

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Biblical, Traditional, Conservative, Congregational

Lord's Day Worship for
June 21, 2026

*"He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom,
who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice.
So this joy of mine has been made full." – John 3:29*



trinityreformedct.org

“*” = Please stand if you are able.

Welcome, Greeting & Announcements

Call to Worship – Isaiah 62:3-5

Leader: You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,

People: And a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

Leader: It will no longer be said to you, “Forsaken,”

People: Nor to your land will it any longer be said, “Desolate”;

Leader: But you will be called, “My delight is in her,”

People: And your land, “Married”;

Leader: For the Lord delights in you,

People: And to Him your land will be married.

Leader: For as a young man marries a virgin,

People: So your sons will marry you;

Leader: And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,

People: So your God will rejoice over you.

Prayer of Invocation and Confession

Gospel Absolution Text – Revelation 19:7-9

***Hymn #521** – *“My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less”*

Scripture Reading – Luke 12:35-48

Ancient Creedal Proclamation – Apostles’ Creed (pg#845 in the red hymnal)

Offerings Presented

[Please put your tithe/offering in the plates before or after the service – Thank you!]

[Gifts labeled “Deacon’s Fund go to aid those in need in the congregation.]

***Doxology #731** (red hymnal)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow; Praise Him, all creatures here below;

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

***Prayer of Dedication**

***Sung Psalm #36C** – *“About the Wicked”*

Prayers of the Church & Lord's Prayer (sins) – *Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

Reformation Creedal Reading – Westminster Larger Catechism, 88.

Leader: *What shall immediately follow after the resurrection?* 2Pet 2:4,6-7,14-15
People: **The general and final judgment of angels and men;** Matt 25:46
Leader: *The day and hour whereof no man knows,*
People: **That all may watch and pray,**
Leader: *And be ever ready*
People: **For the coming of the Lord.** Matt 24:36,42,44

Ministry of the Word

Prayer of Illumination

***Sermon Text** – Matthew 25:1-13

***Gloria Patri #735** (red hymnal)

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost; As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.

Sermon – “Parable of the Ten Virgins”

A Sermon Series on Parables

Ministry of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper

Invitation & Warning

TRC practices guarded open communion. All who profess faith in Christ, have been baptized, have a basic understanding of this sacrament, and are in good standing with a biblical local church are welcome to the Lord's Table. If you are uncertain whether you should partake, it is wise to abstain and speak with the pastor afterward.

Prayer

Words of Institution – Matthew 26:26-28 + Luke 22:19-20; 1Corinthians 10:16-17; 11:26

“While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, ‘Take, eat; this is My body which is given for you; do this in remembrance of Me.’ And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of you; for this is My blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.’ . . . Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread which we break a sharing in the body of Christ? Since there is one bread, we who are many are one body; for we all partake of the one bread. For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.”

Partaking of the Bread and then the Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

***Hymn #669** – “Commit Now All Your Grievs”

***Benediction**

Everyone is welcome to Coffee Hour Fellowship downstairs after church today

Announcements

- **June 27th**, Saturday, there will be a **Pot-Luck Picnic** starting at **noon** at the Ensminger's (100 Hollow Rd, Winchester, CT). If possible, please bring a side, drink or a dessert.
- **In July and August church start at 9:30 AM.** There is no Sunday School during the summer months.
- **July 18th**, Saturday, there will be a **Pool Party / Picnic Pot-Luck** starting at noon at the Gabelmann's. Sandwich platters, beverages and an ice cream bar will be provided. If possible, please bring a pot-luck food item. (We will gather rain or shine.)
- **October 10th**, Saturday, there will our annual **Oktoberfest** at the Aldrich's. If possible, please bring a food item. (*Rain Date:* October 17th)

Regular Studies & Gatherings (for the summer)

- **Sunday School** stops for July & August.
- **Tuesday Morning Study** has stopped for the summer.
- **Wednesday Study** will continue through June; Its last day is June 24th.
- **Saturday Morning Prayer Group** at the Gabelmann's. (Please call Sheryl to confirm if the group is meeting that day, 860-309-7250.)

ONLINE RESOURCES

<i>TRC's Webpage:</i>	TrinityReformedCT.org
<i>TRC's Facebook Page:</i>	facebook.com/people/Trinity-Reformed-Church/61554974150922/
<i>TRC's Youtube Channel:</i>	youtube.com/@TrinityReformedCT
<i>Pastor Doug's</i>	youtube.com/simplyreformed
<i>Youtube Channels:</i>	youtube.com/@PilgrimsOfPlunder

INTERNET PRAYER CHAIN

If you have any prayer requests for our prayer chain, please email them to Donna Ensminger at: trcnwprayer@gmail.com. (If you would like to join the Prayer Chain, also see Donna.)

LEADERSHIP

Elders:	Rev. Douglas Aldrich, pastor	860-379-1147	douglas_aldrich@sbcglobal.net
	Bob Ensminger	860-485-8738	robert.ensminger@arthurgrussell.com
	Rich Gabelmann	860-605-7852	rgabelmann0415@gmail.com
	Rev. Jonathan Haulenbeek	203-709-0784	jhaulenbeek@icloud.com
Deacons:	David Mattson (chair), Carl Bierce, Caleb Goodell, Mason Goodell, Dean Winters		
Sunday School:	Verna Aldrich	Music Coordinator:	Cindy Rines
Clerk:	Sheryl Gabelmann	Treasurer:	Cindy Rines

Trinity Reformed Church of Northwest Connecticut

Worship Starts At: 10:30 AM (9:30 AM in the summer)

Sunday Worship At: Winchester Grange (100 Newfield Rd; Winchester Center, CT 06098)

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 343; Riverton, CT 06065 - *Phone:* (860) 238-7399

Webpage: trinityreformedct.org - *Email:* trinityreformedct@gmail.com

Sermon Notes

Matthew 25:1-13
"Parable of the Ten Virgins"
A Sermon Series on Parables
June 21, 2026

Introduction

- 1) We are going through the major parables, especially in the Gospel of Matthew.
- 2) I have been struck by how systematic they are.
 - a) We looked at numerous parables in Matthew 13.¹
 - i) The most important parable, the Parable of the Sower. Mark 4:13
 - ii) These parables are about the Lord Jesus' favorite theme, the Kingdom of God.
 - iii) These parables focus on the fact the Kingdom is based on the effect of the Word on the heart and its powerful and inward growth, that obtaining it is worth everything, because in the end there will be judgment.
 - b) In Matthew 18, the great chapter about church discipline, we looked at two parables about Kingdom life where Christ will find His lost sheep and how important it is for the sheep to be forgiving.²
 - c) Lately we have been going through the parables about being ready in Matthew 24, because there will be judgment; Hell awaits the unfaithful and unready.³
- 3) So, today we are moving to Matthew 25.
 - a) Today's sermon is the Parable of the Ten Virgins.
 - b) What is it about? Be ready because judgment awaits with hell for the wicked.
- 4) It is tempting to think: Another parable about readiness and hell, really?
 - a) Again, when our Lord starts to repeat Himself, we should listen.
 - i) This is a very important topic for Him.
 - ii) And thus also for our good.
 - iii) And obviously something we humans, have trouble with.
 - iv) Let alone that the state of our immortal souls is at stake!
 - b) A mature Christian doesn't just know theological facts, and just tries to apply that theology, but also rightly weighs out, discerns, and knows where to put an emphasis or not. Prov 2:1-11; Phil 1:9-11
Col 1:9-10; Heb 5:12-14
1Thes 5:21-22; 2Tim 2:15
 - c) And that takes much faith and wisdom.
 - d) *Example:* Knowing that we should love our neighbor, the second most important commandment, is helpful! Lev 19:18; Matt 22:37-40
Mark 12:28-34; Luke 10:25-37
Rom 13:8-10; Gal 5:14
 - i) Knowing that our neighbor includes church members, family, colleagues, friends, fellow citizens, all those around us, even our enemies, is important too. Lev 19:33-34; Matt 5:43-48
Luke 10:25-37
Gal 6:10

¹ Sower (Matt 13:1-23); Tares Among the Wheat (Matt 13:24-30,36-43); Mustard Seed (Matt 13:31-32); Leaven (Matt 13:33-35); Hidden Treasure (Matt 13:44); Costly Pearl (Matt 13:45-46); Dragnet (Matt 13:47-52).

² Lost Sheep (Matt 18:12-14); Unforgiving Servant (Matt 18:21-35).

³ Fig Tree (Matt 24:32-42); Thief in the Night (Matt 24:42-44); Faithful & Wicked Slave (Matt 24:45-51).

ii) Knowing how and when to prioritize, rightly ordering our love, requires much faith, wisdom and discernment.

Prov 2:1-11; 3:5-6
Matt 22:37-40; 23:23
Phil 1:9-11; Col 1:9-10

5) So, let us be obedient and learn at our Master's feet.

6) Today's parable uses imagery that we moderns might have some problems with.

- a) It assumes the goodness of hierarchy, headship, virginity, marriage, family, and decorum.
- b) Things our secular culture has desperately tried to undermine.

Background of the Parable of the Ten Virgins

1) The Parable of the Ten Virgins is about a marriage feast.

2) Marriage, according to Scripture, and every ancient culture, is critical and foundational.

- a) It involves the creation of the critical societal structure of the household/family as a covenant union, and such things as mutual protection (especially for the weaker members of society such as women, children, and the elderly), inheritance, kinship, legitimacy of children, property, alliances between families, religious/civic stability, expression of gender roles, and the only proper venue for physical relations.

b) The Westminster Confession 24.2, wonderfully defines the purpose of marriage as:

Marriage was ordained for the mutual help of husband and wife, (Gen 2:18) for the increase of mankind with a legitimate issue, and of the Church with an holy seed; (Mal 2:15) and for preventing of uncleanness. (1Cor 7:2,9)

c) In a normal life, who you marry, is probably the second most important decision of your life. (The first is one's relationship with Christ.)

Gen 2:18-24; Matt 19:4-6
1Cor 7:2-5; Eph 5:22-33
1Tim 3:2-5; Heb 13:4

d) Marriage is a very important thing, and the uniting of two becoming one, is a time to celebrate.

Gen 2:18-24; Ps 45:10-15; Prov 18:22
SoS 3:11; Matt 19:4-6; John 2:1-11
Heb 13:4; Rev 19:7-9; 21:2,9-10

3) In the 1st century near-eastern world, weddings were major public, family, and covenantal events.

Gen 2:22-24; Deut 22:13-21; Judg 14:10-12
Ps 45:10-15; Matt 22:1-14; John 2:1-11

- a) Remember, food preparation was labor intensive, resources were limited, and travel was difficult, so feasts were significant events.
- b) They were not merely private ceremonies, but communal celebrations involving families, legal commitments, processions, feasting, and public recognition of the new household.
- c) A wedding feast could last several days, and being included or excluded carried social weight.

4) Normally the wedding was held at night.

- a) So that the place of celebration could be ready, which would take a lot of work. (Remember, no electricity, refrigeration, or modern transportation.)
- b) Also, it was common to have the entire party carry torches, or lamps, making it a grand spectacle.

5) The wedding celebration commonly involved the bridegroom coming with an entourage to receive the bride and escort her, along with her attendants, in procession to the wedding feast, often held at the groom's house or his family's house.

- a) Not surprisingly, the exact arrival of the bridegroom could be delayed for numerous reasons.⁴
- b) In today's parable, the focus is not on the bride, who is not even mentioned.
- c) Instead, the bride has 10 attendants, labeled "virgins" in the text.
- 6) Why "virgins"?
- a) Marriage is supposed to last a lifetime thus you go all out for this one-time celebration. Gen 2:24; Mal 2:14-16; Matt 19:4-9
Mark 10:6-12; Rom 7:2-3; 1Cor 7:10-11
- b) Even today, when two people remarry for legitimate reasons (e.g. both of their spouses have died) the ceremony is usually much smaller, which was also true for the ancient world.
- c) So the woman's attendants are called "virgins" in the text because they would be all young women.
- d) And a woman's virginity is one of her most important virtues and duties and is reserved only for her husband on their wedding night. Gen 2:24; 24:16; Ex 20:14; Deut 22:13-29
Prov 5:15-23; Matt 1:18-25; 5:27-30
1Cor 6:18-20; 2Cor 11:2; 1Thes 4:3-8
1Tim 5:2; Titus 2:3-5; Heb 13:4; Rev 14:4
- e) This shows that all 10 of the bride's attendants are good by at least public standards.
- 7) They know the bridegroom is coming but not the exact moment.
- a) So they all have lamps, since that is the custom, and it is night. Matt 25:1-4
- b) However, five are foolish because they have no extra oil with them.
- c) While five are prudent because they have brought extra oil in flasks, just in case.
- d) The bridegroom gets delayed, and the virgins fall asleep. Matt 25:5
- e) Note, falling asleep here is not viewed as a sin, or at the least our Lord does not comment on it.
- 8) At midnight there is a shout, "*Behold, the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.*" – Matthew 25:6b
- a) This is a public pronouncement that the procession has begun.
- b) All the virgins awake to "*trimmed their lamps.*" – Matthew 25:7b
- c) Meaning they get their lamps ready since they have gone out because of the wait.⁵
- d) The foolish, however, have no oil to relight their lamps and demand oil from the prudent ones. Matt 25:8
- 9) The prudent ones tell them, "*No, there will not be enough for us and you too; go instead to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.*" – Matthew 25:9b
- a) I think some modern Evangelicals would find this statement to be uncharitable.
- b) It is not.
- i) Do remember it is a parable.
- ii) Also, charity doesn't demand stupidity.

⁴ Such as delays could happen because of final family negotiations, especially matters connected to gifts, dowry, or formal consent. The families might also prolong the celebration at the bride's house before the bride was escorted away. Guests, musicians, relatives, and attendants could delay the start simply because the event was communal and festive, not run by a strict clock.

⁵ To "trim" a lamp means to prepare it to burn properly: adjust or cut the wick, remove charred parts, and readying the oil so the flame gives clear light.

- c) You are called to be charitable but also discerning.
- i) The Almighty is very concerned with the poor, the widow, the orphan, the stranger, especially within the church. Ex 22:21-24; 23:6,9-11; Deut 10:17-19
Ps 68:5-6; Is 1:16-17; Zech 7:9-10
Matt 5:42; 6:1-4; Acts 6:1-6; James 1:27
 - ii) However, giving all your money to some random drug addict who is trying to guilt you because he knows you are a Christian, is not only unwise but immoral, because you have a greater duty to your family. Prov 6:6-11
Prov 14:15; 20:1
1Tim 5:8; 5:16
2Thes 3:10-12
- d) Besides, the virgins' first duty is to the bridegroom and their duty.
- i) They are called "prudent" because they have discernment.
 - ii) They correctly say, "*No, there will not be enough for us and you too.*"
 - iii) That isn't a lack of charity; that is discernment and knowing their greater duty.
 - iv) They are rightly ordering their loves.
 - v) Which the outcome of the story clearly proves them to be right.
- e) The foolish ones go to try to buy some oil as the bridegroom arrives. Matt 25:10
- f) The prudent ones go to the wedding feast with the bridegroom, and the door is shut, leaving the foolish ones outside.
- 10) Later, the foolish virgins arrive and say, "*Lord, lord, open up for us.*" – Matthew 25:11b
- a) They are refused entry.
 - b) Again, I think many modern readers would sympathize more with the foolish virgins.
 - i) Many might think: They were only late! They're entitled to enter!
How dogmatic and mean is the Bridegroom!
 - ii) Today, we have no sense of decorum, only entitlement.⁶
 - c) Remember, this is a wedding, one of the most important events in the ancient world.
 - d) Let alone, it is a royal wedding, since the Bridegroom is clearly Christ.
 - e) With the closing of the door, the wedding ceremony/celebration has formally begun.
 - i) To show up late when you are part of the wedding party is a serious breach of decorum, protocol, duty, and honor.
 - ii) The proper moment of entrance has passed.
 - f) It brings judgment; thus the bridegroom says, "*Truly I say to you, I do not know you.*" – Matthew 25:12b
 - i) This is not a statement of intellectual ignorance.
 - ii) It is a statement of judgment and rejection.
 - iii) As one only says "*You are dead to me*" to an alive person you are very angry at, and reject them completely.

⁶ To quote from the 1828 Webster's Dictionary: Decorum means: "*Propriety of speech or behavior; suitability of speech and behavior, to one's own character, and to the characters present, or to the place and occasion; seemliness; decency; opposed to rudeness, licentiousness, or levity. To speak and behave with decorum is essential to good breeding.*"
Prov 10:19; 15:1-2; 22:11; 25:11; 1Cor 14:40; Col 4:6.

The Meaning of the Parable

- 1) The big picture meaning of the parable is very clear.
 - a) The Lord Jesus is the Bridegroom, as He is portrayed throughout Scripture.⁷ (There is an entire book about this: The Song of Songs.)
 - b) The virgins here represent the visible church, the church we humans see.
 - i) The prudent virgins are the true church, the elect, the invisible church – the church God sees.
 - ii) The foolish virgins are false believers who will fall away at the end.
 - iii) As we have read about in that most important parable: The Parable of the Sower in Matthew 13.
 - c) The message to the visible church is: Be ready! Be discerning! The Lord will arrive at a time you will not expect.
 - d) Just like we have been hearing in the other parables in Matthew 24.
 - e) As we read in the last verse of today's sermon text.
 - i) Where the Lord Jesus summarizes the meaning.
 - ii) *"Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour."* – Matthew 25:13
- 2) This leads to some basic questions:
 - a) What does being alert look like?
 - b) And if having oil is the critical thing, what is the oil in this parable?

Meaning of the Return

- 1) We clearly do not know when Christ will return; He repeats this point several times. Matt 24:36; 24:42-44; 25:13
Mark 13:32-37; Luke 12:40; Acts 1:6-7
- 2) We are called to be discerning about the meaning of His return, because it has several layers. Matt 24:36-44; 25:1-13; Mark 13:32-37
Luke 12:35-40; Acts 1:6-8; 1Thes 5:1-6
 - a) For those listening to our Lord 2,000 years ago, there would be a type of return in 70 AD, where God's Old Covenant House, the Temple, was destroyed. Dan 9:26-27; Mark 13:1-2,14-20,30
Matt 24:1-2,15-22,34; 23:37-39
Luke 19:41-44; 21:5-6,20-24,32
 - b) For all Christians, save those at the very end of the age (the quick), we do not know when we will die and stand before the Lord. Ps 90:10-12; Eccl 12:6-7
Luke 12:16-21; 2Cor 5:10
Heb 9:27; James 4:13-15
 - c) For the church, both local & universal, we do not know when times of judgment and fiery persecution might come upon us. Matt 10:16-23; 24:9-14
John 15:18-21; Acts 14:22
1Pet 4:12-19; Rev 2:10
 - d) Above all, the main focus is that our Lord will return at the end of the age to bring in the new heavens and new earth. Is 65:17; Matt 24:30-31; 25:31-46
Acts 1:9-11; 2Pet 3:10-13
Rev 1:7; 20:11-15; 21:1-27; 22:1-21
- 3) The response to all these "day of the Lord" events is remaining faithful with discernment and vigilance.

⁷ Ps 45:6-15; SoS 3:6-11; Is 54:5; 61:10; 62:4-5; Jer 2:2; 31:31-34; Ezek 16:8-14; Hos 2:14-23; Matt 9:15; 22:1-14; 25:1-13; Mark 2:19-20; Luke 5:34-35; John 2:1-11; 3:28-30; 2Cor 11:2; Eph 5:25-32; Rev 19:7-9; 21:2,9-10; 22:17.

Application

- 1) Christ's return seems delayed from man's perspective.
 - a) The Bible tells us why.
 - i) Because He is getting all His elect throughout this age. Is 53:10-12; John 6:37-40; 10:16,26-30
Rom 11:25-32; 2Pet 3:8-9; Rev 6:9-11
 - ii) And to give us the honor and mercy of remaining faithful, discerning, and vigilant, and thus desiring His return. Matt 24:42-51; 25:1-13
Luke 12:35-40; Rom 13:11-14
2Pet 3:11-15; Rev 22:17,20
 - b) As we practice faithfulness, by the grace of God, it will create in us hope, which will produce in us love, and this is greatly pleasing to God. Rom 5:1-5; 1Cor 13:13
Gal 5:5-6; Col 1:3-6
1Thes 1:2-3; Heb 11:6
- 2) Being part of the visible church, seeming like you are in the wedding party, is not enough.
 - a) The proclamation that we are clean, pure, and fully forgiven by Christ is proclaimed to all in the visible church, but so are the wheat and the tares.
 - b) All ten of the virgins seem to be in the wedding party.
 - i) They all have lamps, they all start off waiting, and they all become sleepy.
 - ii) To make application: They all have been baptized, and they all attend church, they all take the Lord's Supper.
 - By the way, do not diminish those things as modern Evangelicalism does!
 - Many modern Christians think that having mere intellectual assent to a minimalistic list of doctrines, combined with trying to be nice, is all that true faith is. If you believe that, you are a very foolish virgin.
 - All those who have true faith will partake of the things of the church (e.g. corporate worship, hearing sermons, receiving the Sacraments, being under church discipline). John 10:16; 17:20-23
Acts 2:41-42; 20:7
1Cor 5:1-13; 10:16-17;
1Cor 11:23-29; Heb 10:24-25
 - You can't have true faith and reject Christ's spiritual body on earth, the church. Matt 16:18-19; Acts 2:41-47
1Cor 12:12-27; Eph 1:22-23
 - ii) The difference is not their outward association (which again is required) but whether they possess what is necessary when the Bridegroom comes.
 - c) Readiness cannot be borrowed at the last hour.
 - i) The foolish ask for oil; the prudent cannot give it. Why?
 - ii) The oil represents a faith that produces repentance, perseverance, & good works.
 - iii) That you cannot buy or trade for.
 - iv) You can only receive it by faith, which will produce works.

Conclusion - Being Ready

- 1) You want to be ready?
 - a) Come to church, worship Him, hear His word, and taste His kindness.
 - b) Repent and believe.
 - i) Turn away from yourself, your sin, this fallen world, and Satan.
 - ii) And turn to Christ and believe, and trust, in Him.
- 2) You have been made spiritually pure by His blood, so go and live accordingly.
- 3) Remember the royal wedding feast of Revelation 19:7-9.