

11th SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST**ST. PETERS ANGLICAN CHURCH BUNDOORA****Sunday 9th August 2026****Fr. Stephen Monsieigneur****Readings:**¹ Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 / Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22 / Romans 10:4-15 / Matthew 14:22-36**Series Title:** Called to Discipleship, Who Me? How?**Today's Theme:** *"When Giving Means Submitting Control"***Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28**

Jacob settled in the land where his father had lived as an alien, the land of Canaan. ² These are the descendants of Jacob.

Joseph, being seventeen years old, was shepherding the flock with his brothers; he was a helper to the sons of Bilhah and Zilpah, his father's wives, and Joseph brought a bad report of them to their father. ³ Now Israel loved Joseph more than any other of his children because he was the son of his old age, and he made him an ornamented robe. ⁴ But when his brothers saw that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him.

¹² Now his brothers went to pasture their father's flock near Shechem. ¹³ And Israel said to Joseph, "Are not your brothers pasturing the flock at Shechem? Come, I will send you to them." He answered, "Here I am." ¹⁴ So he said to him, "Go now, see if it is well with your brothers and with the flock, and bring word back to me." So he sent him from the valley of Hebron.

He came to Shechem, ¹⁵ and a man found him wandering in the fields; the man asked him, "What are you seeking?" ¹⁶ "I am seeking my brothers," he said; "tell me, please, where they are pasturing the flock." ¹⁷ The man said, "They have gone away, for I heard them say, 'Let us go to Dothan.' " So Joseph went after his brothers and found them at Dothan. ¹⁸ They saw him from a distance, and before he came near to them they conspired to kill him. ¹⁹ They said to one another, "Here comes this dreamer. ²⁰ Come now, let us kill him and throw him into one of the pits; then we shall say that a wild animal has devoured him, and we shall see what will become of his dreams." ²¹ But when Reuben heard it, he delivered him out of their hands, saying, "Let us not take his life." ²² Reuben said to them, "Shed no blood; throw him into this pit here in the wilderness, but lay no hand on him"—that he might rescue him out of their hand and restore him to his father. ²³ So when Joseph came to his brothers, they stripped him of his robe, the ornamented robe that he wore, ²⁴ and they took him and threw him into a pit. The pit was empty; there was no water in it.

²⁵ Then they sat down to eat, and looking up they saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels carrying gum, balm, and resin, on their way to carry it down to Egypt. ²⁶ Then Judah said to his brothers, "What profit is it if we kill our brother and conceal his blood? ²⁷ Come, let us sell him to the Ishmaelites and not lay our hands on him, for he is our brother, our own flesh." And his brothers agreed. ²⁸ When some Midianite traders passed by, they drew Joseph up, lifting him out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they took Joseph to Egypt.

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Psalm 105:1-6, 16-22***God's Faithfulness to Israel***

- ¹ O give thanks to the Lord; call on his name;
make known his deeds among the peoples.
- ² Sing to him, sing praises to him;
tell of all his wonderful works.
- ³ Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.
- ⁴ Seek the Lord and his strength;
seek his presence continually.
- ⁵ Remember the wonderful works he has done,
his miracles and the judgments he has uttered,
- ⁶ O offspring of his servant Abraham,
children of Jacob, his chosen ones.
- ⁷ He is the Lord our God;
his judgments are in all the earth.
- ⁸ He is mindful of his covenant forever,
of the word that he commanded for a thousand generations,
- ⁹ the covenant that he made with Abraham,
his sworn promise to Isaac,
- ¹⁰ which he confirmed to Jacob as a statute,
to Israel as an everlasting covenant,
- ¹¹ saying, "To you I will give the land of Canaan
as your portion for an inheritance."
- ¹² When they were few in number,
of little account and strangers in it,
- ¹³ wandering from nation to nation,
from one kingdom to another people,
- ¹⁴ he allowed no one to oppress them;
he rebuked kings on their account,
- ¹⁵ saying, "Do not touch my anointed ones;
do my prophets no harm."
- ¹⁶ When he summoned famine against the land
and cut off every supply of bread,
- ¹⁷ he had sent a man ahead of them,
Joseph, who had been sold as a slave.
- ¹⁸ His feet were hurt with fetters;
his neck was put in a collar of iron;
- ¹⁹ until what he had said came to pass,
the word of the Lord kept testing him.
- ²⁰ The king sent and released him;
the ruler of the peoples set him free.
- ²¹ He made him lord of his house
and ruler of all his possessions,
- ²² to instruct his officials at his pleasure
and to teach his elders wisdom.

Romans 10:4-15

⁴ For Christ is the culmination of the law so that there may be righteousness for everyone who believes.

⁵ Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that “the person who does these things will live by them.” ⁶ But the righteousness that comes from faith says, “Do not say in your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ down) ⁷ “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’ ” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). ⁸ But what does it say?

“The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart”

(that is, the word of faith that we proclaim), ⁹ because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. ¹⁰ For one believes with the heart, leading to righteousness, and one confesses with the mouth, leading to salvation. ¹¹ The scripture says, “No one who believes in him will be put to shame.” ¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. ¹³ For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

¹⁴ But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? ¹⁵ And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”

Matthew 14:22-36

²² Immediately he made the disciples get into a boat and go on ahead to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. ²³ And after he had dismissed the crowds, he went up the mountain by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone, ²⁴ but by this time the boat, battered by the waves, was far from the land, for the wind was against them. ²⁵ And early in the morning he came walking toward them on the sea. ²⁶ But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, saying, “It is a ghost!” And they cried out in fear. ²⁷ But immediately Jesus spoke to them and said, “Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.”

²⁸ Peter answered him, “Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.” ²⁹ He said, “Come.” So Peter got out of the boat, started walking on the water, and came toward Jesus. ³⁰ But when he noticed the strong wind, he became frightened, and, beginning to sink, he cried out, “Lord, save me!” ³¹ Jesus immediately reached out his hand and caught him, saying to him, “You of little faith, why did you doubt?” ³² When they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³ And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, “Truly you are the Son of God.”

³⁴ When they had crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret. ³⁵ After the people of that place recognised him, they sent word to that whole surrounding region, and people brought all who were sick to him ³⁶ and begged him that they might touch even the fringe of his cloak, and all who touched it were healed.

SERMON

In our reflection on giving during August, it is tempting to think first about money, time, or resources. Yet the scriptures before us suggest that the deepest form of giving is something far more costly: the surrender of control.

To give ourselves to God is to trust that God's purposes are greater than our plans, God's faithfulness stronger than our fears, and God's future more secure than our own efforts to manage life.

The story of Joseph in Genesis is a story of both betrayal and trust.

Joseph is stripped of control when his brothers, --moved by jealousy--, sell him into slavery². There is no indication that Joseph understands what God is doing. He is not choosing this path, yet God remains at work within it. -----What appears to be the collapse of God's promises becomes the very means by which God preserves Israel. Are there times in your own lives when human faithlessness is met by divine faithfulness?

Psalm 105 reflects on this same story and interprets it through the lens of God's covenant faithfulness.

The psalmist declares that God "had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave"³. What looked like abandonment was in fact preparation. God was faithful to Israel even when circumstances suggested otherwise. The lesson for us is clear. Faith is not confidence that everything will unfold according to our wishes; faith is confidence that God remains present even when life unfolds differently from our plans.

This challenge lies at the heart of giving.

As a parish and as individual disciples, we often prefer giving that allows us to remain in charge. We like to know the outcome of our generosity. We like certainty. Yet Christian giving is an act of trust precisely because it releases control. Whether we give our finances, our time, our talents, or our future, we place them into God's hands rather than our own.

Recently, having given someone a phone from our parish outreach funds, I was asked by the recipient if I had done this before; the answer was yes. Has the generosity ever been abused they enquired? In short, yes. Why do you keep doing it? They asked. Because when I hand over the phone having identified the need, I hand over the responsibility for how it is used to the receiver of the gift. I must trust. Without trust, I can take no action, offer no support, and can no longer be effective as a disciple.

Further, Paul reminds us that salvation comes not through our achievements but through faith in Christ. "The same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him"⁴. God's

² Genesis 37:28

³ Psalm 105:17

⁴ Romans 10:12

generosity always precedes our own. We give because God has already given. We trust because God has already proven faithful. We proclaim Christ because others once surrendered control and shared the gospel with us.

Paul's question is both challenging and inspiring: "And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard?"⁵. The church is called not merely to preserve faith but to share it.

This requires trust. Every act of ministry involves stepping into uncertainty. Every invitation, every conversation, every offering of ourselves to another person is an act of faith that God is already at work.

The Gospel reading brings these themes into sharp focus. The disciples find themselves battered by wind and waves. Peter, seeing Jesus walking on the water, steps from the safety of the boat. For a moment he trusts completely. Then fear takes hold, and he begins to sink. Yet even then Jesus reaches out and saves him⁶.

Peter's experience mirrors our own discipleship. We are called to step out in faith, to release our need for certainty and control. Sometimes we succeed. Sometimes fear overwhelms us. Yet the good news is that God's faithfulness does not depend upon the perfection of our trust. When Peter faltered, Jesus did not abandon him. God remained faithful.

Reflecting on our giving, our willingness, our reluctance, these readings remind us that every act of Christian generosity is fundamentally an act of trust. Joseph trusted amidst suffering. Israel trusted in God's covenant promises. Paul trusted God's saving grace. Peter trusted enough to leave the boat.

The question before each of us is simple: what control are we being asked to surrender to God?

Let us pray

Faithful God, when giving asks us to release control, strengthen our trust in your unfailing love. As you guided Joseph, sustained Israel, and upheld Peter amid the waves, help us follow Christ with courageous hearts. Make us generous disciples, confident in your faithfulness. For where trust deepens, generosity follows; and where generosity flourishes, God's faithfulness becomes visible in the life of the Church and in the lives of God's people. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

⁵ Rom. 10:14

⁶ Matthew 14:30-31