

## **JOURNEYING TOGETHER**

Shalom Mennonite Church

September 1, 2021

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

Chair: Brittany Bither

**Last Sunday (8/29)**, Sabrina invited us to into the events of the last days of Jesus through the eyes of an 11 year old. We also had communion.

**This Sunday (9/5)**, Brian will preach from the book of Ruth and consider how the Bible identifies and responds to the challenges of xenophobia

**Next Sunday (9/12)**, Brian will preach about the kind of humility that "considers others better than yourselves."

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

Chair: Herb Troyer

### **CALENDAR**

**Sunday, September 5** around 12p (after Zoom church) - Virtual Discussion about Antiracism Audit

**Sunday, September 12** around 12p (after Zoom church) - Virtual Vote on Antiracism Audit

**From Sept. 19 to Nov. 21**, at 9:30, Wilma Bailey will lead us in a study of the book of Numbers.

**Sunday, September 26** at 10:30a (during Zoom church) - Pastor Craig Oury's installation

**Sunday, October 3**, World Communion Sunday

### **Celebrations**

Mon, Sept 6 – Bill & Mary Albrecht, 1959

Tue, Sept 7 – Chuck Dunn

Tue, Sept 7 – Carmen Tackitt

### **Small Groups at Shalom**

Returning to Zoom meetings has been emotionally difficult, but the rise in Covid cases around us requires minimizing contacts. The hard part in all this is staying connected to friends, family members and church members. But there are some solutions.

At Shalom Mennonite Church we have a small groups that help to keep us in contact with each other. There are several that are still meeting, and you are invited to join one of them. The groups each meet at different times and places. Depending on what is happening, some are continuing by Zoom and others meet outside when weather permits or zoom meetings when needed. Being in a small group myself, I find it helps to have more contact with others during these times of Covid.

Another option is for a few people to start a new small group based around a common interest. The group can be time-limited and each group is asked to evaluate if the group is still working for them on a regular basis.

Let a Community Life Commission member know if you are interested in either joining an ongoing small group or in starting a new small group: Herb Troyer ([troyers\\_hj@hotmail.com](mailto:troyers_hj@hotmail.com)), Rose Love ([rhlove@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rhlove@sbcglobal.net)), or Linda Kandel ([linidakandel@gmail.com](mailto:linidakandel@gmail.com)).

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

Chair: Martha Yoder

#### **Dismantling Racism Process**

The Commission Chairs of Shalom Mennonite Church are proposing that Shalom hire Widerstand Consulting to perform an antiracism audit on our church. Widerstand is a nonprofit organization with ties to the Mennonite Church whose curriculum was used in a Sunday school class that was recommended by Indiana Michigan Mennonite Conference and taught here at Shalom. Their mission is to help white institutions become anti-racist, which is also a mission that our congregation adopted last year. One of the tools they offer to facilitate this is an anti-racism audit, which is a deep evaluation of our church culture, history, and policies to determine what racial barriers may be present within our congregation. The cost of this audit is \$5000.

On Sunday, September 5, there will be a discussion after the church service about this proposed audit, which all are invited to attend. Frank Kandel and CoraLyn Turentine will facilitate a discussion that invites questions about why we are pursuing this and solicits congregational feedback. The following Sunday (9/12), there will be a congregational vote after church about whether to move forward with this audit. If you consider Shalom to be your home church, whether you are a newcomer or longtime member, we strongly ask you to consider participating in this discussion and subsequent vote.

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

Chair: Brad Yoder

#### **The Arlington Woods Neighborhood Association Cleanup Day**

The Arlington Woods Neighborhood cleanup day plan has changed slightly.

The **date (September 18, 2021, and the time 9AM - 1 PM.)** remain the same.

However, at this past Monday nights' meeting the association announced that volunteers would be asked to go **to 3315 North Drexel Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46218** to pick up trash, clean gutters, trim shrubs and other cleaning task around this home.

The use of a ladder will be required and therefor anyone willing and interested to volunteer would have to visit the following site...  
<https://arlingtonwoods.voluntreehub.com/> and complete a waiver form before coming to work at the property. If you need more clarification about the waiver, please contact Ms. Talia Shivers at [taliapar@aol.com](mailto:taliapar@aol.com).

Zenebe Abebe, for Outreach Commission.

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#### **Food pantry**

Frank will be attending the semi-annual advisory board meeting of Morning Star Church in Muncie on September 7th and would like to take along a load of food stuffs for their food pantry. Please leave your non-perishable food donations at church or drop them off at Frank's house or call him to pick them up at 309-532-2859.

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## **SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM**

CHAIR: Joyce Troyer

The SGDT requests your affirmation for Jeanne Smucker who has agreed to serve as a member on the Worship Commission. Please email Joyce Troyer with your comments at [troyers\\_hj@hotmail.com](mailto:troyers_hj@hotmail.com) or call/text Joyce at 317-446-4353 as soon as possible, at least by September 15. Jeanne will join Brittany Bither (chair) and Linda Showalter (member).

SGDT is also pleased to announce that Mark Stocksdales has accepted the nomination to be the Vision and Accountability Team Congregational Representative (CR) for a three-year term. The other members of the VAT are Cheryl Martin (chair), Frank Kandel (vice chair), Carol Bixler (CR), and CoraLyn Turentine (CR).

SGDT is grateful for all who serve Shalom! At this time, the official positions for the coming church year that begins September 1 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)).

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## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Renewing the Deacon Program. As we enter yet another round of quarantine and virtual church, the Pastoral Team and VAT have decided to temporarily renew the Deacon Program. The Deacon Program is a system of pastoral care that we adopted in April 2020 in which every regular attendee of the church was assigned to a deacon, who was responsible for keeping in touch with them and acting as a point of spiritual support from the church. Although we had talked about implementing something like this for years, we never formally discussed it as a church, and so we decided to experiment with it at the beginning of the pandemic when the need for pastoral care increased beyond what Brian could handle by himself. Now we have experimented with it for over a year, and we have gotten a wide range of responses, from people who really appreciated it to others who did not find it to be helpful or effective. When the church starts meeting in person, we plan to have a congregational evaluation of the deacon program to decide whether to continue it or not, but until then, the church leadership has decided to renew the program, while making two key changes:

- (1) New deacons - All of our deacons did a wonderful job serving in their roles, but some need to end their service, which means that **we need new members of the congregation to volunteer as deacons**. If you have any interest in serving as a deacon, please contact Brian to learn more.
- (2) Congregational Participation - The make-up of our congregation has changed in the last year, with some folks ceasing to attend Shalom and others joining the church. The Community Life Commission is going to re-evaluate the list of regular attendees, which will be re-distributed among the deacons. However, if you do not want to be contacted by a deacon, please email Brian that you would like **to opt out of the deacon program**, and you will not be assigned one. Of course, you will still be valued as a member of our community.

### Crop Walk

It's that time of year again to think about participating with the Crop Hunger Walk!! Due to COVID the walk will be virtual again in October; the walk is 3 miles. As people sign up we will decide if we want to meet up to walk as a group or individually. You need to register online to walk with Shalom Mennonite church. Ask for your donations to help stop hunger as the donations go to people around the world to stop hunger.

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2021/event/indianapolisin>

Please email me at [Juliekins7182@hotmail.com](mailto:Juliekins7182@hotmail.com) if you have any questions! – Julie Sanders

#### MCC bike ride



This year I am again planning to participate in the annual MCC Bike Michiana tour at Amigo Centre on October 8-10. This year's project is directed to Climate Change Mitigation in Zimbabwe, and I am soliciting your sponsorship as I have in prior years. With last year's cancellation, the worldwide needs are still critical in the face of the pandemic, I invite you to share with those who are less fortunate than us. With the limits of in-person worship, I am asking you to make your contributions by mail.

Checks should be made payable to AMIGO CENTRE and mailed to me, John Amstutz, 1185 N 10th St., Noblesville, IN 46060.

Thank you for your contributions and sponsorship. With your past support, you have helped me to raise close to \$30,000 for mission services of MCC, and I am hoping that this year is the year to exceed that goal. John Amstutz

#### **Solar Panel System Payback Changes?**

Recently, Jefferson Electric (Shalom's solar panel installer) was asked to provide expert testimony for the

**INDIANA DISTRIBUTED ENERGY ALLIANCE**, an advocacy group working to get fair financial compensation for residents and businesses in Indiana whose personal and organizational solar investments are producing an excess amount of energy which is contributing to the utility grid's supply. [More here.](#)

**Note:** The current compensation agreement for our excess power is by net metering which gives us full credit for our excess power during daylight times and then we use these credits whenever we use more power than we are currently generating – like during dark hours.

**AES (formerly IPL) Proposal: Instead of net metering (equivalent crediting) for our excess power, they would pay us for it at about 1/3 of the current price. (don't know when this may occur)**

**Comment:** This could double or triple the payback years for our system (which is currently about 15 years). Our excess power during the light hours would be paid to us at about 1/3 the rate that we pay for our power during the dark hours when we use more than we generate. The current net metering agreement is in effect until 2032 but each power company can leave net metering if their rooftop solar generation power reaches 1.5% of their peak power. This does have the attention of many consumer & environmental groups! - Jim S.

#### **Indiana-Michigan Conference**

Attached is the August prayer memo with requests from our sister congregations in Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference.

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!](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEn30AED17Q_ReooskuxUXA!)

**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 account or you have minutes for him to upload, you can email the office at [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) or at [craig@shalommennonite.com](mailto:craig@shalommennonite.com)

## REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY

### *The Time of Testing*

*"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, **I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.**'" - Matthew 25:34-36 (emphasis added)*

Often times, when we talk about the prophets of the past or the martyrs of the church, I find myself wondering, "What would I do if were in that situation?" Would I stand up to the Nazis if I was a German citizen who saw his Jewish neighbors being arrested and attacked? Would I insist that "Jesus is Lord" if I was asked this question in the Roman colosseum, knowing that this would result in my execution? Would I leave my job, my home, and my identity behind if Jesus showed up at my door and asked me to follow him? The truth is, I don't know what I would do in those situations. because they require far more courage than is demanded of me in my daily life. I hope that I would be faithful to Christ if I experienced a "time of testing" like this, but it would require more than my own courage and will power to do it; I would have to be aided to the Holy Spirit.

That being said, there are other situations where we don't have to speculate about how we would act in a time of testing because we are in it. For example, this very moment is one where our Christian hospitality is being tested. The world is dealing with multiple crises right now, and some of them have come to Indiana. COVID-19 cases continue to spike in our state, and our hospitals are beginning to be overwhelmed. Afghan refugees are being flown into Camp Atterbury (about an hour south of Shalom) and have an overwhelming list of needs. Both of these crises compound the crisis at the border because less refugees are allowed to enter the United States and less resources are being devoted to them. For those of us who have been blessed with an abundance of physical, social, and financial resources, now is the time to determine how serious we are about following the way of Jesus.

Remember, the "goats" in this parable are not people who were cruel to the poor or were openly hostile to helping others. They were people who didn't respond to the needs of those around them. Perhaps they didn't notice the needs. If we don't want to be goats ourselves, we must start by looking at the suffering around us and asking God how we can help. Now I can't tell you exactly what that looks like for you. For some, it may mean putting together care packages and sending them to communities in need; for others, financial giving; for still others, prayer. Whatever we do, let's just not talk about advocating for the poor and oppressed or hold it up as an abstract ideal but actually put our faith into action.

549-0577 [shalommennonite.com](http://shalommennonite.com)

Pastors: Brian Bither, (317)-332-7320; Craig Oury, (301) 302-3181

Vision & Accountability Team: Cheryl Martin, Carol Bixler, CoraLyn Turentine, Frank Kandel,  
Brian Bither, Craig Oury

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