The Anglican Chaplaincy in Norway
Stavanger Congregation

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8 November 2026

Remembrance Sunday

SCRIPTURE READINGS & REFLECTION

Wisdom 6.12–16

1 Thessalonians 4.13-end

Matthew 25.1–13

REFLECTION — Matthew 25.1–13

Have you ever been caught unprepared? I certainly have!

I'll never forget an afternoon when I conducted a funeral at our local cemetery in Zimbabwe. As we arrived, I noticed two tents with two separate groups of mourners. I asked the funeral director which one was ours, and we went ahead with the service.



CAUGHT UNPREPARED

When we finished, he turned to me and said, “I need you to do another graveside service.”

“When?” I asked. “Right now!”

Apparently, the family under the other tent had been waiting for their pastor for over an hour or so, and he wasn’t going to arrive any time soon. So, being a helpful sort of person, I agreed.

I walked over, prepared to conduct a brief service, only to discover that I didn’t have the obituary or the information sheet. In fact, I had absolutely no idea who I was burying! I didn’t know the person’s name, age, or even whether I was burying a man or a woman!



THE CALL TO READINESS

It was, I can assure you, the shortest graveside service I have ever conducted! Thankfully, during the closing prayer, the funeral director slipped the information sheet into my hand, so I could at least mention the young woman's name.

I have never felt quite so unprepared!

In today's Gospel, Jesus tells us about ten bridesmaids waiting for the bridegroom. Five were wise and brought extra oil for their lamps. Five were foolish and didn't. When the bridegroom was delayed, they all fell asleep. But when the announcement came, only five were ready.

Jesus isn't suggesting that we should spend our lives anxiously waiting for something terrible to happen. Rather, he reminds us that how we live today matters.



REMEMBERING WITH HOPE

And perhaps that is particularly important on Remembrance Sunday here in Stavanger.

We live in a city whose history is deeply marked by the Second World War. On 9 April 1940, German forces invaded Norway, and Sola Airport was one of their early targets. Stavanger's harbour, airport and strategic position on the North Sea made this area important to the German occupation.

We remember those who resisted, those who served, those who suffered, and those who never came home. We remember the sailors and fishermen who risked their lives, the families who endured occupation, and the ordinary people who showed extraordinary courage in difficult circumstances.

But remembrance is not simply about looking backwards. It is also about how we live forwards.



KEEP OUR LAMPS BURNING

Those whose lives we remember today would surely want more from us than an annual act of remembrance. They would want us to build a world where future generations need not experience the horrors of war.

And that brings us back to Jesus' parable.

The oil in our lamps is found in the everyday things: kindness, forgiveness, generosity, courage and faithfulness. We honour those who came before us not simply by remembering their sacrifices, but by living out the values for which they sacrificed so much.

We cannot always predict what tomorrow will bring. But we can choose how we live today.

So let us remember those who have gone before us, give thanks for their courage, work for peace, and keep our lamps burning.

And unlike me at that cemetery, may we never be caught completely unprepared! Amen.



Contacts and Connections



For pastoral needs,
Baptisms
Blessing of Civil Marriages
Funerals
Please contact the Assistant Chaplain

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Safeguarding concerns, workshops, or Safe Church enquiries: Please contact Jane, who will be happy to assist.

Acts of Mercy - fundraising, donations, or finances: contact Rumi

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COLLECT

Almighty Father,
whose will is to restore all things
in thy beloved Son, the King of all:
govern the hearts and minds of those in authority
and bring the families of the nations,
divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin,
to be subject to his just and gentle rule;
who liveth and reigneth with thee,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.



How to support Stavanger Congregation financially



- Register as a member. Membership forms are available at Church.



- Donate in the Sunday collection basket. Vipps #667359 Stavanger Anglicans.



- Give tax efficiently by donating directly to the main chaplaincy account: **Account number: 7029 05 14973**

  If you complete your personnummer on the form and donate annually 500–25,000 NOK, you will receive a tax rebate.



- Give directly through your bank to Stavanger Congregation: **Account number: 3201 08 90631**



- Donate your time and skills.