

Christ Moravian Church

WEEKLY PASTORAL LETTER

Christ Church Watchword for the Year 2021

"As the deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul longs for you, O God."
Psalm 42:1

Moravian Watchword for the Week: February 28th, 2021

"God says, "I will establish my covenant between me and you, and your offspring after you throughout their generations."
Genesis 17:7



Pastoral Newsletter for the weekend of February 28th, 2021

Worship Focus: Lent 2: "Losing and Finding"

Greetings Friends in Christ:

The Bible Buddies study group on Feb. 21 had a lengthy discussion about the time Jesus spent in the wilderness facing temptations. The Biblical reference notes that Jesus was in the desert for **forty** days. Rev. Michael Ward assisted the group to name and reference a multitude of the times the number "forty" gets noted within scripture. We can recall many of these from our Sunday School lessons: Noah facing the deluge and flood for "forty days and nights"; the Israelites wander in the desert following the departure from Egypt for "forty" years; prophets and kings and other faithful within scripture deal with forty days and forty years of trials and tribulations of all sorts. One of my main Biblical references states very clearly, "the number forty is used to indicate a seriously long period of time."

As February 2021 becomes March 2021, it seems to me that if we were living in Biblical times during this Covid-19 pandemic, some writer of scripture would say this time of the people of God around the world faced this time of virus for "**forty**" weeks (although it seems to at times it has been forty years). We have been dealing with this historic health crisis for an entire year. It has truly effected us in personal ways, economic ways, social ways, and spiritual ways of all sorts. Many of those Biblical times in which people of faith faced a long period of testing and introspection it shaped, molded, and truly changed them. There seems no doubt that we are changing, growing, being transformed in ways that will lead us into the future as the people of God.

Upcoming Events

Feb. 25th – Apr. 1st:
Lenten Prayer Retreat
with Rev. Rick Beck

Shepherd's Group meetings
March 1, 2, 10 and 15
at 7:00 pm

For more information, visit our website @

www.christmoravian.com

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I'm excited to get news of more and more folks receiving the Covid-19 vaccination, and as this begins to grow we will step into the future with greater ease of mind at the safety of those we are with. Let's all be quite patient and vigilant as the vaccination process begins to move more rapidly...it may be forty, fifty, sixty or more days and yet we will always, always be God's people of grace and peace.

Here's a few important highlights in this week's Pastoral letter:

- If you need assistance in getting registered or traveling to the vaccination location please contact us at the church office and a volunteer will assist.
- Information about the Congregational Shepherds conversations on Zoom is highlighted.
(Rev. Gohdes looks forward to this casual conversation with CMC folks)

Shepherds' Fellowship and Reflections Zoom Meetings: 7: 00 pm, March 1, 2, 10 & 15

The CMC Shepherds have invited you to join a time of fellowship and reflection on how God has been present with you over this past year of the pandemic. Each evening will be hosted by Pastor Steve and one of the CMC Elders.

All members of the congregation who live in Calgary should have received a notice from Realm indicating that you were automatically registered for one of these dates. You do not need to log into Realm to confirm this registration. If you didn't receive an invitation, or would like to cancel or switch dates, please contact Donna Gordon or notify the church office.

- Attached is information for a Canadian District Dialogue in preparation for a virtual Synod in May. Check out that info to get engaged and involved.
- Charitable Tax Receipts
CMC Envelope Steward, Ken Schultz has distributed the 2020 charitable tax receipts. Please check your receipt and if you have any questions contact Ken at 403-281-4339. We extend our gracious thanks to all for the generous donations through a challenging year!
- Check out other information for CMC life, including Bible Study information, Children's Activities, and Worship & Event Links.

Pastor Steve Gohdes

Weekly Reminders...

- Please know that Pastor Gohdes continues to be available for any needs that may arise. We are maintaining varied office hours, so please feel free to phone the church office (403-271-2700) to speak with us or leave a message. Or you can contact the church office by e-mail at moravian@nucleus.com with questions or communication.
- Indranie Perera continues to receive recycling for support of Sri Lanka.
- Donations are still being collected for the Acadia Food Pantry. If you are able to assist, or perhaps volunteer some time, please contact Donna Gordon for details.

In All Things Love...

Children's Worship Bulletin

Take Up Your Cross

Mark 8:27-38

Word Search Puzzle

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

WORLD	CHRIST	LIFE	TEACH	DISCIPLES
DENY	KILLED	SOUL	FOLLOW	SATAN
FORFEIT	VILLAGES	LOSE	GOSPEL	GAIN
PROPHETS	SUFFER	SAVE	RISE	CROSS

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Coloring Page

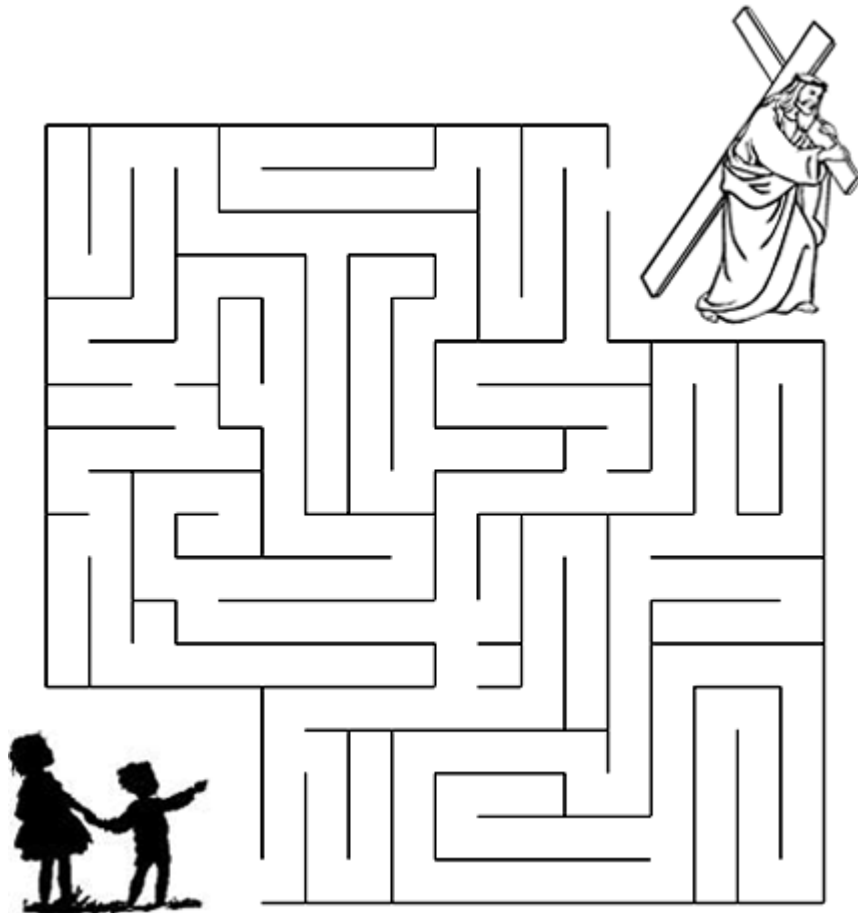


I will follow Jesus, Our Leader

From Thru-the-Bible Coloring Pages for Ages 4-8. © 1988 Standard Publishing.
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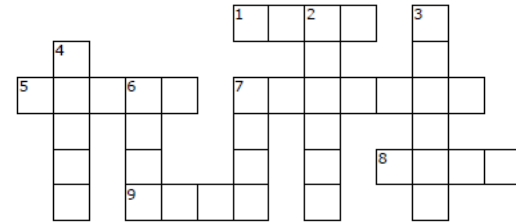
Maze Puzzle

Can you find the path to Jesus?



Take Your Cross

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

1. The period between birth and death
5. The object upon which Jesus was crucified
7. To care about what you want without thinking of others
8. To refuse to allow yourself something
9. To no longer have something because it has been taken away

DOWN

2. To be guided by someone else; to go behind
3. The teachings of Jesus and the Apostles
4. A large number of people gathered together
6. The part of a person that continues to live after a person dies
7. To keep someone or something safe from harm

FOLLOW GOSPEL	CROWD LOSE	SELFISH SAVE	LIFE CROSS	SOUL DENY
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Focus on Genesis 17:1–7, 15–16

WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” W. Sibley Towner

Everlasting Covenant (17:2–7). Yahweh now identifies the promise as “my covenant,” a term that emerges throughout chapter 17 as the dominating motif (thirteen uses in 17:2–22 alone). The verses of our pericope describe the covenant as a unilateral gift or grant by God to Abram that he should become “the ancestor of a multitude of nations” (v. 4), and that he should become “exceedingly numerous. . . . fruitful” (vv. 2, 6). Progeny were necessary if the elect line were to wind like a scarlet thread from the promise of universal blessing in Genesis 12:1–3 down through the entire patriarchal saga and to the end of the Bible. The fact that the covenant is said also to be “everlasting” (v. 7; see also vv. 13, 19) suggests the possibility of entering into a nurturing and right relationship with God was always open.

WHERE is God in these words?

— From “Theological Perspective,” Mark Husbands

We are to learn that the one who seeks to restore and reconcile humanity by establishing a covenant with Abraham is the *one* true God. Covenant devotion to God requires exclusive worship of and obedience to YHWH. As the drama of the Old Testament demonstrates, the single-minded love and worship of YHWH is a hard-won lesson. All too often, our acts underscore what Hendrikus Berkhof calls an “intensifying and never-ending dialectic” of divine faithfulness and creaturely unfaithfulness.

SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

— From “Pastoral Perspective,” Craig Kocher

The pastoral gift of Genesis 17 is its reminder that at the center of our being rest blessing and promise, naming and covenant. We are followers of the One who established a never-ending covenant with Abraham and brought that covenant to fullness in Jesus Christ. In our baptism we have been given a new name, “disciple of Jesus,” that tells us everything we need to know about ourselves and everything we need to know about God.

NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

— From “Homiletical Perspective,”

Barbara Brown Taylor

We do not head straight to Easter from the spa or the shopping mall. Instead, we are invited to spend forty days examining the nature of our own covenant with God. Upon what does that relationship depend? What do we trust to give us life? What concrete practices allow us to become bodily involved with God? If we were to ask God for a new name, what might that name be? What new purpose might that name signify? While Lent focuses naturally on the example of Jesus, Jesus focused just as naturally on the example of Abraham (Matt. 8:11). Like his forebear in faith, Jesus walked toward God’s promise with steady trust, leading God to give him a new name too: “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

God's Shocking Action






Covenants are a part of everyday life. Today they are called promises or contracts, and they come in all shapes and sizes. Mortgages and car loans are covenants. Financial commitments made to congregations in response to a stewardship campaign are covenants. Agreements to take a child to soccer practice or pick up the dry cleaning after work are covenants. Covenants are sealed in a variety of ways—a handshake, a text, or several pages of legalese.

There are several covenants in the Bible. The two most important covenants, though, are the Sinai Covenant and the Covenants with Abraham and David.

The Sinai Covenant was conditional. There were consequences in breaking a contract, but one thing that was never destroyed was the Lord's relationship with the people. The prophets declared that the relationship between God and the people was permanent and that breaking the covenant resulted in only a momentary setback in the relationship.

The real shocker is the covenants the Lord made with Abraham and later with David. Those covenants are unconditional. God appears to Abraham and tells him that he will be the father of a multitude of nations and God will be the God of Abraham. The Lord's covenant with Abraham is a demonstration of God's love and grace.

-  God initiates the covenant.
-  There is nothing that Abraham can do to either strengthen or weaken the covenant.
-  The covenant is never ending.

The New Testament writers picked up on the covenant theme. They understood that the death of Jesus, the Christ, was the beginning of the covenant (Mark 14:24; 1 Corinthians 11:25). Like the Abrahamic Covenant, it was a demonstration of God's love and grace. The ancestors of faith lived in the reality of that covenant, and so Christians today are invited to do the same.

Christ Moravian Church

Canadian District Pre-Synod District Dialogue Groups

February 19, 2020

A Special Synod of the Canadian District is coming up on May 19 and 20, 2021. Three pre-synod meetings in the form of District Dialogue Groups will be held in the months leading up to Synod. Delegates and interested congregants of the Moravian Church in Canada are encouraged to participate in these discussion groups which will help to inform future work of the Canadian District and its newly elected Board of Elders.

District Dialogues will take place through video conference from 7 - 9 pm on Tuesdays, March 9, March 30 and April 27, 2021. Attendance on all three dates would be expected as there will likely be carry over from session to session.

Discussion topics will be related to the District Purpose Statement that was developed by clergy and the BECD in early 2020. It reads:

The Canadian District is called by God to ...

- *inhabit our neighborhoods,*
- *cultivate meaningful ways to use God's resources to ...*
- *share the good news and live God's radical love in the world.*

More specific topics related to these purposes will be framed for discussion. Once your registration is received, you will be given the opportunity to choose a topic of interest to you.

Those choosing to participate in the District Dialogues are asked to complete the attached registration form and return it to greg@mcnp.org, by Tuesday, March 2, 2021.

Your participation in these dialogue groups is important to planning the future of the Moravian Church in Canada.

Further questions may be directed to Rev. Gohdes or Donna Gordon, Board of Elders Canadian District.



**Registration for the District Dialogue Groups of the
Canadian District of the Moravian Church, Northern Province
Tuesdays, 7 – 9 pm: March 9, March 30 and April Wednesday and Thursday
May 19 & 20, 2021**

Using a video conference in response to the Pandemic.

(this information is for Synod use only and will not be distributed to other organizations)

**Please complete and return to
Greg Weir, Via email greg@mcnp.org by March 2, 2021**

**All attendees for the District Dialogue groups are required to complete a registration form.
Please print clearly.**

First Name _____ Last _____

Congregation/Agency _____

Preferred Phone _____

Email _____

Worship & Event Links ~ February 28th, 2021

Topic: CMC Bible Buddies

Hi Everyone,

Attached is Feb 28th's Bible study lesson: Promises Kept – Genesis 17: 1-7, 15-16

We'll meet at 9:00 AM.

Link to join is below:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89356581732?pwd=SXNWZGNka240UHQ1aTVpOE9LNDdyZz09>

Meeting ID: 893 5658 1732

Passcode: 955392

One tap mobile

+12042727920,,89356581732# Canada

+14388097799,,89356581732# Canada

Hope you have a good week.

Beloved is where we begin.

Barb: -)

Links to Online Worship: Christ Moravian

<https://www.christmoravian.com>

Good Shepherd

<https://www.goodshepherdmoravian.org>

Millwoods

<https://www.mcchurch.ca/>

Rio Terrace

<https://www.rioterracechurch.org/live>

Moravian Church Northern Province

<https://www.moravian.org>

for details of events happening within the wider Moravian Church