

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Shalom Mennonite Church

November 17, 2021

WORSHIP: Our relationship with God

Chair: Brittany Bither

Last Sunday (11/14), We come to a key turning point in Numbers, when a new generation emerges to continue the journey into the Promised Land. Brian will preach from Numbers 26-27 about the importance of consciously adapting to changes in the community.

This Sunday (11/21), Craig will finish off the Numbers series by looking at Numbers 31 and also John 18:33-37 and moving from fighting for earthly kingdoms to sacrificing for heavenly ones.

Next Sunday (11/28), We begin the Advent season, during which we will be “daring to imagine” the good news of Jesus Christ again. Brian will be preaching from Jeremiah 33 about hope, which is as important as ever during trying times like the ones in which we are living.

COMMUNITY LIFE: Relationships at Shalom

Chair: Herb Troyer

CALENDAR

From Sept. 19 to Nov. 28, at 9:30, Wilma Bailey is leading us in a study of the book of Numbers.

Sat, November 20, from 9 am-noon, Fall work day at the church. Fellowship will be serving a lunch outside for our Fall Workday. So come and work up a hunger!

Sun, December 5, Congregational Budget Approval Meeting on Zoom after worship. During the Sunday School Hour (9:30) congregation discussion about safely gathering

Celebrations

Thur, Nov 18 – Charles Harms

Sat, Nov 20 – John & Lois Amstutz, 1965

Wed, Nov 24 – Jay Brubaker

Wed, Nov 24 – Angie Buller

Opportunity to Team-Teach Sunday School: What is team teaching? It means working with two teachers for each classroom so that each teacher can benefit from schedule flexibility and extra creativity. We have some great teachers ready to re-start Children and Youth Sunday School when we return to in-person worship and they have all expressed their interest in the benefits of team teaching.

Tentative class break-down:

- PreK (3 students)
- Layla, Calvin, Leo
- K-2nd (5 students)
- Liam, Lexie, Mia, Sydney, Melanie

- JYF/MYF (probably 4-5 students)
- Jacob, Phoenix, Gabby, Caleb, Jason

Since we'll be using the indoor classrooms, we request that all teachers be vaccinated against Covid-19. Due to the challenges of getting 2-yr-olds to wear masks, we are not planning for a classroom setting for them at this point. There is no set date for the start of Sunday School yet.

I'll be reaching out with requests for help with team teaching but it would also be great if you reached out to me! harms.laura@gmail.com or 317-572-0017.

DISCIPLING: Growing in our relationships

Chair: Martha Yoder

Last spring we had a Sunday school class on Dismantling Institutional Racism in Congregations, using an online curriculum from Widerstand Consulting. You should have received an email in March inviting you to participate in Niche Academy, which provided the structure for our participation. If you would like to review any of that material, or if you would like to see their material on how to do a congregational audit, your username is your email address and your old password should still work. If you have lost your password, you can click on "forgot password" to create a new one. If you need help, email Martha Yoder Maust at yodermaust@gmail.com and I can send you a new invitation. We have access to this material until the end of February.

Mennonite Central Committee is providing a free webinar on "the complicity of the Church in racism and how all can journey as a witness and transformative presence with God's beloved inclusive global community." You can register for the December 2 webinar and view recordings of 3 precious webinars at https://mcc.org/color-compromise-honest-look-racism-church?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Great_Lakes_In_Touch_November_2021&utm_content=Great_Lakes_In_Touch_November_2021+CID_263624a36ff3d5d9defa9dbd211e902c&utm_source=CM&utm_term=Learn%20more
<https://mcc.org/color-compromise-honest-look-racism-church?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Great_Lakes_In_Touch_November_2021&utm_content=Great_Lakes_In_Touch_November_2021+CID_263624a36ff3d5d9defa9dbd211e902c&utm_source=CM&utm_term=Learn%20more>

OUTREACH: Relationships beyond Shalom

Chair: Zenebe Abebe

The Eastside Creation Care Network met by Zoom at 9-11:00AM on Saturday, November 13, for the regular bi-monthly meeting. Twelve persons from six congregations participated, including Mike Wigginton and Brad Yoder from Shalom.

Hoosier Interfaith Power and Light (HIPL) organized a campaign for support of a bill to be introduced in the 2022 Indiana General assembly called "Confront the Climate". On Friday, November 12, 13 diverse faith leaders at the Statehouse presented to Governor Holcomb signatures from 866 groups and individuals in support of taking action to protect the environment and reduce harm from climate warming. Among groups that Shalom supports who are signatories supporting climate action by the General Assembly are: Mennonite Central Committee, Great Lakes: Mennonite Creation Care Network, Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Everence, Faith in Indiana, and HIPL. It is encouraging to see the breadth and depth of this support.

Congregations reported on other activities they are involved in. Mike reported that Shalom is continuing to work on resources for tree-planting in our church neighborhood. Also that we continue to address invasive species on our property, to try to get them under control.

Laudato Si Action Platform is a seven-year plan within the global Roman Catholic Church to seriously deal with climate change. It acknowledges and focuses on the fact that the climate crisis disproportionately affects low-income people of the Earth, and also all nonhuman living creatures. Our Lady of Lourdes Parish is actively leading this program among the 123 parishes in the Indianapolis area, but every parish's 'path' will be somewhat unique.

The State of Indiana has gotten a "Thriving Schools" grant of \$225,000. to promote gardens as part of the curriculum at public schools. The purpose is to educate children and youth about connection with the land, the growth process of plants and animals, and to raise awareness about food production close to home.

Nancy Boettner from Northview Church of the Brethren did a presentation on the values and the process of composting.

The next ECCN bi-monthly meeting will be hosted by Shalom on Saturday, March 12, 2022.

Brad Yoder

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM

Chair: Joyce Troyer

SGDT is grateful for all who serve Shalom! At this time, the official positions for the church year are filled, but volunteers are always needed and appreciated. Although the pandemic limits what we can do in person, the work of the church continues. If you are interested in an area of service, please contact Joyce Troyer (troyers_hj@hotmail.com), Frank Kandel (kandel93@gmail.com), or Raphael Edou (raphaedou@gmail.com).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Safely Gathering Committee was created by the Commission Chairs in 2020. We want to have an open conversation with the congregation to explain how we have been making decisions and talk about challenges going forward. This conversation is scheduled for 9:30 AM on December 5.

Here are some of the resources that we have been using:

1. Local data from <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/2393.htm>
2. County cases per 100,000 population per day from <https://globalepidemics.org/key-metrics-for-covid-suppression/>
3. Centers for Disease Control individual advice at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/prevent-getting-sick/index.html> as well as (months ago) some pages on community organizations that were taken down when the Delta variant became prominent.
4. Advice for churches at <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2021/january-web-only/church-reopening-vaccine-coronavirus-covid-advice.html>
5. Resources from The Hymn Society, especially an updated document prepared by church leadership of several denominations in June 2021 at <https://thehymnsociety.org/covid-19/> (scroll down a few lines to find the updated one), especially pages 8 and 9.
6. Specifically about singing, a resource from Sing! The Center for Congregational Song <https://congregational song.org/covid-congregational-song-update-may-18-2021/>
7. Various studies of singing and masks, including <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02786826.2020.1812502>

As of 11/16, Marion County is at 26.3 cases/100,000 population/day.

Martha, for Safely Gathering Committee

AID

Last year, Shalom voted to adopt a Memorandum of Understanding with an organization called Indiana AID (Assistants to Immigrants in Detention), which is a volunteer group created to support immigrants in the state of Indiana who are detained at the Clay County jail. Up to this point, Indiana AID has not been able to reach the immigrants detained there because Clay County ended all in-person visitation for health reasons. However, we recently learned that we can connect with the immigrants detained there through a virtual visitation program, and so several volunteers with Indiana AID have spent the last several weeks training and preparing to start visiting immigrants through that program.

We are very grateful for the opportunity to meet with people virtually, but there is a downside as well: every virtual visit costs \$13, and since we hope to set up weekly visitation with several immigrants at once, those costs (as well as potential others) add up quickly. The Coordinating Committee decided that we need at least \$1000 to get this program started, and we thought we would begin by asking if anyone from Shalom would be willing to donate. You can do this by sending a check to Shalom Mennonite Church and writing "Indiana AID" in the Memo Line (all proceeds will go into the account) or by going on our website, clicking the "Giving" tab, and following the instructions that allow you to direct online donations to Indiana AID. Thank you for your support of this ministry.

Deacons

The deacon program, which was formed last year in the wake of the pandemic, consists of seven deacons who maintain caring relationships with every adult who regularly or semi-regularly attends Shalom (except for those who have asked to be exempted). Eventually, Shalom will have a congregational discussion to determine whether we want to adopt this program as a permanent part of our church structure, but for now, as the pandemic continues to disrupt our church life, the VAT has decided to renew it at least until the spring. Because there have been some changes in both the number of deacons and the membership of the church, some people who were previously assigned to the care of one deacon have been transferred to another. Each Shalom attendee who did not opt out of the program should expect contact from your deacon sometime in the next month either to introduce themselves to you or reaffirm the relationship. If you have questions about who your deacon is or want to opt out of the program, you can email Brian at brian@shalommennonite.com.

First Friends Meeting, 3030 Kessler Boulevard East Drive, is looking into sponsoring an Afghan family through

Exodus Refugee Immigration

2457 E. Washington Street, Suite A
Indianapolis, IN 46201

The person heading it up reached out to me to ask if Shalom would like to contribute in any way, monetary, home-furnishings, being more involved with the family. If you have any interest in being involved or would like more info let me know, the sooner the better. Becky Wigginton, (317) 297-8679

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Delight your loved ones and share God's love with our global neighbors this Christmas. Choose from unique gifts such as goats, clean water, fruit trees, books and many more. Give at mcc.org/delight or call 888.563.4676.

Advent Devotional

Mennonite Church USA is once again offering its **free Advent at Home devotional**. Written by Talashia Keim Yoder, pastor of Christian Formation at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana, the 2021 guide follows the theme of Leader magazine and is appropriate for all ages. Download your copy here. <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/adventathome>

In addition to our podcast, Shalom now 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!

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 or bixlersc@gmail.com.

Craig Oury is now compiling *Journeying Together* each week. You can continue to send information to office@shalommennonite.com by 5 pm on Wednesday. Craig is now 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.

Journeying Together is a weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church: 6100 E 32nd St, 46226; (317) 549-0577 shalommennonite.com

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

Vision & Accountability Team: Cheryl Martin, Carol Bixler, CoraLyn Turentine, Frank Kandel, Mark Stocksdale
Brian Bither
