

Journeying Together

Shalom Mennonite Church

February 9, 2018

WORSHIP

Our relationship with God

Last Sunday Feb. 4:

We introduced the discipline of confession by looking at its roots in the ancient sacrificial system in Leviticus 4-6. We learned that confession was not designed to "let the truth out" as much as it is designed to "let the truth in," to open ourselves up to moral review and a greater understanding of the truth. This applies to both intentional and unintentional sins, which both called for confession in Leviticus. – Brian Bither

This Sunday Feb. 4:

We continue our study of Leviticus by considering how confession plays a role in the central ritual of atonement for the whole book of Leviticus, found in chapter 16. These concepts were foundational for New Testament thinking about the meaning of Jesus' death, especially in passages such as 1 John 1:9-2:2. When we look carefully at Leviticus, we will discover that the sacrifices did not represent vicarious punishments for God's wrath, but a path to healing, one that involved two elements represented by the two goals: confession (truthfulness) and atonement (reconciliation). – Brian Bither

Next Sunday Feb. 18:

Scriptures: Psalm 32, James 5:13-19

Sermon Title: The Courage to Confess

It takes courage to confess. Whether we're confessing our "sin" or our "faith," it may involve risk. Facing our sin head on might mean plunging into darkness and wondering if we'll ever surface and see light again. Psalm 32 gives us confidence to confess as it describes the healing and peace that come with acknowledging our sin and sharing our truth-- first with ourselves and then with God. James 5:13-19 reminds us also to share our truth with one another, for we are called to a

ministry of prayer for healing and forgiveness. In all of it, we are encouraged to feel safe to confess, because we are held in arms of love and mercy. – Sabrina Falls

Ash Wednesday: This week we will host an Ash Wednesday service here at Shalom Mennonite Church on **Wed., Feb. 14** at 6:30pm. We invite you to come to this joint service, co-lead by First Mennonite Church, to inaugurate the season of Lent.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Relationships at Shalom

Calendar

Sun. 9:30am Worship

11 am Sunday School

Feb. 14: 7am Morning Breakfast Group

6:30pm Ash Wednesday Service

Feb. 15: 6:30pm Meal/Bible Study

Feb. 24: 8:30am Indiana-Michigan Conference

Southern Region Delegate Session

Feb. 28: 7am Morning Breakfast Group

Mar. 1: 6:30pm Meal/Bible Study

Mar. 4: Fellowship Meal

Mar. 18: 5pm Guess Who's Coming to Dinner

Apr. 1: 8:30am Easter breakfast

DISCIPLING

Growing in our relationships

Catholic Economics Class Update:

The Catholic Economics Sunday School class will continue our discussion of labor focusing on a biblical/theological basis for how we grapple with the issues. We will also discuss chapter 8 "Sustainability and Environment."

- Wilma Bailey

Update on Gemina Trochez:

Gemina Trochez, the mother of Melanie, Jackie, and Lorraine, will have an opportunity within the next few weeks to make another appeal before an immigration judge that she should be released from detention while her case continues to be tried in the courts. Her legal team believes that it would help to have members of our congregation write the judge letters of support. Laura Harms has created a template that can be used to provide the basic information. If you are inclined to support their family in this way, please fill out the template or write your own letter, sign it by hand, and put it in Brian's mailbox either this Sunday (2/11) or next Sunday (2/18). (Attached to this Journeying Together email.)

Do you have a favorite verse?

In connection with finding your favorite Bible verse, look for posters in the fellowship hall colored by Melanie, Jackie, and Lorraine Hernandez. Please consider sending your favorite Bible verse to Abri to include in the newsletter by Thursday at noon. Thank you!

OUTREACH

Relationships beyond Shalom

Family Promise Immediate Need:

New blankets and other items are urgently needed at the Family Promise Day Center.

"We are getting low on these supplies:

- New blankets (very urgent)
- Plastic spoons (also very low),
- 3T and 4T pull-ups
- Liquid hand soap (large refill bottles, not dispensers)
- 39-gallon black trash bags (w/ built-in ties)
- Regular laundry detergent (pods are preferred; we won't eat them!)
- Dye-free laundry detergent (for parents with infants, usually labeled "free and clear")
- Dryer sheets
- Coffee, dry creamer, sugar in pourable/sealable container
- Toilet paper (if you'll permit, we humbly request at least as many ply as you have thumbs).

Thank you sincerely for your consideration. We would greatly appreciate any donations (no name brands necessary), especially by Saturday, February 17."

Please drop items off at the Family Promise Day Center Monday-Friday between 7 a.m. and 4 p.m. or Saturday/Sunday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. at [1850 N Arsenal Ave.](#), Indy (near the intersection of 19th St. and Dr. Andrew J. Brown Ave.). Call [317-261-1562](#) for directions if needed.

2018 Spring Clothing Drive:

Friday, March 2 through Sunday, March 18. Family Promise of Greater Indianapolis will be holding a clothing drive to collect gently used clothing in all sizes for children and adults from Indianapolis area congregations.

How it works:

Members of congregations collect gently used clothing and place them in white plastic kitchen trash bags. Members bring bags of clothing to their congregation March 2-18. During the week of March 19, congregation volunteers will deliver the clothing bags to the Family Promise Day Center. Based on the number of bags of donated clothing, Goodwill clothing vouchers are donated to Family Promise for guests to use in selecting clothing from a Goodwill Store.

ADMINISTRATION

Congregational support systems

Delegate Interest?

Coming up on Saturday, Feb. 24, from 9am to 4pm at the Mara Christian Church (415 W. Smith Valley Rd., Greenwood) the Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference will host their winter delegate session. A handful of Shalom members will attend (including pastors Brian and Frank) but we have an open at-large representative. If interested or you'd like to learn more, please email Abri (abri.houser@gmail.com).

Job Opening with Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference:

Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference staff seek to support congregations in their efforts

to engage the world God loves with the message of Jesus Christ.

Applicants for this role must have a belief in Christ's transforming power for all people, an appreciation for the local church as an expression of God's reign, and an understanding of administration as pastoral care for the conference organization. Contact dan@im.mennonite.net or call 574-534-4006 for a job description.

Milepost #327: **Confession**

In my last Milepost, I quoted from The Journal of John Woolman, a colonial American Quaker. During this time of transition at Shalom I have returned to his profoundly personal spiritual autobiography for inspiration and encouragement. As we focus on the spiritual discipline of "Confession" this month, we might consider the practice of journaling as a way to confess. A journal is, by its nature, private. Confession is, by its nature, shared with at least one other person (as well as with God).

Confession may feel intimidating if we are not accustomed to it. Mennonites don't have a "sacrament of reconciliation" as do the Catholics with a priest, nor do we have a corporate ritual of confession, as do Jews on Yom Kippur. If you are having trouble mustering the courage to confess in the presence of a brother or sister in Christ, why not try keeping a journal as a "way in" to confession? It can be beautifully-bound with quality paper, or simply a spiral-bound ruled notebook from Office Depot! Set aside a quiet time and a quiet place, sit down, be comfortable, take some moments to be still, then pick up a good pen and prayerfully start writing. Be open to whatever comes. Feel God's presence with you-- a presence of grace and love. Be kind and loving to yourself as words which may trouble you flow out, because it is all good -- you are with God and sharing your heart with God. This brings God joy (Luke 15:1-7, Luke 15:11-32)!

I wonder if John Woolman knew, or even intended, that his journal would be published, as it was in 1774, two years after his death.

Most of us would be mortified if our journals were published! So go ahead and burn yours someday if you can't bear the possibility of anyone finding it and reading it! Of course, a journal can be so much more than your written confession! So consider journaling as yet another spiritual discipline which you might practice alongside those we are focusing on as a helpful way to be accountable to yourself, to others, and to God.

Woolman writes: "I humbly prayed to the Lord for his help, that I might be delivered from all those vanities which so ensnared me. Thus being brought low, he helped me, and as I learned to bear the cross I felt refreshment to come from his presence..." And, at another time, "I sought deserts and lonely places, and there with tears did confess my sins to God and humbly craved his help. And I may say with reverence, he was near to me in my troubles, and in those times of humiliation opened my ear to discipline. I was now led to look seriously at the means by which I was drawn from the pure truth...I felt the power of Christ prevail over selfish desires..."

May refreshment, peace, and joy follow your tears as you bring your confession!

- Sabrina Falls

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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Please submit information by Thursday, 12pm, to Abri Hochstetler: abri.houser@gmail.com