

WORSHIP SERVICE

Sunday, September 8, 2019

Whom have I in heaven but you? And there is nothing on earth I desire besides you.
My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever.
Psalm 73:25-26

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

ENTERING INTO WORSHIP

Greeting and Blessing*

Responsive Reading*

Psalm 143 (p. 837)

Hymn of Preparation*

“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty” Hymn 53

Congregational Confession of Sin

Leader: Heavenly Father, we come to you as your children seeking forgiveness for our many sins. We confess that we have dishonored you with our thoughts, words, and deeds.

All: Our sins are too many to count. Were they to be held against us, we would be crushed under your righteous judgment.

Leader: Forgive us, gracious God, and renew us for the sake of your Son who died for us. Grant us repentant hearts, and cause us to grow in the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

All: Endless praise be to you, O God, through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you in unity with the Holy Spirit, one God, forever. Amen.

Private Confession of Our Sins

Assurance of Forgiveness

Colossians 1:17-20

And Christ is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

* Congregation is requested to stand, if able.

ADORATION AND PRAISE

First Reading*

Genesis 1

Congregational Response

“O Word of God Incarnate” Hymn 140

Confession of Faith

The Westminster Shorter Catechism

Q. 63. Which is the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment is, “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the LORD your God is giving you.”

Q. 64. What is required in the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment requires the preserving of the honor, and performing the duties, belonging to everyone in their various situations and relationships, as superiors, inferiors, or equals.

Q. 65. What is forbidden in the fifth commandment?

A. The fifth commandment forbids the neglecting of, or doing anything against, the honor and duty that belong to everyone in their various situations and relationships.

Q. 66. What is the reason attached to the fifth commandment?

A. The reason attached to the fifth commandment is a promise of long life and prosperity (as far as it shall serve for God’s glory, and their own good) to all who keep this commandment.

Prayer of Thanksgiving and Stewardship

Tithes and Offerings

Doxology*

Hymn 731

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.

Lord’s Prayer*

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the Kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

Second Reading*	John 1:1-18
Congregational Response (Psalm 150)	“Hallelujah! Hallelujah!” Hymn 10
Pastoral Prayer (based on Psalm 18:1-3)	
Sermon	Pastor Ben Muresan
	“In the Beginning” John 1:1-3

GOD’S BLESSING ON HIS PEOPLE

Hymn of Thanksgiving*	“Of the Father’s Love Begotten” Hymn 162
Benediction*	
Congregational Benediction Response*	(Sung to TRINITY)
	To the great One in Three eternal praises be, hence evermore. His sovereign majesty may we in glory see, and to eternity love and adore. Amen.

LORD’S DAY DEVOTION AND QUESTIONS

The way John begins his gospel with the phrase “In the beginning” is meant to draw our attention to Genesis 1:1. Both Genesis and John point to eternity past, to the counsel of our Triune God before creation, in order to reveal God’s eternal nature and creative power. But the striking thing for John’s first-century Jewish audience would have been that he equates the God who created all things with Jesus of Nazareth. Hebrews 1:1-3 reminds us that in the past, “God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son...the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature.” Jesus said this of himself in John’s gospel. He said, “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30); “whoever has seen me has seen the Father” (14:9). If we want to know what God is like—if we want to know the greatest being—we need to learn about and develop a relationship with Jesus Christ.

1. What do you know about the Gospel of John? What makes it unique among the four gospels? What are your favorite verses in this gospel and why?
2. Why does John refer to Jesus as the “Word”? Why would this title have been significant to Gentiles? What significance would it have had for Jews?
3. What does the phrase “and the Word was with God” reveal about the Trinity? Read and discuss John 17:1-5 which describes Jesus’ pre-incarnate glory and his relationship with the Father.
4. When John writes “and the Word was God,” he is pointing to Jesus’ divinity. How would you explain and defend this critical doctrine when talking to a Jehovah’s Witness?
5. Read Colossians 1:15-20. What role did Jesus have in creation?
6. In preparation for next Sunday, read John 1:4-5. What do you think John means when he describes Jesus as Life and Light?

