

RECTOR'S MESSAGE – MAY 31, 2026

The Great Commission

For years we might have been made aware of "***The Great Commission***" as part and part of our Christian mission. This to me resonates with "living in the community of the Trinity." From our Gospel reading this Sunday in Matthew 28:16-20, as believers we're given the marching orders to fulfill a purpose of God's mission in the world. To juxtapose the second reading in our Lectionary in Paul's final benediction to the Corinthians in 2 Cor 13:11-13, like folks in the Church at Corinth we are given the maintenance manual. Jesus sends us out with His authority, and Paul reminds us to go out as a family, not as lone wolves. A church that does both will look a lot like Acts 2: they had favor with all people ***and*** they devoted themselves to fellowship [Communion]. ***That is the Spirit of the Pentecost! That is the Spirit behind the Doctrine of Trinity!*** However, lone wolves often start strong but end wounded. No one to restore you (2 Cor 13:11), no one to remind you "***I am with you***" (Matt 28:20) when it gets hard. We need to be mindful that none of us is indispensable in our Christian journey.

On the one hand, for us as the 21st century church we're facing the same tension Christians in Corinth faced being lone wolves: from our global divisions that cut across the spectrum, political/economic/digital polarizations, misinformation, racism to various misgivings among ourselves, we need to remind ourselves the same task Jesus gave to His disciples to reach a global, post-Christian world! For us to "***Go***" might look different, but the command hasn't changed from Matt 28. And "***all nations***" in 2026 means your new neighbour/friend/coworker from Ethiopia or Egypt or from the Caribbean or Africa to your social media platforms, your chat groups to new immigrant or refugee family in your city looking for a greener pasture and opportunities in your country, we are all encouraged to "***Go***" and make a difference in their lives. You don't need to fly to Galilee at this point! Even at the moment Galilee needs help. The "***going***" is crossing cultural barriers wherever you are. And to be clear with this, sometimes we miss the point, many churches do programs instead of discipleship in order to be missional in our approach. Sorry such programs might lack the desire or revival that might spark something extraordinary. Jesus said "***teach them to obey,***" not just "***teach them facts;***" we sometimes see ourselves unconsciously re-shaping Christ's message to align with what people want to hear rather than a message that that could challenge or spark us to start engaging in a discourse in the way we all want to see the Church thrive in the world that is fast becoming very secular in thinking with consumerism.

On the other hand, Paul in 2 Cor 13:11 wrote to a church fighting over leaders, status, recognition, anti-instruction and misinformed-theology among other vices. But he doesn't say "***cancel them.***" Rather he says "***restore, comfort, agree, live in peace.***" And for us too with the social media rewards outrage of our time, cultural biases vs. racism/ethnicity vs. status, fame vs. recognition in the body of Christ among ourselves, Paul's command is radical and clear: ***pursue peace without sacrificing truth.*** That being said, restoration doesn't mean no boundaries. It means the goal is ***healing wounds,*** not ***winning!***

Finally, our unity is the proof of our mission. Jesus said "***I am with you.***" Paul said "***God of peace will be with you.***" Same purpose, same promise. From ***Jesus' High Priestly Prayer I***

shared with you in the last two weeks' message, John 17:21 ties it together: unity is the apologetic. Thus, in 2026 when the world sees Christians unified across theological and ecumenical lines while making disciples, that's Pentecost-level witness - "**Shared Way, Shared Witness**" [Montreal 2026]. The moment we refuse to acknowledge other peoples' differences, a division is set to be in the offing, **The Great Commission** loses its credibility and is watered down! But the Spirit of God makes things happen and possible; from Matt 28 Jesus' presence with us means we're not alone in this task. And in Paul's 2 Cor 13 "**Fellowship [Communion] of the Holy Spirit**" means we're not alone in the community. The same Spirit who empowered the 120 at Pentecost is the One who restores broken relationships and gives boldness to witness. That's "**The Great Commission!**" Thanks be to God. Amen.

With every blessing,

Rev. Wilson