



*MARCH: WOMEN'S MONTH AND
IRISH AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH*

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

A weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church

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

MARCH 11, 2026

CALENDAR

- Sat, March 14: Eastside Creation Care Network meeting, 8:30-11:00 (see Outreach)
- Sun March 15: Pizzas For Peace after Sunday School
- Wed, March 18: Wild Church will meet at the Virginia Fairbanks Park (100 acres at Newfields), 10 am (see announcements)
- Sun, April 5: Easter Sunday Breakfast, 8:30 am (see CLC)
- Thu, April 9: Shalom Sisters Lunch, 11:30 (see CLC)
- Sat, April 11: A Spring Walk Down The Peace Path, 4 – 6 pm (see Outreach)
- Sat, October 3, 2026: Annual Retreat @ Jameson Camp (see CLC)

ADMINISTRATION

Mike Wigginton (chair), Andrew Martin, Carl Rhine

COMMUNITY LIFE: RELATIONSHIPS AT SHALOM

Linda Showalter (Chair), Bethany Martin, Beverly Smith
Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

Celebrations! (Wednesday – Wednesday)

Mon, March 16: Jason Rosales Harms

Tue, March 17: Abri Hochstetler

Easter Breakfast April 5th will be at 8:30am. Look for signup sheets on back window. Rolls, bread or breakfast casserole or fruit. Have it ready to set on the tables. ~ Becky



Next Shalom Sisters Lunch, April 9th, will be at Fire by the Monan, 6523 Ferguson Street, Indianapolis (Broad Ripple), 11:30 am.

DISCIPLING: GROWING IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Cheryl Martin (chair), Wilma Bailey, Matt Bauman

Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

Sunday school class for the adults

- “Understanding Zionism” with Brad and Sabrina will be in the fellowship hall downstairs.
- The class using the “Salt and Light” materials with Mike will be at the back of the sanctuary.

OUTREACH: RELATIONSHIPS BEYOND SHALOM

(chair), Becky Wigginton

Pastoral Representative:

Sat, March 14: Eastside Creation Care Network meeting at Cumberland Baptist Church, 116 S. Muessing St., Cumberland, 8:30-11:00. All are welcome. Direct questions to Mike and Becky Wigginton

April 11th, 4-6 pm, A Spring Walk Down The Peace Path

Together with our Neighbors we will be learning and enjoying spring ephemerals in the Shalom Woods and on the Peace Path. All are welcome to participate and help greet our neighbors.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM

Jim Showalter (Chair), Angie Buller

VAT Representative: Andrew Martin

VISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM (VAT)

Nizeet Deiter (Chair), Andrew Martin (Vice-Ch) Sam Bixler, Charity Bauman, Abri Hochstetler

Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

WORSHIP: OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Melissa Walsh Martin (chair), Justin Hochstetler, Jeanne Smucker

Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

On Easter Sunday, April 6, breakfast will be at 8:30 and worship will start at 10:30, no Sunday school.

Last Sunday (3/8) Craig brought the message from Matthew 4.

This Sunday (3/15) Craig will bring the message from 1 Samuel 15: 34-16:7.

Next Sunday (3/22) Craig will bring the message.

This week's Prayer List

- **Church:** Peace Community Church is a Mennonite church in our conference located in Detroit, Michigan.
- **Organization:** Peace Community Church is a Mennonite church in our conference located in Detroit, Michigan.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Since Shalom was such a special community to us, we wanted to let people know that Lila Jo Ludden was born at 8:58a on March 6. ~ Emily & Tim Ludden



Wild Church will meet on the third Wednesday of March, March 18 at 10 a.m. at the Virginia Fairbanks Park (100 acres at Newfields). Enter the park from west 38th street. Turn right after the main entrance to Newfields at the sign for White River Parkway. Halfway around the circle turn right and then left into the new parking lot. Leaves of Spring Beauties, Bloodroot and Hepatica are already pushing through the leaf litter in parks around town. Maybe some will be blooming in a week.

Wild Church will meet every third Wednesday at 10 a.m.

If anyone is interested in attending the Indiana Flower & Patio Show at the State Fairground which runs from March 14-22, Rod has free electronic tickets for the event. Contact him if you would like a set of tickets.



YOUTH VOICES ON YOUTH GUN VIOLENCE

SATURDAY, MARCH 14 | 11:30 A.M.

**BROADWAY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
609 E 29TH ST. INDIANAPOLIS**

The event will feature a screening of *Run, Hide, Fight: Growing Up Under the Gun*, a youth keynote speaker, a youth panel discussion, and small-group table conversations. Lunch will be provided.

Free to the public, but
registration is required.



REGISTER NOW!

Youth Voices on Youth Gun Violence Saturday, March 14, 11:30 a.m.

at Broadway United Methodist Church, 609 E. 29th St, Indy

The event will feature a screening of *Run, Hide, Fight: Growing up Under the Gun*, a youth keynote speaker, a youth panel discussion, and small-group table conversations. Lunch will be provided.

Free to the public, but registration is required. <https://www.instagram.com/p/DVFFwYHDQvY/>

PERSON OF COLOR BIO

March: Irish American Heritage Month



The refugees seeking haven in America were poor and disease-ridden. They threatened to take jobs away from Americans and strain welfare budgets. They practiced an alien religion and pledged allegiance to a foreign leader. They were bringing with them crime. They were accused of being rapists.

These undesirables were Irish.

Fleeing a shipwreck of an island, nearly 2 million refugees from Ireland crossed the Atlantic to the United States in the dismal wake of the Great Hunger. Beginning in 1845, the fortunes of the Irish began to sag along with the withering leaves of the country's potato plants. Beneath the auld sod, festering potatoes bled a putrid red-brown mucus as a virulent pathogen scorched Ireland's staple crop and rendered it inedible.

While the potato blight struck across Europe, no corner of the continent was as dependent on tubers for survival as Ireland, which was mired in extreme poverty as a result of centuries of British rule. Packed with nutrition and easy to grow, potatoes were the only practical crop that could flourish on the minuscule plots doled out by wealthy British Protestant landowners. The Irish consumed 7 million tons of potatoes each year.

More than just the pestilence was responsible for the Great Hunger. A political system ruled by London and an economic system dominated by British absentee landlords were co-conspirators. For centuries, British laws had deprived Ireland's Catholics of their rights to worship, vote, speak their language and own land, horses and guns. Now, with a famine raging, the Irish were denied food. Under armed guard, food convoys continued to export wheat, oats and barley to England while Ireland starved.

Ireland's population was nearly halved by the time the potato blight abated in 1852. While approximately 1 million perished, another 2 million abandoned the land that had abandoned them in the largest single population movement of the 19th century. Most of the exiles—nearly a quarter of the Irish nation—washed up on the shores of the United States.

A flotilla of 5,000 boats transported the pitiable castaways from the wasteland. Most of the refugees boarded minimally converted cargo ships—some had been used in the past to transport slaves from Africa—and the hungry, sick passengers, many of whom spent their last pennies for transit, were treated little better than freight on a 3,000-mile journey that lasted at least four weeks. Each adult was apportioned just 18 inches of bed space—children half that. Nearly a quarter of the 85,000 passengers who sailed to North America aboard the aptly nicknamed “coffin ships” in 1847 never reached their destinations. Their bodies were wrapped in cloths, weighed down with stones and tossed overboard.

Although most certainly tired and poor, the Irish did not arrive in America yearning to breathe free; they merely hungered to eat. Largely destitute, many exiles could progress no farther than within walking distance of the city docks where they disembarked. While some had spent all of their meager savings to pay for passage across the Atlantic, others had their voyages funded by British landlords who found it a cheaper solution to dispatch their tenants to another continent, rather than pay for their charity at home.

And in the opinion of many Americans, those British landlords were not sending their best people. These people were not like the industrious, Protestant Scotch-Irish immigrants who came to America in large numbers during the colonial era, fought in the Continental Army and tamed the frontier. These people were not only poor, unskilled refugees huddled in rickety tenements. Even worse, they were Catholic.

Anti-Catholic, anti-Irish mobs in Philadelphia destroyed houses and torched churches in the deadly Bible Riots of 1844. New York Archbishop John Hughes responded by building a wall of his own around Old St. Patrick's Cathedral in order to protect it from the native-born population, and he stationed musket-wielding members of the Ancient Order of Hibernians to guard the city's churches. Wild conspiracy theories took root that women were held against their will in Catholic convents and that priests systematically raped nuns and then strangled any children born as a result of their union.

The Irish filled the most menial and dangerous jobs, often at low pay. They cut canals. They dug trenches for water and sewer pipes. They laid rail lines. They cleaned houses. They slaved in textile mills. They worked as stevedores, stable workers and blacksmiths. Not only did working-class Americans see the cheaper laborers taking their jobs, some of the Irish refugees even took up arms against their new homeland during the Mexican American War. Drawn in part by higher wages and a common faith with the Mexicans, some members of the St. Patrick's Battalion had deserted the U.S. Army after encountering ill-treatment by their bigoted commanders and fought with the enemy.

The discrimination faced by the famine refugees was not subtle or insidious. It was right there in black and white, in newspaper classified advertisements that blared “No Irish Need Apply.”

In 1849, a clandestine fraternal society of native-born Protestant men called the Order of the Star Spangled Banner formed in New York. Bound by sacred oaths and secret passwords, its members wanted a return to the America they once knew, a land of “Temperance, Liberty and Protestantism.” Similar secret societies with menacing names like the Black Snakes and Rough and Readies sprouted across the country. Within a few years, these societies coalesced around the anti-Catholic, anti-immigrant American Party, whose members were called the “Know-Nothings” because they claimed to “know nothing” when questioned about their politics. Party members vowed to elect only native-born citizens—but only if they weren’t Roman Catholic. “Know-Nothings believed that Protestantism defined American society.

Buoyed by the war-cry “Americans must rule America!”, the Know-Nothings elected eight governors, more than 100 congressmen and mayors of cities including Boston, Philadelphia and Chicago in the mid-1850s. They found their greatest success in Massachusetts where in 1854 the American Party captured all state offices, the entire State Senate and all but a handful of seats in the House chamber. According to Dolan, once in power in Massachusetts the Know-Nothings mandated the reading of the King James Bible in public schools, disbanded Irish militia units while confiscating their weapons and deported nearly 300 poor Irish back to Liverpool because they were a drain on the public treasury.

They also barred naturalized citizens from voting unless they had spent 21 years in the United States. Millard Fillmore, the former president most notable for being un-notable, ran on the American Party’s 1856 presidential ticket. Throughout his political career, the 13th president had persistently courted the votes of nativist Yankees fearful of the changes brought by the Great Hunger refugees, and he blamed “foreign Catholics” for his defeat in the 1844 New York gubernatorial election. Although Fillmore finished third behind Democrat James Buchanan and Republican John C. Fremont, who had to swat down rumors that he was both a Catholic and a cannibal, the American Party received more than 20 percent of the popular vote and eight electoral votes.

Abraham Lincoln was among the many Americans disturbed at the rise of the nativist movement as he explained in a 1855 letter: “As a nation, we began by declaring that ‘all men are created equal.’ We now practically read it ‘all men are created equal, except negroes.’ When the Know-Nothings get control, it will read ‘all men are created equal, except negroes and foreigners and Catholics.’ When it comes to this I should prefer emigrating to some country where they make no pretense of loving liberty—to Russia, for instance, where despotism can be taken pure, and without the base alloy of hypocrisy.”

The good news for Lincoln and those Americans with similar views is that the Know-Nothing Party cratered quickly after reaching its high-water mark, although nativism has proven to be stubbornly persistent. The party splintered as the slavery question superseded the immigrant menace with flashpoints such as the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Dred Scott decision and the uprising at Harper’s Ferry steering the country to armed conflict.

Although stereotyped as ignorant bogtrotters loyal only to the pope and ill-suited for democracy, and only recently given political rights by the British in their former home after centuries of denial, the Irish were deeply engaged in the political process in their new home. They voted in higher proportions than other ethnic groups. A generation after the Great Hunger, the Irish controlled powerful political machines in cities across the United States and were moving up the social ladder into the middle class as an influx of immigrants from China and Southern and Eastern Europe took hold in the 1880s and 1890s. “Being from the British Isles, the Irish were now considered acceptable and assimilable to the American way of life,” Dolan writes.

No longer embedded on the lowest rung of American society, the Irish unfortunately, gained acceptance in the mainstream by dishing out the same bigotry toward newcomers that they had experienced. County Cork native and Workingmen's Party leader Denis Kearney, for example, closed his speeches to American laborers with his rhetorical signature: "Whatever happens, the Chinese must go."

Kearney and the other Irish failed to learn the lesson of their own story. Yes, the Irish transformed the United States, just as the United States transformed the Irish. But the worst fears of the nativists were not fulfilled. The refugees from the Great Hunger and the 32 million Americans with predominantly Irish roots today strengthened the United States, not destroyed it. A country that once reviled the Irish now wears green on St. Patrick's Day.

Edited from <https://www.history.com/articles/when-america-despised-the-irish-the-19th-century-refugee-crisis>

Christ with me,
Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
CHRIST IN ME, CHRIST OVER ME.
Christ to right of me,
CHRIST TO LEFT OF ME,
CHRIST IN LYING DOWN, CHRIST IN SITTING.
Christ in rising up, Christ in the heart
of every person who may think of me,
Christ in the mouth of every
person who may speak of me,
CHRIST IN EVERY EYE,
WHICH MAY LOOK ON ME!
CHRIST IN EVERY EAR, WHICH MAY HEAR ME!
catholicALLIANCE.com - st. patrick's breastplate -



Have something to give away? Need something? Skills needed or to share? Tools needed or to share?

ROUTINE INFORMATION

Send email to office@shalommennonite.com for the following:

- **Church calendar** (Grace Rhine)
- **To upload minutes** on the church website. (Carl Rhine)
- **Zoom** (Grace Rhine)
- **Announcements for Journeying Together**, by 5 pm on Wednesday (Linda Showalter)

- **New/update church directory, email address list, or telephone numbers**, managed by Sam Bixler (bixlersc@gmail.com)
- **Building Usage:** 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 the church office so your item can be added to the calendar. It's helpful to include the contact person and which parts of the building you expect to use.

“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 [at lindashowalter52@gmail.com](mailto:lindashowalter52@gmail.com) by Friday, 10 am.
- **Bulletins** are now attached with the Zoom link for those who are worshiping 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.

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:
6100 E 32nd St, 46226; (317) 549-0577 office@shalommennonite.com
Pastor: Craig Oury, (301) 302-3181
Vision & Accountability Team: Chair Nizeet Agular Deiter, Vice-Chair Andrew Martin
Congregational Reps: Charity Bauman, Sam Bixler, Abri Hochstetler
Pastoral Rep: Craig Oury