

## JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Shalom Mennonite Church

December 28, 2022

### WORSHIP: Our relationship with God

Chair: Brittany Bither

**Last Sunday (12/25)**, was Christmas, Brian preached on The theme will be on the joy of the shepherds - a joy in which we can still participate more than 2,000 years later from Luke 2.

**This Sunday (1/1)**, Craig will bring the message from Matthew 2:13-23, After the joy of the birth of Jesus we're back to the difficult realities of life, tyrant rulers, death, and fear. Showing the need for God with us.

**Next Sunday (1/8)**, Sabrina will bring the message.

**Pictures.** As our church family grows, we all want to be able to connect names with faces. We plan to make a bulletin board that has current pictures of everyone who attends regularly along with their names. On Sundays, you may find Jeanne Smucker asking you to pose for a picture to go on the new bulletin board. If you have a photograph that you prefer to use, please give it to her. Otherwise, smile and get your picture taken. Thanks.

### COMMUNITY LIFE: Relationships at Shalom

Chair: Herb Troyer

### CALENDAR

Sunday, January 1, 9:30 worship. NO Sunday School.

Monday, January 2 from 9a to 3p Brian's Roving Office at Northwest Panera, 2902 W 86th St, Indianapolis, IN

Thursday, January 12, 6 pm Commission Chairs

Tuesday, January 17, 7 pm Community Life Commission

Monday, January 23 from 9a to 3p Brian's Roving Office at Greenwood Panera, 789 US Highway 31 N, Greenwood, IN

Monday, January 30 from 9a to 3p Brian's Roving Office at Fishers Panera Bread - 8510 E 96th Street, Fishers, IN

Monday, February 6 from 9a to 3p - Brian's Roving Office at East Side Starbucks, 9605 E Washington St., Indianapolis, IN

Monday, February 13 from 9a to 3p - Brian's Roving Office at Downtown Starbucks, 430 Massachusetts Ave., Indianapolis, IN

Monday, February 27 from 9a to 3p - Brian's Roving Office at Northwest Panera, 2902 W 86th St, Indianapolis, IN

**Bulletins** are now attached with the Zoom link for those who are worshipping on Zoom. 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**

Fri, Dec 30 -- Becky & Mike Wigginton, 1978

Sun, Jan 1 -- CoraLyn Turentine

Tue, Jan 3 -- Marcela Rosales Harms

## **DISCIPLING: Growing in our relationships**

Chair: Martha Yoder

## **Children's Sunday School**

The second semester of Children's Sunday School will begin on January 8, 2023. A BIG Thank you to our teachers from Fall and the teachers that will continue or being in January.

## **OUTREACH: Relationships beyond Shalom**

Chair: Zenebe Abebe

HCGV Newsletter is attached

## **SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM**

Chair: Joyce Troyer

## **Vision and Accountability Team**

Chair: Cheryl Martin

## **Administration**

Chair: Mike Wigginton

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**Bulletin announcements** should be sent to Linda Showalter at [showalter@indy.rr.com](mailto:showalter@indy.rr.com) by Thursday, 10 am.

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 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 for the Journey

### Christmas Truces

World War I was one of the most brutal wars in human history. The German army advanced into Belgium in August of 1914 with the intention of fighting its way through Europe until it was *stopped* at the Battle of the Marne. By “stopped,” I mean that the advance was halted, not that the German army was defeated. Rather than retreating, the Germans dug trenches and held their position, while the French and British allies did the same thing just a few hundred yards away from them. They ended up staying in these trenches for years on end, with neither side capable of successfully breaching the opposing side and both sides using a combination of cruel tactics – including chemical warfare – to demoralize the other.

In this awful context, there was a miraculous moment that occurred in December 1914, which is often called “the Christmas truce.” After months of shouting and shooting at each other, some of the British and German troops began to discuss the possibility of a truce so that they could exchange prisoners and collect their dead to bury them. The military leadership of both armies was generally opposed to this idea, but the troops on the ground pursued it anyway. Then, on December 24-25, it happened: all across the Western Front, groups of soldiers stopped shooting at one another long enough to allow the other side to collect the dead and exchange prisoners. Some groups took it even further, as there were several points along the front where British and German troops sang Christmas songs together and at least one point in which they emerged from their trenches, shook hands, and even played games together.

It was not a coincidence that this truce occurred on Christmas. Most of the soldiers on both sides identified as Christians, and while it is tragic that Christians would be willing to kill each other in the first place, there was enough recognition that peace mattered to God to create this momentary truce on Christmas day. After all, each side had enough faith that their opponent would not lure them to a trap on Christ’s birthday that they risked their lives to make peace with the other. If only this peace could have continued and grown in the days and weeks after Christmas, perhaps it could have brought about an early end to one of the deadliest wars in human history.

I think about this story every year, and I find myself wondering whether I have the courage to make “Christmas truces” with the people in my lives. Could I apologize to someone who has wronged me, even though they might not offer a reciprocal apology? Could I express an interest in reconnecting with someone that I have grown apart from? Could I be the first to name something that one of my peer groups does that troubles my conscience? For peace to happen in any of these situations, someone has to take the risk of stepping out into the open, knowing they could be attacked. But if the people with whom we relate are brothers and sisters in Christ, isn’t it worth the risk if a better and godlier relationship could result from it?

May the spirit of Christmas inspire us to step out of our comfort zones today in hope of peace. ~ Brian

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, Frank Kandel, Grace Rhine, Mark Stocksdales  
Brian Bither, Craig Oury

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