

**Sunday 5 October 2025,
The Sixteenth Sunday after Trinity**

Collect:

Lord of creation,
whose glory is around and within us:
open our eyes to your wonders,
that we may serve you with reverence
and know your peace at our lives' end,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for this week:

Habakkuk 1:1-4, 2:1-4; Psalm 37:1-9; 2 Timothy 1:1-4; Luke 17:5-10

We have no date for the ministry of the prophet Habakkuk; however, scholars have gleaned from indications in the text that his words are most probably related to the closing decades of the Assyrian Empire (625-612 BCE). The book opens directly with the prophet's first complaint to the Lord (1:1-4), then our reading jumps to God's second response (2:1-4). Habakkuk is most concerned that evil is in the ascendancy and that the wicked are dominating the good. God's reply favours the righteous who live by faith – they will prevail over evil. Verse 2:4 can be discerned in Romans 1:17, Galatians 3:11 and Hebrews 10:37-38. The righteous are those who are faithful, steadfast, in applying God's law to all aspects of their lives and thus become fulfilled and valuable members of the covenant community. Psalm 37 reinforces the value of such righteousness, while Paul's opening words from his Second Letter to Timothy follow through on the theme of steadfast faithfulness.

Timothy is disturbed: we get hints that he is having a tough time in his ministry and is struggling to keep going. Paul opens his letter with an affectionate greeting to his protégé then quickly moves straight on to forcefully remind Timothy of the faith and good example that was passed on to him by his grandmother and mother. Having steeled Timothy's backbone with examples from his family history, Paul exhorts him to stand up to those who are causing him difficulties, to be bold in the name of Christ and to trust in the Spirit's guidance.

Jesus is confronted with a similar weakness of faith from his dithering disciples and responds with a hint of exasperation. The disciples demand that Jesus increase their faith. His reply reminds them that faith is not a commodity that can be passed from one person to another like spare tickets to a concert. Faith can't be bought, you grow it, aided by the encouragement of your community and it demands your complete devotion, your all, not simply what you can spare. However, when you steadfastly apply it to every aspect of your life, it offers true rewards, lasting fruit, a vindication for righteousness.

Almighty God,
you have taught us through your Son
that love is the fulfilling of the law:
grant that we may love you with our whole heart
and our neighbours as ourselves;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Readings for next week:

2 Kings 5:1-13, 7:1-5; Psalm 111; 2 Timothy 2:8-15; Luke 17:11-19
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