



JOURNEYING TOGETHER

A weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church

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

DECEMBER 24, 2025

CALENDAR

Sun, December 28: There will be no Sunday school
Thu, January 8: Shalom Sister Lunch @ His Place, 11:30 am (see CLC)
Sun, February 8: Game Night @ Shalom; details to come
Sat, February 21: Arlington Woods Neighborhood gathering, 11 am – 3:30 pm
Sat, October 3, 2026: Annual Retreat @ Jameson Camp

ADMINISTRATION

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

COMMUNITY LIFE: RELATIONSHIPS AT SHALOM

Linda Showalter (Chair), Bethany Martin, Beverly Smith
Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

Celebrations! (Wędnęsday – Wędnęsday)

Thu, December 25: Carol Bither
Sat, December 27: Bob Love
Tue, December 30: Becky & Mike Wigginton, 1978

The next Shalom Sisters Lunch will be on **January 8** since the 1st is New Years Day. We will meet at His Place, 6916 East 30th Street at 11:30 am. In February, we'll make reservations for The Bosphorus and try again! All women are welcome.



DISCIPLING: GROWING IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Cheryl Martin (chair), Wilma Bailey, Matt Bauman
Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

Children's Education

For the 2s-3s class, it would be great to have one more teacher to share dates with Abri in 2026.

December 28 there will be no Sunday School.

There will be one adult Sunday school class for the months of January and February. The topics will focus on the Christian life in our congregation. There will again be two classes during the 3rd quarter (March - May). One will be the standard Bible study. The other class is being finalized but will be revealed shortly. Stay tuned for more information.

OUTREACH: RELATIONSHIPS BEYOND SHALOM

(chair), Becky Wigginton
Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

Christmas Greetings from Ecuador are attached.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM

Jim Showalter (Chair), Angie Buller
VAT Representative: Andrew Martin; Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

VISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM (VAT)

Nizeet Deiter (Chair), Andrew Martin (Vice-Ch) Sam Bixler, Charity Bauman, Abri Hochstetler
Pastoral Representatives: Brian Bither, Craig Oury

WORSHIP: OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Melissa Walsh Martin (chair), Justin Hochstetler, Jeanne Smucker
Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

The Shalom Mennonite Worship Commission invites you to complete this brief questionnaire, linked below, **by Sunday, January 4, 2026**. The responses will provide the commission with information from the congregation regarding several aspects of the worship services at Shalom. If you would like a paper version of the questionnaire, there are printed copies available at the church. Any completed paper questionnaires should be submitted to the Worship Commission mailbox. Thank you!

[Worship Commission Questionnaire Linked Here](#)

A QR code that leads directly to the online form is attached.

Last Sunday (12/21) Craig brought the message from John 1:6-8, 19-28.

This Sunday (12/28) Craig will bring the message from John 1:10-18.

Next Sunday (1/4/2026) is Epiphany, Craig will bring the message.

This week's Prayer List

- **Church: Kalamazoo Mennonite Fellowship** is a home-based church in Kalamazoo, Michigan that is a part of Indiana Michigan Mennonite Conference.
- **Organization: Peter and Delicia Bravo Wigginton** are missionaries from our congregation who work with the Mennonite churches in Ecuador. (Contact: Jeanne Smucker and Martha Yoder Maust)



ANNOUNCEMENTS

Don't forget to sign the Voices Together for Brian! It's in Andrew and Melissa's mailbox.

Dear Shalom Mennonite Church

On behalf of Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), I want to sincerely thank you for your donations. We are deeply grateful for your church's partnership and your commitment to sharing God's love and compassion with our neighbors around the world.

Your support allows us to continue our vital work in relief, development, and peace in the name of Christ. Whether it is providing emergency food supplies, supporting long-term sustainable farming, or fostering peacebuilding in areas of conflict, your generosity makes a tangible difference.

Please know that I am here as a resource for your congregation. If you have any questions, need specific information, or would like me to visit in person to share stories and updates about our global mission, I would be honored to do so.

Thank you again for your faithful support and for being part of the MCC family.

Peace and blessings,

Adriana Ortiz

Church and Community Outreach Coordinator, Great Lakes Mennonite Central Committee

1013 Division Street, Goshen, Indiana 46528

574-534-4133 Office; 574-535-0886 Cell

adrianaortiz@mcc.org

mcc.org

PERSON OF COLOR BIO

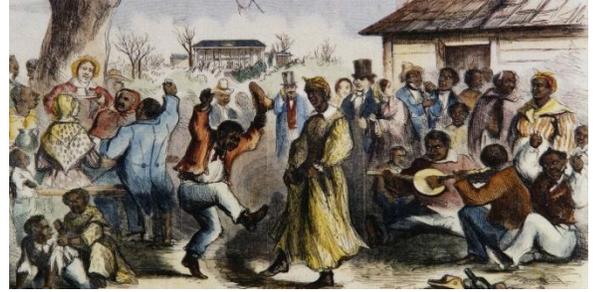
For many Americans, Christmas is a season of gift exchanges, slices of sweet potato pie, and binge-watching holiday classics with family. But for Black Americans, spreading holiday cheer has long carried a deeper meaning — one rooted in reflection, resilience, and resistance. Indeed, throughout history, Christmas has been more than a celebration. For Black communities, it has also been a rare pause from oppression and, at times, a strategic moment to challenge injustice and imagine freedom.

Historically, Christmas was one of the few times enslaved Black people were sometimes given brief reprieve from the brutal demands of plantation life. By the 1830s, major slaveholding states - including Alabama, Louisiana, and Arkansas - were among the first in the United States to declare Christmas a state holiday.

As Solomon Northup wrote in his memoir *“Twelve Years a Slave,”* Christmas was “the time of feasting, and frolicking, and fiddling — the carnival season with the children of bondage. They are the only days when they are allowed a little restricted liberty, and heartily indeed do they enjoy it.”

Picture:

<https://www.history.com/articles/christmas-slavery-american-south>



For others, Christmas was an ideal time to plan their escapes to freedom. In fact, icon and leader of the Underground Railroad, Harriet Tubman, used Christmas Eve 1854, to lead her three brothers to freedom in Philadelphia:

“Harriet Tubman helped her brothers escape at Christmas. Their master intended to sell them after Christmas but was delayed by the holiday. The brothers were expected to spend the day with their elderly mother but met Tubman in secret.”

Picture:

<https://x.com/NMAAHC/status/1474379627690868761>



And Ellen Craft disguised herself as a white man to help her and her husband escape enslavement on Christmas day, 1848:

“In 1848, an enslaved couple, Ellen and William Craft, attempted one of the most audacious and brave escapes for freedom. Ellen could pass for white so she pretended to be a white male planter on a trip with her black slave William.”



Picture: <https://www.thevintagenews.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/65/2016/11/adfsfggf.jpg>

Today, resistance may look a little different - but it's still a strong Black tradition. According to a joint study from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors, nearly two-thirds of Black households donate to community-based organizations and causes, totaling roughly \$11 billion each year.

Despite having a lower median net worth, Black households give 25% more of their income annually than white households, on average. Outside of financial contributions, Black Americans have facilitated some of the most influential protests in the United States. In recent years, resistance has also taken economic form - sparked by rollbacks on racial equity and diversity commitments - reflect a long Black tradition of using consumer power to demand accountability.

Edited from <https://wordinblack.com/2025/12/why-black-christmas-means-resistance/>



Have something to give away? Need something? Skills needed or to share? Tools needed or to share?

Jacob Martin is wondering if there is any job or work he can do for anyone in the community for money.

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.

Brian Bither 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 Usage: 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 Brian 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.

6100 E 32nd St, 46226; (317) 549-0577 shalommennonite.com

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

Vision & Accountability Team: Chair Nizeet Agular Deiter, Vice-Chair Andrew Martin

Congregational Reps: Charity Bauman, Sam Bixler, Abri Hochstetler

Pastoral Rep: Craig Oury