Third Sunday Before Advent, Year A, 08.11.2020

Welcome, notices, birthdays

*On screen before the service:*

*Matthew 25.1-13*

* *Jesus tells a parable about ten bridesmaids waiting for the groom – but are they ready?*
* *Half of the bridesmaids have oil for their lamps, the other half do not.*
* *When the groom arrives, those with no oil go to buy some, but miss their moment.*

**Welcome and introduction**

Lord Jesus, friend and teacher,  
in the morning and at night,   
**you are our strength.**  
In light and in darkness,  
**you are our hope.**  
Today and tomorrow,  
**you are our stability.**  
When we are wise, and when we are foolish,  
**you are our guide.**  
In life and in death,  
**you are our saviour.**  
**Amen.**

**Hymn Come, now is the time to worship**

*Come, now is the time to worship  
Come, now is the time to give your heart  
Come, just as you are to worship  
Come, just as you are before your God. Come*  
  
One day every tongue will confess you are God  
One day every knee will bow  
Still the greatest treasure remains for those who gladly choose you now

Prayer of Confession

When we do not take the oil of kindness   
to those who are hurting: **Father, forgive**.

When we do not take the oil of encouragement   
to those who are downhearted: **Father, forgive**.

When we do not take the oil of friendship   
to those who are lonely: **Father, forgive**.

When we do not take the oil of hope   
to those in despair: **Father, forgive**.

When we do not take the oil of the gospel   
to those who have not heard it:  
**Father, forgive us in Jesus’ name**.  
**Amen**.

**The Absolution**

May almighty God have mercy on us,

forgive us our sins and bring us to everlasting life. **Amen.**

**The****Collect***, the special prayer for today*

God, our refuge and strength, bring near the day when wars shall cease  
and poverty and pain shall end, that earth may know the peace of heaven  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## The Reading Matthew 25: 1-13

Jesus spoke this parable to the disciples: ‘The kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, “Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.” Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the wise replied, “No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.” And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, “Lord, lord, open to us.” But he replied, “Truly I tell you, I do not know you.” Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.’

Address

**Hymn I believe in Jesus**

I believe in Jesus  
I believe He is the Son of God  
I believe He died and rose again  
I believe He paid for us all  
And I believe He is here now  
Standing in our midst  
Here With the power to heal now  
And the grace to forgive

I believe in You, Lord  
I believe You are the Son of God  
I believe You died and rose again  
I believe You paid for us all.  
And I believe You're here now  
Standing in our midst  
Here With the power to heal now  
And the grace to forgive

**Bless the Gifts**

Lord Jesus, you gave everything for us.  
With these our gifts, we offer you all that we have, and are, and will be,  
praying that our church, and our mission,  
may reach out so that others may come to share in your risen life.

**Amen.**

**Prayers**

We light a candle for the Church of God. > SILENCE.

Keep us attentive and alert;   
ready to make the most of every opportunity to grow in faith,   
to share the hope we find in you   
and to witness to your love in acts of kindness and hospitality.

Lighten our darkness, Lord we pray:   
**make us ready to greet you.**

We light a candle for God’s creation. > SILENCE.

Give us wisdom to seek you,   
and courage to work for the coming of your kingdom,   
when justice will roll down like waters,   
and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.

Lighten our darkness, Lord we pray:   
**make us ready to greet you.**

We light a candle for our community. > SILENCE.

May we encourage one another   
with life-giving words of hope,   
and put into action the words   
that reflect our readiness to serve you,   
and one another, in love.

Lighten our darkness, Lord we pray:   
**make us ready to greet you.**

We light a candle for those in need. > SILENCE.

Lord, we know that you rejoice with those who celebrate   
and share the grief of those who are sorrowing.   
Make us attentive to the needs of those around us,   
and attentive to your word of life.

Lighten our darkness, Lord we pray:   
**make us ready to greet you.  
Amen.**

*We sing the* ***Lord’s* *Prayer***

**Our Father who art in heaven HBTN**

**Thy kingdom come thy will be done HBTN**

**On earth as it is in heaven HBTN**

**Give us this day our daily bread HBTN**

**Forgive us all our trespasses HBTN**

**As we forgive those who trespass against us HBTN**

**And lead us not into temptation HBTN**

**But deliver us from all that is evil HBTN**

**For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory HBTN**

**For ever and for ever and ever HBTN**

**Blessing**

Be wise when others are foolish; patient when others rush;  
confident when others are cautious;  
and may God’s love be the oil that keeps your lamp burning   
through this coming week and always.

**Amen.**

**The Peace**

The peace of the Lord be always with you

**and also with you.**

**Hymn These are the days of Elijah**

These are the days of Elijah declaring the word of the Lord:  
And these are the days of your servant Moses righteousness being restored  
And though these are days of great trial, of famine and darkness and sword  
Still, we are the voice in the desert crying 'Prepare ye the way of the Lord!'  
  
*Behold He comes riding on the clouds, shining like the sun at the trumpet call;  
Lift your voice, it's the year of jubilee and out of Zion's hill salvation comes*  
  
And these are the days of Ezekiel the dry bones becoming as flesh;  
And these are the days of your servant David rebuilding a temple of praise  
And these are the days of the harvest, the fields are as white in your world  
And we are the labourers in your vineyard, declaring the word of the Lord!