



JOURNEYING TOGETHER

A weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church

**** To view graphics and a more colorful version, open the attached pdf file. ****

APRIL 9, 2025

CALENDAR

Mon, April 14: *BRO @ Northwest Panera, 6050 W 86th St, Indianapolis, IN

Wed, April 16: Wild Church, @ Holliday Park, 10 am (see announcement)

Sun, April 20: Easter Breakfast 8:30 am

Sun, April 20: Easter Worship at 10 am

Sun, April 20: Easter Egg Hunt at 11:30 am

Mon, April 21: *BRO @ Greenwood Panera, 789 US Highway 31 N, Greenwood, IN

Mon, April 28: *BRO @ Downtown Starbucks, 430 N Mass Ave, Indianapolis, IN

Sat, May 10: Arlington Woods Spring Clean up, 8am.

Sat, May 17: Celebration of 500 years of Anabaptism @ First Mennonite (see announcement)

*BRO: Brian's Roving Office, 9 am – 3 pm

ADMINISTRATION

Mike Wigginton (chair), Andrew Martin, Dan Rosenberger
Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

COMMUNITY LIFE: RELATIONSHIPS AT SHALOM

Linda Showalter (Chair), Bethany Martin, Beverly Smith

Celebrations!

Today: Carol Bixler

Today: Laura Harms

Today: Gabriella Turentine

Sat, April 12: Joann Buerge

Tue, April 15: Krystal Johnson

Wed, April 16: Charles and Lorraine Harms, 1971

DISCIPLING: GROWING IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Carol Bixler (chair), Wilma Bailey, Carol Bither

Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

Children's Classes

Hall Monitor

April 13: Linda Showalter

April 20: No Sunday School

April 27:

May 4:

May 11:

May 18:

May 25:

Teachers:

2-yr old class: Abri Hochstetler and Carol Weaver will co-teach

Pre-K and K: Beverly Smith will teach with Joyce Troyer as a substitute

Elementary: Frank Kandel and Rod Maust will co-teach

Youth: Jeanne Smucker and Brad Yoder will teach

Adult Sunday School Classes:

Apr 13: Salt & Light: Session #4 (page 20) John 1:1-18; Confession of Faith, article #4;
Shalom Orientation Class

Apr 20: Easter - **No Sunday School**

Apr 27: Salt & Light: Session #5 (page 26) Luke 2:25-35; Confession of Faith, article 8;
Shalom Orientation Class

May 4: Technology & Our Discipleship led by Andrew Martin

May 11: Technology & Our Discipleship led by Andrew Martin

May 18: Antiracism Sunday

May 25: **No Sunday school**

June 1: Child Safety Training

OUTREACH: RELATIONSHIPS BEYOND SHALOM

(chair), Chuck Dunn, Becky Wigginton

Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

Family Promise conducts the Annual Fund Raising Campaign, "A Night without a Bed," the first week in April. Individuals can contribute using the same link through out the year if needed. I am attaching the link where Shalom members could decide to participate in the campaign.

<https://familypromiseindyihh.us1.listmanage.com/track/click?u=24b9c6c8fbebddd20cbf6427e2&iid=488616e1b3&e=366a1f4fee>. Thank you! ~ Solomon Abebe



SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM

Angie Buller

VAT Representative: Nizeet Deiter; Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

As we are starting a new year here at Shalom thank you to everyone who has agreed to serve on our commissions. We do have one spot that is yet to be filled. Please be praying for the right person who is willing to serve as chair of the Outreach Commission.

VISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM (VAT)

Frank Kandel (Chair), Nizeet Deiter (Vice-Ch) Sam Bixler, Charity Bauman, Grace Rhine
Pastoral Representatives: Brian Bither, Craig Oury

WORSHIP: OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Brittany Bither (chair), Justin Hochstetler, Jeanne Smucker
Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

Last Sunday (4/2) Craig continued the Lenten journey of Jesus' Farewell Discourse in John 17 where Jesus prays for believers to be united.

This Week (4/13) is Palm Sunday, which we will celebrate by waving palm branches and reflecting on Jesus' most confrontational protest against injustice - the cleansing of the temple. Brian will be preaching from John chapters twelve and two.

Next Sunday (4/20) is Easter Sunday. There will be an Easter breakfast at 8:30am, followed by the worship service at 10am, with an Easter egg hunt (but no Sunday school) afterwards. All are welcome to join us in celebrating Christ's victory over death and evil.

This week's Prayer List;

- **Church:** Maple River Mennonite Church
- **Organization: Indiana AID** is a volunteer group that supports immigrants detained in the state of Indiana by visiting them, bearing witness to their experiences, and providing resources to them and their families. (Contact: Brian Bither)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Congratulations to Menan and Isaac on the birth of Saba Worknesh Lederach, born Monday, April 7! Saba means Queen of Ethiopia, daughter of oath, or greatness. Ethiopian origins. Worknesh is Dagne's mother's name.

WFYI is currently airing a series titled "Wolf Hall" which focuses on Thomas Cromwell, a powerful man in the court of Henry the 8th. Henry the 8th was King of England in 1525 when the Anabaptist movement began. During the 4th episode which will air on **Sunday (April 13 at 9 p.m.)** an Anabaptist is brought before Henry on charges of heresy. The Anabaptist, John Lambert, was a real person in history who was burned at the stake because of his Anabaptist beliefs. Cromwell later reveals that although he shares Lambert's beliefs, he did not speak up in his defense because he was afraid that he would meet the same fate. If you want to watch the part related to the Anabaptists, it starts 36 minutes into the episode and ends at 42 minutes. A brief reference during the episode is

made to Tyndale, the first person to translate most of the Bible into the English language. He was also executed. ~ Wilma



Wild Church will meet on **Wednesday, April 16** at 10 a.m. at Holliday Park. The topic will be flooding in nature and the Bible. Bring a story that you have related to flooding. We will meet under the spruce trees and look out for newcomers in the parking lot closest to the Nature Center. There are hard slabs to sit on. If you want a softer chair to sit in, you should bring one.

Hello Shalom!

Our congregation is full of members doing incredible work to uplift individuals and families in our community and across the world. I am inspired by so many of you and your tireless commitment to service.

As you know, affordable housing is a passion of mine through my work with Habitat for Humanity. Some of you have volunteered regularly (thank you!) and some are regular donors (thank you!). For those new to Habitat, we partner with families and individuals who need the education, skills, and financing to purchase their first home. We do that by bringing people together to build homes and hope.



Today I am helping raise the walls for Arielle. See photo! (You can read more about her tenacity and story here: <https://indyhabitat.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/12/Arielle-Pharms-Biography.pdf>). Arielle's home is one of FOUR we are building completely by women volunteers through our annual Women Build program. Not only are 800+ women building the houses, but we are also raising funds for each home. If this project piques your interest and you have capacity to make a gift of any size, I would be grateful for support through my fundraising page at <https://give.indyhabitat.org/fundraiser/6175741> ; and/or please send me a note to learn more about Habitat and how to get involved! (ahochstetler@indyhabitat.org)

Thank you for the countless ways each of you help our neighbors live healthy, stable, and hopeful lives. ~ Abri

Undoing Patriarchy:

MC USA's latest "Learn, Pray, Join" initiative calls for transformation.

How do we dismantle patriarchal norms in our churches and communities? MC USA's latest "Learn, Pray, Join" initiative – **Undoing Patriarchy** – invites congregations and individuals to explore this crucial question through learning, prayer, and action. Running through mid-May, this campaign equips MC USA members with the tools needed to work toward a more equitable church and society where all people are treated with dignity and respect, regardless of gender.

"Undoing patriarchy is about reclaiming the radical inclusivity we are called to live out as Christians. As we work to undo systems of exclusion we are living into our faith more fully as followers of Jesus," said Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, MC USA denominational minister for Peace and Justice.

"Learn, Pray, Join: Undoing Patriarchy" sets the stage for **MC USA's Women's Summit**, a powerful, one-day event on July 8, just before the **Follow Jesus '25** national convention in Greensboro, North Carolina. The initiative is rooted in scripture and draws from "**Laboring Toward Wholeness: A Training on Dismantling Patriarchy**," a curriculum developed by MC USA's **Women in Leadership** ministry. This resource, first published in 2021, examines the history and impact of systemic patriarchy while challenging participants to respond with a Christ-centered, intersectional approach.

What to expect: Throughout this initiative, MC USA will offer thought-provoking blogs, compelling resources, and engaging webinars to help participants reflect on gender roles in the church and beyond. Expect deep discussions that will transform not only personal perspectives but also relationships, families and faith communities.

Highlights:

- **Webinar:** April 24 | 2 p.m. ET / 11 a.m. PT – Get an exclusive sneak peek into the Women’s Summit! Join Lorraine Stutzman Amstutz, MC USA’s denominational minister for peace and justice, along with Sarah Bixler and Joanne Gallardo, as they explore the power of storytelling, listening, and shared experiences in a panel discussion on “Beholding.”
- **Webinar Recording:** “Women in Leadership: Envisioning the Women’s Summit” – MC USA’s Women in Leadership steering committee discussed the evolution of women’s leadership in the Mennonite church, the need to empower women to live out their callings amid patriarchal systems, and the importance of creating intentional, intergenerational spaces to foster collective women. View it in **English** or **Spanish**.
- **Blogs** from women leaders across the church, featuring voices such as Abby Endashaw, Ana Alicia Hinojosa and Cynthea Millsaps.
- A **prayer** for women by Karla Stoltzfus Detweiler.
- **Opportunities for deeper engagement** through the Women’s Summit and the Women in Leadership ministry.

Stay connected and engage: Want to be part of the conversation? Visit the “Learn, Pray, Join: Undoing Patriarchy” **webpage** for a full list of resources. Subscribe to **PeaceMail**, MC USA’s weekly email newsletter, and follow MC USA on social media — **Facebook**, **Instagram**, **Bluesky** and **YouTube** — for ongoing updates.

On **Saturday, May 17**, Shalom and First Mennonite Churches will host a festival to celebrate **the 500-year anniversary of the Anabaptist movement**. Beginning at 9am, we will join together for worship, education, fellowship, and service with seminars, food, and opportunities that we would *like* to offer free of charge. For this to happen, we need volunteers, donors, and a general idea of how many people plan to attend. ***So far, we have not received any donations for this event, which we need in order to bring in a guest speaker and provide a common meal.*** Please consider donating by writing a check to Shalom with “the Anabaptist 500” written in the Memo line or giving through the newly added “Anabaptist 500” option on Shalom’s online giving page, which you can find at [this link](#). Also, we are asking anyone who plans to attend to register at [this link](#) so that the planning team can know how to budget and prepare. It would be especially helpful for those who plan to bring children to let us know so that we can determine whether to provide childcare. We are also looking for volunteers to provide snacks, offer information and assistance to guests during the day, and act in a skit during the evening service. If you would be willing to help in any of these ways, please email Pastor Brian at brian@shalommennonite.com or Pastor Jonathan at jonathan@indymenno.org. ~ Brad Yoder

For those who know Gaynel Bryan from First Mennonite: Gaynel Bryan recently lost her 51 year old son, a missionary in Mexico. He leaves behind a wife and teenage son. Thank you for your prayers.

REFLECTION

Speaking Out for Those who Cannot Speak

“Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out; judge righteously; defend the rights of the poor and needy.” – Proverbs 31:8-9

Nearly a month ago, President Trump invoked a 1798 wartime law, the Alien Enemies Act, in order to ramp up his efforts to expel immigrants from the United States. He then announced that he had made arrangements with the President of El Salvador to send immigrants (who would now be labeled as ‘enemies of the state’ under this new act) to a mega-prison in that country known as CECOT, which can hold up to 40,000 inmates. Just a few months earlier, the International Security Journal included this prison in a list of the 20 worst prisons in the world and ranked it as the third worst overall. There, the detainees are not granted any rights. They are not guaranteed food, medicine, or sufficient clothing or shelter. They are not protected from abuse, allowed to receive any visitors, or even permitted to go outside. And they are prisoners for life. The prison does not exist to rehabilitate offenders but to punish criminals (and political enemies) and to enrich the state of El Salvador through the slave labor that it extracts from the people condemned to live there. This prison is comparable to the gulags of the Soviet Union and commits almost every imaginable human rights violation. And now our government is sending human beings directly into that jail.

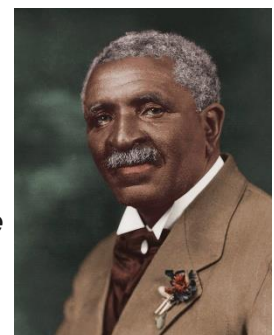
There are few situations in which I am willing to point to a specific law or public policy and judge it to be good or evil in moral terms, but this is one case in which that must be said. Sending people to CECOT is evil. If you’re reading this newsletter, then you likely could have guessed that this would be my position, and I doubt that I have to say much more to convince you of that. So the question is, what are we who are citizens of the government committing these acts, as well as followers of Jesus, obliged to do about it?

The Bible gives a pretty straightforward answer: speak out about against it. If we are in a position in which we ‘can’ speak, then the love of neighbor demands that we raise up our voice against evil. To be clear, speaking “out” does not mean expressing our concerns to likeminded friends, as I am doing in this reflection. There may be some value in that, but it is not incumbent upon all of us, and there are times when it can even be counterproductive. Speaking out means – as the Quakers put it – speaking truth to power. Emailing, calling or writing to people to whom we have been given access to clearly decry this action, just as we would do if it were our own family members who were caught up in it. This is uncomfortable because it involves confrontation. It may seem futile because we may believe – rightly or wrongly – that our words will have no impact. But that is what God calls on Her people to do: to proclaim the truth, not to control the outcome. So I would urge all of us who do not feel that we ourselves are among ‘the destitute’ to find a way that works for us to ask our representatives to stop. Better yet, we should find a way to turn this into a spiritual discipline, to train our voices to rise to the occasion. ~ Brian

PERSON OF COLOR BIO

George Washington Carver

One of the most impactful conservationists in United States history, *George Washington Carver* healed land and uplifted farmers recently freed from slavery.



Born into slavery himself, Carver overcame race-based rejections from multiple colleges and became the first Black student at Iowa State University and later its first Black faculty member. He helped found the agricultural school at Alabama's Tuskegee Institute.

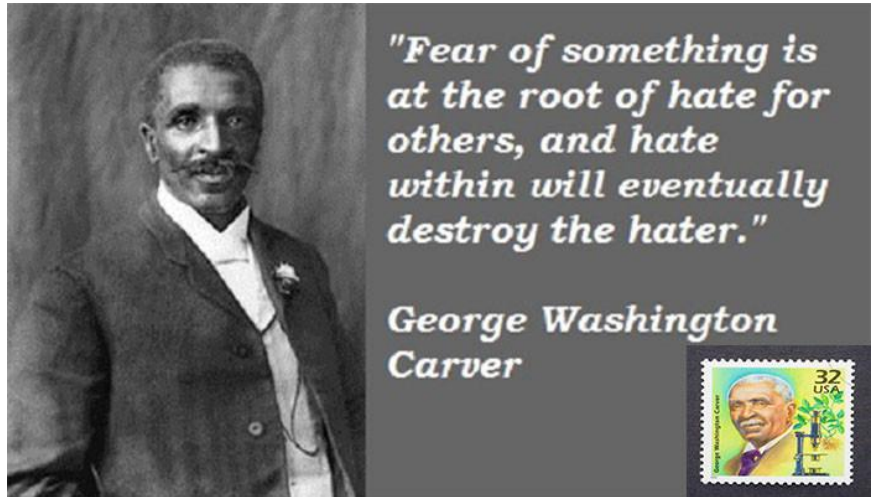
Upon arriving in the South, Carver noted how degraded the soil was from a long history of intensive cotton growing. Carver experimented and perfected ways to bring nutrients back to the land, an idea that in modern times is embraced as regenerative agriculture, a powerful climate solution.



Carver's methods of rotating a variety of crops and turning some cover crops under the soil boosted the land's productivity. To create a market for diverse soil-fixing crops like peanuts and sweet potatoes, Carver invented hundreds of uses for them.

By demonstrating these lessons far and wide, Carver hoped to liberate the region's formerly enslaved Black farmers from a sharecropping system that kept them indebted and dependent on white landowners.

While his historical narrative is often tied to his promotion of the peanut, his tireless efforts to take on an unjust status quo through nature and ingenuity are now seeing the light of day. Due to his contributions to the nation's agriculture, Carver was the first non-president to be honored with a national monument.



<https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/black-leaders-science-conservation/>



Need something? Have something to give away?

ROUTINE INFORMATION

“SHARING OUR LIVES” weekly power point: We invite photo submissions of events / hobbies / interests in your lives. Send pictures to Linda Showalter at lindashowalter52@gmail.com by noon on Saturday. It will run before and after the service.

BULLETIN INFORMATION:

- Send announcements to Linda Showalter at lindashowalter52@gmail.com by Friday, 10 am.
- **Bulletins** are now attached with the Zoom link for those who are worshipping on Zoom. A link will continue to be sent out each week. If you have a prayer request or announcement you would like to share, ***type your request live into the chat*** feature on zoom and someone on the tech team will read it to the congregation at church.

JOURNEYING TOGETHER is compiled by Linda Showalter each week. Send information to office@shalommennonite.com by 5 pm on Wednesday.

SAM BIXLER manages our church directory, email address list, and telephone numbers. You can email changes or additions to the office at office@shalommennonite.com or bixlersc@gmail.com.

CRAIG OURY is managing our Zoom calendar, church calendar, and uploads minutes on the church website. If you need to schedule a meeting using the church zoom account or have minutes to upload, you can email the office at office@shalommennonite.com or craig@shalommennonite.com.

BUILDING USEAGE: If you want to use the building for a meeting or event, please check the online calendar first to be sure it's open, then email Craig at office@shalommennonite.com so he can add your item to the calendar. It's helpful to include the contact person and which parts of the building you expect to use.

YOUTUBE CHANNEL: In addition to our podcast, Shalom has a Youtube Channel. This is an easy way to share the good news with church members past and present, visitors and newcomers, and even outsiders. Check it out at youtube.com/@shalommennonite55.

VIDEO RECORDINGS (MP4) of our Zoom worship services are available online. A link to the worship service recordings is on the Member's page of our website.

Journeying Together is a weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church:

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Pastors: Brian Bither, (317) 332-7320; Craig Oury, (301) 302-3181

Vision & Accountability Team: Nizeet Agular, Charity Bauman, Sam Bixler, Frank Kandel, Grace Rhine

Pastors Brian Bither, Craig Oury