

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Shalom Mennonite Church

June 16, 2021

WORSHIP: Our relationship with God

Chair: Grace Rhine

Last Sunday (6/13) we had our first hybrid service, with some Shalom members meeting in-person and others continuing to worship on Zoom. Let's pray for God's blessing as we enter this new chapter together!

This Sunday (6/20) Brad Yoder will deliver the message.

Next Sunday (6/27), Brian will be preaching on the parable of the Lost Sheep and the challenging implications that this has for us as a church community.

COMMUNITY LIFE: Relationships at Shalom

Chair: Herb Troyer

CALENDAR

Sunday, June 20

10:30 am - Hybrid Worship service.

Monday, June 21

9 am – 3 pm - Roving Office at McDonald's, 9851 E. Washington St, Indianapolis, IN

Monday, June 28

9 am – 3 pm - Roving Office at Fishers Panera, 8510 E 96th St, Fishers, IN

Monday, July 26

9 am to 3 pm - Roving Office at Panera Bread, 789 U.S. Highway 31 N, Greenwood, IN

Celebrations

Thu, Jun 17 – Bethany & Joshua Martin, 2006

Fri, Jun 18 – Jeanne Smucker & Brad Yoder, 2016

Fri, Jun 18 – Dirk Wilson

Sun, Jun 20 – Carol & Sam Bixler, 1981

Mon, Jun 21 – Jacob Martin

DISCIPLING: Growing in our relationships

Chair: Martha Yoder

Children's Church: Are you willing to provide care to Shalom children during in-person services this summer?

For Children's Church, we have developed the following guidelines:

- * Children ages 2-8 will be dismissed after Children's Story
- * One adult volunteer and one youth volunteer will provide a short program and/or supervise play time
- * Children's Church will be an outdoor activity when possible. Fellowship Hall will be used when being outdoors is not possible.
- * Children and adults should be prepared to wear masks. Indoors this will be required. Outdoors everyone will either need to keep a mask on or stay 6 feet from others.

We have volunteers for all June dates. THANK YOU! Please contact Laura if you'd like to volunteer for a date in July or August. harms.laura@gmail.com

OUTREACH: Relationships beyond Shalom

Chair: Brad Yoder

Last Thursday Robert Coleman and Frank Kandel delivered a van load of food pantry items from Shalom to Morning Star Church in Muncie. We had the opportunity to interact with Pastor Gladys Maina and church members Cheri and Ron Willis. The Food Pantry outreach is going strong and they appreciate Shalom's ongoing support. Thank you!

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM

Chair: Joyce Troyer

The Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team is pleased to announce that Zenebe Abebe has agreed to serve as Chair of the Outreach Commission. He has been a member for four years along with Marilyn Teel and the current Chair Brad Yoder. Brad is leaving the Chair position but will continue to serve as a member. Please communicate your affirmations or other thoughts to Joyce Troyer at troyers_hj@hotmail.com or 317-446-4353 by June 23.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear people of Shalom,

I am pleased to invite you to attend a "Salon of Music and Theatre," an event hosted by my sister, Sharon Sigal, a professional performing artist who lives in Philadelphia, PA. In past years, she has held intimate salons of music and theatre in private homes. This year, because of the pandemic, she has planned a virtual salon to take place on Saturday, June 26th, 7:30 pm, and has graciously invited me to play the harp as part of the program. Below you will find the details about the event as well as how to attend, if you are interested. I would love for you to come and enjoy the harp as well as all the other music and humor as well! Hope to see you there! (Additional information is attached.)

Sabrina

Mennonite Church USA is proposing changes to their bylaws, for which there will be a vote at the biannual convention that meets July 6-10. As a member of MCUSA, our church is impacted to some degree by these changes, and so you all are welcome to review them [here](#) and offer any feedback you have either directly to MCUSA leaders or through our delegate.

- 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_ReooskuxUXA!
- **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.
- Mike Wigginton manages our Zoom calendar, church calendar, and uploads 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 the office at office@shalommennonite.com or mlwiggin@sbcglobal.net.
- 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.
- Send announcements for *Journeying Together* to office@shalommennonite.com by 5 pm on Wednesday.

REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY

Critical Race Theory

Until the past few weeks, the term "critical race theory" was neither familiar nor controversial to most people. Although it sounds elitist and complicated, it really isn't. It is a way of understanding racism which argues that many of our society's institutions (such as our laws, our schools, and our media outlets) were created by white supremacists specifically to benefit white people, and that this still has a harmful effect on people of

color today – even if most white people aren't aware of it. To my knowledge, we haven't used the term "critical race theory" at Shalom, but we have certainly drawn from it. In fact, our last Sunday school class on "Dismantling Racism" was rooted in critical race theory. There's nothing secretive or sinister about this because we draw from theories all of the time without explicitly stating their names. For example, I generally make the assumption in my sermons that human beings have free will, but I don't think I have ever talked about "Arminianism" on a Sunday morning, even though that is the formal name of the theory behind it.

I've been really saddened to see this term become politicized over the past few months because I have found critical race theory to be very helpful in my own understanding of racism. When I was growing up, neither I nor any of the white people whom I knew *wanted* to discriminate against people of color. We believed and stated that people of all races should be treated equally, and therefore, I concluded that racism had essentially been defeated. However, my deeper interactions with people of color led me to see that they still faced discrimination, and critical race theory helped me understand how that could be true. Critical race theory teaches that the racism of the past still impacts people today because most of our social institutions were set up at a time when the majority of white people were unapologetically racist. To me, this makes a lot of sense, and it actually makes it less threatening to study racism because it acknowledges that I am not personally responsible for it while maintaining that I have a responsibility to do something about it.

Unfortunately, now that the term has been politicized, people who identify as conservative will likely be suspicious of material that has been influenced by critical race theory. This includes the "Dismantling Racism" material that we studied at our church, which was recommended to us by Indiana Michigan Mennonite Conference. I wonder, will this eventually become controversial among Mennonites, as it has with Baptists? If so, how can we continue to do the work of dismantling racism without making it partisan?

I don't have a solution to this, but I believe that last week's Scripture applies here too: "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up." This is not to say that we should abandon critical race theory because it is too academic or intellectual. Knowledge is a good thing! But when we are engaging with people who disagree with us about how we should approach racism, we should resist the urge to debate or defend abstract theories and instead highlight the role that love plays in what we do. Ultimately, the reason that I want to dismantle racism is because I love my sisters and brothers of color, and I see that racism harms them. Furthermore, I have come to believe that racism harms white people as well, and because I also love white people, I am even more motivated to dismantle it. When we frame it like this, even people who disagree about the theory are less likely to take offense at the work of dismantling racism. So let us endeavor to stay anchored to love as much as possible, especially in the face of controversy.

~Brian

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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