



TRINITY  
SUNDAY

# Who celebrates Trinity Sunday?

Trinity Sunday is part of the Church Calendar (which includes such observances as Advent, Christmas, Holy Week, and Easter) and is celebrated in most Protestant denominations, such as: Reformed, Christian Reformed, Lutheran, Anglican, Presbyterian, United Church of Christ, United Methodist, etc.

# What is “Trinity Sunday”?

- “The first Sunday after Pentecost is the Festival of the Holy Trinity.
- On this day, the church rejoices in the impenetrable mystery that God is triune (three-in-one) -- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. How the Lord can be one God in three distinct persons is completely beyond the ability of any human to understand. By the power of the Holy Spirit, Christians accept this incomprehensible mystery as a fundamental article of faith.
- Since faith comes only through the Holy Spirit working through the means of grace, it is appropriate that this glorious mystery is celebrated on the first Sunday after Pentecost, the great festival of the coming of the Holy Spirit.”

*--Jacqui King, pastor of First United Methodist Church, College Station, TX*

# History of the term “Trinity”

- Although the term “trinity” does not appear in the Bible, there are passages where the three persons of the Trinity appear simultaneously:
- <sup>16</sup> And when Jesus was baptized, immediately he went up from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and coming to rest on him; <sup>17</sup> and behold, a voice from heaven said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.” (Matthew 13:16-17)
- Tertullian (born 155/160 A.D. and died after 220 A.D.), coined the Latin term “Trinitas” (“trinity,” meaning “The tripleness”). Tertullian was a Christian theologian and apologist who lived in Carthage, in northern Africa.

# Definition of “Trinity”

- “The Christian understanding of God as triune. Trinity means that the one divine nature is a unity of three persons and that God is revealed as three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The ultimate basis for the Christian doctrine of the Trinity lies in the divine self-disclosure in Jesus, who as the Son revealed the Father and poured out the Holy Spirit.” (*Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*)
- **John 17:25-26**
- “O righteous Father, even though the world does not know you, I know you, and these know that you have sent me. I made known to them your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you have loved me may be in them, and I in them.”

# Perichoresis

- “The theological concept . . . affirming that the divine essence is shared by each of the three persons of the Trinity in a manner that avoids blurring the distinctions among them. By extension, this idea suggests that any **essential characteristic** that belongs to one of the three is shared by the others. It also affirms that the action of one of the persons of the Trinity is also fully the action of the other two persons.” (*Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms*)
- The Godhead is often described as being in a dance, in, around, and through each *person*—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

# God's Essential Characteristic: Love

## 1 John 4:8

Anyone who does not love does not know God, because **God is love**.

## 1 John 4:16

So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

# The Trinity in Evangelization and Discipleship

## Matthew 28:18-20

<sup>18</sup> And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

<sup>19</sup> Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

<sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

# The Trinity in Benediction

## 2 Corinthians 13:14 (ESV)

<sup>14</sup> The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

# The Creeds

- The Creeds, such as the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed (325 A.D.), affirm a Christian's belief and trust in the Trinity.
- Conclude this brief overview of Trinity Sunday by reciting the Nicene Creed.