

# The Pilgrim's Compass

## *The Pilgrimage*

A Ministry of Adult Faith Formation  
at Cary Presbyterian Church





Iona 2019

Week One — August 28

# Ice-Breaker

- ~ How did you come to faith?
- ~ How has your faith been sustained and enriched?
- ~ What challenges do you see for Christians in the coming decades?

# Answering the Great Commission

~ Matt. 28:16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 When they saw him, they worshiped him; but some doubted. 18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 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, 20 and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

# A quick romp thru Christian history

- ~ Jesus and first disciples CE 1-33.
- ~ Peter, Paul, apostles (ACTS) first century.
- ~ Authors of Gospels later first century.
- ~ “Early church” 2<sup>nd</sup> thru early 4<sup>th</sup> century.
- ~ 312 Edict of Milan (Constantine).
- ~ 325 Council of Nicaea
- ~ 380 Theodosian makes Christianity religion of the empire.

# A quick romp thru Christian history

- ~ The “Constantinian Church” is just a reference name for the church aligned with “empires.”
- ~ The “Constantinian Church” — 380 CE - to the present.
- ~ *Some* argue that the Constantinian Church ended in the mid-to-late 20<sup>th</sup> Century and that we are now entering a “post-Constantinian era.”
  - ~ Resident Aliens, Stanley Hauerwas, Will Willimon
  - ~ The Benedict Option, Rod Dreher
  - ~ The Change of Conversion and Origin of Christendom, Alan Kreider

# Making Disciples — Then & Now

## Pre Constantine (before 313 CE)

- ~ Discipleship involved risk.
- ~ No support from empire.
- ~ Faith lived at margins of society.
- ~ Simple, daily, journey with God.
- ~ Love & Justice focussed.

## Constantinian Era (4<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> C. CE)

- ~ Little risk.
- ~ Church of the Empire.
- ~ Christians in halls of power and wealth.
- ~ Entertaining visions of worldwide Christendom.
- ~ Certitude, and Power focussed.

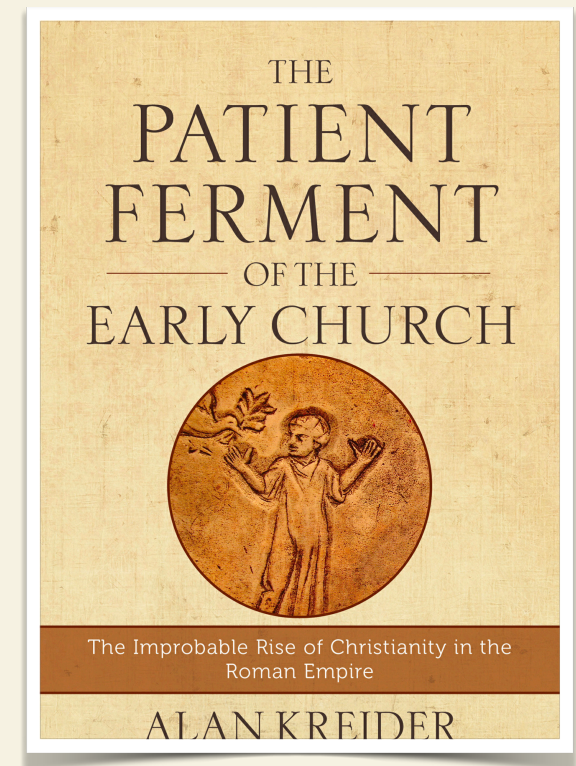
# Making Disciples — Then & Now

- ~ Church indoctrinating disciples begins to look a lot like an empire indoctrinating new citizens.
- ~ Pay taxes & follow laws becomes — pay your tithe and submit to church's authority.
- ~ Maintaining the *Status Quo* is preferred over living *Status Viatoris*.
- ~ The focus of conversion moves away from individual transformations and into ideas of creating a Christian world.
- ~ In early years no such grandiose plans are seen.



# Intriguing growth of the church

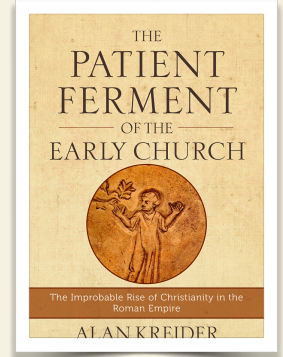
- ~ In first 300 years Christians wrote **THREE** treatises on *patience* and not a single one on *evangelism*.
- ~ Faith transmitted by *action* rather than by *argument*. Christians simply lived lives such obviously kind, gentle, and selfless that others were attracted.



# Intriguing growth of the church

- ~ “The best surviving summary of catechetical topics, Cyprian’s *To Quirinus 3*, contains 120 precepts for catechumens in Carthage, but not one of them admonishes the new believers to share the gospel with the gentiles.
- ~ Early Christian preachers do not appeal to the “Great Commission” in Matthew 28:19–20 to inspire their members to “make disciples of all nations”; they assume that the “apostles” (Jesus’s eleven plus Paul) had done this in the church’s earliest years and that it had already been fulfilled in the church’s global expansion. When writers referred to the Matthew 28:19–20 text, it was to buttress the doctrine of the Trinity or to address the issue of baptism, not to inspire missionary activity.”

Kreider, Alan. *The Patient Ferment of the Early Church* (p. 10).



# Conversion in first centuries

- ~ Paul & Peter 1<sup>st</sup> Century
- ~ Justin in Rome Late 2<sup>nd</sup> Century
- ~ Cyprian in Ephesus 3<sup>rd</sup> Century

Kreider, Alan. *The Change of Conversion and the Origin of Christendom*

## Quote from St. Irenaeus

*“A Person Fully Alive  
is the Glory of God”*

St. Irenaeus bishop of Lyons in what is now France in the last quarter of the 2nd century.

# Ester de Waal

[This] understanding of journeying is in itself so rich and so significant. It is *peregrinatio*, seeking quest, adventure, wandering, exile — it is ultimately a journey . . . to find the place of my resurrection, the resurrected self, the self that I might hope to be, to become the true self in Christ. This journey is possible only because I am finding my roots — that familiar paradox known in all monastic life and a reflection of basic human experience, that only if one is rooted at home in one's self, in the place which one finds oneself, in one able to move forward, to open up new boundaries, both exterior and interior, in other words, to embark on a life on continual and never-ending conversion, transformation."

in *The Celtic Way of Prayer* p. ix-x

# William Ralph Inge

“Every [person] has two journeys to make through life. There is the outer journey, with its various incidents and the milestones . . . There is also an inner journey, a spiritual Odyssey, with a secret history of its own.”

# T.S. Eliot

“We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive where we started  
And know the place for the first time.”

pt. 5, *Four Quartets* (1942)

10 minute break



Pilgrimage in  
the broader  
sense of being  
“on the way.”

... from Jerusalem to  
Jericho ...

... from this world to  
kingdom of heaven ...

