

Journeying Together

Shalom Mennonite Church

February 21, 2019

WORSHIP

Our relationship with God

Last Sunday, February 17:

Wilma Bailey delivered the sermon. In recognition of Black History Month, the sermon examined bias and stereotyping in a Biblical story and what we might learn from it. Biblical text: Genesis 12:10-20.

This Sunday, February 24:

We will be discussing a major feature of Jesus' ministry: casting out evil spirits. This is pretty foreign to many Western Christians, which often leads to debates about whether or not demons "really" exist. Although that conversation has some value, most people don't realize that the "demons" the Bible describes have a deep connection to what we would call "systemic evils" or "institutional forces" in the twenty-first century. We'll be exploring these issues in some depth as we engage Luke 8:26-39.

Next Sunday, March 3: We will talk about how Jesus *himself* is instrumental in bringing about Jubilee as he reveals that he is the Messiah in Luke 9:18-27.

World Day of Prayer:

Each year, on the first Friday of March, there are celebrations of the World Day of Prayer. Shalom is part of the area that is being hosted at St. Lawrence Catholic Church (46th and Shadeland) at 10am on March 1. In the foyer, there is a listing of other Indianapolis host churches. This year's program was written by the women of Slovenia.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Relationships at Shalom

Calendar

Sun. 9:30am Worship
11:00 am Sunday School

Feb 25 – No Roving Office hours

Feb 26 – Family Promise at First Menno

Feb 27 – Morning Breakfast Group 7am

March 3 – Carry-In meal after Sunday School

March 4 – "Roving Office" 10:30am to 3:30pm;
Pastor Brian will be available for walk-in chats at Del Liva coffee shop in Fishers (8220 E 106th St, Suite 200, Indianapolis)

March 7 – Meal, 6:30pm; Bible Study 7-8

March 9 – Eastside Creation Care; 8:30am

March 11 – "Roving Office" 10:30am to 3:30pm - Panera on the northwest side of Indy (6050 W 86th St, Indianapolis)

March 13 – Morning Breakfast Group, 7am

March 18 – "Roving Office" 10:30am to 3:30pm - McDonald's on the southeast side of Indy (7822 Brookville Rd, Indianapolis)

March 24 – Guess Who's Coming for Dinner

March 25 - No Roving Office Hours

March 27 – Morning Breakfast Group, 7am

April 21 – Easter Breakfast 8am

Barbara is retiring!

Barbara Longoria has faithfully served as the Shalom custodian for more than 10 years. We are grateful for her dedication to keeping our space clean and inviting. Thank you Barbara!

Pastoral Team Search Committee:

PTSC has compiled the responses from the 20 Tasks survey and found that our top priorities have remained the same from last year. We have contacted Earlham and Christian Theological Seminary, placed advertisements in The Mennonite World Review and continue to be in contact with IN-MI conference in our search for a new pastoral team member. Survey results are attached.

Guess Who's Coming to Dinner:

Looking for something to do on a Sunday evening? How about something with a little bit

of mystery? If so, please sign up for our annual Guess Who's Coming to Dinner event. Dinner will be March 24, 2019 at 6:00pm. Sign-up sheets are in your mailbox. Please complete and return to Angie Buller by Sunday, March 10.

OUTREACH

Relationships beyond Shalom

Family Promise (IHN)

FMC is hosting another round of Family Promise. Shalom is assisting by hosting Family Promise on Tuesday, Feb 26. You have the opportunity to serve, please sign up to help.

Giving Corner:

Thank you for all the blankets that are being sent to Mennonite Central Committee and Wheeler Mission. In March, the emphasis will be on pasta for Second Helpings. This is in addition to the regular food pantry items for Morning Star, Muncie.

Hoosiers Concerned about Gun Violence:

On Saturday, March 2, at 12 noon, on the west side of the State House, Student March for Our Lives in Indiana will be holding a rally against gun violence, and for increased gun safety in Indiana. Hoosiers Concerned about Gun Violence is supporting this student-led rally, and invites all of you to participate.

Faith in Indiana (FI):

One of the local outreach organizations that Shalom supports is Faith in Indiana. Formerly called IndyCAN, Faith in Indiana is an ecumenical catalyst for people of good will to act collectively for racial and economic justice. In partnership with over 60 congregations, organizations, and the 17 largest denominations in Indiana, FI activates people through our deeply rooted shared values and stories of our people. Some concrete goals of Faith in Indiana for 2019 include:

1) expanding voter registration and holding candidate forums for municipal elections throughout Indiana in 2019, 2) working with Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett and Metropolitan Police Chief Bryan Roach to

reduce violent crime in Indianapolis, and 3) oppose President Trump's emergency declaration to build a southern border wall.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC):

MCC is a worldwide ministry of Anabaptist churches with about 1000 employees serving around the globe. MCC operates in more than 57 countries collaborating with 508 partners in ministries of relief, development, and peace building. In the U.S., the organization is divided into four regions: East Coast, Central States, Great Lakes and West Coast. Each region is incorporated with its own board and executive director. The Great Lakes region is made up of seven states.

In 2020, MCC will be celebrating 100 years of relief, development, and peace around the globe.

Zenebe Abebe, Shalom Rep

In 2018, Shalom contributed 9 blankets, 7 comforters, 27 hygiene kits, 19 infant care kits, 271 school kits, and 12 boxes of additional supplies. In 2018, MCC shipped 63,841 comforters and blankets, 69,375 hygiene kits, 78,035 school kits, 24,530 relief kits, 10,396 infant care kits, and 560 sewing kits, plus canned meat, soap, sheets, and fabric. Shalom is part of a great effort to help to make the human family more comfortable and healthy!

Mennonite Central Committee recently sent a thank you letter to Shalom:

"We are grateful for your generous support of the work of Mennonite Central Committee, as we provide hope, healing and comfort around the world in the name of Christ. Thank you, friends and supporters at Shalom Mennonite for the ways you contribute to the work of MCC We were also blessed by your financial support of \$5,500 in 2018. Keep us in your prayers, as we collaborate ...[to share] God's love and compassion through relief, development and peace in the name of Christ. To reach about specific partners and projects, please visit mcc.org. With sincere thanks, Les Gustafson-Zook, MCC Great Lakes"

Climate Camp:

Youth have the opportunity to attend Climate Camp on Sat., March 23, a program of Earth Charter Indiana and held at Downey Christian Church. Registration information attached.

ADMINISTRATION

Congregational support systems

Administrative email:

Please email office@shalommennonite.com with

- Commission minutes
- Calendar updates
- Requests to reserve the facilities for outside events
- Announcements (deadline Thurs at noon)

Custodial Services for Shalom:

The task of cleaning the church facilities will be transferred to a team of volunteers from Iglesia Amigos upon Barbara's retirement on March 1. Barbara and Laura have and will continue to work with Karla Moran to ensure a smooth transition. You are welcome to make suggestions via the office email if you notice anything amiss.

Photographs:

If you have a knack with a lens, we would love to have a continuous supply of new photos highlighting our church (people, programs, facilities). Please send photos to the office email so our website can be updated. *Photos of people will not be posted publicly until a permission process has been completed with all people depicted.

Minutes:

Administration Commission minutes are updated on the website.

Milepost #669 Proclaiming in Parable?

During our sermon series on the gospel of Luke, we have seen that Jesus understood the *proclamation of Jubilee* to be a central part of his earthly ministry. Shortly after he began this ministry in Nazareth, he said, "I must proclaim the good news of the kingdom of God to other cities also, for I was sent for *this*

purpose." (Luke 4:43, emphasis added) That being said, if proclaiming the new order of things was a core part of his mission, then it seems odd that Jesus spoke in parables. After all, parables are intentionally unclear. When asked to explain a particular parable, Jesus once said, "To you it has been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others I speak in parables, so that 'looking they may not perceive, and listening they may not understand.'" (Luke 8:9-10) Now that doesn't make any sense at all. Why wouldn't Jesus want everyone to perceive and understand the mysteries of the kingdom of God? If he was sent to proclaim the good news, shouldn't he have done so in the clearest way possible?

One of the insights that Jesus had, which comes up in his teachings again and again, is that truth has to be *sought* in order to be *appreciated*. When I was a teenager, I remember that adult speakers would occasionally talk about this or that habit that you should try to develop early in your life so that you can extend your life into your 80s or maybe even your 90s. But all of these lessons went in one of my ears and out the other, because that seemed like an incomprehensibly long time from the present moment and I wasn't really ready to think about what it would be like to be old. On the other hand, now that I am in my 30s, I am beginning to experience the reality of aging, and I realize that it's only going to have a stronger and stronger impact on me as I get older. So now, when I hear an eighty or ninety-year old talk about some habit they developed that has made a big difference in their life, I pay attention!

When you hear a parable for the first time, it takes some effort to understand what it means, and this makes it a perfect form of speech for Jesus' purposes. Yes, Jesus came to proclaim the good news, but he didn't come to shove the good news down anyone's throat or to offer it as a cheap solution to those who weren't willing to put any effort into it. A large crowd of people might come to hear Jesus speak, but only those who took his words really seriously would still be discussing the parables days or weeks later, trying to discern what they mean.

Now this may be one area in which we cannot directly imitate Jesus. Few of us are clever enough to come up with parables off the top of our heads that explain the points we want to make. Nevertheless, we follow general principle of not “throwing our pearls before swine” in our daily conversations by assessing whether our conversation partners are genuinely interested in coming to a better understanding of truth. This simple assessment should guide us as we discern when and how to share God’s truths with a world that needs to hear them.

Do you have some thoughts to share about this month's spiritual discipline? The Pastoral Team invites you to share your thoughts as one of the weekly milepost entries. Please email Sabrina, Frank, or Brian to explore this further.

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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Vision & Accountability Team: Brad Sommer, Jeanne Smucker, Wilma Bailey, Carl Rhine, Rod Maust, Brian Bither

Please submit information by Thursday, 12pm, to office@shalommennonite.com