

Journeying Together

Shalom Mennonite Church June 24, 2020

WORSHIP: Our relationship with God
Chair: Linda Showalter

Last Sunday (6/21), we spent some time dwelling on the story of enslavement at the beginning of Exodus, and how the idea that God gives preferential care to the poor and oppressed has shaped the ethics of God's people ever since.

This Sunday (6/28), Frank will preach about Moses reluctantly accepting God's call and, along with Aaron, gathering the Israelites together to lead them out of Egyptian bondage to a place of promise. The journey to the new place was difficult and people grumbled. Likewise, at times we resist leadership, desiring to go back to the way things were. Often it seems easier to stay put than to follow leaders.

Next Sunday (7/5), we will listen to a message from Dan Miller, our Conference pastor, about how to do the work of love in the midst of a pandemic.

COMMUNITY LIFE: Relationships at Shalom
Chair: Herb Troyer

Calendar (*All events are Zoom meetings*)

Sunday, June 28

9:30 am - Bob Love will share about his medical volunteering and reflections on health care

10:30 am – Worship Service on Zoom – Frank Kandel will preach on “The Exodus”

2 pm - Facing the Hard Questions - How should pacifist Christians respond to Biblical celebrations of the death of Israel's enemies?

Sunday, July 5

10:30 am – Worship Service on Zoom

No Facing Hard Questions session

Sunday, July 12

10:30 am – Worship Service on Zoom

2 pm - Facing Hard Questions - How do we determine which aspects of the Mosaic Law still apply to us as Christians and which ones do not?

Celebrations

To help alleviate the isolation felt during the pandemic, we have decided to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries in Journeying Together. If you do not want your birthday to be listed, email office@shalommennonite.com.

Today, June 24 – Leo Maust

Thu, June 25 – Arlene Miller

Fri, June 26 – Cheryl Martin

Fri, June 26 – Katy Maust

Mon, June 29 – Brian & Brittany Bither, 2012

Tue, June 30 – Cheryl & Jim Martin, 1967

For those of us using the phone tree: It has come to our attention that another column of information needs to be added to the posting as a few people mentioned that they were called at inconvenient times. To remedy this, please send an email to Mike Wigginton with this information. Please indicate the best time for someone to call you or if you would like to be texted before the call so that you could respond back when the call would be most appreciated. ~ Herb Troyer for Community Life Commission

Youth Vegetable Stand: Jason and Marcela Rosales will be working at Lawrence Community Gardens again this year. You can buy fresh, organic veggies from 8-12 Monday thru Friday, 10am-2pm on Saturdays. Located at 9240 E. 46th St. You can call the organization at 317-747-1811 or text Marcela at 317-238-9422 to ask what they have on hand.

DISCIPLING: Growing in our relationships
Chair: Martha Yoder

“Story of the Bible” Assigned Reading

Throughout our “Story of the Bible” sermon series, we will recommend daily readings at home. Next week’s readings are:

Monday: Exodus 19-20, Psalm 119:1-8
Tuesday: Exodus 21-22, Psalm 119:9-16
Wednesday: Exodus 23-24, Psalm 119:17-24
Thursday: Exodus 25-27, Psalm 119:25-32
Friday: Exodus 28-29, Psalm 119:33-40
Saturday: Exodus 30-31, Psalm 119:41-48

OUTREACH: Relationships beyond Shalom
Chair: Brad Yoder

Meserete Kristos College Update

With global pandemic of covid 19 the campus was forced to lock down on March 27 and classes were dismissed. Students went home and those without internet access were given hard copies of course manuscripts for the remaining class materials. 4 Kenyan students remained on campus due to the border closing and completed studies via zoom thru the end of June. Administrators stayed on site to oversee the construction of kitchen/all purpose dining hall which started construction on March 17 with plans of finishing by the end of September. They also oversee income generating farming (growing potatoes, carrots and broccoli for sale this summer), livestock operations, and a new tree nursery for seedling sales prior to the next rainy season.

The Master of Arts in Theology and Global Anabaptism was launched a year ago by AMBS as on-line program with 9 initial students. The next year has 10 potential applicants interested in the program.

College prayer requests are for raising funds for essential equipment and furniture for the new building which estimate costing \$200,00. Also, prayers for the Presidential Search Committee in finding the right person to fill that position.

Join us (virtually) for an MCC Centennial Celebration on July 26. This year marks the 100th anniversary of MCC! It is not the centennial year we anticipated. Still, we invite you to join us (virtually) on Sunday, July 26, at 6:30 p.m. (EDT), as we offer thanks to God and pray for the future of MCC’s ministry of relief, development and peace in the name of Christ. We’ll

be broadcasting live from Prairie Street Mennonite Church in Elkhart, site of an important first meeting in the formation of MCC when representatives of various Mennonite and Mennonite Brethren groups met in July 1920. We had hoped to worship together in person, but we're grateful for the livestream option that will enable more MCC supporters and partners to join us. The livestream will feature a combination of live and pre-recorded speakers and music. Please invite your friends and family by sharing the link: mcc.org/gl-centennial-livestream.

CROP Walk: As Shalom's team caption I just got word about the Crop Walk being held virtually this year! It's on Sunday October 4th! Will let you know how we will walk virtually at a later date. As it will be virtually anyone who wants to participate can do so and register now. Go to this website. <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/indianapolisin>. When you register find Shalom Mennonite Church as our team! And you can start to get donations right away!! I set our goal high as we are 4 months away from the walk! If you have any questions please email me at Juliekins7182@hotmail.com.

Pastor Brian has been involved over the past several months with the development of an organization called **Indiana Assistance to Immigrants in Detention (IAID)**. The organization is committed to addressing the needs of recent immigrants to the United States who end up being detained in facilities in Indiana. IAID is interested in developing a close relationship with Shalom, as they move forward with providing services to recently or currently detained persons. The challenge of the coronavirus has understandably slowed down the work of IAID.

Outreach Commission is in the process of studying a memorandum of understanding that spells out exactly how IAID would like to relate to us at Shalom. We will keep everyone informed as we proceed with this potential collaborative ministry that fits with other activities Shalom has been involved with, serving the rights and needs of recent immigrants. ~ Brad Yoder

ADMINISTRATION: Congregational support systems
Chair: Laura Harms

The commission chairs met on Tuesday June 16 to continue the conversation about when we might start to meet in person again for worship, and how to do that safely.

A subcommittee considered guidelines from the CDC and from an article in Christianity Today written by a pulmonary specialist and epidemiologist, Dr. Daniel Chin <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2020/may-web-only/when-churches-reopen-phase-coronavirus-covid-19-guidelines.html> and presented findings to the commission chairs. We reviewed an air flow study of the sanctuary done by Jim Showalter. We looked at the numbers of deaths from Covid-19 in central Indiana over the past 2 weeks.

We decided not to move forward with meeting in person until the death toll from Covid-19 in central Indiana stays below an average of 5 deaths/day for 3 weeks. (see <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/2393.htm>) Once that happens we will poll the congregation to see how many are ready to meet in person. If we have an adequate number of volunteers to take care of the needed logistics, we will set a date for meeting in person.

Shalom will continue to have virtual worship and adult ed classes through the end of July, as even if the deaths stay low in June it will take us a few weeks to accomplish the needed polling, planning, and preparation of the building. We recognize that people have different levels of risk tolerance and different health risks, so we will plan to have a hybrid

service, with some in the church building and some on Zoom, and our tech staff have the equipment to make that possible.

Here are some of the changes we anticipate for those who worship in the building:

- do NOT come to church if you feel unwell
- hand sanitizer at the door
- put on a mask before you enter the building and wear it until you reach your car
- no handshakes or hugs, greet each other with a wave or a bow
- keep a 6 foot distance from each other, including skipping 2 pews between persons
- best airflow is near the center aisle
- hymnals and Bibles will be removed from the pews
- no paper bulletins
- no singing initially (since singing can send the virus as far as 16 feet) but may hum (with mask), clap, wave
- no nursery or Sunday school in the building, as it is very difficult for young children to distance from each other, and those under 2 cannot safely wear masks. (Children are still welcome!)
- no coffee or food
- limit 2 people in each restroom and try to keep your distance

There are still many details to figure out. Thank you for your patience as we work toward gathering safely. ~ Martha Yoder Maust, for the commission chairs

Announcements

- **Nizeet's host family (the Weavers)** are going to a wedding on August 1 in Kansas, and they are passing through Indianapolis on their way there and back. The six of them are looking for a place to stay on the nights of July 30 and August 2, before and after the wedding. If you would be available to host them on either or both days, please email Nizeet and Chris at deiteraquilar@gmail.com.
- **Cumberland First Baptist Church** is a congregation about 20 minutes east of Shalom with whom we have partnered on several occasions. They run a preschool at their church and are currently looking to hire preschool teachers and teacher assistants for the fall who share their values of love, inclusivity, justice, and stewardship of the Earth. If you are interested in applying for a job with them, you can email Mary Montgomery at cfbcweekdaypreschool@gmail.com.
- 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 [here!](#)
- **Video recordings** of our Zoom worship services are located online with our normal worship service recordings. A link to this location is on the Member's page of our website. – Jim Showalter
- Mike Wigginton is now managing our Zoom calendar and uploading minutes on the church website. If you need to schedule a meeting using the church account or you have minutes for him to upload, you can email him at mlwiggins@sbccglobal.net.
- Send announcements for Journeying Together to office@shalommennonite.com by 5 pm on Wednesday.

Reflections on the Journey

This past Sunday, prior to worship, we had our first of what I hope will be many conversations about racism, and I'm grateful to Jeanne Smucker for guiding us gracefully through the hour. She began by reminding us of our mission statement (reprinted below)* and our commitment to carry it out.

What does it mean for us—a racially diverse congregation—to be “anti-racist”? We watched a video of Ibram X. Kendi, the author of *How to Be an Anti-Racist*, briefly explaining the difference between being “not racist” and being an “anti-racist.” Saying we’re “not racist” is denial of our complicity in racism. It is a neutral term with little meaning. Being “anti-racist” means affirming the full and equal humanity of all people of every race and actively supporting policies to transform oppressive systems that perpetuate racism.

So how do we start talking about racism? How do we stop avoiding it? How do we get past the pain and discomfort of looking intently at how racism affects people we know and love, people we work with, worship with, our neighbors and friends and family members—not to mention the countless folks we don't know personally whose suffering we might prefer not to see or think about?

To have such conversations we also need to be willing to deal with conflict which, as many are aware, Mennonites are notorious for avoiding! We also need the spiritual strength to face our own demons. The second video Jeanne shared (a TED talk from Jay Smooth about how to talk about racism: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFcQKHh72_w) provided a good-humored and compassionate springboard for this and future discussions.

As I see it, at this moment our mission has two facets (at least!): inner work and outer work. We know that changing policies and laws to be more just and fair—while extremely necessary—is never enough to bring lasting change. Having an African-American president did not make our society “post-racial.” Desegregation laws did not end American apartheid. Banning confederate flags from NASCAR didn't mean a noose wouldn't show up in driver Bubba Wallace's garage stall. Myriad police reforms and implicit bias trainings already in place did not stop senseless police violence against Black people.

This list could go on and on. So white people especially need to do whatever we need to do—whether reading, tuning in, listening deeply, training, having the hard conversations—for inward transformation. As we all know, that's not a quick and easy process.

Meanwhile...at the same time... we have outer work to do that we can and must start right now. Given that the injustices we're combating now have existed since the first slaves were forcibly brought to our shores and that the movement in which we now find ourselves is long overdue, there's no time like the present. Being “anti-racist” means doing something about racism. As Ibram Kendi says, “What we do determines who we are.”

There are many things we can do right now. A resource list will soon be posted on the Shalom website which will include not only books, articles, videos, etc. but also concrete ways to take action and become engaged.

God's righteousness and love are powerfully visible and palpable and incarnate among us right here, right now. We are witnessing it, and we are called to be part of it—not just this week, or this month—but to keep at it for the long haul. As Glen Guyton, Executive Director of Mennonite Church USA, says so truthfully: “Systemic racism, government-endorsed violence, and poverty are diseases which, when left unchecked, threaten us all. Our churches are obligated to proclaim Jesus' way of peace. We can no longer be silent, and we must work together.”

Here are just a few things to do for starters:

- Follow Indy 10 Black Lives Matter to keep up with local policy developments, protests, etc: <https://www.facebook.com/Indy10People/>.
- Those of us who live in Marion County can contact the City-County Council to redirect and invest the overabundance of funds currently allocated to police to community needs and dismantling racial injustice (social services, education, health care, etc) : <https://defund12.org/indianapolis>
- Showing Up for Racial Justice <https://www.showingupforracialjustice.org/> and the local chapter IndySURJ: <https://www.facebook.com/SURJIndianapolis/> focuses on engaging white people as allies in anti-racist work.
- Mennonite Church USA has launched the Justice Fund to support MC-USA congregations that are actively involved in dismantling racism, addressing police brutality, reimagining policing or

combating poverty.... The Justice Fund will use donations to provide grants for MC USA congregations that are engaging in their communities to dismantle racism and to build peace. Congregations also may use these funds for seed money to begin working in these areas. Read more about it here: <https://themennonite.org/daily-news/mc-usa-launches-justice-fund/>

Let's not neglect the inner work, though! For that, I offer some inspiration from Sufi poet Rumi:
I said: what about my eyes?
He said: Keep them on the road.

I said: What about my passion?
He said: Keep it burning.

I said: What about my heart?
He said: Tell me what you hold inside it?

I said: Pain and sorrow.
He said: Stay with it. The wound is the place where the Light enters you."

****Shalom Mennonite Church is a diverse faith community, rooted in the Anabaptist Christian tradition, being transformed by God's grace. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we follow Jesus together as we worship God, grow as disciples, support one another, and share God's love, justice, and peace with those around us and the world.***

Sabrina Falls

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

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Please submit information by Wednesday, 5 pm, to office@shalommennonite.com

**ORGANIC
AND
LOCALLY
GROWN**

**YOUTH
VEGETABLE
STAND**

**MONDAY THRU FRIDAY
8:00AM TO 12:00PM**

**LAWRENCE COMMUNITY GARDENS
9240 EAST 46TH STREET**

**WWW.LAWRENCECOMMUNITYGARDENS.ORG
317-747-1811**