

The Holy Trinity – 2026

Genesis 1:1-2:4

Acts 2:14a, 22-36

Matthew 28:16-20

We're not done yet. None of us here are done yet. We are disciples of the Lord Christ. That means that we move forward. That means that we advance, we press on, we are nurtured to grow, nurtured to realize more and more of Jesus' life into our own. None of us are done. No one "arrives" in this life. Stagnation – it's anathema to discipleship, contrary to discipleship. Is there anyone who truly enjoys flat soda? Flat soda is an indication that something has gone wrong, something has been ignored, neglected. I won't drink it. One sip and I'll put it down. You are a disciple of the Son of God. Christ's Word is living and active. Not in the wind; not in an unopened book; in your soul, in a believer's soul – his heart, her mind – that's where this Word is living and active. You're a disciple of the Incarnate Word. That means that you are a learner, one who has been attached (bonded) to the Master. We grow. By way of circumstance and difficulty, by way of study and prayer, by way of communing with Christ, we grow. By the working of the Holy Spirit, Christ's life begins to assume a larger portion of our own. We're not done yet. We're moving forward.

Some of this depends on how you approach being a disciple. The joyful run ahead. The loving immerse themselves in the truth. The grateful pry into the deep things of God, the profound and the rich and the exquisite things of God. The flat do none of this. The flat are curved in on themselves. The flat ask no questions, seek no opportunity to serve, and are quietly stagnating. Here is the Lord calling you to Himself: "Come unto me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30). *Learn* from me – it is the same word as the "disciple" word. The Word made flesh shares His life with His disciples. He teaches you humility and grace and compassion and sacrifice and forgiveness and hope and trust and then, as a product of this teaching, peace invades your soul as you learn. Disciples love Jesus' yoke. His yoke is His cross. It's bloody and inspiring and humbling and full of love and it sets us free. Christ's cross is personal to every one of you, and it is simultaneously universal and perpetually contemporary. None of us are done learning. We're moving forward.

The disciples gathered at a prearranged location to meet the Lord. Jesus is about to ascend. His thirty-three-year life on earth is complete. The disciples, as they greet their crucified and risen King, are stirred to worship, just as we are. But some doubted. Just as we do. What they doubted, we aren't told. The Lord takes charge. Jesus proclaims His authority (Matthew 28:18). We have a leader. He has all authority. Authority in heaven and authority on earth belongs to the crucified King. He uses His authority to save. Salvation is in His wounds. He commits Himself to us. "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20). That is divine commitment. Immanuel, God with us; I am with you. How long? How long will the Lord of heaven and earth be with His church? Always! In season and out of season, when your mood is high and when failure casts an unhappy shadow – Christ is with us. When the church's coffers are full and when the church's pantry is bare – Christ is with us. The work of making disciples is rooted in His presence, His authority, His very active ministry. He served humanity by living a

sinless life, a life characterized by love and charity and truth. He served humanity by willingly laying down His life. He served us by dying. That service is ongoing. He rose, triumphant over sin and death and Satan. He rose and He delights to give you the victory. He serves you with His victory. And we grow. None of us are done because Christ is among us and He is still serving.

There's work to do. Make disciples – that's our charter. It should not be reduced to a soundbite or a mission statement or a clever self-promotion. Making disciples... it's our heartbeat, it's a *living church*, it's a Word that does not return empty. Making disciples doesn't earn us a brownie button or a seat at the head table in heaven. Making disciples for us is akin to a fish who loves to swim or a New York socialite who loves to shop. We do it naturally, as a matter of course, simply because that's who we are. Baptizing and teaching – the song remains the same. Sinners are baptized *into* Jesus, baptized *into* His death and resurrection (Romans 6:1-11). His yoke is in the water of Holy Baptism. His authority is in the water of Holy Baptism. We are adopted as our Father's rightful children as we die with Christ and are raised a new creation (Romans 8:15; 2 Corinthians 5:17). In the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit: "one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4:5-6). Our Triune God is made known as He brings His Son's death and resurrection into the lives of those who need precisely what He gives. What does He give? He gives forgiveness, life, and salvation.

This is a working congregation. There's no sitting on one's hands in this place. We are active in His Word. We cultivate a depth of Christian formation. We aren't interested in entertainment or being theologically innovative or jumping on spiritual bandwagons. What are we interested in? Loving one's neighbor – truly and in Christlike humility. What are we interested in? We're interested in making the good confession, as our Lord did before Pontius Pilate (1 Timothy 6:13). We pursue virtue, intentionally. That interests us very much. We strive to build character in our youngsters. We teach others to observe everything that our Lord has commanded us. Observe (τηρεῖν) – that's an interesting biblical word – what does that mean? We *guard* our Lord's Word, we cling to it, we extol it, we pass it on – but mostly, it means that we *do* it. Christianity is faith, to be sure. Christianity is believing, no doubt. We're saved by grace, God's work alone (Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 10:17). But Christianity, the life of a disciple, is doing. There are certain things that we do and there are other things that we cannot do. We cannot steal. We cannot take the Lord's name in vain. We cannot commit adultery. We cannot lie. We cannot covet.

We do honor the Lord's Day. We do celebrate the Lord's Supper. We do use the gifts that God has given us in service to Him and others. We do actively protect the vulnerable. We do pray for God's will to be done, that His reign would come, that His name would be hallowed in our lives, our community, and our nation. We are peacemakers. We do hunger and thirst for righteousness. We bless those who curse us. We're learners and none of us are done. We're disciples. We treasure Christ's yoke. He is the active leader in this place. His light shines. God the Father – Creator; God the Son – the Word by whom all things were made, the Word made flesh who redeemed us by His blood; God the Holy Spirit – the Sanctifier, the Lord and Giver of life: This One True God is among us, He elevates us, He gives us all we need for this body and life. This Holy and Saving God has seen to it that heaven is your home. So many, so very many, have

finished their course in faith and now rest from their labors. We are not done. One day, we will go marching in. Now we walk the path together, brothers and sisters in Christ, children of our heavenly Father. We walk as disciples, beloved of God the Father, redeemed and taught by God the Son, and guided by the Comforter, God the Holy Spirit. To the great Three-in-One belongs all glory, power, and honor.