

January 4, 2026 - Order of Worship

TIME OF REFLECTION

“My chief reason for choosing Christianity was because the mysteries were incomprehensible. What’s the point of revelation if we could figure it out ourselves? If it were wholly comprehensible, then it would just be another philosophy.”

~Mortimer J. Adler (1902-2001), philosopher, educator, and founder of the Aspen Institute

“There has not been a ‘when’ when the Father was not in existence. This, then, is true of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Put another question and I will answer it.

Since when has the Son been begotten? Since as long as the Father has not been begotten.

Since when has the Spirit been proceeding? Since as long as the Son has not been proceeding but being begotten in a non-temporal way that transcends explanation....”

“*How is it then that they are not co-unoriginate if they are co-eternal with him?* Because they are *from* him, though not *after* him. ‘Being unoriginate’ necessarily implies ‘being eternal’, but ‘being eternal’ does not entail ‘being unoriginated’, so long as the Father is referred to as origin.”

~Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 329-390) in “On the Son” orations 29, chapter 3

“The saints have both their spiritual excellency and blessedness by the gift of the Holy Ghost, and his dwelling in them. They are not only caused by the Holy Ghost, but are in him as their principle. The Holy Spirit becoming an inhabitant, is a vital principle in the soul. He, acting in, upon, and with the soul, becomes a fountain of true holiness and joy, as a spring is of water, by the exertion and diffusion of itself.”

~Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) in “God Glorified in Man’s Dependence”

“This then is the order of the rule of our faith....: God, the Father, not made, not material, invisible; one God, the creator of all things: this is the first point of our faith. The second point is: The Word of God, Son of God, Christ Jesus our Lord, who was manifested to the prophets according to the form of their prophesying and according to the method of the dispensation of the Father through whom all things were made; who also at the end of the times, to complete and gather up all things, was made man among men, visible and tangible, in order to abolish death and show forth life and produce a community of union between God and man. And the third point is: The Holy Spirit, through whom the prophets prophesied, and the fathers learned the things of God, and the righteous were led forth into the way of righteousness; and who in the end of the times was poured out in a new way upon mankind in all the earth, renewing man unto God.”

~Irenaeus (c. 125-202) bishop of Lyon in *The Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching*

Worship through the Word

SERMON – “We Believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the Giver of Life” – *Pastor Don Willeman*

SERMON PASSAGE – *John 14:15-26, John 15:26, John 16:5-15 (ESV)*

John 14 – Jesus speaking

¹⁵“If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you.

¹⁸“I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹Yet a little while and the world will see me no more, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰In that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. ²¹Whoever has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me. And he who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I will love him and manifest myself to him.” ²²Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, “Lord, how is it that you will manifest yourself to us, and not to the world?” ²³Jesus answered him, “If anyone loves me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴Whoever does not love me does not keep my words. And the word that you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me.

²⁵“These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. ²⁶But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

John 15 – Jesus speaking

²⁶“But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me.”

John 16 – Jesus speaking

⁵But now I am going to him who sent me, and none of you asks me, ‘Where are you going?’ ⁶But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart. ⁷Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. ⁸And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: ⁹concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; ¹⁰concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; ¹¹concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

¹²“I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. ¹³When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. ¹⁴He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you. ¹⁵All that the Father has is mine; therefore I said that he will take what is mine and declare it to you.