

# Journeying Together

Shalom Mennonite Church      May 6, 2020

**WORSHIP:** Our relationship with God  
Chair: Linda Showalter

**Last Sunday, (5/3)** Brian offered an introduction to the "Story of the Bible" sermon series, in which we will study the entire story of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Drawing from the Song of Songs, Brian claimed that what seems to be a miscellaneous collection of religious texts actually contains a divinely inspired story that features three main characters: God, the World, and the Chosen People.

**This Sunday, (5/10)** we will start Act I of our seven-act sermon series - "The Backstory: Creation and the Fall" - by engaging the bold and beautiful poem of Genesis 1, which takes us beyond mere scientific assertions and describes the world as orderly, purposeful, and good. This sets the stage for the entire story of the Bible, by reminding us that God has always loved the universe She created.

**Next Sunday, (5/17)** we will reflect on the tragic divide between God and creation, which is narrated in Genesis 3-11 and which has come to be known as "the Fall" by Christian theologians.

**COMMUNITY LIFE:** Relationships at Shalom  
Chair: Herb Troyer

## **Calendar**

*(All events are Zoom meetings)*

### **Sunday, May 10**

9:30a – 1 & 2 Kings SS class

10:30a – Worship Service on Zoom

2p – Facing the Hard Questions: Can we really believe the description of creation in Gen 1 & 2?

### **Sunday, May 17**

9:30a – 1 & 2 Kings SS class

10:30a – Worship Service on Zoom

2p – Facing the Hard Questions: Can we reconcile Genesis 1-3 with the theory of evolution?

### **Sunday, May 24**

9:30a – 1 & 2 Kings SS class

10:30a – Worship Service on Zoom

*No Facing the Hard questions session*

## **Celebrations**

*To help alleviate the isolation felt during the pandemic, we have decided to celebrate birthdays and anniversaries in Journeying Together. If you do not want your birthday to be listed, email [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com).*

Mon, May 11 – Eirene Brubaker

Tue, May 12 – Dagne Assefa

### **Hernandez/Trochez fund for June and beyond:**

Thank you to those who responded to our call for the Hernandez/Trochez fund. We are in good shape for June.

An evaluation was conducted with the family and it is not surprising that their needs for financial support are ongoing. So far no change to Gemina's court date has been communicated. That means she expects to have her hearing in August and may at that time apply for work authorization but not before. We expect financial need to continue and recommend continuing to seek support funds. It is a blessing to see the response each month to this need. Contact Laura Harms with questions. [harms.laura@gmail.com](mailto:harms.laura@gmail.com)

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

Chair: Martha Yoder

### **"Story of the Bible" Assigned Reading**

Throughout our "Story of the Bible" sermon series, we will recommend daily readings at home. Next week's readings are:

Monday: Genesis 3-4, Psalm 6

Tuesday: Genesis 5-6, Psalm 14

Wednesday: Psalm 69, Genesis 7-9, Psalm 53

Thursday: Proverbs 8:1-21, Genesis 10-11, Proverbs 1:20-33

Friday: Job 1, Psalm 26, 28

Saturday: Job 2-3, Psalm 13

### **Facing the Hard Questions sermon discussion**

As a corollary to our "Story of the Bible" sermon series, Brian will host a sermon discussion class at 2p on Sundays through [this link](#) that will wrestle with the critical questions about the Bible in light of modern insights into science, history, and ethics. These sessions may be recorded and posted on the internet.

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

Chair: Brad Yoder

### **Mennonite Disaster Service (MDS)** by Jim & Linda Showalter

It was 8:30 am New Year's Day 2020 when we pulled out of our driveway with the travel trailer and headed down the new I-69 on our 3-day trip to south Texas near Corpus Christi. Arriving at the campground where the MDS RV group was set up, we met friends from last years' service and got introduced to the new folks. We were a group of 6 couples. Sunday morning, we all went to a local church (Baptist this week) then to lunch together.

Monday morning at 6 am we made coffee, ate breakfast, packed our lunches and then met together in the office trailer at 7:30 for a time of devotions, sharing, prayer, and getting instructions for the work for the day. Then it was off to the house we are building, unlock the tool trailer, get the needed tools and get some work done! A typical day might include hanging dry wall, or laying flooring, installing kitchen cabinets, and a lot of painting.

Our group consisted of retired folks with a variety of skills and experience in construction tasks. The new houses were framed and enclosed for weather by other groups, and then our group did the interior work to complete it. Mid-afternoon we packed up the tools, cleaned up and returned to the campground to rest! We had Friday to Sunday to rest and enjoy other things.

Then in mid-March we were told to shut down and return home due to the coronavirus. However, we convinced the MDS leadership to allow us one more week so we could complete our house for the well-deserving woman and her son. We returned home at the end of March having created new friendships, experiences, and serving as God's hands and feet during those three months.

### **ADMINISTRATION: Congregational support systems** Chair: Laura Harms

For many years, Shalom has recorded our worship services and uploaded them on our Dropbox page. Because these recordings include songs that are copyrighted, personal sharing that is sensitive in nature, and announcements that divulge detailed information about our comings and goings, we keep these private in our password-protected members section, which makes them difficult to access for those who want to share links to sermons with friends and family. In order to make our sermons more accessible, Shalom has created a podcast [at this link](#), which contains recordings of just the sermons. We encourage you to check out the podcast and share it widely with anyone who may be interested in hearing the Sunday messages.

Although Shalom is still searching for a part-time administrator, we are grateful that two individuals have volunteered to take on some of the administrative work until we find one. Mike Wigginton is now in charge of managing our Zoom account and overseeing the church calendar. If you would like to reserve the Zoom account, please email him at [mlwiggin@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mlwiggin@sbcglobal.net). Linda Showalter is now putting together the newsletter each week, but you can continue to email any newsletter information to [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) by Wednesday at 3 pm. Thanks to Linda and Mike for meeting these needs!"

### **Reflections On Pilgrimage**

One of my morning rituals is to read the daily meditation from Richard Rohr, a Franciscan priest and founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation. Last week the theme was "liminal space." "Liminal" comes from a Latin word which means "threshold," so liminal space refers to a time or stage of transition, or in-betweenness. "Liminal" is a good term for the time and space we are in right now. In one of the meditations, Rohr quotes a friend who wrote, "We may be impatient to pass through [liminal space] quickly with as little distress as possible, even though that is not likely."

This rings true as I have found myself eager for time to pass quickly so I can get to the future and go back to taking my harp into hospital rooms and hugging my grandchildren and mingling with people at a cultural event. By wishing away the present I miss God and the wisdom and beauty and life God is offering me here, now.

The 13<sup>th</sup> century Sufi poet, Rumi, wrote a poem that speaks directly to the "stay at home" orders many of us have struggled with these past weeks. I hope it reminds you – as it does me – to pay attention where you are:

BE MELTING SNOW

Totally conscious, and apropos of nothing, you come to see me.  
Is someone here? I ask.  
*The moon. The full moon is inside your house.*

My friends and I go running out into the street.  
*I'm in here*, comes a voice from the house, but we aren't listening.  
We're looking up at the sky.  
My pet nightingale sobs like a drunk in the garden.  
Ringdoves scatter with small cries, *Where, Where*.  
It's midnight. The whole neighborhood is up and out  
in the street thinking, *The cat burglar has come back*.  
The actual thief is there too, saying out loud,  
*Yes, the cat burglar is somewhere in this crowd*.  
No one pays attention.

*Lo, I am with you always* means when you look for God,  
God is in the look of your eyes,  
in the thought of looking, nearer to you than your self,  
or things that have happened to you  
There's no need to go outside.

Be melting snow.  
Wash yourself of yourself.

A white flower grows in the quietness.  
Let your tongue become that flower.

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P.S. A couple of weeks ago I submitted a poem by Mary Oliver called "The First Time Percy Came Back". Since it appeared with no explanation, it may not have been clear that it was, for me, a reflection on the resurrection (we had just celebrated Easter) and that "Percy" was Oliver's beloved dog. She has written other poems from throughout his life—Percy at age one, age three, age nine, etc.

Submitted by Sabrina Falls

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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Vision & Accountability Team: Jeanne Smucker, Cheryl Martin, Wilma Bailey, Rod Maust, Thad Wilson, Brian Bither

Please submit information by Wednesday, 3pm, to [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com)