

WEEKDAY WORSHIP

November 6-12, 2017

Worship as encounter with the living God cannot be limited to one hour per week. "Weekday Worship" invites you to extend your worship beyond the sanctuary, to hear the story of the Bible as your story, lived out each day of each week. Feedback is appreciated and should be directed to Rita Boyer.

BIBLE READING

This week's reading is: Matthew 25:1–13 (<http://bible.oremus.org/?ql=375348743>)

Other readings are: Joshua 24:1–3a, 14–25; Psalm 78:1–7; 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

The theme is: Be Ready

This week we continue reading a portion of the "judgment speech" that Jesus shared with his followers. This portion deals with the coming judgment. Scholars are divided over whether this story should be read as a parable (leading the hearer to an unexpected truth about the Kingdom of God) or an allegory (offering characters and events that have very particular symbolic meanings). The story conveys the importance of preparedness, even when the event for which one is preparing is delayed. Each of the ten bridesmaids falls asleep while waiting for the bridegroom. By the time the groom arrives, the bridesmaids' lamps have gone out. Five of the bridesmaids are prepared with a supply of oil, while the remaining five have nothing to refill their lamps. Since the "wise" bridesmaids refuse to share their oil, the "foolish" bridesmaids need to go to town in search of oil, thereby missing the banquet. When the shoppers return, the bridegroom will not let them into the celebration, saying he does not know them. According to Jewish tradition, oil stands for good deeds or acts of righteousness. An allegorical interpretation of the story would suggest that good deeds or righteousness cannot be shared or borrowed. According to this interpretation, this is not a story about preparedness but rather about putting faith into action each and every moment. While we wait for the fulfillment of God's realm, we are each responsible to show God's activity in our words and actions.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

"Questions to Consider" enable you to connect your story to the biblical story. Rather than easy questions to be answered at first glance, these questions or reflections can be returned to and meditated upon throughout the week.

Believing that Jesus' return was soon, the early church had a sense of urgency.

Today we laugh at those who prepare for an immanent "end" to the world, but

how might we live differently if we shared that sense of urgency?

Continue to reflect upon the worship theme of November 5:

Give thanks for the saints remembered last Sunday.

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