



Sunday
12-Nov-2023

A very warm welcome is extended to all visitors to St Johns. Morning tea is offered after the service today, so please stay and enjoy.

Keep Awake

Scripture reading: Matthew 25:1-13 (New International Version)



The Parable of the Ten Virgins

25 “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. ² Five of them were foolish and five were wise. ³ The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. ⁴ The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. ⁵ The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep.

⁶ “At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’

⁷ “Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. ⁸ The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.’

⁹ “‘No,’ they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’

¹⁰ “But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut.

¹¹ “Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’

¹² “But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I don’t know you.’

¹³ “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

Sunday

19-Nov-2023

THIS WEEK

Theme: TBC

From: 12-Nov-2023

Scripture readings: Matthew 25:14-30

To: 19-Nov-2023

Prayer points:

- For peace and restoration of stability in Israel, Ukraine and other regions experiencing unrest;
- For Jane's health;
- For Brenda's health;
- For Felicity's recovery;
- For violence and crime to be subdued in our country.
- For those who have had major surgery and are recovering;
- For support for all those who have lost loved ones, homes and/or livelihoods in the recent natural disasters.

Pastoral Reflection

Hello, friends, who love St Johns,

This is week's gospel reading is the beginning of four consecutive parables Matthew records as a part of Jesus' final discourse. Brace yourself because I believe these few readings are going to be very challenging for us. I personally struggle with this week's parable. Every time I read it; it provokes awkward and uncomfortable questions for me: why do the bridesmaids have to bring their own light to a wedding reception? Why are the "wise" bridesmaids stingy and mean? Why doesn't the groom show up for his own wedding until midnight? Why does the bride — whoever she is — put up with such a ridiculous delay? Where even *is* the bride in this story? And why, after keeping his poor bridesmaids waiting for hours, does the groom blame *them* for lateness — and shut his door in their faces? If the flaw of the bridesmaids is not that they fell asleep why are they told to keep awake?

All the awkward and challenging elements, however, help to heighten the contrast between the wise and the foolish bridesmaids. Five have prepared for the delay of the bridegroom by bringing sufficient supply of oil, while the five have not. The last-mentioned group want to attend the wedding celebration. They are friends of the bridegroom.

Yet when they return from their search for oil and call out, "Lord, Lord, open to us," they are rejected as if they were strangers. "Truly I tell you, I do not know you."

This exchange between the foolish bridesmaids and the bridegroom brings to mind Jesus' words towards the end of the Sermon on the Mount:

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' ²³ Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

With that connection in mind what do you intuit is the main point of the parable? Also, with that connection in mind what does "keep awake" imply then?

Sunday 12-Nov-2023

9.30 am Sunday Service in English
(Chinese subtitle)
3:30 pm Christian Youth Church

Tuesday 14-Nov-2023

N/A

Wednesday 15-Nov-2023

7:00 pm AA meeting

Thursday 16-Nov-2023

3:10 pm Musiqhub

Friday 17-Nov-2023

10:00 am Knitting Group
6:45 pm Youth Group

Saturday 18-Nov-2023

9:00 am till noon Working Bee

Sunday 19-Nov-2023

9.30 am Holy Communion Sunday
Service in English (Chinese subtitle)
3:30 pm Christian Youth Church

Phone Book Update

Annual exercise to update the phone book.

A copy is placed on the welcome desk.

Need your Support

Deadline



Target to complete the exercise on 30 November 2023

Thank You



SAVE THE DAY

If you missed the last Working Bee in July, here is your opportunity! !

Don't miss it again.

November 18 (Saturday)

9:00am - noon



Thanksgiving

Express thankfulness by giving back!

Collection Period: Nov - Dec 2023

Whether you give online or through envelopes, please use the remark **"Thanksgiving."**



This year's Thanksgiving donation will support:

- 90% for general repair and maintenance fund
- 5% for the Breakfast Club
- 5% for a local charity in East Auckland (to be determined)

Bank account: 03-0166-0135407-025 (Buckland's Beach Co-op Parish)

Join us in spreading gratitude and helping those in need!



Walking the Christian Labyrinth



Source: <https://tinyurl.com/3u3m5ef8>

In the medieval ages, monks wandered their monasteries' labyrinth paths in quiet contemplation with God.

The labyrinth is a physical representation of spiritual believer's journey as they seek a closer relationship with God.

Walking the labyrinth can help Christians reflect on their journey of faith and the obstacles they may encounter.

Walking the labyrinth can also be a communal experience, allowing individuals to come together and share their faith experience.

Walking the labyrinth is often done meditatively or contemplatively to focus all thoughts on God.

Friday evening Youth Group - 6:45 p.m.



Songs for Today

1. Amazing grace
2. Lily of the valley
3. You are my all in all
4. Because he lives

Sunday Services:	English 9:30a.m.	
Office Hours:	Tues - Friday 9:00 am – 12:00 noon	
Phone: 09 534 2305	Email: office@stjohnsbb.org.nz	
Website:	https://stjohnsbb.org.nz	
Minister	Rev Jeff Odhiambo	022 674 0044
Administrator	Winnie Wong	
Property Manager	Charles de Vilder	
People's Warden	Ayleen de Vilder	
Minister's Warden	Julie Dickey	
Pastoral Care	Judy McDonald	
Prayer Chain	Judy McDonald	
Direct Credit Offerings AC	03-0166-0135407-025	

Youth Group: Contact Jeff minister@stjohnsbb.org.nz

	Today's Helpers 12-Nov-2023	Next Week's Helpers 19-Nov-2023
Preacher	Rev Jeff Odhiambo	Rev Jeff Odhiambo
Musician/s	Jeanette Li Dymock, Albert Ip Winnie Wong	Rahil John Albert Ip
Projector & Sound Desk	Mavis Haigh	Alicia Odhiambo
Reader	Felicity Vincer	Trevor Haigh
Intercessor	Rev Jeff Odhiambo	Mavis Haigh
HC set up	N/A	Ayleen de Vilder
HC Serving team	N/A	Joan Rutherford
Prayer ministry	Joan Jones	Joan Rutherford
Sunday School	An opportunity to serve here	An opportunity to serve here
Welcome Desk	Joan Rutherford	An opportunity to serve here
Usher	Trevor Haigh	Mavis Haigh
Counters	Jeanette Li Dimock Monita Leung	Trevor Haigh Albert Ip
Morning Tea	Betty Curd Nessie Crawford	Monita Leung Jojo Lee