



Anabaptism
at 500

LOOKING BACK,
LIVING FORWARD

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

A weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church

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

JANUARY 15, 2025

CALENDAR

Sun January 19: Carry-In after Sunday School. (see announcement under Community Life)
Mon, January 20: *BRO @ Greenwood Panera, 789 US Highway 31 N, Greenwood, IN
Tue, January 21: 500-year anniversary of the Anabaptist movement Zoom service, 7pm
(see announcement)
Sun, January 26: Congregational meeting following Sunday School (see announcement under VAT)
Mon, January 27: *BRO @ Downtown Panera, 430 N Mass Ave
Sun, February 9: Game Night, 4:30 pm (see announcement under Community Life)
Thu, February 27: Community Life Commission Zoom meeting, 6:30 pm
Sat, May 17: Celebration of 500 years of Anabaptism @ First Mennonite
*BRO: Brian's Roving Office

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

This Sunday January 19th *carry-In* after Sunday School. We will be having our Winter Soup Sunday! We're asking folks to bring soup or salad or bread! And please bring dishes ready to set out.



Sunday, Game Night, Sunday, February 9, 4:30 pm

We hear there's a major football game on Sunday, February 9! There is a large TV in our fellowship hall that could show that game. There could be table games for those not interested in football. And, what if a simple soup/bread meal was added? And, since Valentine's Day is the following Friday, what if there were valentine cookies for the kids to decorate? 



There's a sign-up sheet on the back window for soup, bread/cheese/snacks, un-iced valentine cookies.

DISCIPLING: GROWING IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Carol Bixler (chair), Wilma Bailey, Carol Bither

Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

Children's Classes

Hall Monitor:

Jan. 19: Bob Love

Jan. 26: Linda Showalter

Teachers:

2-yr old class: Abri Hochstetler and Carol Weaver will co-teach

Pre-K and K: Beverly Smith will teach with Joyce Troyer as a substitute

Elementary: Frank Kandel and Rod Maust will co-teach

Youth: Jeanne Smucker and Brad Yoder will teach

Adult Sunday School Classes:

January 19 - Salt & Light session 8. The Center of our Worship, Luke 22:14-23

January 26 - Caucus Sunday, Color of Compromise, chapter 6

February 2 - Salt & Light session 10. Rain, Even for the Unrighteous, Matthew 5:38-48

February 9 - Salt & Light session 11. Becoming Great, Matthew 18:1-5, 10-14

February 16 - Caucus Sunday, Color of Compromise, Chapter 7

February 23 - Salt & Light session 13. A Treasured Life, Matthew 6:19-24

OUTREACH: RELATIONSHIPS BEYOND SHALOM

(chair), Chuck Dunn, Becky Wigginton

Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM

Angie Buller

VAT Representative: Nizeet Deiter; Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

As we are starting a new year here at Shalom thank you to everyone who has agreed to serve on our commissions. We do have one spot that is yet to be filled. Please be praying for the right person who is willing to serve as chair of the Outreach Commission.

VISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM (VAT)

Frank Kandel (Chair), Nizeet Deiter (Vice-Ch) Sam Bixler, Charity Bauman, Grace Rhine

Pastoral Representatives: Brian Bither, Craig Oury

The Vision and Accountability Team (VAT) invites you to a brief congregational meeting on **Sunday, January 26, 2025** at 12:00 PM to vote on the proposed Shalom Mennonite Church Statement of Welcome (drafted June 18, 2024, attached). The proposed statement is a result of significant

congregational discussion over the last year, and incorporates congregational feedback on several prior drafts. For additional context, please see the appendix, which includes an excerpt from VAT minutes.

This vote is an important step, but it does not mark the end of our conversations on this important topic. We acknowledge that unresolved questions remain, making ongoing dialogue essential. However the vote goes, together we still must thoughtfully explore key questions around same-sex marriage, leadership, and pastoral expectations. These are challenging, yet meaningful conversations that we must approach with humility, care, and respect for all perspectives. With the Holy Spirit's presence among us, we can navigate these discussions faithfully and lovingly as a congregation. We ask for your prayerful consideration and discernment as we approach this important moment together.

Voting Information:

Members will have the opportunity to vote in person by paper ballot or online at the meeting on January 26. Absentee voting will also be available, with details to follow soon. A 75% affirmative vote is required to approve the statement. Please mark your calendars and plan to participate.

Frank Kandel, Chair, for the Vision and Accountability Team

VAT Members: Vice-chair: Nizeet Deiter; Congregational Representatives: Grace Rhine, Charity Grimes Bauman, Sam Bixler; Pastors: Brian Bither and Craig Oury

Appendix

From the August 20 VAT meeting minutes:

"... VAT continued work on seeking a way forward with the Statement of Welcome for Shalom. Feedback from the congregational session was shared and discussed. VAT felt that the current statement draft elicited significant positive responses along with some continuing concerns to keep working through the process. Many/most responses from the congregation acknowledged that a "perfect" statement simply won't ever be possible and that this draft is, overall, a likely livable/acceptable compromise for the time being. A VAT member then recommended that perhaps we are nearly ready to bring the statement, in its present form, to the congregation for a vote acknowledging that we might not, at this moment in time, find a closer "fit". "After significant discussion VAT decided that the draft as of June 18, 2024, should be brought to the congregation for a vote. Specifics regarding timing for a vote were not yet firmly decided."

WORSHIP: OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Brittany Bither (chair), Justin Hochstetler, Jeanne Smucker
Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

Last Sunday (1/12) Brian began a mini-series called "Lessons from History," which began by offering a history of the early church and considered how the complicated legacy of the Christian Emperor Constantine revealed the need to separate church and state.

This Sunday (1/19) will be the 500-year anniversary of Anabaptism! Join us as we celebrate our theological heritage and as Brian continues the "Lessons from History" series with a focus on the sixteenth century Anabaptist movement.

Next Sunday (1/26), Brian will conclude the "Lessons from History" series by considering how the Mennonites made their way to the United States, northern Indiana, and eventually Indianapolis and how we have changed and grown along the way.

On this week's Prayer List;

Church: This week, we are praying for **College Mennonite Church**, which is the large Mennonite church in Goshen, Indiana that is on the Goshen College campus. They have asked for to pray for them during a time of pastoral transition and to pray for the immigrant members of their church who face uncertainty regarding immigration policy in the coming months. Let's also pray for the service they will be streaming on Tuesday celebrating the exact 500-year anniversary of the Anabaptist movement.

Organization: Our organization in focus this week is **Faith in Indiana**, which is a network of congregations, clergy, and people of faith who advocate collectively for racial and economic justice in Indiana. (Contact: Sabrina Falls)

ANNOUNCEMENTS

January 21, 2025 at 7pm – This month we will cross the 500-year anniversary of the Anabaptist movement, which began when Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, George Blaurock, and several others defied the orders of Zurich City Council to baptize their newborn babies and instead baptized one another as adults, which they understood as a voluntary decision to commit their lives to Jesus. Shalom will be celebrating this milestone later in the year, but for anyone who wants to celebrate on the exact day, College Mennonite Church will be broadcasting a special service which you can watch by registering at [this link](#).



Arts WEEKEND

Join us at Mennonite Arts Weekend, **February 7-9, 2025**, in Cincinnati, Ohio. This weekend celebrates the creativity and discipline of Anabaptist Mennonite artists. Presentations by musicians, visual artists, writers, and craftspeople start on Friday evening and conclude with Sunday morning worship. Activities and workshops designed specifically for Pre-K children through high school are planned throughout the weekend. A nursery will be available. Find the list of presenters and registration and location information at <https://mennoniteartsweekend.org>.



Mennonite Disaster Service 75th Anniversary event in Wichita, KS on **February 14th and 15th**. This is a unique opportunity to attend a large MDS gathering of celebration. More at MDS.org. Registration is required but there is no charge for the event, lunches, and dinners. Lodging is up to you. Jim S.

Save the date of April 5 to join us in celebrating Herb Troyer's retirement and 70th birthday. April 4 will be his last day of professional work, and April 5 is his birthday. You are invited to come **4:30 - 6:30** to enjoy supper and dessert in Shalom's fellowship hall. Instead of gifts, please bring memories of Herb to share. A few of you will remember when he first came to Indianapolis as a VSer in 1974!



Save the date! Shalom and First Mennonite Church are jointly planning a celebration of 500 years of Anabaptism which will take place during the day on **Saturday, May 17** at First Mennonite. More details will be announced as they develop, but we would like to give everyone an opportunity to participate in this major anniversary milestone.

REFLECTION

Celebrating 500 Years of Nonviolence

"In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever." - Daniel 2:44

On January 21, 2025, the Anabaptist movement will enter its 500th year of existence. On Sunday, I expressed how pleased I am to be a part of this milestone, but I realize that others may not share my excitement. After all, entering your 500th year doesn't come with any special privileges or benefits. As nice as it is to have a big, round number, it seems arbitrary to celebrate this particular birthday. So why focus on it?

Among other reasons, I would argue that the simple fact that Anabaptism has lasted for 500 years is a testament to the power of peace. There are many military leaders and just war theorists who argue that a community that does not defend itself with violence has no chance at survival. Sure, pacifist communities are able to exist in the United States, but that's only because they are protected by the

world's strongest military. Moreover, I am increasingly encountering arguments that pacifism is a "privileged" position taken by intellectual elites, not the working class and especially not oppressed people who understand the inherent violence of the world we live in. But the mere existence of the Mennonite Church (and the ongoing Anabaptist movement) refutes these claims.

Anabaptism was forged largely among lower class peoples, it did not gain legal protection from any nation for a long period of time, and yet it has not only survived but grown in the midst of this violent world. It's worth noting that many of the most powerful empires of history, including the Persian Empire, the Aztec Empire, and the Western Roman Empire, did not make it to the 500 year mark despite being fully committed to the myth of redemptive violence. And yet the simple Mennonites still live on today.

For people like me who encountered pacifism as an idea but were unsure about it, it was profoundly meaningful to find a tradition that a track record of practicing it for hundreds of years. And now we can say that it has lasted for half of a millennium. I say that's reason to praise God! ~ Brian

PERSON OF COLOR BIO

Lawrence Hart



Lawrence Hart was a Mennonite pastor and Cheyenne peace chief from Oklahoma. He spoke only Cheyenne until he started school. After two years at Bethel College in Kansas he joined the Navy, where he became the first Native American to become a U.S. military jet pilot and instructor.

Before Lawrence's grandfather John Peak Heart died, he selected Lawrence to take his place as a Cheyenne Chief. Lawrence gave up his military career, returned to Bethel College to finish his history degree (1961), and went to Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary in Elkhart, Indiana (1961-63). He took the vow a peace chief takes to become a peacemaker and became one of four principal peace chiefs for the Cheyenne tribe.

Lawrence went on to serve his people in the Cheyenne tribe and the General Conference Mennonite Church as an ordained minister for the rest of his life. He practiced conflict resolution and merged his roles of peace chief and Mennonite minister to practice restorative justice from his post as pastor for the Koinonia Mennonite Church in Clinton, Oklahoma along with his wife Betty (Bartel) from 1963-2021. He used methods from both Cheyenne justice traditions and Anabaptist peacemaking, interpreting Jesus as a tribal person as he studied Scriptures from a Cheyenne point of view. He was also influenced by the lives of his parents, Homer and Jennie Hart, who served as lay pastors and translators for forty years, 1918-1958 at Hammon Mennonite Church.



Lawrence served on many churchwide committees and organizations as well as tribal leadership roles. One of his most important projects was the Return to the Earth Project he initiated with Mennonite Central Committee to mobilize the help of churches across the country to repatriate Native American remains as a result of his ten years of service with NAGPRA (Native American Graves Protection Rights Act), 1990-2000.

~Martha Yoder Maust

You can read more biographical information at the Global Anabaptist-Mennonite Encyclopedia Online (from which I have freely borrowed)

[https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Hart, Lawrence Homer \(1933-2022\)](https://gameo.org/index.php?title=Hart,_Lawrence_Homer_(1933-2022))

A moving story of a reconciliation event related to the Washita Massacre is available at <https://anabaptistworld.org/lawrence-harts-vision-peace/>



Need something? Have something to give away?

Does anyone know what happened to the 2 white, round tablecloths used for the communion tables?

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

CRAIG OURY 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 USEAGE: 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 Craig 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.

Journeying Together is a weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church:

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