

# Journeying Together

Shalom Mennonite Church

March 22, 2018

## WORSHIP

Our relationship with God

Last Sunday March 18:

Frank preached on Jeremiah 31:31-34 and John 12:20-33. He reminded us that having faith not only means practicing the outward forms of discipleship such as obedience and service, but it requires a transformation of hearts by the grace of God. Fasting is a valuable spiritual practice because we have a limited amount of space in our hearts, and sometimes we have to remove something that currently takes up space in order to make room for God's Spirit to do something new within us.

This Sunday March 25:

Palm Sunday. One of the main characters in the story of Holy Week is not a person at all, but instead, "the crowds" who had gathered to see Jesus. On Palm Sunday, we join those crowds in praising Jesus, but by Good Friday, those same crowds had betrayed him. To what extent are we influenced by the crowds/"the culture" today, and how can we engage with them without being unduly influenced by them? Jesus addresses this matter directly in John 12:12-36, and Brian will offer reflections on it in his sermon, "Keep Your Eyes on the Light."

Next week April 1 is Easter Sunday: Brian will deliver the sermon.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

Relationships at Shalom

Praise from Shirley:

Shirley Frost (who lives across from Shalom) wants to express her appreciation for the prayers and support she received from the church community while her son, Joshua Roberts, was staying in her home as he

recovered from a major car accident. She also wants to report that he is walking again and seems to be on his way to a full recovery - thanks be to God!

Robert Coleman's Move:

Robert Coleman will be moving end of this month and could use some help cleaning his old apartment and moving his furniture. If you are available to help for 3 or 4 hours any day from March 27th (Tuesday) through March 31st (Saturday) let me know.

Frank Kandel, [kandel93@gmail.com](mailto:kandel93@gmail.com)  
[309-532-2859](tel:309-532-2859)

## Calendar

Sun. 9:30am Worship

11 am Sunday School

Apr. 1: 8:30am Easter breakfast

Apr. 5: 6:30pm Meal/Bible Study

Apr. 11: 7am Morning Breakfast Group

Apr. 19: 6:30pm Meal/Bible Study

Apr. 25: 7am Morning Breakfast Group

Apr. 29: 6:30pm 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday Hymn Sing

## DISCIPLING

Growing in our relationships

Check out the Easter Tree!

Children contribute a lot to our worship life at Shalom. The Easter tree in the downstairs hallway is a prayer tree and will give you a glimpse of their concerns. What prayers can you contribute?

Catholic Economics Class Update:

The Catholic Economics Sunday School class will discuss chapters 14 and 15. Carol Bither has graciously volunteered to lead the discussion in my absence. - Wilma Bailey

## OUTREACH

### Relationships beyond Shalom

#### Outreach Survey Results:

The Outreach Commission would like to thank everyone who completed the online Outreach Survey. Results showed that 60% of those who responded are currently involved with other services organizations beyond Shalom and that all respondents are willing to share stories with the congregation either through the newsletter, moment in mission or with the outreach commission. The responses to the dreams or excitement for an outreach project for our church received a variety of themes that were grouped into three categories; Children, Peace and Justice, and the Environment.

Children themes included: VBS for the neighborhood, Thriving Thursdays, Kids club. Themes for Peace and Justice included: immigration, visitation to immigration detention center, partnering with Faith in IN, homelessness. Environmental themes included: Community garden and solar panels. Those offering to serve as a representative to our church agencies include: MCC, Jeanne Smucker; MDS, Jim Showalter; Anabaptist Disabilities, Mary Albrecht; Everence, Cheryl Martin; Mennonite Creation Care, Marilyn Teel. We still need contact persons for AMBS, Meserete Kristos College, and Mennonite Mission Network. Please feel free to share any additional vision or thoughts with the outreach commission; Brad Yoder, Marilyn Teel, Frank Kandel or Mil Penner.

#### Family Promise Thank You:

Thanks to all who donated to the Family Promise Clothing Drive! 27 bags of clothing were delivered to Family Promise this past Monday. Each bag that Goodwill receives from this drive is worth a \$5 voucher for each family member served by Family Promise.

#### Updates to MCC kit contents:

MCC carefully plans our shipments of material resources in order to meet local needs, and we work hard to send high-quality items that can withstand the harsh conditions faced by the people who receive them. We continually

assess the items that we request for each kit to make sure they are the most useful for recipients. In light of recent evaluations, we have made a few changes to the kit supply lists. Check out the updated lists on [mcc.org/kits](http://mcc.org/kits). New printed kit cards will be available from the MCC Great Lakes office and material resources centers in April. Thank you for your continued donations that bring dignity and hope to people around the world.

## ADMINISTRATION

### Congregational support systems

#### Administrative Assistant Job Opening:

After discussion with various groups at Shalom, the administration commission is sharing the attached job description for a quarter-time administrative assistant. Please contact Abri ([abri.houser@gmail.com](mailto:abri.houser@gmail.com), 316.680.0892) if you are interested or have questions. Thanks!

## VISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM

### Milepost #369: A Fasting Experience

For Lent this year, I made an effort to take the spiritual discipline of fasting a little more seriously than I normally do by “giving up” a few things, including a particular news source that I read just about every day. To be clear, I did not give up the news *in general* for Lent. I still allowed myself to read the international papers that give summaries about important events going on in the world. Instead, I just gave up one particular news source – my *go-to* source for reading the daily news – which is an American paper that gives a lot of coverage to national politics. I didn’t anticipate that this would be a major sacrifice, since I still allowed myself to read the news from other sources. In fact, I added it at the last minute to the other things I was giving up for Lent. But it turned out to be the hardest one and the most revealing. Here is what I am learning from this experience:

There is a fine line between “being informed” and participating in gossip. Although

I believe that there is great value in paying attention to what is going on in the world and to holding public figures accountable for their words and actions, there comes a point when we fixate too much on what celebrities or communities are doing, when we “analyze” a moral error over and over and over and read articles that are more focused on speculation than reporting, that I think we have crossed into gossip. I didn’t realize how much I had come to crave this gossip until I tried to cut it out. God help me!

Some of the benefits of cutting out this news source are just starting to kick in at this late moment in Lent. For example, I am finding it easier to “pray for my enemies” when I’m not constantly reading material that stirs up the frustration I feel toward them. I’m also feeling less enslaved to the urgency of the moment. Somehow, the news keeps us constantly on the edge of our seats even about processes that take months and years to develop. I still feel concerned about the issues that I used to read about daily, but I don’t feel quite as consumed by them.

Am I going to go back to reading this news source after Lent is over? I haven’t decided yet. I am certainly more conscious of the spiritual effects it is having on me than I was before, and I am grateful for that. In any case, that has been my experience with the spiritual discipline of fasting this year. What experiences have you had with the spiritual disciplines we’ve been engaging? Please considering sharing your thoughts with the pastoral team in the milepost!

- Brian Bither

*Do you have some thoughts to share about this month's spiritual discipline? The Pastoral Team invites you to share your thoughts as one of the weekly milepost entries. Please email Sabrina, Frank, or Brian to explore this further.*

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

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Please submit information by Thursday, 12pm, to Abri Hochstetler: [abri.houser@gmail.com](mailto:abri.houser@gmail.com)