



The _____
First Congregational Church
of Woodstock _____

*Declaring, "Jesus Christ is the same, yesterday, today,
and forever." Hebrews 13:8*

October 15th, 2023

The Order of Morning Worship

October 15th, 2023

Ten-thirty

Welcome & Announcements

Pastor Doug Warren

Prelude & Silent Prayer

❖ Call to Worship from Psalm 19 Pastor

❖ Hymn of Exultation #55 *To God Be the Glory* Congregation

Scriptural Call to Repentance Habakkuk 2:14, 18-20 Pastor

Prayer of Collective Confession from Psalm 25 Congregation

Remember Your mercy, O LORD, and Your steadfast love, for they have been from of old. Remember not the sins of our youth or our transgressions; according to Your steadfast love remember us, for the sake of Your goodness, O LORD! For Your name's sake, O LORD, pardon our guilt, for it is great. Turn to us and be gracious to us, for we are lonely and afflicted. The troubles of our hearts are enlarged; bring us out of our distresses. Consider our affliction and our trouble, and forgive all our sins.

Silent Reflection and Confession

Proclamation of Forgiveness Romans 8:1 Pastor

Pastoral Prayer Pastor

Offering (collected from back to front) Congregation

Affirmation of Faith *The Nicene Creed*¹ Congregation

Pastor: Christian, what is it that we believe?

Congregation: We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by whom all things were made; who for us

¹ The Nicene Creed originated at the Council of Nicea (325). It was formulated to answer heresies that denied the biblical doctrine of the Trinity and of the person of Christ.

and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried; and the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father; and He shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets; and we believe in one holy catholic² and apostolic church; we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins; and we look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

❖ Creedal Song #735	<i>Gloria Patri</i>	Congregation
❖ Scripture Reading	Romans 13:1-8	Pastor
❖ Hymn of Reflection #562	<i>All to Jesus I Surrender</i>	Congregation
The Sermon	Exodus 20:12 <i>“The Good Gift of Divine Authority”</i>	Pastor
❖ Hymn of Response #355	<i>We Are God’s People</i>	Congregation
❖ Benediction	2 Corinthians 13:14	Pastor

The Congregation may be seated after the Benediction for silent prayer.

Postlude

*~~ Organist: Nick Kleinschmidt ~~
~~ Please ensure cell phones are off ~~*

² The term “catholic” here means universal and does not mean any particular denomination.

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## Vespers Today

Vespers will be held at Homestead at 3:00 pm and the Mertens House at 3:30 pm. If anyone is interested to join us please talk to Rhonda Bruce or Rosmarie Vanderhoof.

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Save the Date!

Today, Sunday, October 15 — 3:00-4:00 pm Vespers Services

Saturday, October 28 — 5:00 pm Covered dish dinner with visiting missionaries Herb & Heather)

Saturday, November 4 — 9:30 am-12:30 pm COT food drive

Thursday, November 9 — 7:00 pm-9:00 pm Annual Meeting

Friday, December 8-Saturday, December 9 — Wassail Weekend

Friday, 4:30 & 5:30 pm — FCCW Building & History Tours

Friday, 5:00 pm — Organ Concert

Saturday, 11:00 am-2:00 pm — Hot Wassail and DIY s'mores on the lawn

Saturday, 2:00 pm — Wassail Parade Watch Party

Saturday, 3:00 pm — The Ten of NYC Concert

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There will be no Young Adult Fellowship Group tonight.

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Volunteers Needed!

COT Food drive at FCCW Sat., Nov. 4th from 9:30am-12:30pm. We need 4-5 volunteers to assist during drop off and one person to take donated food to the Woodstock food shelf. Contact Keri Bristow at kerilynbristow@gmail.com to volunteer.

COT will host Wassail drinks and s'mores on the FCCW front lawn Sat Dec 9th from 11am-2pm. We will need set up and clean up volunteers. Contact Keri Bristow to volunteer: kerilynbristow@gmail.com

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The October Prayer Letter is available on the back table.

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Weekly Gathering Opportunities

Sundays, 6:00 pm — Young Adult Fellowship Group in the library

Tuesdays, 7:00 am — Middle School & High School Bible Study—meet at Maplefields to grab breakfast, then on to the church for study, discussion, and prayer.

Tuesdays, 10:00 am — Ladies' Bible Study meets in person at the Thompson Senior Center and via ZOOM, please contact Bonnie Atwood at (802) 457-4120 or email bonhope2@gmail.com.

Tuesdays, 6:00 pm — Prayer Meeting, in person in the library and via ZOOM

Wednesdays, 6:15 am — Men's Bible Study, in person in the library and via ZOOM, please contact Dick Atwood at (802) 457-4120 or email rbatwood1@gmail.com.

Join the WCCC Teaching Team!

Are you looking for rewarding work with young children, part or full time? Woodstock Christian Child Care (WCCC) has immediate openings for part-time or full-time Trainees, Teacher Assistants, or Teachers for our full-day program for ages 6 weeks to PreK, and our After School Program for PreK to Grade 2. This is a great opportunity for college students interested in ECE, nursing, or human services to gain experience. WCCC has been serving children and families in the area for 29 years. If you are 18 years old or older, enjoy children, or would like to explore a career in early childhood education, please contact the WCCC Executive Director Ruth Brisson at rbrissonwccc@gmail.com. Thank you!

The Good Gift of Divine Authority

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

1. God Establishes Lines of Authority.

2. The Land Represented Heaven on Earth.

3. We Are God’s Authorized Outposts for the Kingdom of God.

CONCLUSION: Our parents are gifts from God. Great parents. Horrendous parents. Gifts from a gracious God who is more concerned with our eternal conformity to Christ than our temporary experiences of familial bliss or horror. God is good. He has not only given us our parents, but established authoritative relationships in a fallen world to restrain chaos and anarchy. Even though positions of power can and are abused, we can trust Christ to work through them for His good purposes. Let us honor Christ through honoring those in positions of authority appropriately.

Westminster Larger Catechism

Q. 124. Who are meant by *father and mother* in the fifth commandment?

A. By father and mother, in the fifth commandment, are meant, *not only natural parents*, but all *superiors* in age and gifts; and especially such as, by God's ordinance, are *over us in place of authority*, whether in *family, church, or commonwealth*.

Q. 125. Why are superiors styled father and mother?

A. Superiors are *styled* father and mother, both to teach them in all duties towards their inferiors, like natural parents, to express love and tenderness to them, according to their several relations; and to work inferiors to a *greater willingness and cheerfulness in performing their duties to their superiors*, as to their parents.

Q. 126. What is the *general scope* of the fifth commandment?

A. The general scope of the fifth commandment is the performance of those duties which we mutually owe in our several relations, as inferiors, superiors, or equals.

Q. 127. What is the *honor* that *inferiors* owe to their *superiors*?

A. The *honor* which inferiors owe to their superiors is, *all due reverence in heart, word, and behavior*; prayer and thanksgiving for them; imitation of their virtues and graces; willing obedience to their lawful commands and counsels; due submission to their corrections; fidelity to, defense and maintenance of their persons and authority, according to their several ranks, and the nature of their places; bearing with their infirmities, and covering them in love, that so they may be an honor to them and to their government.

Q. 128. What are the *sins of inferiors* against their superiors?

A. The *sins of inferiors against their superiors* are, all neglect of the duties required toward them; envying at, contempt of, and rebellion against, their persons and places, in their lawful counsels, commands, and corrections; cursing, mocking, and all such refractory and scandalous carriage, as proves a shame and dishonor to them and their government.

Q. 129. What is required of superiors towards their inferiors?

A. It is *required of superiors*, according to that power they receive from God, and that relation wherein they stand, to love, pray for, and bless their inferiors; to instruct, counsel and admonish them; countenancing, commending, and rewarding such as do well; and discountenancing, reproving, and chastising such as do ill; protecting, and providing for them all things necessary for soul and body: and, by grave, wise, holy, and exemplary carriage, to procure glory to God, honor to themselves, and so to preserve that authority which God hath put upon them.

Q. 130. What are the *sins of superiors*?

A. The *sins of superiors* are, besides the neglect of the duties required of them, an inordinate seeking of themselves, their own glory, ease, profit, or pleasure; commanding things unlawful, or not in the power of inferiors to perform; counseling, encouraging, or favoring them in that which is evil; dissuading, discouraging, or discountenancing them in that which is good; correcting them unduly; careless exposing, or leaving them to wrong, temptation, and danger; provoking them to wrath; or in any way dishonoring themselves, or lessening their authority, by an unjust, indiscreet, rigorous, or remiss behavior.

Q. 131. What are the duties of equals?

A. The *duties of equals* are, to regard the dignity and worth of each other, in giving honor to go one before another; and to rejoice in each other's gifts and advancement, as their own.

Q. 132. What are the *sins of equals*?

A. The *sins of equals* are, besides the neglect of the duties required, the undervaluing of the worth, envying the gifts, grieving at the advancement or prosperity one of another; and usurping pre-eminence one over another.

Q. 133. What is the reason annexed to the fifth commandment, the more to enforce it?

A. The *reason annexed* to the fifth commandment in these words, "that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee," is an express *promise of long life and prosperity*, as far as it shall serve for God's glory and their own good, to all such as keep this commandment.

Taking Gathered Worship Home

How can God expect us to honor authorities when some *abuse their authority*? Isn't the fifth commandment unreasonable in a fallen world? Does this commandment address more than just our parent-child relationships? How can we trust Christ if we have been broken by tyrants? Yet, *God commands us to bear the weight of their superior position*. He does so not to crush us, but as a gift for our ultimate benefit—trust.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to praise Christ.

Sunday Morning

READ **Exodus 20:12; Genesis 1:26-31; Romans 13:1-8; Ephesians 3:14-19; 5:15-6:9; 2Corinthians 5:16-21; 1Tim 5:4-8; Matthew 27:11-13; Psalm 119:49-64**. DISCUSS What does it mean to *honor your father and mother*? How have you dishonored them or other God ordained authorities? How are you *trusting Christ* for forgiveness and power to *honor them as you should*? MEDITATE on **Proverbs 1:8-9** with WLC #124-33. PRAY “Father, enable us to honor those we should!”

Sunday Evening

There will be *no Young Adult Fellowship tonight*.

Monday

READ **Exodus 20:12; Genesis 1:26-31; Psalm 119:49-64**. DISCUSS Why is God's law good? Do you love it? Why or why not? SERVE by taking time to help someone! MEDITATE on **Proverbs 1:8-9** with WLC #124-33. PRAY, “Father, forgive us our prideful rebellion!”

Tuesday

READ **Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 3:14-19; 5:15-6:9; Psalm 119:49-64**. DISCUSS Why is God our rightful authority? How do we honor Him through honoring those whom He has ordained to positions of authority? Are we *always* to obey these authorities? Why or why not? How are you honoring Christ through your family, work, and community relationships? MEDITATE on **Proverbs 1:8-9** with WLC #124-33. PRAY, “Father, enable us to glorify You through our relationships.”

Wednesday

READ **Exodus 20:12; Romans 13:1-8; 2Corinthians 5:16-21; Psalm 119: 33-48.** DISCUSS How are we to view civil authorities as God's ministers? Why? What does it mean for us to be Christ's ambassadors? MEDITATE on **Proverbs 1:8-9** with WLC #124-33. PRAY, "Father, forgive us for our insecurity and fear!"

Thursday

READ **Exodus 20:12; 1Tim 5:4-8; Matthew 27:11-13; Psalm 119:49-64.** DISCUSS What should make us glad? SERVE by putting someone else's interests *above your own!* MEDITATE on **Proverbs 1:8-9** with WLC #124-33. PRAY, "Father, enable us to honor Your established authorities even as Christ did Pilate as governor. Teach us to trust You in all of life because of Jesus."

Friday

READ **Exodus 20:12; Genesis 1:26-31; Romans 13:1-8; Ephesians 3:14-19; 5:15-6:9; 2Corinthians 5:16-21; 1Tim 5:4-8; Matthew 27:11-13; Psalm 119:49-64.** DISCUSS What has God been teaching you this week? SERVE by *caring for someone in need!* MEDITATE on **Proverbs 1:8-9** with WLC #124-33. PRAY that we at FCCW would *honor Christ together.*

Saturday

PREPARE today for *gathered Sunday worship tomorrow.* READ **Exodus 20:1-21.** *Invite others to join you tomorrow for the worship service @ 10:30 am.* PRAY, "Lord, gather us together *to delight in You.*"

Proverbs 1:8-9

Hear, my son, your father's instruction,
and forsake not your mother's teaching,
for they are a graceful garland for your head
and pendants for your neck.