Christian context. His use of images like the thief and the pregnant woman heighten this sense of suddenness – what feels like a time of security may suddenly be overturned by God's coming.  But, lest they are totally crushed by the prospect of God's destruction, Paul reminds the Thessalonian community that they are now living as Christians in the light, not in the darkness of their previous existence. He uses metaphors of drunkenness and sleep for those unprepared for God's coming and moves into the language of war and armour to describe the preparedness of the Christian in times of uncertainty. Towards the end of this passage he underlines what makes things different for Christians, and urges them to help build the community of the faithful in this time of uncertainty.

### The Gospel Matthew 25.14-30

The three parables in Matthew 25 are strong indicators individually, of what is expected of us as we await the coming of Jesus and his kingdom; cumulatively they are like an unstoppable juggernaut. We note similarities of intent and differences of emphasis. There is huge breadth of purpose, simultaneously challenging and energising.

The man is going away and assigns his slaves responsibilities in full knowledge of what they can and cannot do. We are not judged on the basis of what we can't do, but on the basis of what we can, yet have failed to do.

On his return, the master rewards those who have used their own (and his) resources to good purposes. We can treat this as a judgement of Jesus on market economics, but investment and risk-taking have to take place on all sides. The man with one talent is too consumed by fear to use even that and the ability that he has. His reward and his judgement are the same – to be thrown out from the company of Jesus and the community around him.