

HOLY TRINITY, WHOLLY LOVE

Introduction to the Theme

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“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

—Revelation 22:13

Our God is one, and our God is also three—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Welcome to the mystery of the Holy Trinity! Truth be told, this math surrounding our God is more than a little murky. How can one equal three and three equal one? Any elementary student would be correct to say, “That’s not right!” And yet, it is this three-in-one God in whom we confess our belief.

Wading into the mystery of the Holy Trinity can be a daunting endeavor. But that is precisely what we are going to do this summer. We enter together into the wonder and truth of the Trinity in order to know God more fully and know ourselves more wholly. So, how do we even begin? Where do we start our journey into our understanding of the Holy Trinity?

We begin with the end: the book of Revelation, where God declares, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” With Revelation 22:13 as our guiding text, this curriculum explores the Holy Trinity through the whole scope of God’s love expressed from start to finish. The totality of love in and through the Holy Trinity is beyond any mathematical equation. This summer we set our calculators aside and explore the mystery of God through the formula of love—a love freely gifted to all of us!

Each day at camp is framed by a question that will open us to an aspect of the Trinity. As we ponder each question, the scripture text for the day will guide us into God’s story of love for all creation that claims us and nourishes us. Our identity as God’s people is wedded to God’s love made alive in us through Jesus’s friendship and the Spirit’s work. As God’s beloved ones, we are sent into the world with the message of God’s love.

Who is God the creator? Psalm 104 is a poetic encounter with God, the source of all things—the beginning. The witness of creation testifies to the handiwork of our God, who, out of love, made all things good. We are part of this goodness and are compelled to honor creation, the love-work of God.

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Who is Jesus? As the incarnate person of the Trinity, Jesus takes on flesh and abides with us. Jesus speaks metaphorically as “the vine,” while calling us “the branches” (John 15:5), but the metaphor extends beyond, to the truth of divine friendship marked by selfless love. This holy love of God for all humanity goes wholly to the end, to death on the cross.

Who is the Holy Spirit? With wild winds and dancing tongues of fire, the Holy Spirit makes a grand entrance in the place where Jesus’s followers have gathered for the day of Pentecost (Acts 2). The fire of the Spirit fuels and begins the church and our formation as beloved community.

Who am I? Jesus begins his public ministry in the waters of the Jordan River. In Matthew 3:11-17, we hear God and see the Holy Spirit mysteriously manifested while Jesus emerges from the waters, named and sealed as “the Beloved.” Through the love and relationship of the Trinity, the title “beloved” becomes yours too, as one wholly claimed in the waters of creation and in the holy promise of baptism.

Who are we? Fueled by the fire-energy of the Holy Spirit, we live as disciples of Jesus, embodying and sharing God’s radically inclusive love for all the world.

And so the murky journey into the mystery of the Holy Trinity begins. Together as campers and camp leaders, we will discover the holiness of the Trinity, who abides with us and for us, revealing our own belovedness as we are wholly—from beginning to end—loved by God, the three-in-one.