

The Commission Chairs of the Shalom Mennonite Church met for their regular sharing session on August 17, 2022 by Zoom. Participating were Sam Bixler for Administration, Martha Yoder Maust, Cheryl Martin, Herb Troyer, Joyce Troyer, Zenebe Abebe, Brittany Bither, Pastor Brian Bither, and Frank Kandel.

Cheryl led in prayer.

Brittany reported that Worship Commission is planning around an upcoming sermon series on the Book of Amos. She also reported that they are looking into a Spanish interpreter for Sunday mornings.

Sam reported that the revised church website is up and running. Sam also reported that three security cameras have been installed and that the Administrative Commission is working out plans and policies for monitoring.

Martha reported that during a recent Sunday School hour people worked together sorting the plastic CAPS and another similar session will be planned before too long. Peter and Delicia Bravo-Wigginton, missionaries to Ecuador, will be sharing in an upcoming Sunday School Class. We are also continuing with our monthly Sunday School focus on dismantling racism. This Fall a class will be led by Wilma

Bailey on Amos. Furthermore, an orientation class will be offered for those new to the church.

Zenebe reported that the last two meetings of the Outreach Commission have been focused on editing our anti-racism statement in response to the suggestions of the anti-racism audit. Before it is taken to the whole congregation, the Sunday School caucus groups will review it. It is hoped that the revised statement can become more visible to outsiders and more central to our internal community. In terms of other work of the Commission, Brad Yoder has been focused on gun violence, Zenebe and Becky Wigginton on the Arlington Woods Neighborhood Association, Sabrina Falls on Faith in Indiana, and Brian Bither on Indiana Aid.

Joyce reported for Gifts Discernment that Wilma Bailey has been affirmed for the Discipling Commission and Grace Rhine for the VAT. Two people are still being sought for the Community Life Commission. The job of this commission is large with a gathered piece (including the kitchen committee) and a scattered piece (including deacons). Perhaps there is room for another subcommittee.

Herb reported from Community Life that a group is working on plans for the October 8th Church retreat. He also said there has been little response to the Newsletter invitation to Small Groups. There was conversation about meals for

several families with new babies. Meals have been offered. The question was raised as to whether there will be Thanksgiving Day meal at church this year. Would it be better to meet in smaller groups in homes or gather at the church? What is safest? What is most welcoming?

Cheryl reported that VAT is working on a survey to begin to examine and renew our mission and vision. This will also include questions about the church structure—how it is working and how it might be changed.

Pastor Brian reported that a steering committee has been appointed to guide our congregational effort to dismantle racism. Brian and Craig have been traveling some lately but have still managed to deal with some heavy pastoral care situations. Schedules should get more back to normal with Fall and the beginning of the school year.

Brian presented the following outline of things to come:

- Sept 11 – Oct 23 – Amos Series
- Late Oct – November – Mission and Vision
- December – Advent
- Early Next Year – the LGBTQIA question

With the anti-racism question going on in the background we have our fingers in a lot of pies and it can make one anxious. Where does the anti-racism steering committee fit

into our structure? Free-floating? Ad-hoc? Permanent? It is hoped as we move forward renewing our mission and vision that broad congregation participation can be realized and that our anti-racism efforts can be incorporated.

Finally, Brian shared that with the illness of Pastor Monica Miller at FMC he and Craig have been helping where they can. FMC requests our prayer and support.

Next Meeting: September 22, 6:00 p.m.