

The Comparison Trap

John 3:22-36



TRINITY
Presbyterian Church

ORDER OF WORSHIP | March 1, 2026

SONG OF GATHERING & PREPARATION

The people of God always sang as they ascended the hill in Jerusalem up to the temple to worship (see Psalms 120-134). We, as well, prepare our hearts, minds, and bodies for worship by singing about the God we serve.

Ancient Gates

CALL TO WORSHIP | Exodus 20:17 & 1 Corinthians 4:7 (ESV)

We read God's Word, the Bible, together. It reveals to us who God is and what He expects of us.

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his male servant, or his female servant, or his ox, or his donkey, or anything that is your neighbor's. ... For who sees anything different in you? What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?

PRAYER OF ADORATION & CONFESSION

We pray together praising God for who He really is (Adoration) and admitting our inability to live up to what He expects of us (Confession).

ASSURANCE OF PARDON | John 10:27-30 (ESV)

We read God's Word together and are reminded that mercy and grace are freely given to all who have faith in Jesus Christ.

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. I and the Father are one.

WORSHIP THROUGH GIVING

We respond to the good news of God's mercy and grace for us in Jesus by giving generously to the work of His church and the kingdom of God.

There Is A Fountain

PRAISE & CELEBRATION

Our response to God's free grace is celebratory worship. We express our praise to God for who He is and what He has done for us.

Rest

A Thousand Hallelujahs

COMMUNITY KIDS' DISMISSAL (Infants - Kindergarten)

Please see your child's check-in name tag for class assignment.

GREETING

PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & INTERCESSION

We express in prayer our gratitude to God for what He has done and ask Him to continue to act for our good and the good of others in our community and world.

PROCLAMATION OF GOD'S WORD | Tim Rice, *Founding & Teaching Pastor*

A small portion of God's Word is explained to us and applied to our lives and circumstances.

CONFESSION OF FAITH

As an expression of our faith in Jesus Christ in solidarity with his people, we declare the substance of what we believe.

The Apostles' Creed: I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The ritual meal of Communion is a sign and seal of the grace we have in Jesus. That is, it symbolizes the work Christ did for our salvation (sign) and communicates the grace and mercy we have been given (seal) as a result of His death and resurrection.

SONG OF RESPONSE

We respond to the good news of God's mercy and grace by singing again of His goodness and greatness.

Lord I Need You

BENEDICTION

Because the hand of God's wrath was raised against Jesus, we now receive the hand of God's blessing as we are sent out to live our lives to the glory of God.

May the LORD bless you and keep you;
the LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;
the LORD turn His face toward you and give you His peace,
both now and forevermore. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGE & SERMON OUTLINE

Proclamation of God's Word

Text: John 3:22-36 (ESV)

Title: The Comparison Trap

Teacher: Tim Rice

22 After this Jesus and his disciples went into the Judean countryside, and he remained there with them and was baptizing. 23 John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because water was plentiful there, and people were coming and being baptized 24 (for John had not yet been put in prison). 25 Now a discussion arose between some of John's disciples and a Jew over purification. 26 And they came to John and said to him, "Rabbi, he who was with you across the Jordan, to whom you bore witness—look, he is baptizing, and all are going to him." 27 John answered, "A person cannot receive even one thing unless it is given him from heaven. 28 You yourselves bear me witness, that I said, 'I am not the Christ, but I have been sent before him.' 29 The one who has the bride is the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly at the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is now complete. 30 He must increase, but I must decrease." 31 He who comes from above is above all. He who is of the earth belongs to the earth and speaks in an earthly way. He who comes from heaven is above all. 32 He bears witness to what he has seen and heard, yet no one receives his testimony. 33 Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true. 34 For he whom God has sent utters the words of God, for he gives the Spirit without measure. 35 The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand. 36 Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him.

INTRO: When did you last compare yourself with someone else?

EVALUATING YOUR PLACE

What exactly was John facing from his own friends?

THE COMPARISON TRAP

How are comparisons a trap? And by what standard do you measure yourself?

HEAVENLY DEFINITION

How could John say, *“This joy of mine is now complete?”*

YOU CAN PRAY WITH US ...

1. Worship the LORD for the marvelous gift of purpose and His calling for our lives. Praise Him, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, that He has set you free from death, fear, punishment, bondage to sin, and meaninglessness.
2. How have you lived confused and shortsighted, without trust in God’s point of view? *Confess your unbelief and arrogance to Jesus, and ask Him to forgive you for doubting Him and acting as if you know what’s best.*
3. Give thanks to Jesus for taking people like us into His love story. Thank Him for giving up the Father’s favor, blessing and Presence (on the Cross) so that we can gain it by His miraculously gracious gift!
4. Who do you know who lives as a slave to coveting and comparisons? Pray for them, asking the Lord to shed His light into their heart, and that He would help them see how He alone can satisfy their deepest needs.
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to bear in you His fruit of love and joy! Reflect on John the Baptist’s confidence in vv. 27-30, and ask Him to secure you in the Gospel, especially knowing what His call is upon your life.

Upcoming *events*



Night of Worship & Prayer

March 1, 5pm

Contact the Church Office for details.

***Scan the code to register
for childcare.***



Retirees Prayer Luncheon

March 5, 12pm

Contact John Tucker at
jtuckerdc@gmail.com for details.



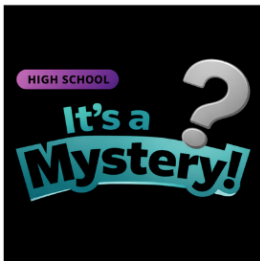
High School Girls'

Rom-Com Bingo

March 7, 7pm

Contact Taylor Hart for details.

Scan the code to register.



High School Mystery Event

March 8, 5:45pm

Contact Taylor Hart for details.

Scan the code to register.



Grace & Grit

Men's Prayer Gathering

March 21, 7:30am

Contact Tony Myers for details.

Upcoming *events*



Churchwide Easter Picnic

March 29, 12:15pm

Contact the Church Office for details.



2026 Men's Florida Retreat

April 16-18

Contact Brown Peterson for details.

Scan the code to register.



Middle School Girls'

Dos de Mayo

May 2, 6pm

Contact Emma Riggs for details.

Scan the code to register.



Person of Jesus (POJ) Study

Wednesdays, 12pm

Contact the church office for details.

Scan the code to join our email list!



Resource Library

***Located between the Children's Ministry
& the Church Office.***

Stop by to check out a resource for yourself or to share with a friend. **If there's a resource you'd love to see added, contact Tony Myers.**

Interested in Getting Connected?

Scan the code below to be added to our database, weekly announcement emails and for information on areas where you can serve at Trinity.



Follow Us! @TrinityLakeland

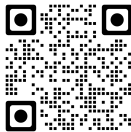


The Compass And Map Podcast

Now streaming on *Apple Podcasts* and *Spotify*.



Apple



Spotify

Community Bible Reading

communitybiblereading.org

March 2-7, 2026

(3-year plan: read [blue](#) passages | 1-year plan: read [all](#))

Monday	Acts 19 1 Kings 13	Genesis 43 Isaiah 35
Tuesday	Acts 20 1 Kings 14	Genesis 44 Isaiah 36
Wednesday	Acts 21 1 Kings 15	Genesis 45 Isaiah 37
Thursday	Acts 22 1 Kings 16	Genesis 46 Isaiah 38
Friday	Acts 23 1 Kings 17	Genesis 47 Isaiah 39
Saturday	Psalm 62	Psalm 10 Psalm 114

Scripture Memory for the Week:

John 3:34 (ESV)

34 For he whom God has sent utters the words of God,
for he gives the Spirit without measure.

Office Hours:

Monday - Thursday | 8:30am - 5:00pm & **Friday** | 8:30a-12:00pm

Sunday Worship | 9:00am & 10:45am

301 N Florida Ave

Lakeland, FL 33801

863-603-7777 | trinitylakeland.org

Vision

A city transformed: Loved by God the Father, saved by Jesus His Son,
empowered by His Spirit, called by God to reach our city with His love.