

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth  
Sunday, May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
Rev. Gerry Gallant

The Holy Catholic Church  
Trinity Sunday  
Isaiah 6:1-13

## Welcome

## Announcements

### Call to Worship

God calls us to worship, and we come,  
**some with laughter and songs of joy.**

God calls us to worship, and we come,  
**some from a sense of obligation or habit.**

God calls us to worship, and we come,  
**some with hearts heavy with grief.**

God calls us to worship, and we come,  
**some with distraction or exhaustion.**

God calls us to worship, and we come,  
**some with eagerness and enthusiasm.**

God calls us to worship, and we come,  
**some with stress, loneliness, or depression.**

As God's dearly loved children,  
**we bring all our joy and pain, hurt and hope  
into this place of Spirit-given grace, love, and hope**

### Prayer of Adoration and Invocation

O God, our Father,  
you seek people  
who will worship you in spirit and in truth;  
and so we ask you to inspire

and bless the worship week by week in this church,  
 in words and music,  
 prayers and hymns,  
 psalms and lessons.  
 Open the hearts and lips of those  
 who worship you today all over the world,  
 that all of us may listen with humility and acceptance  
 to the preaching of your Word.  
 We ask this in the name of him  
 through whom we have salvation:  
 our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

**Children's Hymn: "Peace Like a River"**

**Call to Confession**

Prepare the way of the Lord!  
 Let us make our confession to God.

**Prayer of Confession**

**Triune God,  
 we praise you as the God of love and life.  
 Though Jesus prayed that we would be one,  
 we confess that we fail to live in unity with each other and with you.  
 We break our communion through hostile words and unkind actions.  
 We long for your Spirit to heal us and to correct us.  
 We long for you to help us experience communion  
 with you and with each other  
 as we gather around your Word.  
 Even now, dependent on your grace, we commit ourselves  
 to live more fully in the unity you desire.  
 Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

**Assurance of Pardon**

You did not receive a spirit of slavery to fall back into fear,  
 but you have received a spirit of adoption.  
 When you cry, "Abba! Father!"  
 it is that very Spirit bearing witness with our spirit  
 that we are children of God,  
 and if children, then heirs,  
 heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ.  
 In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, we are forgiven.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
 Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
 Give us this day our daily bread.  
 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.  
 For Thine is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory,  
 Forever and ever. Amen.

Hymn #461: "Be Thou My Vision" (V 1,4,5)

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;  
 naught be all else to me, save that thou art -  
 thou my best thought, by day or by night;  
 waking or sleeping, thy presence my light.

Riches I heed not, nor vain, earthly praise;  
 thou my inheritance, through all my days;  
 thou and thou only the first in my heart,  
 high King of heaven, my treasure thou art!

High King of heaven, when the battle is done,  
 grant heaven's joy to me, O bright heaven's sun!  
 Heart of my own heart, whatever befall,  
 still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Responsive ReadingPsalm 8

1 O Lord, our Lord,  
 how majestic is your name in all the earth!  
 You have set your glory above the heavens.

**2 Out of the mouth of babies and infants,  
 you have established strength because of your foes,  
 to still the enemy and the avenger.**

3 When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,  
 the moon and the stars, which you have set in place,

**4 what is man that you are mindful of him,  
 and the son of man that you care for him?**

5 Yet you have made him a little lower than the heavenly beings  
 and crowned him with glory and honor.

**6 You have given him dominion over the works of your hands;  
 you have put all things under his feet,**

7 all sheep and oxen,  
and also the beasts of the field,  
8 the birds of the heavens, and the fish of the sea,  
whatever passes along the paths of the seas.

9 O Lord, our Lord,  
how majestic is your name in all the earth!

**Anthem (Music Ministry): "I Hear the Prophet Calling"**

**Prayer for illumination**  
**(Congregant Prepared)**

**Scripture**

**Isaiah 6:1-13**

**6** In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. <sup>2</sup> Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. <sup>3</sup> And one called to another and said:

"Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;  
the whole earth is full of his glory!"

<sup>4</sup> And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. <sup>5</sup> And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"

<sup>6</sup> Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. <sup>7</sup> And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for."

<sup>8</sup> And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." <sup>9</sup> And he said, "Go, and say to this people:

" 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand;  
keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'"

<sup>10</sup> Make the heart of this people dull,  
and their ears heavy,  
and blind their eyes;  
lest they see with their eyes,  
and hear with their ears,  
and understand with their hearts,  
and turn and be healed."

<sup>11</sup> Then I said, "How long, O Lord?"  
And he said:

**“Until cities lie waste  
 without inhabitant,  
 and houses without people,  
 and the land is a desolate waste,  
<sup>12</sup> and the LORD removes people far away,  
 and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.  
<sup>13</sup> And though a tenth remain in it,  
 it will be burned again,  
 like a terebinth or an oak,  
 whose stump remains  
 when it is felled.”  
 The holy seed is its stump.**

### **Sermon**

Did you know that there are almost 2.3 billion people who claim to be Christians in this world? 2.3 billion Christians, that seems like a lot until you realize that those 2 billion Christians are in fact very different from one another.

By best estimates there are roughly 41,000 Christian denominations globally. Each denomination has its own history, traditions, and practices, some that are very similar and others that are radically different.

Perhaps the best known are Roman Catholicism, Protestantism, and Orthodox Christianity. These churches differ in a wide variety of topics such as salvation, the role of the church in a person's life and the very nature of God. And within each of these major sectors of the faith there are churches that have different views on secular issues, some being more conservative and others being more progressive.

The Christian faith offers people literally thousands upon thousands of options to explore their faith, yet the Bible teaches us that there is only one way to the heaven, abiding in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, fully trusting in him, and obeying his Word in our lives.

The main problem with modern day Christianity is not the denominations, it is the denominationalism that has crept in alongside Christianity. We are allowed to differ in our views of salvation and rapture, after all, we all know that the Bible does not clearly state the process that will take place after our death or when Jesus returns. However, these modern churches have taken on a stance of our denomination is correct and yours is wrong therefore you are a false church.

We see this when people begin to describe themselves as Calvinists, or Arminiests. Two church fathers who had some very different views on how man comes to God. We see it in the debates that occur between people who believe in rapture and those that don't. In each case of

denominationalism, the people argue very well using points from the Bible that fully support their case. Yet they ignore the Scripture that does not.

This is the problem with denominationalism, it makes people faithful to a man-made organization, that is fully susceptible to the fallen nature of man. People begin to trust in the denomination to do the reading, interpreting, and teaching of the Scripture to them, which ends up just using the Scripture that supports the denomination's viewpoint and ignores anything that does not agree with them.

The truth is that a Christian needs to study the entire Word of God, not just cherry pick out the points of Scripture we like while we ignore the points we do not. In our desire as Christians to come together into larger more organized institutions we have lost the most valuable aspects of our faith, a zeal for God's Word, a zeal of prayer, a zeal for the Holy Spirit in our lives, a zeal for the lost, and a zeal to answer God's call on us.

The reality is that the majority of Christian denominations in the world today are in fact nothing like the church that is describes in the New Testament, except for the warning to the churches that appears in the book of Revelation. One Christian theologian said that the church we know today has become so normal in the world that the church of the New Testament seems abnormal. In other words, what was once considered normal for God's people in this world, the plan and purpose of His Church, now seems out of place in the world if kept.

So, we need to remember what it means to be Christian, to have Christ in us, and remember the call that he has placed upon each of us as we serve him in this world.

And that is going to take effort on our part, because the denominational churches of this world for the most part are going through a paradigm shift, and not in a good direction. In an attempt to make Christianity more palatable to the world the church has lost its foundation in the Lord and lost its way in this world. And even though we have 2.3 billion people who call themselves Christian in this world, a good number of them will be in for a shock when they stand before the White Throne on the Day of Judgment and come to the realization that they were not in fact Christian at all.

It is with this in mind that we look at the book of Isaiah today, where the Lord calls his servant Isaiah. And through a study of this short bit of Scripture we can discover what it means to be a true Christian and begin to understand that even though there are 41,000 denominations, there can be both true Christians and false Christians in each and every one of them.

In verse 5 it says

**Isaiah 6:5**

**<sup>5</sup> And I said: "Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!"**

This is the woe that true Christians all possess. Isaiah stood in the presence of one of the angels of the Lord, and immediately realized his uncleanness, that he was a sinner in his nature, and he understood this from just a glimpse of the holiness of God.

Every true Christian knows that they are a sinner, that it is our very nature, we know that Paul speaks the truth when he says 'no one is righteous' and that.

**Romans 3:23**

**<sup>23</sup> for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,**

Until we open up our Bibles fully and expose ourselves to the complete light of God's Word it is easy for us to turn a blind eye to the areas of our life that are sinful and hidden in the dark. Yet once we open up the complete Scriptures and let them into our lives, all of those sins hiding out in the dark corners are exposed and we like Isaiah, come to the realization of the gravity of our sinful life.

If you have ever read through the book of Isaiah, you would know that up until this point in Scripture Isaiah has cried out 'woe' a warning seven times, and each time it was a warning and condemnation from God upon the nation of Israel, and now God is showing Isaiah that while the nation of Israel has fallen away from obedience to God's Word, he is in fact no different. He too is a sinner, and so Isaiah calls out, 'woe is me!'

Remember Isaiah was a prophet a leader of God's people, including you and I, and at this moment he realized that even the prophets of God, the leaders of God's people were not immune from their own fallen nature.

The fallen nature of mankind is evident in the direction that many denominations are walking in the world today. There are blatantly ignoring the Word of God in efforts to fill the pews, or in many cases to fill their pockets. There are many ministers and denominations that will set aside parts of Scripture because they do not want to offend, or they do not want to suffer persecution because of their faith. Then there are those that are led astray, and begin to worship false idols, putting those idols ahead of God in the church itself.

Again, this is not a new issue. This is the pattern that God's people have repeated since the very beginning of time, which is why it is so important that we are rooted in the vine.

The great prophet Ezekiel was given a dream where he witnessed the falling away of the leaders of God's people.

**Ezekiel 8:7-18**

**<sup>7</sup> And he brought me to the entrance of the court, and when I looked, behold, there was a hole in the wall. <sup>8</sup> Then he said to me, "Son of man, dig in the wall." So I dug in the wall, and behold, there was an entrance. <sup>9</sup> And he said to me, "Go in, and see the vile abominations that they are committing here." <sup>10</sup> So I went in and saw. And there, engraved**

on the wall all around, was every form of creeping things and loathsome beasts, and all the idols of the house of Israel. <sup>11</sup> And before them stood seventy men of the elders of the house of Israel, with Jaazaniah the son of Shaphan standing among them. Each had his censer in his hand, and the smoke of the cloud of incense went up. <sup>12</sup> Then he said to me, "Son of man, have you seen what the elders of the house of Israel are doing in the dark, each in his room of pictures? For they say, 'The LORD does not see us, the LORD has forsaken the land.'" <sup>13</sup> He said also to me, "You will see still greater abominations that they commit."

<sup>14</sup> Then he brought me to the entrance of the north gate of the house of the LORD, and behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz. <sup>15</sup> Then he said to me, "Have you seen this, O son of man? You will see still greater abominations than these."

<sup>16</sup> And he brought me into the inner court of the house of the LORD. And behold, at the entrance of the temple of the LORD, between the porch and the altar, were about twenty-five men, with their backs to the temple of the LORD, and their faces toward the east, worshiping the sun toward the east. <sup>17</sup> Then he said to me, "Have you seen this, O son of man? Is it too light a thing for the house of Judah to commit the abominations that they commit here, that they should fill the land with violence and provoke me still further to anger? Behold, they put the branch to their nose. <sup>18</sup> Therefore I will act in wrath. My eye will not spare, nor will I have pity. And though they cry in my ears with a loud voice, I will not hear them."

God makes it clear that these false followers will not inherit the kingdom of heaven, they will not receive his mercy, instead they will receive his wrath.

This is why it is so important that Christians constantly evaluate themselves in the light of the holy and righteous Word of God. We need to know and acknowledge our sinful nature, the full extent of it, not just the parts of us we want to change, but also those parts of us we do not want to change, in the light of God's Word. So that we look upon the cross of Calvary, and the sacrifice that Jesus made paying the debts of all of our sinful nature with his flesh and blood, we can truly understand the greatness of the price he paid so that we could be brought back into relationship with God.

Once we have done this, once we have opened up God's Word fully and exposed all the dark corners of our life, God begins his work in us through the Holy Spirit.

#### **Isaiah 6:6-7**

<sup>6</sup> Then one of the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. <sup>7</sup> And he touched my mouth and said: "Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for."

The apostle John said the same thing this way.

#### **1 John 1:9**



**<sup>9</sup> If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

We need to have the holy righteousness and light of God's Word shining into us, so that we can confess our sins. Isaiah stood before the angel of God and realized that he is unworthy, that he is a 'man of unclean lips.' And after he confesses the sinful nature of his lips, an angel of the Lords takes a scalding hot coal in his hand and touches it to Isaiah's mouth, purging his sin, burning it away, so that Isaiah would be cleansed.

This is why studying the full depths of Scripture is so important, because of man's fallen nature we will have sins in our life that we will never be made aware of, if we do not open ourselves to the complete Word of God. And if we are not aware of our sin, how are we going to confess those sins to God and be cleansed?

However, to fully grasp the depths of this, we also need to understand the reality of what will happen for all of those who do not fully confess their sins before God. The same way we need to understand what happened on the cross of Calvary, we need to understand the realities of hell and the eternal torment that those who do not come to a true faith will endure.

William Booth, the man who founded the Salvation Army once said that he wished that the final stage of training he gave to every one of his men could be 24 hours of witnessing the realities of hell.

John Edwards gave a sermon in 1741 called 'Sinners in the hands of an angry God' which painted the picture of hell for those who were there so clearly, that some claimed they could smell the smoke and fell down crying for God to save them. The sermon was so powerful that it began a revival movement that swept across the U.S.

The truth is that modern Christianity tries to play down the realities of condemnation because of a desire to make the Word of God more palatable to the masses of Non-Christians and false - Christians. Perhaps we need to return to the days of fire and brimstone preachings like John Edwards and remind people that unless you fully confess your sins there is only one eternal fate you will receive on the Day of Judgement.

A man by the name of Charlie Peace was on death row and was being visited regularly by a chaplain. This minister told Peace of the grace and mercy of God, but he also shared with him the realities of hell for those who did not chose God. Peace was shocked at how easily the minister could talk about hell without shedding a tear for Peaces's soul knowing that he would be spending eternity in that suffering. Which made Charlie begin to question if the minister actually believed the words he was preaching to him. Peace said if he believed what the Bible teaches about hell that 'even if England were covered from coast to coast with broken glass, he would crawl on his hands and knees to save one soul from spending an eternity there.'

If you are a true Christian, you should understand his conviction. We have an obligation to share the full truth of God's Word with everyone in this world because of the reality that if one is not one of God's children, there is only eternal suffering for their soul in the fires of hell and we would not want even our worst enemy to suffer such a fate.

Which brings us to.

**Isaiah 6:8-13**

**<sup>8</sup>And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" Then I said, "Here I am! Send me." <sup>9</sup>And he said, "Go, and say to this people:**

**" 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand;  
keep on seeing, but do not perceive.'  
<sup>10</sup> Make the heart of this people dull,  
and their ears heavy,  
and blind their eyes;  
lest they see with their eyes,  
and hear with their ears,  
and understand with their hearts,  
and turn and be healed."  
<sup>11</sup> Then I said, "How long, O Lord?"  
And he said:  
"Until cities lie waste  
without inhabitant,  
and houses without people,  
and the land is a desolate waste,  
<sup>12</sup> and the LORD removes people far away,  
and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land.  
<sup>13</sup> And though a tenth remain in it,  
it will be burned again,  
like a terebinth or an oak,  
whose stump remains  
when it is felled."  
The holy seed is its stump.**

Go! Go out and share the truth of God's revelation to his people with the lost.

If we believe in the truth of God's Word, can we do anything less. We need to be out there standing firm in the truth of God's Word before one more soul is lost into eternal damnation.

Every year 55.3 million people die, that is 151,600 people per day, 6,316 people per hour, 105 people per minute.

Jesus told us that.

**Matthew 7:13-14**

**<sup>13</sup> “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. <sup>14</sup> For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.**

Which means that the majority of the 55.3 million people that die each year are not headed for Eternal Salvation but instead are destined for the fiery pits of hell.

This is not the fate that any human being should have. God wishes Salvation for all of his people. He offers all human beings his grace, and when we learn the truth about who we are, and who he is, we come to him as Lord and Saviour and learn to abide in him.

If we never know the truth of who he is, we may never come to know him.

This is why Christians were given the Great Commission.

**Matthew 28:19-20**

**<sup>19</sup> 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, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”**

Christians are in Christ, and Christ is in them. Christians see themselves in the Light of the Lord.

We see the Lord, high and lifted up, holy and righteous, and we see his love for us on the cross of Calvary, where his only Son took our place and died the death that we deserved to pay, the debt owed by our sins. This is why we confess our sins and sinful nature to the Lord.

Christians understand what hell is, we understand that on the Day of Judgement you are either fully God's, 100%, and if you are not, that eternal damnation is your eternal judgement.

Christians understand that this world is lost, that man's nature will constantly lead him away from God as he pursues his own desires. That millions of people are going to hell because of their refusal to hear the truth of God's word. Yet we continue to proclaim it proudly and loudly from in our lives for that one soul that could be saved from eternal damnation.

This is the Word of God, that all who abide in Jesus Christ, obey his Word, trust in him, and carry out his commandments, belong to him and will receive his mercy and Eternal Salvation living for all of eternity in the New Jerusalem which is still to come.

True Christians may be in all 41,000 denominations of Christianity in this world, yet they all belong to the most important Church, the Holy Catholic Church, the one true church of Jesus Christ, that is made up of all true Christians throughout all time, and they can be recognized by

their faithfulness to the Word of God as they walk as the Salt and Light of God's Word proclaiming the truth of the Scriptures as they experience the persecution and condemnation of this broken, and darkened world.

Let us pray,

**By Your Word You Have Brought Us out of Darkness**

Lord God, heavenly Father,  
 we most heartily thank you  
 that by your Word  
 you have brought us out of the darkness of error  
 into the light of your grace.  
 Mercifully help us to walk in that light,  
 guard us from all error and false doctrine  
 and grant that we may not become ungrateful  
 and despise and persecute your Word,  
 as your people did long ago,  
 but receive it with all our heart,  
 govern our lives according to it  
 and put all our trust in your grace  
 through the merit of your dear Son,  
 Jesus Christ our Lord,  
 who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
 one true God, now and forever.

**Hymn: "All Heaven Declares"**

Verse 1

All heaven declares the glory of the risen Lord  
 Who can compare with the beauty of the Lord?  
 Forever He will be the Lamb upon the throne.  
 I gladly bow the knee and worship Him alone.

Verse 2

I will proclaim the glory of the risen Lord  
 Who once was slain to reconcile man to God  
 Forever you will be the Lamb upon the throne  
 I gladly bow the knee and worship you alone.

**Invitation to Offering****Offering****Offertory Prayer**  
**(Congregant Prepared)****Closing Hymn #479: "The Church's One Foundation"**

The church's one foundation  
 is Jesus Christ, her Lord;  
 she is His new creation,  
 by water and the word.  
 From heav'n He came and sought her  
 to be His holy bride;  
 with His own blood He bought her,  
 and for her life He died.

Elect from every nation,  
 yet one o'er all the earth,  
 her charter of salvation:  
 one Lord, one faith, one birth.  
 One holy name she blesses,  
 partakes one holy food,  
 and to one hope she presses,  
 with every grace endued.

Though with a scornful wonder,  
 men see her sore oppressed,  
 by schisms rent asunder,  
 by heresies distressed,  
 yet saints their watch are keeping,  
 their cry goes up, "How long?"  
 and soon the night of weeping  
 shall be the morn of song!

'Mid toil and tribulation,  
 and tumult of her war,  
 she waits the consummation  
 of peace forevermore;  
 till with the vision glorious  
 her longing eyes are blest,  
 and the great church victorious  
 shall be the church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union  
 with God the Three in One,  
 and mystic sweet communion  
 with those whose rest is won;  
 O happy ones and holy!  
 Lord give us grace that we,  
 like them, the meek and lowly,  
 on high may dwell with Thee.

### **Pastoral Prayer**

O Lord, we praise you with all our soul.  
 We praise you for the abundance of grace and mercy  
 that we unconsciously receive from you in so many different ways.  
 You overlook our iniquities.  
 You bring us back to good health.  
 You save us from evil and inundate us with your love and compassion.

Lord, you provide nourishment and rejuvenation  
 to our bodies, minds, and souls.  
 We also know, Lord, that through you,  
 there will be justice for the suffering of your people.  
 Thank you for graciously revealing yourself  
 to your children so long ago,  
 that we might have the privilege of knowing your will.

We are only deserving of eternal death as a result of our evil ways.  
 However, rather than eternally condemning your children in anger,  
 you bestow your unconditional and boundless love on us.  
 Through your incomprehensible love for us,  
 you free us completely from the price of our transgressions.  
 We cherish your compassion  
 just as a child cherishes the compassion of loving parents.  
 We know that, without your compassion,  
 we would be reduced to nothing but dust on this material planet,  
 alive and growing one day,  
 then dead and blown away with the wind the next,  
 fading away even from human memories forever.

Because of your compassion, Lord, we are allowed a life of eternity;  
 a gift that you have promised even to future God-fearing generations.  
 Help us and all future generations to hold tightly  
 to your precious covenant through obedience to your will.  
 Lord, from your mighty throne you rule over us all.  
 We call the angels that surround you, the seraphim that serve you,

and every believer in your domain to join our souls  
in praising your holy name! **Amen.**

**Benediction**

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely;  
and may your spirit and soul and body  
be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**