# 🪔 KEEP YOUR LAMPS BURNING

A Weekly Devotional & Bible Study

November 9–14, 2026

Ridge Avenue United Methodist Church Pastor Kabrene Pittman

Sermon Scripture: Matthew 25:1–13 (KJV)

Weekly Theme: Don't Miss Your Midnight Moment: Does the Church Have Enough Oil for Everyone?

## Introduction: Keeping the Light Burning

In Matthew 25:1–13, Jesus tells the parable of ten bridesmaids waiting for the arrival of the bridegroom. All ten carried lamps. All ten were waiting. All ten became sleepy. But when the midnight announcement came, only five had brought enough oil to be ready.

This parable challenges us to consider our spiritual preparedness, but it also invites the modern church to examine how we help others prepare for life's unexpected moments.

Our guiding question this week is:

Does the church have enough oil for everyone, and how can we help others prepare for their midnight moment?

In the original parable, the oil cannot simply be transferred from one person to another. Readiness cannot be borrowed at the last minute. Yet the church can help people cultivate faith, develop spiritual habits, experience God's grace, and prepare before the midnight hour arrives.

Each day's devotional includes scripture, biblical background, a spiritual lesson, practical application, reflection questions, and prayer.

## Monday, November 9, 2026

## Day 1: Everybody Has a Lamp, but Is Everybody Ready?

Scripture: Matthew 25:1–4 (KJV)

Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

Biblical and Historical Background

Jesus uses the familiar imagery of a wedding celebration in the ancient Jewish world. The bridegroom's arrival was an important part of the celebration, and those waiting needed lamps to participate in the procession.

All ten bridesmaids looked prepared from the outside, but five had neglected to bring extra oil.

Today's Lesson

Church attendance, religious traditions, and outward appearances do not automatically mean that we are spiritually prepared.

A lamp represents visible participation, but the oil reminds us of the preparation that sustains us when life becomes difficult.

Life Application

We may own Bibles, attend worship, and know the hymns, but are we nurturing a living relationship with God?

Consider how the church can help people move beyond simply attending worship to growing in discipleship.

Reflection Questions

- What does my spiritual lamp look like today?
- Am I relying on outward religious activity or cultivating an active faith?
- How can our congregation help someone begin developing spiritual habits?

Closing Prayer

Lord, help us recognize the difference between appearing ready and actually being prepared. Strengthen our faith and teach us to live each day in expectation of Your presence. Amen.

## Tuesday, November 10, 2026

## Day 2: What Happens When Midnight Comes?

Supporting Scripture: Psalm 46:1–3 (KJV)

God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

Biblical Background

Psalm 46 is a song of confidence in God's protection amid instability and danger. Its images of shaking mountains and troubled waters describe circumstances that seem beyond human control.

The psalmist reminds God's people that divine help remains available even when everything familiar feels uncertain.

Today's Lesson

Midnight is not always twelve o'clock.

Sometimes midnight is an unexpected diagnosis, a lost job, a financial crisis, a troubled marriage, a grieving family, or a season of loneliness.

These are moments when we discover what has been sustaining our faith.

Life Application

The church must become a community where people know they can seek prayer, encouragement, practical assistance, and spiritual guidance before a crisis arrives.

We cannot prevent every midnight, but we can help people discover that they do not have to face it alone.

Reflection Questions

- What has been a midnight moment in my life?
- How did my faith help me through it?
- How can our church respond when someone experiences an unexpected crisis?

Closing Prayer

God, when the ground beneath us seems to shake, remind us that You are our refuge. Give us courage in difficult seasons and compassion for others facing their own midnight moments. Amen.

## Wednesday, November 11, 2026

## Day 3: You Cannot Borrow Someone Else's Faith

Scripture: Matthew 25:5–9 (KJV)

And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil; for our lamps are gone out.

Biblical Background

When the bridegroom's arrival was announced, the five unprepared bridesmaids requested oil from the others.

The wise bridesmaids explained that there would not be enough for everyone if they divided their supply.

The parable emphasizes the importance of personal readiness rather than suggesting that Christians should refuse to help people in need.

Today's Lesson

Someone can pray with you, teach you, encourage you, and walk beside you, but no one can maintain your relationship with God for you.

Faith requires personal participation.

Life Application

Parents cannot live their children's faith for them. Pastors cannot practice every member's discipleship for them. A congregation cannot depend solely on the spiritual preparation of its leadership.

The church can provide opportunities for growth through worship, Bible study, prayer partnerships, mentoring, and acts of service.

Reflection Questions

- Am I depending too heavily on someone else's spiritual life?
- What personal spiritual discipline do I need to strengthen?
- How can I encourage another person to develop their own relationship with God?

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, teach us to seek You personally. Help us grow beyond borrowed faith into a mature relationship with You. Give us wisdom to encourage others on their spiritual journeys. Amen.

## Thursday, November 12, 2026

## Day 4: Is Your Light Helping Somebody Else?

Supporting Scripture: Matthew 5:14–16 (KJV)

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

Biblical and Historical Background

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches His disciples that their faith should be visible through good works. In first-century Galilee, lamps illuminated homes and helped people navigate the darkness.

Jesus uses light to describe the public witness of those who follow Him.

Today's Lesson

Our light was never meant to shine only for ourselves.

The church's mission is not simply to keep its own lamps burning, but to help others discover the source of spiritual light.

We cannot manufacture another person's faith, but we can introduce them to Christ.

Life Application

At Ridge Avenue UMC, this may mean welcoming a visitor, inviting a neighbor to worship, helping a struggling family, or making time to listen to someone who feels forgotten.

The question is not merely whether our sanctuary has light, but whether that light reaches beyond the sanctuary doors.

Reflection Questions

- Who has helped keep the light of faith burning in my life?
- What practical act of love can I offer someone this week?
- How can our congregation make discipleship more accessible to our community?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, make us a church whose light reaches beyond our walls. May our words, actions, and service point others toward Your love. Amen.

## Friday, November 13, 2026

## Day 5: Prepare the Next Generation

Supporting Scripture: Psalm 78:1–7 (KJV)

That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children.

Biblical Background

Psalm 78, attributed to Asaph, calls God's people to remember His mighty works and teach them to future generations.

The psalm emphasizes that faith is not intended to disappear when one generation passes away. God's people have a responsibility to share the story of His faithfulness.

Today's Lesson

A church concerned about keeping its lamps burning must also consider who is learning to carry the light.

Spiritual preparation involves teaching children, encouraging young adults, mentoring new believers, and creating opportunities for every generation to participate in ministry.

Life Application

What would happen if every experienced Christian committed to encouraging one person who is still growing in faith?

The church can provide opportunities for intergenerational prayer, scripture reading, mentoring, and service.

The goal is not simply preserving yesterday's traditions, but helping tomorrow's disciples develop their own living faith.

Reflection Questions

- Who taught me about God's faithfulness?
- What spiritual lessons am I passing to the next generation?
- How can our church include children, youth, and new believers in meaningful ministry?

Closing Prayer

Faithful God, thank You for those who taught us Your Word. Help us share Your love and truth with future generations so that their faith may grow strong. Amen.

## Saturday, November 14, 2026

## Day 6: Keep Watch, Keep Hope, Keep Encouraging

Supporting Scripture: 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 (KJV)

Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

Biblical and Geographical Background

The Apostle Paul wrote to Christians in Thessalonica, an important city in ancient Macedonia, located in present-day Greece.

Members of the early church were concerned about believers who had died before Christ's return.

Paul reassured them that Christian hope extends beyond death and encouraged them to comfort one another with the promise of Christ's return.

This passage connects directly to the expectation and readiness emphasized in Matthew 25.

Today's Lesson

Spiritual preparation is not supposed to produce fear. It should inspire faithful living, enduring hope, and mutual encouragement.

The wise bridesmaids were ready when the bridegroom arrived.

Likewise, Christians are called to live faithfully while awaiting Christ's return.

But we do not have to wait in isolation. We are part of a community called to strengthen and encourage one another.

Life Application

As we prepare for another week, consider what it means to become a congregation that encourages readiness rather than fear.

We can teach God's Word, pray together, comfort the grieving, welcome questions, and remind people of God's promises.

Our task is not to predict midnight. Our task is to remain faithful while we wait.

Reflection Questions

- Does my understanding of Christ's return inspire hope or fear?
- How can I encourage someone whose faith has grown weak?
- What can our congregation do this coming week to help people prepare spiritually?

Closing Prayer

Lord, teach us to live with hope and expectation. Help us encourage the discouraged, strengthen the weary, and remain faithful in every season. May our lamps continue burning as we await Your coming. Amen.

## Weekly Sermon Review

## Does the Church Have Enough Oil for Everyone?

Throughout this week's study, we have examined six important lessons.

| Day | Spiritual lesson | Scripture |
|---|---|---|

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Monday | Genuine spiritual preparation | Matthew 25:1–4 |
| Tuesday | Trusting God in midnight moments | Psalm 46:1–3 |
| Wednesday | Developing personal faith | Matthew 25:5–9 |
| Thursday | Sharing the light of Christ | Matthew 5:14–16 |
| Friday | Preparing future generations | Psalm 78:1–7 |
| Saturday | Waiting with hope and encouragement | 1 Thessalonians 4:13–18 |

## A Final Thought From Pastor Kabrene Pittman

The question, “Does the church have enough oil for everyone?” challenges us to think beyond ourselves.

In Jesus’ parable, the wise bridesmaids could not transfer their preparedness to those who were unprepared.

But today, the church has an opportunity to help people prepare before midnight.

We can teach before the questions become crises. We can pray before the burdens become overwhelming. We can build relationships before someone feels alone. We can share the Gospel before someone begins searching for hope in the darkness.

We cannot live someone else’s faith, but we can help them discover the One who sustains it.

And when the midnight cry comes, may we be a people who have lived faithfully, loved generously, and encouraged others to prepare.

## Closing Congregational Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for the light of Jesus Christ.

Teach us to be spiritually prepared, not through fear, but through faithfulness.

Help Ridge Avenue United Methodist Church become a place where people are welcomed, encouraged, taught, and strengthened.

When midnight moments arrive, remind us that You remain our refuge and our hope.

May our lamps continue burning, our hearts remain open, and our witness shine brightly in the world.

In the name of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, we pray. Amen.

Ridge Avenue United Methodist Church You Are Welcome at Ridge Sunday Worship: 10:00 AM in the Sanctuary

Weekly Devotional and Bible Study | November 9–14, 2026 | Prepared for the sermon “Keep Your Lamps Burning,” November 8, 2026.