

The Seventeenth Sunday After Pentecost – Year A
20th September 2026

Sentence: Ephesians 2.8–9

By grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.

Collect:

Loving and righteous God,
your boundless generosity exceeds all that we can desire or deserve,
and you give to the last worker all you promised to the first:
liberate us from all jealousy and greed,
that we may be free to love and serve others,
and in your service may find our true reward;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

First Reading: Jonah 3.10-4.11

A reading from the book of the Prophet Jonah

^{3,10} When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil ways, God changed his mind about the calamity that he had said he would bring upon them; and he did not do it. ^{4,1} But this was very displeasing to Jonah, and he became angry. ² He prayed to the Lord and said, ‘O Lord ! Is not this what I said while I was still in my own country? That is why I fled to Tarshish at the beginning; for I knew that you are a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and ready to relent from punishing. ³ And now, O Lord , please take my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live.’ ⁴ And the Lord said, ‘Is it right for you to be angry?’ ⁵ Then Jonah went out of the city and sat down east of the city, and made a booth for himself there. He sat under it in the shade, waiting to see what would become of the city. ⁶ The Lord God appointed a bush, and made it come up over Jonah, to give shade over his head, to save him from his discomfort; so Jonah was very happy about the bush. ⁷ But when dawn came up the next day, God appointed a worm that attacked the bush, so that it withered. ⁸ When the sun rose, God prepared a sultry east wind, and the sun beat down on the head of Jonah so that he was faint and asked that he might die. He said, ‘It is better for me to die than to live.’ ⁹ But God said to Jonah, ‘Is it right for you to be angry about the bush?’ And he said, ‘Yes, angry enough to die.’ ¹⁰ Then the Lord said, ‘You are concerned about the bush, for which you did not labour and which you did not

grow; it came into being in a night and perished in a night. ¹¹ And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than a hundred and twenty thousand people who do not know their right hand from their left, and also many animals?’

Hear the Word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Psalm 145.1-8

¹ I will exalt you, O God my king:
I will bless your name for ever and ever.

² Every day will I bless you:
and praise your name for ever and ever.

³ Great is the Lord, and wonderfully worthy to be praised:
his greatness is past searching out.

⁴ One generation shall praise your works to another:
and declare your mighty acts.

⁵ As for me, I will be talking
of the glorious splendour of your majesty:
I will tell the story of your marvellous works.

⁶ All people shall speak of the power of your terrible deeds:
and I will proclaim your greatness.

⁷ Their lips shall flow with the remembrance
of your abundant goodness:
they shall shout for joy at your righteousness.

⁸ The Lord is gracious and compassionate:
slow to anger and of great goodness.

Second Reading: Philippians 1.21-30

A reading from the Letter of St Paul to the Philippians

²¹ For to me, living is Christ and dying is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labour for me; and I do not know which I prefer. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two: my desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better; ²⁴ but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you. ²⁵ Since I am convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and joy in faith, ²⁶ so that I may share abundantly in your boasting in Christ Jesus when I come to you again. ²⁷ Only, live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that, whether I come and see you or am absent and hear about you, I will know that you are standing firm in one spirit, striving side by side with one mind for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and are in no way intimidated by your opponents. For them this is evidence of their destruction, but of your salvation. And this is God's doing. ²⁹ For he has graciously granted you the privilege not only of believing in Christ, but of suffering for him as well— ³⁰ since you are having the same struggle that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Hear the Word of the Lord,
Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation: Acts 16.14

Alleluia. **Alleluia!**
Open our hearts, O Lord,
to listen to the words of your Son.
Alleluia!

The Holy Gospel: Matthew 20.1-16

The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew,
Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

¹ 'For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. ² After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. ³ When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; ⁴ and he said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right." So they went. ⁵ When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. ⁶ And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, "Why are you standing here idle all day?" ⁷ They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard." ⁸ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, "Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first." ⁹ When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. ¹⁰ Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. ¹¹ And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, ¹² saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." ¹³ But he replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? ¹⁴ Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. ¹⁵ Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?" ¹⁶ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord,
Praise to you Lord Jesus Christ.