

Coaldale Mennonite Church

2316 – 17 St., Coaldale, Alberta

***“Rooted in Jesus, Growing in Grace, Connected in
Community, Branching into the World”***

Keeping in Touch – May 21, 2021



Pentecost Sunday

- ✓ **The new Covid restrictions have reduced our in-person attendance for worship services to 15 people total. Most of these 15 people will be those that are involved in the morning service. There may be room for a few people who don't have access to the Live-stream service online. Registration is still mandatory.**

Please do not attend in person if you are experiencing the most common symptoms of COVID-19 (cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose, or sore throat).

- ✓ **The Live Stream of the Sunday Service will begin at 11am. You will be able to find the Live Stream on **You Tube** and searching **Coaldale Mennonite Church**.**
- ✓ **This Sunday, May 23rd is Pentecost.** We will be celebrating communion during the morning service. If you are watching via Live Stream and wish to participate in communion, please have the communion elements ready with you at home.

- ✓ **Sunday School** – We will not be having Sunday School this Sunday, May 23rd but we be having **Sharing & Announcements starting at 10:30am** on Zoom.

Topic: Sharing & Announcements

Time: May 23, 2021 10:30 AM Edmonton

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84638703580?pwd=eDdvOTJ3SjZDbUJLV004S0FtVnBOZz09>

Meeting ID: 846 3870 3580 Passcode: 221267

- ✓ **Pastor Gary will be working from home** for the next few weeks while the new Covid protocols are in place. If you need to contact him, please call him at (403) 795-0350.
- ✓ **Men's Prayer time has been cancelled until June due to the new Covid restrictions.**
- ✓ **The church office will be closed, Monday, May 24th** for the Victoria Day long weekend.
- ✓ **Church Directory** – The 2021 Church Telephone Directory is now in your church mailboxes. Feel free to stop by and get yours.
- ✓ **Address Change – Dave & Janice Gross** have moved back to Coaldale. Their new address:
2317 19 Street
Coaldale, AB T1M 1G4
- ✓ **Thank you** for continuing to be with us on our Covid journey. Pete has been home for over two weeks and is improving. We are realizing that healing lungs takes time and effort. Thank you for your encouragement, your prayers, and your friendship.
Peter and Maxine
- ✓ **Givings for May 16, 2021:** \$1017.97 Budget \$917.97 Food Grains \$100.00
 - **E-transfer has been updated. No password is necessary.**
 - **E-transfer** is available for your donations to the church email:
cmchurch@telusplanet.net

Leading us in Worship this Sunday:

Worship Leader: Tim Janzen Music: Kelsey Janzen

Speaker: Gary Giesbrecht

Scripture Readings: Ezekiel 37:1-14; Acts 2:1-21

Sermon: "Where two or three are gathered – Pentecost in a time of Covid-19"

Sound: Mike Marriott

Media: Nic Groenheide



PRAYER FOCUS



Pray for:

- † **Trudy and John Penner and family** as Trudy's mom, Elizabeth Wall, passed away on Sunday, May 16th.
- † **Peter Janzen** who is recovering at home from Covid.
- † **David Giesbrecht** who is recuperating at home.
- † **Staff & students at all our schools while they are learning online at home, during the next few weeks.**
- † **Our seniors at the various lodges and those in their homes.**
- † **Coaldale-Lethbridge Food Grains Project**

(If you would like to have a prayer request in this weekly update, please contact Jodi at cmchurch@telusplanet.net or 403-345-3363.)

Food for thought - Sunday May 23, 2021

“Where two or three are gathered in My Name; Pentecost in a time of Covid!”

When I think of Pentecost this year, I am reminded of Psalm 137:1-4 (NIV). The Psalmist laments the fact that they cannot “sing the Lord’s song in a strange land.”

*¹By the rivers of Babylon we sat and wept
when we remembered Zion.
²There on the poplars
we hung our harps,
³for there our captors asked us for songs,
our tormentors demanded songs of joy;
they said, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion!”
⁴How can we sing the songs of the LORD
while in a foreign land?*

For the last year it seems like we have been in a foreign land and it is hard to sing the Lord’s song in this land. On top of all the losses we have endured, it is fighting the invisible virus that weights heavy on us. While other tragedies have a beginning and end, the Covid-19 tragedy has no clear ending. It seems like the fear of catching or transmitting the virus is constantly on our minds. While every sector of our society has been impacted by this virus, as a society we are suffering from loneliness and isolation. When we are by ourselves, who hears and who cares that we are singing the Lord’s song. We live in strange land that we thought we once knew, and now the parameters are different. We live in a strange land in that we cannot make simple decisions like who to see, when to see them and where to go. This has been a time of limitations ordered to keep us “safe.” And we even wonder what it means to be safe? We might be able to understand safety in terms of mitigating the virus (and this is so important make no mistake), but what about safety in terms of spiritual and mental health. This is much harder to assess because we have been in this condition for over a year, and it is hard to remember what a good normal was. Some might recognize this as a war that does not end and is always threatening. (The recent conflict in the Middle East is one such war.)

As we celebrate Pentecost, a verse that has helped me recently is found in Matthew 18:19-20 (NIV). Jesus says, “*Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.*”²⁰ *For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.*” Can this reality be found in the first Pentecost story in Acts 2? Can we see the hand of God or the life-giving power of the Spirit of God in the reality that “where two or three are gather in my name, I am in the midst of them?” Do we need a big gathering to celebrate the presence of the Holy Spirit?

Read Acts 2:1-21, 42-47 (NIV). (Take the time to read the whole chapter.)

*When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.*² *Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting.*³ *They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them.*⁴ *All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues^[a] as the Spirit enabled them.*

⁵ Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. ⁶ When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard their own language being spoken. ⁷ Utterly amazed, they asked: "Aren't all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸ Then how is it that each of us hears them in our native language? ⁹ Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,^[b] ¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome ¹¹ (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs—we hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!" ¹² Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, "What does this mean?" ¹³ Some, however, made fun of them and said, "They have had too much wine."

Peter Addresses the Crowd

¹⁴ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: "Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. ¹⁵ These people are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! ¹⁶ No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

¹⁷ "In the last days, God says,

I will pour out my Spirit on all people.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy,

your young men will see visions,

your old men will dream dreams.

¹⁸ Even on my servants, both men and women,

I will pour out my Spirit in those days,

and they will prophesy.

¹⁹ I will show wonders in the heavens above

and signs on the earth below,

blood and fire and billows of smoke.

²⁰ The sun will be turned to darkness

and the moon to blood

before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

²¹ And everyone who calls

on the name of the Lord will be saved.^[c]

Acts 2: 42-47 They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Here are some questions to ponder...

1. What are some of the signs that the Holy Spirit was involved in birthing the church?
2. Read Ezekiel 37:1-14 (NIV). Is the birth of the church the fulfillment of the "dry bones" brought to life in Ezekiel's vision?

3. What are some of the characteristics of this early church that can help us at this time and fulfill what Jesus said in Matt 18:20 “Where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am with them?”

As you ponder these questions, how does hope begin to arise within you, so that rather than feeling like victims we can thrive and grow even deeper in the limitations of this shut down?

Pastor Gary Giesbrecht



To Contact the Church

Admin Assistant: Jodi Reed

Office Hours: 9am – 12noon Monday – Friday

Church Office: **403-345-3363** & **403-345-5255**

Lead Pastor, Gary Giesbrecht: **403-795-0350**

Pastor to Seniors, Lil Thompson: **403-331-0297**

Lay Pastor, Eric Giesbrecht: **403-345-3946**