

Innisfail United Church

Christians: Committed, Caring, Community

Twenty third after Pentecost
November 16, 2025



Minister: Rev. Tammy Allan

Thank you for joining us today



Wheelchair Accessible



Equipped For Hearing Impaired

4720 – 48 Avenue, Innisfail, AB T4G 1N6 Phone: 403-227-3881

Prelude

Greetings and Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge with respect the history, culture and spirituality of the people with whom Treaty 7 was signed and the territory in which our church and its members reside, and our responsibility as treaty members. We also honour the heritage and gifts of the Metis people of region 3. May we live with respect on this land and live-in peace and friendship with its people.

Announcements, Celebrations

Lighting the Christ Candle

May the candle remind us that we are always held in the light of Christ's love.

Introit MV 21 Open Our Hearts

Call to Worship

God has promised a new creation.

Where can we glimpse this new realm of God?

God is creating a world of justice and peace right now.

Where can we glimpse this new realm of God?

Take hope, the new creation is being built all around us. Seeds of it lie within us, and God is nurturing them into life.

We are people of hope and joy. Let us praise God together.

Hymn 402 We Are One

Prayer of Approach

Thank you, God, for your great love for creation, and for all that you do to build and sustain it in goodness and beauty. May your vision of peace and shalom connect us to you in profound ways. We sing and pray for your realm, in and among us. We gather this day to bring you, our praises. Amen.

Time for the Young and the Young at Heart

Hymn MV 48 I Can Feel You Near Me God

Minute for Mission

Becoming a new parent can be overwhelming, with the constant demands of caring for a newborn, sleepless nights, and the pressure to make the right choices for your child. The exhaustion of balancing daily responsibilities while navigating the unknowns of parenthood often leaves new parents feeling unsure and isolated. It's a time filled with great joy, but also uncertainty, as parents adjust to their new roles and work to create a safe and nurturing environment for their little one.

At Fairview Resource Centre in Halifax, Nova Scotia, the New Parents Support group aims to walk with parents as they navigate the complexities of raising a newborn. Once a week, parents gather to meet with a public health nurse who provides education and answers questions. From expectant parents to those with babies up to 18 months, the program provides resources for those who might not otherwise have access to in-person support or resources.

Parents connect not only with health professionals, but form deep bonds with each other, and some are

still in contact many years later. Many of us have heard that “it takes a village to raise a child,” and Fairview Resource Centre is truly taking action to give a positive space for children in the community to flourish. Thank you for walking alongside our Mission and Service partners as they help children and communities grow.

Your support of [Mission and Service](#) is vital to the continuation of incredible programs like these.

Scripture Reading Isaiah 65: 17-25

New Heavens and a New Earth

17 I am about to create new heavens and a new earth; the former things shall not be remembered or come to mind. 18 But be glad and rejoice forever in what I am creating; for I am about to create Jerusalem as a joy, and its people as a delight. 19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and delight in my people; no more shall the sound of weeping be heard in it, or the cry of distress.

20 No more shall there be in it an infant that lives but a few days, or an old person who does not live out a lifetime; for one who dies at a hundred years will be considered a youth, and one who falls short of a hundred will be considered accursed. 21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22 They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. 23 They shall not labor in vain, or bear children

for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by the LORD— and their descendants as well.

24 Before they call, I will answer, while they are yet speaking, I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent—its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the LORD.

Reflection

The year is drawing to a close. On the Christian Church calendar, the year end is closer still. We are, this week, at the 2nd last Sunday of the church year.

Our gospel reading places us at a time in the life of Jesus' ministry that is also nearing its conclusion, as we heard the beginning of Jesus' final sermon before he joined his companions for the Last Supper. It was a time, one can imagine, for both Jesus and his disciples, that was becoming more and more tension filled, as they realized that the religious authorities were becoming increasingly angry and ready to put an end to their ministries.

Jesus was preparing his disciples and his followers for times of turmoil and upheaval. But he was also offering the anticipation that those times would be followed by the promise of a new hope, a new life of peace and justice. He was promising the fulfillment of the Song of Mary, found in the first chapter of Luke's gospel. That song of Mary's is something we will hear in a few weeks time, during Advent.

Keep in mind that Luke's gospel was actually written AFTER the fall of the temple in Jerusalem, and AFTER the death and resurrection of Christ. So, what we find in this passage was written in such a way that gives us a vision of Jesus as a prophet, like the many prophets that had gone before him.

Keep in mind, too, that Jesus and his followers would have learned the stories of the prophets growing up. Their lives would have been shaped by those prophetic visions of what was to come. Of course, one of those many prophets was Isaiah, whose words we also heard today.

The SALT commentary for this week's passage from Isaiah calls it "one of the most soaring and beautiful in all of the Bible's library, words of encouragement for Israelites exiled in Babylon, promising what amounts to a New Exodus, similar to the original exodus from Egypt, but now with a scope that's nothing less than cosmic: new heavens, and a new earth!"

It's good to remember that Jesus and his followers would have known that writing from Isaiah. They would have, as part of their biblical story, that promise of new heavens and a new earth. As people of faith, they would have that to hold on to as they heard Jesus tell them of the struggles that were to come. Those prophetic words would perhaps give the faith in Jesus' promise of new life to come.

The prophesy of the tearing down of the temple was so much more than just the tearing down of the physical structure of that building. In those times, the temple was

central to the life of the people. It was where they gathered, where news was shared, where their life celebrations and life passages occurred, where they learned the stories of their faith, from childhood on. The temple was central to the life of the people. Its loss was about not just the loss of a functional structure. It was about defeat of the people, and their way of being in the world.

Perhaps the prophet Isaiah was someone the people of Luke's gospel could hold on to as they heard of what was to come for them, in terms of persecution, perhaps even unto death. Perhaps it was that promise of new heavens and a new earth that helped them to stay the course, and remain on the path of following Jesus' way.

With passages like these, I find myself asking the question of where we find ourselves in the words we have heard? Where do we find conditions like persecution, wars, nations rising against nations, famine?

Sadly, we don't have to look very far. Look at the tragedies of war in Ukraine; the ongoing struggles for peace and the hope of a two-state solution in Palestine and Israel; the wars in Sudan; the chaos and fear of those in the United States that are most affected by the shutdown of the government, and the loss services that support the most vulnerable in that country.

Look at the struggles within our own province to honour the rights of our teachers, through an action that could have ripple effects into other areas of our life as citizens of

this province, such as health care and social services and supports.

It is hard not to let all that is wrong in our world, the fear, the distrust, the open acts of hate, immobilize us, paralyze us, as we fear for the future. I am saddened by the reality that a member of our Canadian parliament crossing the floor, on principle, and with integrity for his values as a public servant is now receiving death threats. It's not hard to see why people may think twice before risking to stand for justice.

Can we find hope in the biblical story?

Can we find promise in Isaiah's vision of new heavens and a new earth?

What is our role in bringing that promise to fruition? What is our gospel today, our good news? Where is our hope?

People standing up – across the globe, calling for justice, letting it be known that they – we – will not – cannot accept injustice, that human rights matter, that people matter more than power and control.

Hear again the words of Isaiah:

21 They shall build houses and inhabit them; they shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit. 22 They shall not build and another inhabit; they shall not plant and another eat; for like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be, and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands. 23 They shall not labor in vain, or bear children for calamity; for they shall be offspring blessed by

the LORD— and their descendants as well. 24 Before they call, I will answer, while they are yet speaking, I will hear. 25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together; the lion shall eat straw like the ox; but the serpent—its food shall be dust! They shall not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the LORD.

The metaphor of the wolf and the lamb lying together, what does that look like to a Palestinian and an Israeli in 2025? How does the vision of not building for another to inhabit play out in that part of our world?

That is a vision of hope that we must be a part of bringing to life. It can be overwhelming to consider how to do so. I get that sometimes one wonders how we, as individuals can affect change. I remember someone long ago, at a youth event I was at, asking the then moderator of the United Church about that. It was the late Rev. Clark MacDonald. He reminded us – about 300 youth in an auditorium, that each one of us is like a grain of sand, and that although individually that may not seem like anything, but, he said, it is the totality of the many, many grains of sand that can hold back the tide.

As citizens of the world, as people of faith, we are called to be agents of peace and justice, living examples of God's call. We do have a role to play. We can exercise our right to vote. We can support economic initiatives that sustain those on the margins and at risk. We can learn and develop our awareness of the issues in our communities, our province, our world, that keep people on the margins, that oppress and exclude rather than support and include. We can pray. We can be the grains of sand that join

together to hold back the tide of injustice and build a world of hope. May it be so.

Hymn VU 229 God of the Sparrow

Offering

Special Music Innisfail Bell Choir

Offertory TLUS 58 Sing, Thanks to our God

Prayer of Dedication

To you, O God, we bring all that we have and all that we are. We ask your blessing upon our offerings and your guidance upon our paths as we journey with you by our side. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Loving God, we give you thanks for all your gifts to us—for daily food, for health, for each breath we take, for freedom to choose, and for the gifts of your word, and your love. You have entrusted so much to us. May we be worthy of that trust—may we be a people who are unafraid to live as fully and as richly as you want us to live.

Help us, O God, as followers of Jesus, to stand for justice, to build a world where hope and peace abound.

We pray for the church, this community, Innisfail United; for the wider United Church of Canada and its mission; for the church universal, that we might together seek justice and resist evil in our world.

We pray for those who are living with illness, feeling alone or lonely, or living with loss. May they know the healing that comes with compassionate support of

friends, family and community care.
On our prayer list, we hold space for:
In a moment of silence, we lift up our concerns, our
hopes, and our joys.

God of grace, in gratitude for your never-ending
presence among us, we join our voices together,
sharing the words that Jesus taught us to pray.

The Lord's Prayer

Hymn VU 884 You Shall Go Out With Joy

Words of Departure

And now, surrounded by the love of God who calls us to
seek justice and live-in peace, let us go forth with joy to
follow in the way of Jesus. **Amen.**

Sung Blessing VU 298 When You Walk from Here

Postlude



Announcements

Sun. Nov. 2 to Sun. Nov 30– Silent Auction

Tues. Nov 18 – Board Meeting – **1:30 pm**

Tues. Nov 25 – Sundae Social at Autumn Grove – **2:00 pm**

Thurs. Nov. 27 – Advent Bible Study – **10:00 am** (Parlour)

Fri. Nov. 28 – Ladies Night Out – **5:00 pm** - Great Wall

Sun. Nov. 30 – Teddy Bears (1st Sunday Advent)

Sun. Nov. 30 – White Gift Sunday (Pajama Day)

(Collecting for Christmas Bureau)

Thursday mornings 10:00-11:30 – Advent Bible Study
(Dec 4, Dec 11 and Dec 18) – Meet in Parlour

HAM SUPPER

**Sunday, November 30, 2025
At 4:30 pm in the Church Hall**



Presale Tickets Only

Adult \$25.00 Under 11—Free

Innisfail United Church

4720—48 Avenue

Tickets on sale at the church office

Tuesday -Thursday 9 am— noon

403-227-3881

Ticket sales limited to 80

Silent Auction

Have you checked all the great items that are up for bid?

There are dinners, baking, gift baskets, and art work, etc... You don't have to wait until Sunday to bid. Drop by the office during office hours and bid.

Have fun and let's get those bids up!!!!

Word Search Puzzle

from Pinawa.Church/puzzles (use for free distribution only)

M Z L I V E S O N E C H I L D R E N C S F D
O M O U N T A I N A N S W E R F S P R H A E
R N E W C A L A M I T Y N R S V E E E O L S
E L A M B E A R I N H A B I T T R O A R L C
W O R K S J I N F A N T K S U O P P T T S E
U W T H H C R E A T I N G O D G E L E S C N
H E H O A B W Y W R D T T U I E N E S A R D
O L U L L L O O I E E H H N S T T F T Y Y A
U L R Y L E L U L E S E E D T H P E R S O N
S I T S A S F T L E T R I R R E W E A R E T
E O L D U S T H A T R E R E E R E D W Q N S
S N C O M E G Y L F O O D M S A E B Y C J L
A B O U T D L E O M Y D I E S N P C B H O I
F O R M E R A A R L O M R M A O I O E O Y F
T H I N G S D R D A F C E B C T N N F S B E
F M I N D O E S A B F A J E C H G S O E U T
R F E W H I L E Y O S L O R U E I I R N I I
U Y E T H A N D S R P L I E R R S D E H L M
I V I N E Y A R D S R W C D S B A E V E D E
T P H U N D R E D L I K E N E U I R E A V L
H E A V E N S P L A N T K W D T A E R R A O
W H A T O X D E L I G H T H E M H D J D I N
T H E Y J E R U S A L E M O S P E A K I N G

Word List

DESCENDANTS REMEMBERED CONSIDERED VINEYARDS OFFSPRING
JERUSALEM TOGETHER SPEAKING MOUNTAIN LIFETIME DISTRESS
CREATING CHILDREN CALAMITY ACCURSED WEEPING SERPENT
REJOICE INHABIT HUNDRED HEAVENS FOREVER DESTROY DELIGHT
BLESSED ANOTHER THINGS PERSON PEOPLE ISAIAH INFANT HOUSES
FORMER CREATE CHOSEN BEFORE ANSWER YOUTH YEARS WHILE
THERE THEIR STRAW SOUND SHORT SHALL PLANT LIVES LABOR