

## **JOURNEYING TOGETHER**

Shalom Mennonite Church

November 10, 2021

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

Chair: Brittany Bither

**Last Sunday (11/7)**, Craig look at the story of Balak and Balaam as we continued the series on Numbers.

**This 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.

**Next Sunday (11/21)**, Craig will finish off the Numbers series by looking at the final chapters.

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

Chair: Herb Troyer

### **CALENDAR**

**From Sept. 19 to Nov. 21**, 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.

### **Celebrations**

Mon, Nov 15 – Josh Martin

Wed, Nov 17 – Justin Hochstetler

**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-2<sup>nd</sup> (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](mailto: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](mailto: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)  
<[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

### **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](mailto:troyers_hj@hotmail.com)), Frank Kandel ([kandel93@gmail.com](mailto:kandel93@gmail.com)), or Raphael Edou ([raphaedou@gmail.com](mailto:raphaedou@gmail.com)).

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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

## **Eastside Creation Care meeting.**

The last bimonthly meeting of the year is this Saturday from 9 to 11. We will meet by zoom. See attachment for details.

## **MCC Thanks**

Shalom Mennonite Church

Greetings in the name of Christ. Thank you for your donation to Mennonite Central Committee which will be used to help those who are suffering around the world.

Item(s): bags of Hygiene Kits

This Christmas choose gifts that give comfort and joy to those who need it most. A gift of hope changes lives in so many ways.

Give the gift of hospitality to migrants and refugees (\$30.00) or invest in women by providing a sewing machine (\$150.00) for start-up businesses. Perhaps you can provide blankets, clothing, and other infant items. A gift of \$15.00 will give mother and babies around the world hope, as well as practical help.

This Christmas season, MCC invites you to participate and choose a gift from one of the MCC Christmas giving projects.

❖ Choose from projects online at [mcc.org/christmas#!](https://mcc.org/christmas#!) or request a printed booklet by calling 888-563-4676.

❖ Send a colorable card with a gift of books, chicks, or goats. Parents can download a card for children to color to give to friends and family. Or grandparents can choose a gift for a child and give them the card to color.

❖ Request a free, downloadable resource that helps families to talk with children about generosity and MCC Christmas giving. The resource includes printable pages with activities, a story, a craft to make and gift ideas at [mcc.org/free-resource-learning-about-generosity-mcc](https://mcc.org/free-resource-learning-about-generosity-mcc)

## **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!](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.

**PLEASE NOTE: You can only watch the first 60 minutes of a recording while online at this site.** However you can watch the **entire recording if you download it** onto your computer/tablet and then watch it from the downloaded MP4 file. Be aware that these files are 300MB - 1200MB in size. First click on the recording and then the download (direct download) function is at the top right. When finished watching, delete that downloaded MP4 file from your computer/tablet so you gain back that space. -Jim

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](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) or [bixlersc@gmail.com](mailto:bixlersc@gmail.com).

Craig Oury is now compiling *Journeying Together* each week. You can continue to send information to [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto: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](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) or [craig@shalommennonite.com](mailto:craig@shalommennonite.com).

## REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY

### *The Zeal of Phinehas*

Because we are working our way through the book of Numbers, I want to take this opportunity to highlight a passage that Christians rarely discuss or even notice in modern times but which was one of the most important passages in the debate about how Jews ought to serve God in the first century: Numbers 25. In this chapter, the Israelite men were provoking God's anger by engaging in sexual relations with Moabite and Midianite women. According to the language of Numbers, this "yoked them" together with these pagan peoples, whose worship of other gods contaminated them, and therefore God wanted the offending men to be stoned. If you are like me, you may be troubled by this story, in which God yet again issues the death penalty against people, but you can at least understand it at some level, when we consider the contaminating nature of sin and how it was perceived as such a threat to the entire Israelite community, especially in the wilderness.

But there is another part of this story that is worth highlighting here. At one point, while Moses and the Israelite leaders were trying to atone for this violation of God's commands for the Israelites, one individual shows blatant disregard for the atonement process by bringing a Midianite woman into his camp to sleep with her *while the ceremony is underway*. This is the kind of thing that has enraged God in the past, leading to threats that God would wipe out the entire community. But a Levite named Phinehas – who was the grandson of Aaron – immediately took up arms and killed the couple before God even had a chance to do anything. Here is how God describes that act a few verses later:

"Phinehas son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, the priest, has turned my anger away from the Israelites. Since he was as **zealous** for my honor among them as I am, I did not put an end to them in my **zeal**... he was **zealous** for the honor of his God and made atonement for the Israelites." – Numbers 25:11-13 (emphasis added)

In Jesus' day, there were different sects of Jews who had different beliefs about how they ought to deal with their Roman overlords. The Sadducees believed the best option was to partner with the Romans and make the best out of a hard situation. The Pharisees were less fond of the Romans but thought they should focus on following a strict code of religious piety to win God's favor back in the hopes that God would then intervene in their situation.

The **Zealots**, by contrast, pointed to this passage as evidence that God wanted them to take matters into their own hands and fight the Romans themselves.

Jesus did not fully embrace the position of any of these groups, but he did embrace aspects of each of them. With regard to the Zealots, he clearly diverged from their position by denouncing all forms of violence, insisting that killing our enemies cannot bring peace. However, Jesus *does* seem to agree that there are times when God's people should not just sit on the sidelines and pray over misfortunate circumstances but should take action themselves. We see this especially with the cleansing of the temple, when Jesus was so troubled by the injustice there that he started driving out profiteers and overturning tables. His disciples later understood these actions as a fulfillment of the prophecy, "Zeal for your house will consume me." (John 2:17)

I do not believe that God calls us to violently take matters into our own hands, but I do think that there is still a lesson to be learned here: sometimes, God stirs our hearts in such a way that we ought to take bold action. When done ethically, this kind of zeal is not necessarily impulsiveness but a call from God. ~ Brian

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

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