

PENTECOST

June 2020

“When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place...” - Acts 2:1

We were blessed to hold our first corporate Sunday service on May 31 which also happened to be Pentecost Sunday.

Pentecost takes place fifty days after Passover. It commemorates the day God gave His Law to Israel on Mt. Sinai when Moses went up the mountain for forty days to receive the commands of God. It was also a celebration of the Jewish wheat harvest. Traditionally the Book of Ruth is read during Pentecost. The reason being the story takes place during the a harvest, but more importantly for us it is the story of a Jew (*Boaz*) redeeming a Gentile (*Ruth*)!

Fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus Christ (*First Fruits*), ten days after the ascension, Pentecost was fulfilled prophetically in the birth of the Church as Jesus redeemed His gentile bride! The feast included two loaves of bread which represented Jews and Gentiles because when Jesus redeemed the church He saved both! Ephesians 2:14 – “For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation...” It is a celebration of how God brought unity out of division.

I have had interesting conversations with good friends over the past few weeks in relation to when and how churches should reopen. It has been a curious debate for me because for the most part we do not have the same challenges here that many are facing state side. Calvary Chapel Iwakuni has been limited to online services since March 22. Pastor Glenn prayerfully decided to close in person attendance in respect for the local military base where most of the congregants from the church are employed. Ironically there were never any restrictions from the Japanese government who considered churches to be essential and never required them to close. But with the easing of restrictions on base as well as the timing of Pentecost it seems the perfect moment to reopen the doors and step out to see what the next season will hold for the fellowship here in Japan!

The many conversations I had with others about reopening did get me thinking about what the proper response to the current circumstances might be. People seem to be very passionate on differing sides of the debate. There are those who argue that opening is a stand for our religious freedom. While still others argue that staying closed is more about protecting people from harm. Both likely have good arguments they bring to the table - but I am left to wonder why it becomes a point of division.

When and how a church ministers is certainly a matter of conviction. Let each person be fully convinced (Romans 14:5).





But in a time when the world is in the throws of uncertainty and chaos, when there are millions out of work and riots in our streets, we more than ever need to come together in unity with the one message that the world needs - the Gospel of Jesus Christ!

I am excited for what the Lord is going to do next. We live in exciting times

when the norms of our daily lives are being rewritten. It is a time when people are open and searching for answers. Our prayer is that we will be able to rise to the occasion and be there to meet their fear and uncertainty with the love and assurance of the ONE who is THE answer in these uncertain times.

Speaking of uncertainty we had tickets to return to Bacolod on June 1, but for the third time they were canceled by the airlines. As I write this update it looks like we might be able to get tickets again sometime towards the end of June. We are excited to get back to the Philippines to begin church planting. In preparation we have begun to upload video teachings to our website (thehincheys.com) as well as a new Facebook page specifically created for church planting in Bacolod (facebook.com/pastordavidhinchey). Interestingly the Philippines is the second largest population of Facebook users of any country in the world (*only the US has more*). Of its more than 100 million people around 75 million have Facebook accounts! As the Philippines still has restrictions in place prohibiting public gatherings over 10 people, we hope to continue creating online teaching content in to minister to those who cannot attend church in person.

Jen and Hallel are settled into life here in Japan. Hallel has officially become a Japanese princess (*see the pictures*). Most might add that was a forgone conclusion! Jen is chomping at the bit to start helping out her younger sister who is busy planning her wedding with Pastor Nick. I suspect that it will be a busy month as we, Lord willing, wind down our time here in Japan and move on into the next season of this amazing journey God has us on. Thank for you all for your prayers!

Love,
David, Jen, and Hallel

