

## **Sunday, October 2, 2022 – Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost**

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### **Introduction**

A little faith goes a long way is Jesus' point in the gospel. A mustard seed's-worth of faith has miraculous potential. The patience, tenacity, and endurance required for the life of faith are the blessings received in holy baptism, holy communion, and the word read and proclaimed in this assembly. Anticipate them. Receive them with thanksgiving.

### **Prayer of the Day**

Benevolent, merciful God: When we are empty, fill us. When we are weak in faith, strengthen us. When we are cold in love, warm us, that with fervour we may love our neighbours and serve them for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen.**

### **First Reading: Lamentations 1:1-6**

*Jeremiah's announcement of destruction has become a reality. Now Judah is in exile in Babylon. The book of Lamentations contains five poems mourning the exile. In this passage, Jerusalem is portrayed as a widow with no one to comfort her.*

<sup>1</sup>How lonely sits the city  
that once was full of people!  
How like a widow she has become,  
she that was great among the nations!  
She that was a princess among the provinces  
has become a vassal.

<sup>2</sup>She weeps bitterly in the night,  
with tears on her cheeks;  
among all her lovers  
she has no one to comfort her;  
all her friends have dealt treacherously with her,  
they have become her enemies.

<sup>3</sup>Judah has gone into exile with suffering  
and hard servitude;  
she lives now among the nations,  
and finds no resting place;  
her pursuers have all overtaken her  
in the midst of her distress.

<sup>4</sup>The roads to Zion mourn,  
for no one comes to the festivals;

all her gates are desolate,  
her priests groan;  
her young girls grieve,  
and her lot is bitter.

<sup>5</sup>Her foes have become the masters,  
her enemies prosper,  
because the LORD has made her suffer  
for the multitude of her transgressions;  
her children have gone away,  
captives before the foe.

<sup>6</sup>From daughter Zion has departed  
all her majesty.  
Her princes have become like stags  
that find no pasture;  
they fled without strength  
before the pursuer.

## Psalm 137

<sup>1</sup>By the waters of Babylon we sat | down and wept,  
when we remembered | you, O Zion.

<sup>2</sup>**As for our harps, we | hung them up  
on the trees in the midst | of that land.**

<sup>3</sup>For those who led us away captive asked us for a song, and our oppressors | called for mirth:

“Sing us one of the | songs of Zion.”

<sup>4</sup>**How shall we sing | the LORD’s song  
upon an | alien soil?**

<sup>5</sup>If I forget you, | O Jerusalem,  
let my right hand for- | get its skill.

<sup>6</sup>**Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth if I do not re- | member you,  
if I do not set Jerusalem above my | highest joy.**

<sup>7</sup>Remember the day of Jerusalem, O LORD, against the peo- | ple of Edom,  
who said, “Down with it! down with it! even | to the ground!”

<sup>8</sup>**O daughter of Babylon, doomed | to destruction,  
happy shall they be who pay you back for what you have | done to us!**

<sup>9</sup>Happy shall they be who take your | little ones  
and dash them a- | gainst the rock!

## Second Reading: 2 Timothy 1:1-14

*This letter written to Timothy is a personal message of encouragement. In the face of hardship and persecution, Timothy is reminded that his faith is a gift of God. He is encouraged to exercise that faith with the help of the Holy Spirit.*

<sup>1</sup>Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus,

<sup>2</sup>To Timothy, my beloved child:

Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

<sup>3</sup>I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. <sup>4</sup>Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. <sup>5</sup>I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you. <sup>6</sup>For this reason I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; <sup>7</sup>for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.

<sup>8</sup>Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, <sup>9</sup>who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, <sup>10</sup>but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. <sup>11</sup>For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, <sup>12</sup>and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him. <sup>13</sup>Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. <sup>14</sup>Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us.

## **Gospel: Luke 17:5-10**

*On the way to Jerusalem, Jesus instructs his followers about the power of faith and the duties of discipleship. He calls his disciples to adopt the attitude of servants whose actions are responses to their identity rather than works seeking reward.*

<sup>5</sup>The apostles said to the Lord, "Increase our faith!" <sup>6</sup>The Lord replied, "If you had faith the size of a mustard seed, you could say to this mulberry tree, 'Be uprooted and planted in the sea,' and it would obey you.

<sup>7</sup>"Who among you would say to your slave who has just come in from plowing or tending sheep in the field, 'Come here at once and take your place at the table'? <sup>8</sup>Would you not rather say to him, 'Prepare supper for me, put on your apron and serve me while I eat and drink; later you may eat and drink'? <sup>9</sup>Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded? <sup>10</sup>So you also, when you have done all that you were ordered to do, say, 'We are worthless slaves; we have done only what we ought to have done!'"

## Prayers of Intercession

As scattered grains of wheat are gathered together into one bread, so let us gather our prayers for the church, those in need, and all of God's good creation, saying "God of grace," and responding, "hear our prayer."

*A brief silence.*

We pray for your holy church in every place and for those who serve following the example of Christ (*rostered and lay leaders may be named*). Help them to live by faith and walk by the light of your gospel. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For parts of the world ravaged by natural disaster (*especially*): relieve those affected by floods, wildfires, droughts, earthquakes, tornadoes, and hurricanes. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For every nation and for those entrusted with authority: grant our leaders self-discipline in all things, and inspire them with love for your people. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For victims of violence, abuse, and neglect: heal those who have been harmed and protect those who are vulnerable. For all who are sick (*especially*). God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

For this and every congregation: rekindle your gifts within your people, and inspire councils, committees, and individuals to plan and work together that all may know your love. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

In thanksgiving that you have abolished death, and for the saints who have died (*especially*). Bring us all to eternal life with you. God of grace, **hear our prayer.**

Gathered together in the sweet communion of the Holy Spirit, gracious God, we offer these and all our prayers to you; through Jesus Christ, our Savior.

**Amen.**

## ***A reflection for this Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost...***

### The Righteous Live by Faith

Faith is the theme for today's readings, but not just any faith. It is a life-transforming faith, one that demonstrates the very presence of God moving, alive, and active in God's people. In response to Habakkuk's oracle, the Lord answered him that "the righteous live by their faith" (Hab. 2:4b). But just what does it mean to be righteous? It's a righteousness imparted by God, who creates and claims each of us as God's own sons and daughters, bringing us into this family by our baptisms and by the faith God gives us makes us holy children. Being part of this divine family gives us our worth, even at those times we may not think of ourselves as worthy. In 2 Timothy, the author writes a history of the faith in Timothy's family, beginning with his grandmother and then passed on to his mother and himself. This is how many of us were first brought into the family of God: we had faithful parents who knew of their own God-given righteousness and then passed this gift on to their children. But again, it's all God's doing! Finally, Jesus' disciples boldly ask their teacher to "Increase our faith" (Luke 17:5). They knew that faith was something needed, and Jesus explains that even a small amount of faith can do great wonders. What does it mean to have this sort of faith, a faith that can serve God's purposes here to truly be God's work and yet it's done with our hands? On this Sunday, help the assembly experience this faith that God has given us. It's a gift and connection to our God.

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