

## Mission: The Identity & Vision of Our Church

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When the Beatles landed on the United States soil in the winter of 1964, they swept the nation by storm.

They played on the Ed Sullivan show to audience of 73 million people—about six times the number of people who watched this past year's NBA finals. They played to sold out crowds every night. When they arrived in city after city, the airplane runways were lined with adoring, screaming fans.

After one particular performance, rhythm guitarist George Harrison stuck his face into the center of a camera and said: *Who are you? Where are you from? Where are you going?*

Those are incredibly piercing questions, penetrating questions about identity and purpose.

All individuals must ultimately answer those questions.

All churches must answer those questions as well.

### Our Mission

Mission Statement: **Trinity Grace Church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ who make disciples in Athens & beyond for the glory of God.**

Who are we? *We are disciples of Jesus Christ.*

What are we doing? *We are making disciples in Athens & beyond.*

We are disciples who are *called, growing, and going* with one another in this mission of making disciples in Athens & beyond for the glory of God.

### I. Called

**Mark 1:16-20:** *Passing alongside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew the brother of Simon casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men." And immediately they left their nets and followed him. And going on a little farther, he saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who were in their boat mending the nets. And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and followed him.*

#### A. Discipleship begins with the effective call of God.

1. Jesus begins his ministry by calling his disciples to follow him.

Why did Simon and Andrew, James and John leave everything immediately to follow Jesus? What caused them to leave their family, their livelihood, and their lives behind?

2. The New Testament teaches that there are two calls:

**General call:** All who hear the gospel are called to repent.

**Effective call:** Some who hear the gospel are called and drawn to faith and repentance.

3. The effective call is an act of God through the gospel in which he calls and draws sinners to himself.

**1 Cor. 1:9:** *God is faithful, by whom you were called into the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*

**1 Peter. 2:9:** *But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*

“One of the New Testament’s most frequent one-word descriptions of the Christian is that he is ‘called.’”  
**Sinclair Ferguson**

4. Discipleship begins with the effective call of God. The sinner is converted, born again by the Spirit and transferred from darkness to light (Eph. 5:8) and death to life (Eph. 2:1-4).

**John 1:12-13:** *But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.*

“Scripture is clear in teaching that we are not all journeying toward God—some having found him, others still seeking. Instead, Scripture presents us as needing to have our hearts replaced, our minds transformed, our spirits given life. We can do none of this for ourselves. The change each human needs, regardless of how we may outwardly appear, is so radical, so near our roots, that only God can bring it about. We need God to convert us.”  
**Mark Dever**

## **B. The effective call of God results in faith.**

1. Faith is a personal commitment to Jesus Christ that includes knowledge, belief, and trust.

Jesus says, follow me. Then, the first disciples—Simon and Andrew, James and John—immediately leave their nets *and follow Jesus*.

**1 Thess. 1:8-10:** *For not only has the word of the Lord sounded forth from you in Macedonia and Achaia, but your faith in God has gone forth everywhere, so that we need not say anything. For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God, and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come.*

“It is not gazing on the lifeboat that saves the shipwrecked sailor, but actually getting into it. It is not knowing and believing that Christ is a Saviour that can save your soul, unless there are actual transactions between you and Christ. You must be able to say, ‘Christ is my Saviour, because I have come to Him by faith, and taken Him for my own.’”  
**J.C. Ryle**

2. Saving faith is the fruit of God’s call and the regenerating work of the Spirit.

**Eph. 2:8-9:** *For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

**Matt. 16:15-17:** *He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.*

3. Saving faith perseveres for life, enduring various trials and temptations without losing heart until the end.

**Matt. 10:22:** *But the one who endures to the end will be saved.*

## **C. The effective call of God results in repentance.**

1. Repentance is a personal commitment against sin that includes sorrow for sin, renunciation of sin, and turning from sin.

Jesus says, follow me. Then, the first disciples—Simon and Andrew, James and John—*immediately leave their nets and their family and follow Jesus*.

**2 Cor. 7:10-11:** *For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment!*

**2. True repentance is the fruit of God's call and the regenerating work of the Spirit.**

Faith and repentance are two sides of the same coin of conversion—after conversion, the new believer turns to Christ in faith and turns away from sin in repentance.

*Acts 5:30-32: The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.*

**3. True repentance continues for life.**

*1 John 1:7-8: If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.*

*"When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said 'Repent,' he intended that the entire life of believers should be repentance."*  
**Martin Luther**

## **II. Growing**

*Mark 3:13-15: And he went up on the mountain and called to him those whom he desired, and they came to him. And he appointed twelve (whom he also named apostles) so that they might be with him and he might send them out to preach and have authority to cast out demons.*

### **A. The Goal: Growth.**

**1. After being called by God and born again, every Christian is a follower of Christ and begins the path of growth in godliness.**

*Eph. 4:15-16: Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.*

*Col. 3:9-10: Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.*

**2. We are buildings that are being built up (Eph. 4:12), children that are being matured (Eph. 4:13-14), vines that are being pruned to bear more fruit (John 15:2), and a bride that is being washed and readied to be presented to her husband (Eph. 5:26-27).**

**3. The goal of growth is to become more like Christ, for our knowledge of God to become less and less theoretical and more and more actual and applied.**

*Eph. 4:13: . . . Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God.*

### **B. The Means: Hearing & Obeying the Word.**

**1. The means of our growth in Christ is the Word of God.**

*John 17:17: Sanctify them in the truth, your word is truth.*

In the Parable of the Soils (Mark 4:1-20), Jesus explains that the most decisive element in someone's growth is not their background, their track record, or church attendance. The most decisive element in someone's growth is whether they hear and obey the Word of God.

**2. Hearing happens as we wake up to the Word of truth.**

**Eph. 4:14:** . . . So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

The world, the flesh, & the devil oppose the truth. The world opposes the truth and gathers teachers to suit their own passions. Our hearts are deceitful and prone to wander into untruth. The god of this world blinds the minds of unbelievers to the truth.

### 3. Obeying happens as we walk out the Word of truth.

As walking follows waking, obeying follows hearing.

**Eph. 4:1:** *I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called.*

## C. The Context: The Local Church.

### 1. While the first disciples were called to follow Jesus and be with him, the primary context of our growth is the local church, the body of Christ. We are members of a larger body. We are stones of a spiritual house. We are sheep of a flock. We are brothers and sisters of the household of God.

### 2. We grow alongside one another.

**Eph. 4:13-15:** . . . until we all attain the unity . . . so that we may no longer be children . . . we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head.

"Some Christians try to go to heaven alone, in solitude. But believers are not compared to bears or lions or other animals that wander alone. Those who belong to Christ are sheep in this respect, that they love to get together. Sheep go in flocks, and so do God's people."

**Charles Spurgeon**

### 3. We grow with the help of one another.

**Eph. 4:16:** *From whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly . . .*

**Titus 2:2-6:** *Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good, and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled.*

## III. Going

**Mark 1:17:** *Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you become fishers of men."*

**Matthew 28:19-20:** *"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, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

"The fundamental goal is to make disciples who make other disciples, to the glory of God. We want to see people converted from being dead in their transgressions to being alive in Christ; and, once converted, to be followed up and established as mature disciples of Jesus; and, as they become established, to be trained in knowledge, godliness, and skills so that they will in turn make disciples of others."<sup>1</sup>

**Collin Marshall**

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<sup>1</sup> Collin Marshall, *The Trellis and the Vine*.

## A. All Disciples Go.

### 1. The precept: All believers are commanded to go.

*Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.*

**1 Peter 3:15:** . . . but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.

**2 Cor. 5:17-21:** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

### 2. The pattern: All believers go and share the hope they have received.

**Acts 8:4:** Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word.

**Acts 11:19-20:** Now those who were scattered because of the persecution that arose over Stephen traveled as far as Phoenicia and Cyprus and Antioch, speaking the word to no one except Jews. But there were some of them, men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who on coming to Antioch spoke to the Hellenists also, preaching the Lord Jesus.

## B. Going Is a Discipline.

### 1. Evangelist is a gift of the risen Christ.

**Eph. 4:11-12:** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

### 2. Evangelism is not a gift but a discipline for all followers of Christ.

**Acts 1:8:** But you [all] will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you [all] will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.

"Evangelism is not a gift given to some, it's a command given to all. One of our main callings as followers of Christ is to help others become followers of Christ. Many of us have misfiled evangelism in the spiritual gift drawer when it needs to be filed in the spiritual discipline drawer. It's not reserved for those who are outgoing, any more than Bible study is reserved for those who are studious."

**Jim Donahue**

## C. The Posture of Our Going.

### 1. Humble.

**1 Cor. 1:26-31:** For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."

### 2. Joyful.

**Mark 5:20:** And he went away and began to proclaim in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and everyone marveled.

**3. Confident.**

*John 10:16: I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.*

**4. Trusting God.**

*1 Cor. 3:6-7: I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.*

**D. How Do Disciples Go?**

**1. Gathering corporately to worship and praise God.**

*Heb. 10:24-25: And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

Until Christ returns, we are commanded to gather for preaching, praying, singing, giving, and celebrating the sacraments.

**2. Scattering individually to live godly lives and share the gospel of Jesus Christ.**

*Matt. 5:14-16: You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.*

Here are a few ideas for how we might scatter individually to represent Christ in McMinn County: serve in soup kitchens, foster care, crisis pregnancy ministry, disability services, boy scouts, nursing homes, economic development through business, education services, drug rehabilitation, housing renovations for the impoverished, veteran services, meals on wheels, lawn care ministry, community development, firewood distribution, English lessons for immigrants, athletics and recreation.