

6TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST – (OT-16)**ST PETER'S ANGLICAN CHURCH BUNDOORA****Sunday 20th July 2025****Fr. Stephen Monsieigneur****Readings:** Amos 8:1-12 / Psalm 52 / Colossians 1:15-29 / Luke 10:38-42¹**Theme:** *Reclaiming Our Focus in a Distracted World***Amos 8:1-12**

8 This is what the Lord God showed me—a basket of summer fruit. ² He said, 'Amos, what do you see?' And I said, 'A basket of summer fruit.' Then the Lord said to me,

'The end has come upon my people Israel;

I will never again pass them by.

³ The songs of the temple shall become wailings on that day,'

says the Lord God;

'the dead bodies shall be many,

cast out in every place. Be silent!'

⁴ Hear this, you that trample on the needy,

and bring to ruin the poor of the land,

⁵ saying, 'When will the new moon be over

so that we may sell grain;

and the sabbath,

so that we may offer wheat for sale?

We will make the ephah small and the shekel great,

and practise deceit with false balances,

⁶ buying the poor for silver

and the needy for a pair of sandals,

and selling the sweepings of the wheat.'

⁷ The Lord has sworn by the pride of Jacob:

Surely I will never forget any of their deeds.

⁸ Shall not the land tremble on this account,

and everyone mourns, who lives in it,

and all of it, rise like the Nile,

and be tossed about and sink again, like the Nile of Egypt?

⁹ On that day, says the Lord God,

I will make the sun go down at noon,

and darken the earth in broad daylight.

¹⁰ I will turn your feasts into mourning,

and all your songs into lamentation;

I will bring sackcloth on all loins,

and baldness on every head;

I will make it like the mourning for an only son,

and the end of it like a bitter day.

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¹¹ The time is surely coming, says the Lord God,
 when I will send a famine on the land;
 not a famine of bread, or a thirst for water,
 but of hearing the words of the Lord.
¹² They shall wander from sea to sea,
 and from north to east;
 they shall run to and fro, seeking the word of the Lord,
 but they shall not find it.

Psalm 52

¹ Why do you boast, O mighty one,
 of mischief done against the godly?
 All day long ² you are plotting destruction.
 Your tongue is like a sharp razor,
 you worker of treachery.
³ You love evil more than good,
 and lying more than speaking the truth. *Selah*
⁴ You love all words that devour,
 O deceitful tongue.
⁵ But God will break you down forever;
 he will snatch and tear you from your tent;
 he will uproot you from the land of the living. *Selah*
⁶ The righteous will see, and fear,
 and will laugh at the evildoer, saying,
⁷ 'See the one who would not take
 refuge in God,
 but trusted in abundant riches,
 and sought refuge in wealth!'
⁸ But I am like a green olive tree
 in the house of God.
 I trust in the steadfast love of God
 for ever and ever.
⁹ I will thank you for ever,
 because of what you have done.
 In the presence of the faithful
 I will proclaim your name, for it is good.

Colossians 1:15-29

¹⁵ [Christ] is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation; ¹⁶ for in him all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers—all things have been created through him and for him. ¹⁷ He himself is before all things, and in him all things hold together. ¹⁸ He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that he might come to have first place in everything. ¹⁹ For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰ and through him God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, by making peace through the blood of his cross.

²¹ And you who were once estranged and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²² he has now reconciled in his fleshly body through death, so as to present you holy and blameless and irreproachable before him— ²³ provided that you continue securely established and steadfast in the faith, without shifting from the hope promised by the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven. I, Paul, became a servant of this gospel.²⁴ I am now rejoicing in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church. ²⁵ I became its servant according to God's commission that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶ the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to his saints. ²⁷ To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸ It is he whom we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone in all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹ For this, I toil and struggle with all the energy that he powerfully inspires within me.

Luke 10:38-42

³⁸ Now, as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. ³⁹ She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord's feet and listened to what he was saying. ⁴⁰ But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so, she came to him and asked, 'Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.' ⁴¹ But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; ⁴² there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her.'

SERMON

On the eve of my ordination Archbishop Aspinall was asked by a fellow ordinand; "What is our job description? The archbishop's answer was swift and succinct, he said, "you have three things to do, read that you remain informed, be present that you serve whoever is before you and pray knowing that you are always in need of God's help. The rest will just happen."

Whether in our professional, personal, or familial contexts, we live in a world of constant motion, filled with notifications, deadlines, expectations, and noise. Our calendars overflow, our minds race, and our hearts grow weary. In this whirlwind, we often mistake urgency for importance and busyness for faithfulness. But the Word of God, as we have just heard today, calls us to pause, to listen, and to choose "the better part."²

The prophet Amos³ sees a basket of summer fruit, a cacophony of flavour and colour, who does not imagine the juicy sweetness. Yet while a symbol of ripeness, the fruit is also a warning of impending decay. God warns of a coming famine, not of bread or water, but of hearing His Word. The people are so consumed with commerce and self-interest that they trample the needy and long for the Sabbath to end so they can return to profit-making. Their worship is hollow, their priorities misaligned.

² Luke 10:42.

³ Amos 8:1-12

This is not unlike our own age. We may not sell grain with dishonest scales, but we often trade time with God for productivity, success, or entertainment. The danger is not merely distraction—it is spiritual starvation. When we neglect the Word, we lose our anchor, and the fruit of our lives begins to spoil.

However, the Psalmist⁴ offers a stark contrast between the wicked who trust in wealth and deceit, and the righteous who flourish like an olive tree in the house of God, declaring, “I trust in God’s unfailing love forever and ever.” In a world that prizes self-sufficiency, this is a radical confession. Distractions often lure us into trusting ourselves—our plans, our resources, our reputations. But the path forward begins with trust in God’s steadfast love. Like the olive tree, we are called to root ourselves in God’s presence, not in the shifting soil of worldly pursuits.

Paul’s words in Colossians⁵ lift our gaze to the supremacy of Christ, who Paul declares is “the image of the invisible God,” the One through whom all things were created and in whom all things hold together. He is not peripheral—He is central.

Yet how often do we relegate Jesus to the margins of our lives? We squeeze Him into our schedules rather than building our lives around Him. Paul reminds us that Christ is not only the Creator but also the Reconciler. He brings peace through His blood and calls us to maturity in Him.

Paul’s own life was marked by suffering and toil, but it was purposeful. He labored to present everyone mature in Christ. This is our calling too—not to be merely busy, but to be fruitful; not to be distracted, but to be devoted. Consider Martha and Mary⁶.

Martha is distracted by many tasks, anxious, and troubled. Mary, however, sits at Jesus’ feet, listening. Following Martha’s expression of frustration, Jesus gently corrects her, saying: “You are worried and upset about many things, but only one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the better part.” This is not a condemnation of service—it is a call to prioritize presence. Martha’s hospitality was good, but Mary’s devotion was better. In our own lives, we must ask: Are we so busy serving Jesus that we forget to sit with Him?

Now I will admit that even to me this reflection sounds wonderful, but as quickly as that thought happens so does the doubt, as I see the reality of this life’s demands. I want so much to simply live for Christ, for his mission, but when I mistakenly look inward, I struggle to see the tools for success. This is the danger of self-reliance, but there is a path forward: It does require a reordering of our lives

So, how do we reclaim our focus in a distracted world?

1. **Recognize the Famine:** Like Amos, we must name the spiritual hunger in our lives. What are we consuming instead of God’s Word?
2. **Root Ourselves in Trust:** Like the psalmist, we must choose to trust in God’s unfailing love, even when distractions tempt us to rely on ourselves.

⁴ Psalm 52

⁵ Colossians 1:15-29

⁶ Luke 10:38-42

3. **Recenter on Christ:** Like Paul, we must make Christ the centre—not just of our theology, but of our time, our relationships, our work.
4. **Return to His Feet:** Like Mary, we must carve out space to sit with Jesus, to listen, to be still. This is not wasted time—it is the better part.

Let us pray,

Lord Jesus,
In a world of noise and haste, teach us to be still.
Forgive us for the times we've chosen urgency over intimacy,
Tasks over trust,
Distraction over devotion.
Hold our hearts together,
That lesser things may not pull us apart.
Help us choose the better part—
To sit at Your feet,
To listen to Your Word,
To trust in Your love,
And to live lives bearing fruit that lasts,
reflecting Your glory in all we do.

Amen.