



This week our worship shifts to the daily reality of persevering in faithfulness to the small actions that bring justice into our world. As hard as it can be when the justice we seek fails to come as quickly as we long for, giving up is not an option. But, if we can remain faithful, offering God our small seeds of faith, we become part of God's world-changing purpose.

INTRODUCTIONS

For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines

Lamentations 1:1-6, 3:19-26: While Jerusalem has been devastated and the people of Judah have been conquered – their former glory and pride lost in their humiliation, God remains compassionate, God's mercies are new every day, and those who remain can continue to wait for God's salvation.

OR **Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4**: Habakkuk complains about the corruption and injustice in the land, but is assured by God that God's purposes – a vision of restoration for God's people – will come to pass.

Psalm 137: A Psalm of grief for the destruction of Jerusalem and the exile of God's people.

OR **Psalm 37:1-9**: A warning not to envy or be angry at the success of evil doers, but to remain faithful and trusting of God, who will act on behalf of those who wait for God.

2 Timothy 1:1-14: Paul celebrates Timothy's ancestry in the faith, and encourages him to stay true to Paul's teachings about Christ and the way of Christ, even to the point of being prepared to suffer for the sake of the Gospel.

Luke 17:5-10: Jesus explains the immense impact that even small measures of faith can have, and encourages his followers not to expect reward for simply doing what should be considered their duty as they seek to serve God and follow Christ.

[Click here to view the readings](#)

http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Lamentations%201:%201-6%0Acw%20Psalm%20137:%201-6%0A2%20Timothy%201:%201-14%0ALuke%2017:%205-10

COLLECTS OF THE DAY

Collect One

O God,
forasmuch as without thee
we are not able to please thee;
Mercifully grant, that thy Holy Spirit
may in all things direct and rule our hearts;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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Collect Two

O God,
without you we are not able to please you;
Mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit
may in all things direct and rule our hearts;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Lord God Almighty, you hear the complaints of those who see never-ending cruel injustice. Remind us that evil will end, and that the righteous live by faith alone.
Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Holy Spirit, even as tears streak the cheeks of the one who grieves, so comfort all who are exiled or uprooted from homes they love, through storm, war, fire or foreclosure.
Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Holy Spirit, your Psalmist reminds us to refrain from anger and rage, for it leads to evil. Give us patience whenever we are wronged, that we may not react in a way that makes a problem worse.
Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Lord Jesus Christ, even as faith comes alive in us as your gift of the Holy Spirit, grant that we may joyfully use your gift of a living faith in our daily lives.
Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Lord Jesus, Master, when we ask you to "Increase our faith," you tell us to serve others, expect no thank you or reward, and to live as though we are available to God for any reason, at anytime. Master, help us live as your worthy slaves.
Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Holy Spirit, the world in its need, and sometimes in its greed, is always ready to be served. Help us serve you first, others second, and seek to live as obedient servants, always listening for your call.
Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

We bring before you, Lord Jesus, those with physical needs, in spiritual crisis, or mental anguish. Hear us as we name persons in need of prayer_____.
Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Listening God, hear our prayers. Amen.

POST COMMUNION

Holy and blessed God,
you feed us with the body and blood of your Son
and fill us with your Holy Spirit.
May we honour you,
not only with our lips but in lives dedicated
to the service of Jesus Christ our Lord.

PRAYERS

God of power and justice,
like Jeremiah you weep over those
who wander from you,
turn aside to other gods,
and enter into chaos and destruction.
By your tears and through your mercy,
teach us your ways
and write them on our hearts
so that we may follow faithfully
the path you show us. Amen.

Friends in Christ,
God invites us to hold the needs of our sisters and brothers
as dear to us as our own needs.
Loving our neighbors as ourselves,
we offer our thanksgivings and our petitions
on behalf of the church and the world.
Hear our prayers, God of power,
and through the ministry of your Son
free us from the grip of the tomb,
that we may desire you as the fullness of life
and proclaim your saving deeds to all the world. Amen.

As you heard the prayer of Isaac and Rebekah, O God,
and guided them in the way of your love,
so listen now to those who call upon you.
Move us to praise your gracious will,
for in Christ Jesus you have saved us from the deeds of death
and opened for us the hidden ways of your love.
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord God, friend of those in need,
your Son Jesus has untied our burdens
and healed our spirits.
We lift up the prayers of our hearts for those still burdened,
those seeking healing,
those in need within the church and the world.
Hear our prayers
that we may love you with our whole being
and willingly share the concerns of our neighbors. Amen.

Creator God,
you call us to love and serve you
with body, mind, and spirit
through loving your creation
and our sisters and brothers.
Open our hearts in compassion
and receive these petitions
on behalf of the needs of the church and the world.

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Holy One,
hear our prayers and make us faithful stewards
of the fragile bounty of this earth
so that we may be entrusted with the riches of heaven. Amen.
We praise your abiding guidance, O God,
for you sent us Jesus, our Teacher and Messiah,
to model for us the way of love for the whole universe.
We offer these prayers of love
on behalf of ourselves and our neighbors,
on behalf of your creation and our fellow creatures.

Loving God,
open our ears to hear your word
and draw us closer to you,
that the whole world may be one with you
as you are one with us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
God of mercy and healing,
you who hear the cries of those in need,
receive these petitions of your people
that all who are troubled
may know peace, comfort, and courage.

Life-giving God,
heal our lives,
that we may acknowledge your wonderful deeds
and offer you thanks from generation to generation
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of salvation,
who sent your Son to seek out and save what is lost,
hear our prayers
on behalf of those who are lost in our day,
receiving these petitions and thanksgivings
with your unending compassion.
Redeeming Sustainer,
visit your people
and pour out your strength and courage upon us,
that we may hurry to make you welcome
not only in our concern for others,
but by serving them
generously and faithfully in your name. Amen.

God, the refuge of wanderers and exiles,
the mother and father of the homeless,
you weep with those who are uprooted from their homeland,
and you suffer with those who exist without shelter and security.
Grant that your faithful love may reach out,
and that your healing mercy rise like the dawn
on all who are oppressed.
We ask this through Jesus, your Son,
who know hardship and died outside the city wall. Amen.

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God of all the ages,
you have revealed your grace
in our Savior, Jesus Christ.
As we wait patiently on your mercies,
strengthen us to live in your justice,
that with open hearts we may hear
and accomplish your will,
through Christ, who lights the way to life everlasting. Amen.

BENEDICTION

Go in peace,
and may God's arms surround you and embrace you,
may the Spirit fill your hearts with truth, beauty, and love,
and may Christ Jesus our Lord walk with you and guide your every step
both now and for evermore. Amen.

LECTIONARY NOTES

REFLECTIONS ON THEME:

The readings this week offer a fascinating juxtaposition of ideas. The Old Testament and Psalm readings all explore the pain and humiliation of God's people when they are defeated, conquered and exiled, and as they long for forgiveness restoration and salvation. Even Psalm 37 deals with similar issues, albeit in a more generalised way, speaking of the pain and confusion that arises when destructive or evil people prosper and the difficult work of faith and patience in God's action on behalf of those who trust God's ways.

The New Testament readings, on the other hand, explore the impact that a life of simple, ordinary faith can have, and the attitude of humble servanthood which expects no undue reward for simply living faithfully. In essence, both Testaments are saying the same thing this week.

In a world where bad things happen to good people, and where it often appears that the lawless and 'godless' get the best, it can be tough to live in faith and faithfulness. Justice can take a long time to come, and it can be tempting to use any means – however undesirable – to achieve what we long for. This applies even when our goal is to manifest God's reign. However, as we live in faithfulness, and pass our faith on to others who come after us, the small, ordinary acts of goodness and justice that we do each day, the small faithful commitments to our convictions that we renew each day, really do 'move mountains' and change the world, little by little, into a place where God's salvation is visibly revealed.

CONNECTING WITH LIFE:

GLOBAL APPLICATION: In the light of the huge challenges facing our world – hunger and poverty, human rights abuses, unequal distribution of resources, human trafficking, dread diseases, environmental degradation, conflict and war – it is easy to get frustrated and impatient, and it is extremely tempting to embrace any strategy that gets results. The danger here, though, is that we can too easily become what we seek to overcome, and our efforts, which may appear successful in the short term, leave us in deeper trouble in the long term. Think, for example, about the food shortages and rising food prices which arose as a result of the growth of the biofuels industry. Two important principles that the lectionary offers us this week are 1) the power of small acts of goodness and justice, and 2) the need to think systemically and long term, waiting at the "guard post on the wall" (to

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use Habakkuk's image) to observe, nurture and cooperate with any manifestations of God's reign that emerge. In the world of big business, big politics, and powerful lobby groups, such long term thinking can be frustrating, but, as demonstrated by Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. and Nelson Mandela (it must have taken faith to spend 27 years in jail and then still embrace dialogue as a valid process to end apartheid) such faithful, consistent and just living does result in significant change. What long term commitments to justice can you embrace or renew in your community this week?

LOCAL APPLICATION: Perhaps the best focus, on the local level, this week, is the power of small, ordinary, "everyday" acts of justice. When we refuse to live according to the expedient, self-centred, materialist values of the society around us, it may appear to have no impact, and we may feel like we become nothing more than a laughing stock – a people in exile, suffering for what may sometimes feel like foolish and ineffectual convictions, while those around us "live it up" and succeed. The promise of the Scriptures, though, is that such alternative living does have an impact – a significant one – and also has lasting value – becoming the heritage of faith and goodness that is passed down through generations and across communities. The reassurance this gives is that our suffering is not in vain, and that our faithfulness is useful to God. In our "instant gratification" society, such perseverance and endurance is hard and counter-cultural, but is a powerful witness to the Gospel. Where has your church's commitment to "everyday justice" grown tired or weak? In what ways do you need to renew your commitment to persevere? What alternate living choices do you need to make or renew together? To whom can your faith heritage be passed on? What can you do to inspire and sustain small, long term, commitments in your community this week?

SERMON OUTLINE

Luke 17: 5-10 Increase our faith!

Jesus had been teaching the disciples about the importance of faith & putting faith into practice daily...

1. The Right Approach 5-6:– as 5 *The apostles said to the Lord, 'Increase our faith!*

They were learning all the time they were with Jesus – wonderful lessons of God's love in practice – truly inspirational! What a privilege! So they ask – as did **Oliver Twist** in the workhouse in Charles Dickens' novel of 1838 - ***'Please, sir, I want some more.'***

So the disciples ask *'Increase our faith!* But Jesus says that it wasn't *more faith* they needed but the right kind of faith... Even the smallest amount of faith *the size of a* mustard seed* can achieve remarkable results – a mulberry tree – noted for its deep roots – will *be uprooted & planted in the sea* – truly remarkable indeed!

2. The Right Attitude 7-9:- that of humble service. Servants shouldn't expect special praise or recognition for doing work they were told to do! Would a master ever expect anything else from his servants but to serve faithfully & loyally? ⁹*Do you thank the slave for doing what was commanded?* Would the master ever thin of saying *"Come here at once & take your place at the table"*? Let me serve you! It wouldn't happen!

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3. The Right Action 10:- simply to do our duty faithfully..

Cf **Admiral Nelson** at Trafalgar (1805): England expects that every man will do his duty - & after the battle:- *Thank God I have done my duty.* Cf **BCP Catechism Duties & Scout/ Guide Duties...** May we too be able to say at the end:- *we have only done our duty* (NIV) - *we have done only v10 what we ought to have done!* ’

By Norman Porteous

ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

An Act of Love - By Canon Frank Logue, Episcopal Church - Sermons that work. Good use of life and witness of Francis of Assisi to lead into teaching...”there is no getting around the fact that the Bible knows nothing of professional clergy serving a congregation. The Bible teaches that all Christians are ministers of the Bible by virtue of their baptism. “

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2016/08/23/an-act-of-love-proper-22c/>

"[Increase Our Faith,](http://day1.org/1062-increase_our_faith)" the Rev. Dr. Kenneth Carter, Day 1

http://day1.org/1062-increase_our_faith

Keeping the faith in Babylon. Rockies net

<http://www.rockies.net/~spirit/sermons/c-or27-keeping.php>

"Lord Jesus, Give Us a Sticker!" the Rev. Dr. Chris Tuttle (PCUSA), Day 1

http://day1.org/5225-lord_jesus_give_us_a_sticker

CHILDREN

[Worshiping with Children](http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2010/09/year-c-27th-sunday-of-ordinary.html), Ordinary 27C (World Communion Sunday), Including children in the congregation's worship, using the Revised Common Lectionary, Carolyn C. Brown

<http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2010/09/year-c-27th-sunday-of-ordinary.html>

"[Exercising Your Faith,](http://www.sermons4kids.com/faith_exercise.html)" Children's Sermon from Sermons4kids.com.

http://www.sermons4kids.com/faith_exercise.html

"[Sermon of the Week,](http://www.sermons4kids.com/)" / "[Mensajes para ninos,](http://www.sermons4kids.com/)" Sermons 4 Kids, Charles Kirkpatrick, Object Lessons & Children's Sermons, Coloring Pages, Puzzles. Sermons4Kids.com.

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/>

"Different But The Same," On the Chancel Steps, children's resources by Frances Woodruff

<https://onthechancelsteps.wordpress.com/2013/09/22/same/>