

17th Sunday after Pentecost
Sunday, October 5, 2025

Introduction to the day

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

Let us pray.

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 fervor we may love our neighbors and serve them for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

FIRST READING: Habakkuk 1:1-4; 2:1-4

A reading from Habakkuk.

Injustice and violence in the time leading up to the Babylonian exile move this prophet to lament: How can a good and all-powerful God see evil in the world and seemingly remain indifferent? God answers by proclaiming that the righteous will live by faith.

PSALM: Psalm 37:1-9

Commit your way to the LORD; put your trust in the LORD. (Ps. 37:5)

SECOND READING: 2 Timothy 1:1-14

A reading from 2 Timothy.

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.

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.

GOSPEL MESSAGE - Faith beyond Measure

Matters of faith are sometimes tricky to comprehend. Faith is a relationship of trust in God. But how do we measure it? It is, by definition, unquantifiable. Of course, that does not stop us from trying. We want to grade our faith, and we look on the outside for signs of a high faith score.

How often do we mistake material success for God's blessing? It is tempting to look at other people and think they must be more faithful than we are because they have or do more than we do. But there is a flaw in that logic. Quite often, looks can be deceiving. We have all suffered disappointment a time or two (or ten!). Life sometimes deals us more than we can handle. We could have faith the size of a bowling ball, but sometimes things just don't work out.

Jesus' understanding of faith seems different from his disciples' or our own. He teaches the apostles that even the tiniest amount of faith possesses transformative power capable of altering entire realities. The "size" of faith is irrelevant.

God gives every one of us a seed of faith. It is a gift freely given, nurtured through baptism and communion. We build confidence in that faith through worship, prayer, and community. While we struggle to measure our faith, we can increase our confidence and willingness to act on it. When that confidence is low, we can lean on those around us. When it is high, we can strive to build up others, encouraging them in their own relationship with God.

God is calling all of us to be willing and confident servants, sending us out into the world to act on our faith. Like a giant, wild bush that grows from the tiniest seed, our faith can grow, spread, and thrive beyond measure.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Renewed in God's everlasting grace, let us pray for the church, the world, and all creation.

O God of the church, you give the church a treasure in Jesus Christ. Draw us into the gift of faith passed down from generation to generation. Remind your people that faith the size of a mustard seed is enough. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

O God of creation, you nourish the earth with grace and mercy. Bring favorable weather during the harvest season and sustain all creation along with all who labor in the field. Ensure the welfare of animal companions whose presence offers comfort, safety, and joy. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

O God of nations and communities, you govern and guard the world. Give leaders and people in authority a spirit of making just and righteous laws. Bring peace to countries affected by war and violence *especially* in Gaza and Ukraine. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

O God of those in need, you care for those who are sick, oppressed, bereaved, lonely, and poor. Come to the help of all in need especially Shirley Glickman, Donna L. Hoffman, Glenda Panke, Marilyn Schneider, Doug Sell, Debbie Thom, and those in long term care facilities and senior residences. Help us to trust that you will come to us at the right time. In this moment of silence, we name out loud or in the quiet of our hearts, those who need your healing touch. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

O God of this congregation, you nurture our faith. Thank you for those of all ages who teach, lead, and learn in this congregation and beyond. Give growth to the seeds of faith watered by faithful examples of baptismal living. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

O God of ages past, thank you for the witness of those who have died in faith. May the faith of those who now rest in your merciful arms, shape our faith in your Son, Jesus Christ. God of grace, **receive our prayer.**

We offer our prayers, O God, trusting in your everlasting grace and mercy, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

LORD'S PRAYER (ELW p. 191)

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

BLESSING

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace. Share the good news.

Thanks be to God.

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