

Church of the Divine Love
TWENTY-FOURTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST
NOVEMBER 12, 2023 7:00 PM
HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II

Prayer before worship – on insert

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (sung) page 356

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Amos 5:18-24**

Psalm 70

Second Lesson: **1 Thessalonians 4:13-18**

Gradual Hymn #

Gospel: **Matthew 25:1-13**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze (printed on insert)

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form VI page 392

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #

Doxology (sung)

The Great Thanksgiving:	
Eucharistic Prayer A	page 361
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	page 367
Hymn during Consecration printed on insert	
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn #	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
Prayer for Peace – on insert	
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn #	
Dismissal	

Sermon Sunday November 12, 2023

Amos 5:18-24; Psalm 70; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Matthew 25:1-13.

Sisters and brothers in Christ,

Where is there light in your life and the world today? And where is there darkness in your life and the world today? What do you see when you look into the lamp of your life? Is it full of oil, running out, or empty? Is the oil fresh or has it become rancid? Is your lamp burning brightly or is it growing dim?

Light or darkness, full or empty lamps, fresh or rancid oil are not about what is happening around us, the circumstances of our life and world, but about what is happening within us. They are metaphors for our spiritual condition, our inner way of being. It would be so easy to divide and categorize the ten bridesmaids into two groups: the wise and foolish, the prepared and unprepared, the good and bad, the winners and losers, the welcomed and rejected. More often than not that's what we do to ourselves and each other. To divide and categorize the ten bridesmaids, however, is to forget, ignore, or misunderstand what today's gospel says. All ten bridesmaids were a part of the kingdom. All ten were invited to the wedding banquet. All ten went to meet the bridegroom. All ten become drowsy and fell asleep. All ten

had lamps. All ten were meant, intended, and called to be carriers of the light. The only difference is that some carried light and others did not. And that is true for every one of us. We also are meant to be carriers of the light. "You are the light of the world," Jesus says earlier in Matthew's account of the gospel (Matthew 5:14). "Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5:16). To withhold our light is to add darkness to the world.

This parable teaches us a number of important lessons. First, it teaches us the importance of being prepared for the return of Jesus Christ. Jesus said that he would return one day, but he did not say when. Therefore, we must always be ready for his return. Second, this parable teaches us the importance of being wise. The wise bridesmaids in the parable were wise because they brought extra oil for their lamps. They knew that the bridegroom might be delayed, so they wanted to be prepared. We too need to be wise in our preparation for the return of Jesus Christ. We need to have a strong faith in him and we need to live our lives in a way that is pleasing to him. Third, this parable teaches us the importance of being watchful. The foolish bridesmaids in the parable fell asleep while they were waiting for the bridegroom. When he arrived, they were not ready for him. We too need to be watchful for the return of Jesus Christ. We need to be aware of the signs of his coming and we need to be prepared to meet him.

How can we apply the lessons of this parable to our lives today? Here are a few suggestions: Make sure that your faith in Jesus Christ is strong. The more we know about Jesus and the more we love him, the more prepared we will be for his return. Live your life in a way that is pleasing to Jesus. This means obeying his commands and following his example. Be watchful for the signs of Jesus's return. The Bible tells us that there will be certain signs that will precede his return, such as wars, earthquakes, and famines. We need to be aware of these signs so that we are not caught off guard when Jesus returns.

Every day we either add to the light of the world or we add to its darkness. I know that because I've seen it in my own life. Maybe you've seen it in your life too. When I break relationships; turn away from the needs, concerns, or hopes of another; or act as if I have no need of him or her; my world becomes darker. And when I remain open and receptive, soften my heart, and recommit to love my neighbor as myself, a new light begins to shine. When I carry grudges and resentments, nurse old offenses, or refuse another forgiveness, I add to the darkness. But when I offer mercy, forgiveness, and seek reconciliation, I let my light shine in the world.

When, in my marriage or other relationships, I put myself at the center, act as if I am sovereign, give priority to my needs and desires, I am living in a dark place. But when my concern is for the other, I make him or her a priority in my life, and I act as if he or she truly matters, I add to the light of the world. When I think, speak, or act with violence; deny another's dignity; act with indifference to another's well-being, I darken this world. But when I turn the other cheek, work for justice, recognize the dignity of every human being, I add to the light of the world. When I get stuck in my way as the right way or the only way, assume I know more and better than others, close myself to new truths, ideas, or possibilities, I stand in a darkness of my own making. But when I recognize my need of others; let go of comparisons,

competition, and judgments; risk not being in control or having all the answers I begin to see the world in a new light, and new possibilities arise.

What do you see when you look at your life and world today? When I look at my life and world today, I see light. And when I look at my life and world today, I see darkness. I suspect that's true for you as well. None of us are all light or all darkness. We're all a mixture of both. Some days I add light to the world and other days I add darkness. I don't think the question is whether there is darkness today in our life and world. There is. The question is this: What are you doing about it? What am I doing about it? Every time I live in that dark place, every time I add darkness to the world, I betray the gospel of Jesus, myself, and the values I claim to hold. And when I do, I have to justify that betrayal. I blame, criticize, and refuse to look at myself. It's someone else's fault. They got what they deserved. I didn't do anything wrong.

And in that moment, I no longer know myself. I am no longer the light carrier I want to be or that God created me to be. No wonder Jesus says to the five bridesmaids, "I do not know you." He's speaking to the darkened part in each of our lives. It's not so much a rejection as it is a call to discover the light within us, a call to let our light shine. What does that mean and look like for you today? How's your oil level? And if you're a quart low, what are you doing about that? What's going on in the lamp of your life? The world needs your light. There is not a person or a place in our world today that is not in need of light. Your light makes a difference. You can push back the darkness with your light of love, hope, healing, forgiveness, gentleness, compassion. The light of Christ is already within you. "You are the light of the world. "Let's leave this place today, face our darkness, and shine our light. For it is God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness" (2 Corinthians 4:6).

The parable of the ten virgins is a warning to us all. It teaches us the importance of being prepared for the return of Jesus Christ. We need to be wise, watchful, and faithful. If we are prepared, we will be able to enter into the wedding feast with the bridegroom. But if we are not prepared, we will be left outside. May God help us to be prepared for the return of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

There are envelopes containing stewardship letters and pledge cards. If you did not receive one last week, please take one. Return by December 3rd.

24 PENTECOST 10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II (also on zoom)
COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

MONDAY 8:30 PM AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY	7:00 PM	AL-ANON MEETING	
THURSDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFT SHOP	
	8:30 AM	AA MEETING	
SAURDAY	10AM-2PM	THRIFTSHOP	
25 PENTECOST	10:15AM	HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II	(also on zoom)
		COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS	

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Deb Giordano	Anthony Giordano
Coffee Hour	Jess Berbeck	Giordanos

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN

PARISH PRAYER LIST

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Grace Schinella	Lourdes S.	Jess
Bob Curley	Michael & Family	Art

Chris Dickson	Kate Jones	Deb P.
Michael Echevarria	John Rocco	Judy
Christopher	Warren	Kristen
Charlotte H.	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Mo	Phil Ryder	Carolyn
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del
Robert Hosey	Robert Sweat	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Carol K.
Mary & Family	Ciara	Dennis L.
Nathan Treadwell	Vincent	

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disasters.

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.
Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

Prayer before Worship

Almighty God, who pours out on all who desire it, the spirit of grace. Deliver us, when we draw near to you, from coldness of heart and wanderings of mind, that with steadfast thoughts and kindled affections we may worship you in spirit and in truth; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,

Lay my life before you,

How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus
and third verse starting with Spirit.

Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn

but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So
mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that

all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince
of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions
and glory, now and for ever. Amen