

## **JOURNEYING TOGETHER**

Shalom Mennonite Church

April 21, 2021

### **WORSHIP: Our relationship with God**

Chair: Grace Rhine

**Last Sunday (4/18)** Gemima Trochez brought us into Act VI of the Biblical Story by preaching about the coming of the Holy Spirit, who is the same Spirit is that is with us today.

**This Sunday (4/25)** we will reflect on the most momentous decision made by the young church: to include Gentiles in their fellowship without requiring them to adopt all Jewish customs. This major decision still has implications for us today as we continue to think about how God calls us to relate to our brothers and sisters from other cultures and backgrounds.

**Next Sunday (5/2)** we will discuss another major theme in Acts - the persecution of the church by the powers and principalities of this age - in a sermon preached by Herb Troyer.

### **COMMUNITY LIFE: Relationships at Shalom**

Chair: Herb Troyer

**Calendar** *(All events are Zoom meetings)*

#### **Sunday, April 25 - May 30**

Adult Sunday school, "Dismantling Institutional Racism in Congregations"-Wilma Bailey, Frank Kandel

#### **Sunday, April 25**

2 pm - FHQ: What do we make of the discrepancy between the New Testament description of healing miracles - which the apostles performed frequently - and relative absence of healing miracles today?

#### **Sunday, May 2**

2 pm - FHQ: How should we respond to Biblical passages that seem to tolerate - if not defend - the institution of slavery?

#### **Sunday, May 16**

2 pm - FHQ: In light of all of the false prophecies regarding the end of the world, how are we supposed to read and interpret the book of Revelation?

#### **Sunday, May 30**

2 pm - FHQ: Can we still believe in the imminent return of Christ and the final judgment when two thousand years have passed and it has not happened yet?

### **Celebrations**

**April 23** Tania Goodloe

**April 26** Mike Wigginton

### **DISCIPLING: Growing in our relationships**

Chair: Martha Yoder

**"Story of the Bible" Assigned Reading** - During our "Story of the Bible" sermon series, recommended daily readings at home for next week:

**Monday** - Acts 21-22, Hebrews 9-10, Proverbs 6:6-11, 21:15-17

**Tuesday** - Acts 23-24, Hebrews 11, Proverbs 16:9, 25:15

**Wednesday** - Acts 25, Hebrews 12-13, Proverbs 13:1, 15:15, 29:15-17

**Thursday** - Acts 26, 1 Peter 1, Proverbs 13:2-3, 11; 16:16-17

**Friday** - Acts 27, 1 Peter 2-3, Proverbs 14:29, 16:32, 27:14-16

**Saturday** - Acts 28, 1 Peter 4-5, Proverbs 10:12, 13:4, 22:13

### **OUTREACH: Relationships beyond Shalom**

Chair: Brad Yoder

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

As mentioned during announcements last Sunday, we encourage you to contact our two US Senators from Indiana about several bills in Congress related to social justice issues. You can call Senator Mike Braun at 202-224-4814 or 317-822-8240 or write by going to his website. Senator Todd Young can be called at 202-224-5623 or 317-226-6700 or email him through his website. Thank you for considering these issues. **Brad Yoder**

**1) HR 1280** - George Floyd Justice in Policing Act of 2021- this bill addresses several policing practices and law enforcement accountability. It creates a framework to prevent and remedy racial profiling by law enforcement at the federal, state, and local levels. Limits the use of force by the police, and, it creates a National Police Misconduct Registry, to prevent rehiring of police guilty who are guilty of misconduct.

**2) HR 8** - Bipartisan Background Checks Act of 2021- requires background checks for nearly all gun purchases, except a few kinds of private transfers.

**3) HR 1620** - Violence Against Women Act Reauthorization of 2021- reauthorizes the law to prevent violence against women through 2026. Prohibits a person involved in domestic violence from possessing a gun.

**Thursday, April 22, "Earth Day"** at 12 Noon, Interfaith Power and Light (of which our group Hoosier IPL is a part) invites us to join with people of faith everywhere in prayer with the Climate Blessing below. **Sabrina**

We Hold the Earth

We hold brothers and sisters who suffer from storms and droughts intensified by climate change.

We hold all species that suffer.

We hold world leaders delegated to make decisions for life.

We pray that the web of life may be mended through courageous actions to limit carbon emissions.

We pray for right actions for adaptation and mitigation to help our already suffering earth community.

We pray that love and wisdom might inspire my actions and our actions as communities...

...so that we may, with integrity, look into the eyes of brothers and sisters and all beings and truthfully say,

...we are doing our part to care for them and the future of the children.

May love transform us and our world with new steps toward life.

When God calls someone to leadership, a journey begins. Perhaps you are on that journey. Perhaps you are looking for mentors and companions along the way. Indiana-Michigan Conference invites you to join Journey: A Missional Leadership Development Program. This program is for lay leaders, pastors, church planters, and other emerging leaders who are called without specific training for ministry or who are exploring a call to ministry. The early registration deadline to apply for fall 2021 is July 13 with the final registration deadline on August 10. For more information visit [www.ambs.edu/journey](http://www.ambs.edu/journey), contact your pastor, or Dan Miller at [dan@im.mennonite.net](mailto:dan@im.mennonite.net) or at 574-534-4006.

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](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEn30AED17Q_ReoskuxUXA)

**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.

**Please note:**

Mike Wigginton manages Zoom scheduling, church calendar, and uploads minutes to the church website. To schedule a meeting using the church account or if you have minutes to post, email [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) or [mlwiggin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mlwiggin@sbcglobal.net).

Sam Bixler manages our church directory, email address list, and telephone number list. Email changes or additions to [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) or [bixlersc@gmail.com](mailto:bixlersc@gmail.com).

Send announcements for Journeying Together to [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) by 5PM Wednesday.

### **RELECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY**

**The Derek Chauvin Verdict** - Yesterday was a historic day in the United States. Although there have been dozens of high profile cases in the past few years in which police officers killed unarmed African Americans – sometimes while being filmed and in broad daylight – this is the first of those cases that resulted in a criminal conviction. So how should followers of Jesus respond to such an event? Do we celebrate the news that a criminal will be incarcerated? That doesn't seem quite right. Do we stoically carry on, continuing to work for justice without acknowledging this judicial victory? That doesn't seem right either. How should we as a community address all of the feelings that this case has triggered in our members – from traumatic memories to profound relief to lingering anxiety and beyond?

Let's start by acknowledging that each person feels how we feel, and that's ok. Feelings are not intrinsically good or bad – they are one of the ways in which our bodies communicate with us. Furthermore, the way that we feel is impacted significantly by our social position and experiences. This verdict has a different impact on a black person who has experienced discrimination by the police than it does on the mother of a white police officer (both of which we have in our congregation, by the way). Generally speaking, the best response to strong feelings is to listen to them and to try to make sense of them in light of our Scriptures and values.

For some of us, the overwhelming feeling is a positive one: joy or hope or, perhaps, relief. This is appropriate, but how we channel those positive feelings matters. It is not healthy for us to bask in the suffering of Derek Chauvin. As evil as it was for him to kneel on Floyd's neck for more than nine minutes, he is still a child of God, and we should still pray for his wellbeing. (In his case, that doesn't necessarily mean praying for a minimal jail sentence, but we should at least pray that God will help him come to terms with what he has done so that he can repent and be saved.) However, the reality is that this verdict has a much bigger meaning than its implications for Chauvin himself, and some of its broader meanings do merit celebration.

For example, this trial represents an important victory of truth in the public consciousness. There have been two conflicting narratives about police interactions with African-Americans in this country for a long time: one that says that police violence is required and justifiable, and another that says that black people are unjustly targeted and harmed by the police. Both of those narratives were on full display in this court case, as the defense took the standard position that Chauvin was acting in line with his police training while the prosecution argued that Chauvin's actions were cruel, unreasonable, and out of line. For many black Americans, it has been exasperatingly difficult to have their experience even acknowledged by society, let alone validated through a strong legal response. So, the fact that the police-training narrative was rejected in favor of the injustice narrative in a court of a law is an important milestone rightfully inspires hope and relief.

At the same time, it can also inspire anxiety. The question is: why did the criminal justice system acknowledge the wrong committed against George Floyd when it has failed to do so in so many other cases? Was it because all of the protests and reforms in the past few years have led to changes in the law, in police training, and in the way that juries interpret such events? One would hope so. Or is it just because this was an extraordinary circumstance in which a police killed a victim slowly – rather than shooting them, as is common in most police killings – and because the whole thing was captured on film? It's hard to say which of these it is. In other words, this guilty verdict doesn't guarantee future justice, and there is even potential that it can be used against those who call for reform to "prove" that

the system is just. For some of us, who may be feeling anxious or who are reluctant to be hopeful, this may be why. And that is also legitimate, but we can still take solace that there was justice in this particular verdict as we continue pressing on for reform.

Finally, I want to acknowledge that there is a whole range of emotions that people feel in response to this case that don't immediately make sense to them, such as anger or racial resentment or fear for personal safety or shame. We can't unpack these feelings in a newsletter reflection, but we can acknowledge that even as we celebrate this victory for truth and reform, it is a bittersweet and painful kind of celebration. It is not the kind of celebrating you do when you get a new car, but more like the kind you do when you learn that someone is going to survive a car accident. (And of course, George Floyd's family doesn't even have the joy of survival to celebrate.) All this to say – let us endeavor to be patient and nonjudgmental as we process this together, recognizing that we come to this news from different places, but we are bound together by the Spirit of peace and are committed to seeking out truth and justice as taught and modeled by Christ. ~ **Brian**

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

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