

## JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Shalom Mennonite Church

March 2, 2022

### WORSHIP: Our relationship with God

Chair: Brittany Bither

**Last Sunday (2/27)**, Brian preached from Exodus 34:29-35, Luke 9:28-36, & 2 Corinthians 3:12-18 about unveiling our faces in the presence of Christ.

**This Sunday (3/6)**, is the first Sunday of Lent, and Brian will be preaching about Jesus' temptations in Luke 4.

**Next Sunday (3/13)**, is the second Sunday of Lent and Craig will be preaching from Luke 13:31-35.

### COMMUNITY LIFE: Relationships at Shalom

Chair: Herb Troyer

### CALENDAR

Friday, March 4 World Day of Prayer services

Sunday, March 6 (First Sunday of Lent)

--- 10:30a - Worship service **in-person at Shalom** with a streaming option available for those who want to participate from home (Note: This may be converted into a virtual service if VAT decides that it is not safe to meet)

March 6

--- after church - Congregational meeting to give feedback to our delegate about the resolutions under consideration at the Special Assembly meeting

**As we begin meeting in person**, there will continue to be a virtual zoom option available for those who will be at home or away. A link will continue to be sent out each week. At this time, we will not be able to accommodate active participation from home. If you have a prayer request or announcement you would like to share, there will be two options. You can either email the office at [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) or [pastors@shalommennonite.com](mailto:pastors@shalommennonite.com) with the request by Saturday night and a pastor will share the request at church, or you may type your request live into the chat feature on zoom and someone on the tech team will read it to the congregation at church.

### Celebrations

Mon, March 7 -- Kim Johnson

Wed, March 9 -- Rose Love

### DISCIPLING: Growing in our relationships

Chair: Martha Yoder

We are ready to invite children back to in-person Sunday School on March 13. Classes offered will be:

PreK class for 3-5yr olds not enrolled in school - Taught by Carol Weaver with Tania Goodloe

Early Elementary for K-3rd grade - Taught by Debora Akotonou with Rose Love

JYF/MYF for 6th-12th grade - Co-taught by OlaJowon Turentine and Frank Kandel with Julie Sanders

Older MYF students will also be invited to join an adult class if they prefer.

For any questions you can contact Laura Harms

[harms.laura@gmail.com](mailto:harms.laura@gmail.com)

**Do you have questions about Shalom**, the Mennonite Church, or the Christian faith? Are you interested in

making a deeper commitment? The Discipling Commission will be planning a baptism exploration class soon, which is designed for people who are new to Shalom, Mennonites, or Christianity to learn, ask questions, and get involved. Please email Brian at [brian@shalommennonite.com](mailto:brian@shalommennonite.com) if you are interested

### **OUTREACH: Relationships beyond Shalom**

Chair: Zenebe Abebe

During the month of March please bring non perishable items to church for the Morning Star Church Food Pantry in Muncie.

Thank you!

Frank Kandel for the Outreach Commission

At our Tuesday evening Outreach Commission meeting of March 1, I shared an idea, where I was encouraged to share it with the congregation and invite a volunteer.

It has been over three years now since Shalom Mennonite Church started a relationship with Eastern Star Church, and by extension, with Arlington Woods Neighborhood Association.

From time to time, our congregation has been briefed on activities at the Neighborhood Association. For now, Shalom Mennonite Church's involvement in this organization is limited to my attending monthly Association meetings. However, the past couple of years, several Shalom members were involved in neighborhood cleanup days, which is very much appreciated by members of the Neighborhood Association.

Our involvement as a church is a positive one, and has created energy and great appreciation by the Neighborhood Association about our partnership. We hope that Shalom congregation will be more actively involved in our neighborhood's affairs.

#### **Here is the Invitation:**

We agreed that to have one other person from Shalom attend the Arlington Woods Neighborhood Association meeting with Zenebe. This will strengthen our relationship more, and when Zenebe is unable to attend a meeting, there will always be someone at the table representing our congregation. Meetings are scheduled for Monday evenings once a month for about an hour, and start at 6:00 PM. The next meeting will be Monday, March 28. If interested to be part of this ministry, please contact Zenebe at (920) 602- 7339.

Zenebe Abebe, for Outreach Commission.

Among the concerns the Outreach Commission addresses are social justice issues. Sometimes this involves engaging with 'The Powers'—that is, the recognized governmental authorities at the national, state, or local level. This carries some risk, because our ultimate loyalty is to God, not to Earthly powers.

Last Wednesday I had an encounter with 'the powers' by spending nine hours at the Indiana Statehouse with the Indiana Senate Judiciary Committee (I had previously done the same for four hours with the House Public Policy Committee on January 5th). The focus was on House Bill 1077, which sought to end the licensing of handguns in Indiana. I testified against the bill on behalf of Hoosiers Concerned about Gun Violence, because we support the licensing of handguns. We think that it keeps guns from getting into the hands of people who would not use them safely. The meeting went 1:30-10:30PM. Many people testified, mostly opposing HB 1077. Many law enforcement organizations opposed the bill, including the Indiana State Police, the Indiana Chiefs of Police, and the Indiana Fraternal Order of Police. I testified at about 7:30PM. (See my attached testimony, if you're interested in the details.)

After all of the testimony was heard, the Committee considered about a dozen amendments to the bill. All were rejected except one, which proposed creating a provisional handgun license to speed up the process, until the State Police could complete background checks to be sure that a person would be eligible for a regular license. That amendment passed 6-5, and **we were very pleased**. Then the Committee voted 11-0 to send the bill on to the full Senate. Then **the bad news** started to unfold. The original author of HB 1077 was very unhappy with the amended bill. So he went to the Senate President Pro Tem, claiming that a rule had been

violated in passing the amendment (it hadn't), asking him to send the amended bill to the Senate Rules Committee, instead of the full Senate. This is where bills go to die, when their author wants them 'killed'. What the author may now do, is to 'graft' the language of his original bill into another bill, to get it passed. This isn't supposed to happen, but this is the unethical way 'the powers' sometimes work. Now we have to hope that that 'grafting' doesn't pass, or that Governor Holcomb will veto the bill.

All of this is to tell you that working for social justice is sometimes very messy and frustrating, even with a government that is officially democratic. We can invest a lot of time and energy, and have all of our efforts wiped out by one or two powerful people who block the will of the people on an issue (80% of Indiana supports handgun licensing, including a majority of gun owners). But we need to keep showing up, and doing the right thing.

On another social justice issue at the Federal level, the House of Representatives has passed the Reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act. This provides protection and financial and emotional support to women who have been abused. This isn't a perfect bill because they removed a provision which would have taken guns away from a person who has abused a woman, but we encourage you to ask our US Senators Todd Young and Mike Braun to support S 3623 Reauthorization of the Violence against Women Act.

### **SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM**

Chair: Joyce Troyer

The Sunday school class on Spiritual Gifts Discernment will begin on March 13. If you have interest in discerning your spiritual gifts prior to then, or if you prefer a format other than a group class, please contact Joyce Troyer at troyers\_hj@hotmail.com.

### **Vision and Accountability Team**

Chair: Cheryl Martin

As we begin to gather in person for worship, there are some guidelines we will need to follow. These guidelines are meant to help us worship safely without causing illness to our fellow church members. We have planned these guidelines to be respectful to each other, to show our love for one another, and to help others feel safe. Thank you for showing your love and respect for one another in these ways.

1. Please do not attend services if you are feeling ill in any way.
2. All persons must wear a mask during the entire service and while in the building.
3. We request that only fully vaccinated individuals (if eligible for vaccination) attend services.
4. Please space yourselves in the sanctuary so there is sufficient distance between groups and individuals.
5. There will not be a coffee time between church and Sunday school at this time.

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

In preparation for our congregational meeting on March 6, we want to give everyone an opportunity to comment on any of the 4 resolutions that will be discussed at the MC USA meeting in May. If you plan to attend the meeting virtually, or prefer not to speak, here is the link to a Google Form that you can use to submit your thoughts. The form will come with no name attached. If you wish your name to be added, please put your name in the message. The messages that come on these forms will be read by someone during the meeting. <https://forms.gle/c1Hd3Aysmetuv9v49> Follow the links below to read the resolutions.

The purpose of this special meeting is to complete the 2019-2021 biennium resolution process. Delegates will discuss and vote on resolutions that were delayed due to the global pandemic.

***These two resolutions are scheduled for a vote:***

- § [Clarification on Mennonite Church USA Polity and the Role of the Membership Guidelines of Mennonite Church USA](#)
- § [MC USA Accessibility Resolution](#)

This resolution is designated as a study resolution:

§ MC USA For Justice Resolution

MC USA delegates will determine if this resolution will be discussed and voted on at this special assembly:

§ A Resolution for Repentance and Transformation

**God of Grace and God of Glory**

(Voices Together hymnal #716, verse 3)

"Cure thy children's warring madness; bend our pride to thy control;  
Shame our wanton, selfish gladness, rich in things and poor in soul."

**A Litany for Ukraine**

by Iris de León-Hartshorn, associate executive director, Mennonite Church USA

**All: Our hearts and prayers go out to the people of Ukraine,**

One: As they seek refuge from the terrible effects of war.

**All: May they find shelter in God's arm,**

One: As they try to calm their fears.

**All: May they find comfort in God's arm,**

One: As they worry about where to find food and shelter.

**All: May they find comfort in God's arm,**

One: As they witness the death that war brings.

**All: May they find solace in God's arm,**

One: As they leave their homes behind to find safety.

**All: May they find strength in God's arm.**

One: Deliver us all from the madness of believing good can come from violence.

**All: God hear our prayer.**

One: Give us the courage to resist the myths of violence.

**All: God hear our prayer.**

One: Forgive us our pride as a super military power.

**All: God hear our prayer.**

One: Give us the compassion that gives birth to generosity and hospitality.

**All: God hear our prayer.**

One: Let us show love and mercy for those fleeing war.

**All: God hear our prayer.**

One: Mold us as a people of peace.

**All: God hear our prayer.**

**May God hear our prayers and the cry of the Ukrainian people.**

**People of Shalom** we would like to hear from you! We are looking for people to write reflections for Journeying Together. It can be a story, an experience, a poem, or a response to a piece of Scripture. If you would like to give a try sometime email the office at, [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) and we would be happy to schedule a week for you.

In addition to our podcast, Shalom has a **YouTube channel**, and many of our Zoom Sessions including the sermons in the "Story of the Bible" sermon series and the "Facing Hard Questions" sessions - can be found there. 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 [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEn30AED17Q\\_ReoskuxUXA!](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEn30AED17Q_ReoskuxUXA!)

**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.

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](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) or [bixlersc@gmail.com](mailto:bixlersc@gmail.com).

Craig Oury is compiles *Journeying Together* each week. You can continue to send information to [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) by 5 pm on Wednesday. Craig 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](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) or [craig@shalommennonite.com](mailto:craig@shalommennonite.com).

## REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY

Just a Few Little Questions  
by Brad Yoder

So, there's this guy named Jesus of Nazareth  
whom we claim to follow.  
But how directly?  
How much do the decisions we face, match his?  
As we wrestle with how to allocate our God-given resources  
of **time**, **money**, and **attention**,  
How did Jesus make his choices?

About **time**, how clearly did he know that he would have +/- 33 years  
to invest?  
Did he have a 33-year life plan, which would lead to a sudden end in Jerusalem?  
Or is that just a Western, goal-directed notion  
that we can imagine?

Regarding **money**, we can be almost certain that he **didn't** need to  
spend much time pondering his financial investments!  
He had no pillow to lay his head,  
Eating with friends, or surviving on "meat to eat that you know not of".

Who or what deserved, and received, Jesus' **attention**?  
The marginalized and devalued, of all kinds—  
Tax collectors, prostitutes, zealots, the physically and mentally ill,  
The genuinely seeking, and the disingenuous entrappers,  
'Unclean' women, the hungry, the struggling, and the existentially lost.  
Jesus listened eloquently to them all.

And at times, he sought silence, or communed with The Creator.

So, how do we follow Jesus?  
How directly can we find our cues?  
It's a challenging journey, and full of love and joy along the way.

Journeying Together is a weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church: 6100 E 32nd St, 46226; (317) 549-0577 [shalommennonite.com](http://shalommennonite.com)

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

Vision & Accountability Team: Cheryl Martin, Carol Bixler, CoraLyn Turentine, Frank Kandel, Mark Stocksdale  
Brian Bither

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