Hilda of Whitby, Abbess, 680 **Evening Prayer, November 18, 2026**

The Collect of the Day: O God of peace, by whose grace the abbess Hilda was endowed with gifts of justice, prudence, and strength to rule as a wise mother over the nuns and monks of her household: Raise up these gifts in us, that we, following her example and prayers, may build up one another in love to the benefit of your church; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Psalm 122 *said responsively by the half-verse* BCP pp. 779-780

1 I was glad when they said to me, * **"Let us go to the house of the Lord."**

2 Now our feet are standing * **within your gates, O Jerusalem.**

3 Jerusalem is built as a city * **that is at unity with itself.**

4 To which the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, * **the assembly of Israel, to praise the name of the Lord.**

5 For there are the thrones of judgement, * **the thrones of the house of David.**

6 Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: * **"May they prosper who love you.**

7 Peace be within your walls * **and quietness within your towers.**

8 For my kindred and companions' sake, * **I pray for your prosperity.**

9 Because of the house of the Lord our God, * **I will seek to do you good."**

First Reading: A Reading from the Letter of Paul to the Ephesians (4:1-6)

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Second Reading: A Reading from the Gospel of Matthew (19:27-30)

Peter replied to Jesus, "Look, we have left everything and followed you. What then will we have?" Jesus said to his disciples, "Truly I tell you, at the renewal of all things, when the Son of Man is seated on the throne of his glory, you who have followed me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or children or fields, for my name's sake, will receive a hundredfold, and will inherit eternal life. But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first."

The Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Hilda of Whitby, Abbess, 680: "Hilda's career falls into two equal parts," wrote Bede, "for she spent thirty-three years nobly in secular habit, while she dedicated an equal number of years still more nobly to the Lord, in the monastic life." Hilda, born in 614, was the grandniece of King Edwin. She was instructed by Paulinus (one of the companions of Augustine of Canterbury) in the doctrines of Christianity in preparation for her baptism at the age of thirteen. She lived at the King's court for twenty years and then decided to enter the monastic life. She had hoped to join the convent of Chelles in Gaul, but Bishop Aidan was so impressed by her holiness of life that he recalled her to her home country, in East Anglia, to live in a small monastic settlement. One year after her return, she was appointed Abbess of Hartlepool. There, Hilda established the rule of life that she had been taught by Paulinus and Aidan. She became renowned for her wisdom, her eagerness for learning, and her devotion to God's service. Some years later, she founded the abbey at Whitby, where both nuns and monks lived in strict obedience to Hilda's rule of justice, devotion, chastity, peace, and charity. Known for her prudence and good sense, Hilda was sought out by kings and other public figures for advice and counsel. Several of her monks became bishops, and at least one pursued further studies in Rome. She encouraged the poet Caedmon, a servant at Whitby, to become a monk and to continue his inspired writing. All who knew her, Bede remarks, called her "mother." In 663, Whitby was the site of the famous synod convened to decide divisive questions involved in the differing traditions of Celtic Christians and the followers of Roman order. Hilda favored the Celtic position, but, when the Roman position prevailed, she was obedient to the synod's decision. Hilda died on November 17, 680, surrounded by her nuns and monks, whom, in her last hour, she urged to preserve the gospel of peace.