

**Shalom Mennonite Church
Commission Chair Team (CCT)
Meeting Minutes
January 14, 2025**

The Commission Chair Team (CCT) convened on January 14, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. EST via Zoom. Present were Frank Kandel, Pastor Brian Bither, Pastor Craig Oury, Brittany Bither, Carol Bixler, Linda Showalter, Mike Wigginton, Martha Yoder Maust, and Nizeet Deiter.

Introduction

Frank opened the meeting with a reflective question: What is the bright light we are looking forward to during these dark winter times? Team members shared their thoughts and reflections.

Opening

- Frank introduced Martha, leader of the Dismantling Racism Steering Committee, to discuss how each commission can integrate the People of Color (POC) Caucus Group's gift, *"Ideas for a Way Forward – 2024,"* into their activities.
- Martha provided a summary of the church's decision to become an antiracist congregation, detailing the process initiated by the Outreach Commission in 2020.

Commission Teams Updates

1. Linda provided an update on behalf of the **Community Life Commission Team**.

The key points were as follows:

- Retreat Focus: Integration of dismantling racism and focusing on “bright lights” during dark times.
- Game Night: Scheduled for Sunday, February 9, 4:30 p.m., incorporating Valentine’s Day themes.
- Brian emphasized games as a great way to spend time together.
- Support for Laura: The team will assist Laura during her two-week absence in February.

2. Carol provided an update on behalf of the **Discipling Commission Team**.

The key points were as follows:

- The Sunday School: Highlighted Wilma Bailey’s excellent contributions.
- Dismantling Racism Class: Conducted monthly under this commission.
- Shalom Orientation Class: New members have been visiting Shalom.
- Pastor Brian plans to open a Shalom Orientation Class in March, co-facilitated by Pastor Craig.

3. Brittany provided an update on behalf of the **Worship Commission Team**.

The key points were as follows:

- The team met yesterday on January 13.
- There will be a zoom service on January 21st and May 17th to celebrate the 500 Years Anniversary of the Anabaptist Movement.
 - It was suggested to celebrate the diversity during the celebration of the 500 Years Anniversary of the Anabaptist Movement.
- The team is collaborating with Barbara Abebe to prepare liturgies, with broader member participation to prevent burnout. Celebrations are planned for two Sundays in February.
 - There was a discussion about addressing challenges in member participation in liturgical preparation, which has contributed to a lack of diversity during services.
- If approved in the January 26 congregational meeting, a brief version of the Shalom Mennonite Church Statement of Welcome will be incorporated into worship services.
- The team is working on initiatives to make Sunday morning services more accessible.
- Communion is conducted once a month, using a table setting.
 - Some members have expressed discomfort with this arrangement due to varying personalities and perspectives.
 - Brittany acknowledged the feedback and stated she would discuss it with the team.
 - Carol expressed her gratitude for Brittany and the team's hard work.

4. Mike provided an update on behalf of the **Administration Commission Team**.

The key points were as follows:

- The team focuses on addressing immediate needs as they arise.
- Efforts were made to manage snow removal within the budget constraints.
- Neighbors near the church are enjoying the trail, with discussions about organizing a future event to include the community.
- Pastor Craig noted that the church is changing its internet provider.
- The recycling bin, initially missing, was located with assistance from other CCT members.
- Frank stated that the church budget is under the Administration Commission, and he thanked Mike for this faithful and encouraging words in the 2023 budget meeting and he also thanked God for His provision in 2024.

- Marta suggested incorporating more Black historical figures into journey together for reflection and learning.

5. Pastor Craig provided an update on behalf of **the Spiritual Gift Discernment Commission Team**.

The key points were as follows:

- The team compiled a list of potential Outreach Commission chairs.
- A meeting will be scheduled soon to address the decline of invitations by some candidates.
- One individual expressed interest in the role of chair but requested Joyce Troyer as a mentor. This will be discussed further in the next meeting.

6. Pastor Brian provided an update on behalf of the **Outreach Commission Team**.

The key points were as follows:

- Regular meetings have not occurred, but communication continues through email.
- Becky Wigginton represents the church in the Arlington Wood Neighborhood partnership.
- Pastor Brian is supporting the Mara Church with legal needs.
- Plans are underway to collaborate with First Mennonite for the 500th Anniversary of the Anabaptist Movement on May 17, featuring a full day of activities.
- Pastor Brian is engaged with Indiana AID, noting growing financial aid but also increasing needs. He expressed gratitude for God's provision.

7. Pastor Brian and Pastor Craig and provided an update on behalf of the **Pastoral Team**.

The key points were as follows:

- Pastor Craig shared a request from a neighbor seeking help with moving.
 - Questions were raised about the details of the request.
 - Frank suggested gathering more information before deciding how the church could assist.
 - Pastor Brian explained that in similar situations, he has informed the person in need that he would announce the request to the congregation. If a church member volunteers to coordinate, they would manage the effort.

- Sabbatical Planning: Pastor Brian has connected with potential spiritual directors to support him during his sabbatical. He is enthusiastic about working on articles and exploring potential publication opportunities.

8. Frank reported on behalf of the **Vision & Accountability Team**.

The key points were as follows:

- Frank expressed gratitude for the privilege of working with the VAT members.
- A brief congregational meeting is scheduled for Sunday, January 26, 2025, at noon to vote on the proposed Shalom Mennonite Church Statement of Welcome, drafted on June 18, 2024.
- The team is actively searching for a chair for the Spiritual Gift Discernment Commission. Frank plans to reach out to potential candidates.
- Nizeet will assume the role of VAT chair starting in fall 2025. During Pastor Brian's sabbatical, Frank will assist Pastor Craig.

Next Meeting

The next CCT meeting is scheduled for **Tuesday, March 11, 2025, at 6:30 p.m. EST via Zoom**. Pastor Craig may provide the update on behalf of the Community Life Commission.

Adjournment

Frank thanked everyone for their hard work. Pastor Craig closed the meeting with a prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 7:52 p.m. EST.

Recorded by Nizeet Deiter