

Journeying Together

Shalom Mennonite Church

March 14, 2019

WORSHIP

Our relationship with God

Last Sunday, March 10

We are in the season of Lent, when Jesus has "set his face on Jerusalem," and he seems to have two different missions: to proclaim Jubilee and to go to Jerusalem, where he will be killed and rise again. To understand what these two missions have to do with each other, we first must understand what Jesus believed his Jubilee movement was up against: a spiritual world that was hostile to it. Luke 10:1-12, 7-20, and 11:14-26.

This Sunday, March 17

We will begin a new section of Luke that examines Jesus' Jubilee principles more carefully, starting with the teaching to "Love your neighbor as yourself" in the parable of the Good Samaritan. Luke 10:25-37

Next Sunday, March 24

Frank will be preaching about Jesus' Jubilee teachings about money and our "worldly" concerns. Luke 12:13-34

COMMUNITY LIFE

Relationships at Shalom

Calendar

Sun. 9:30am Worship

11:00 am Sunday School

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

March 21 – Meal 6:30pm; Bible study 7-8

March 24 – Guess Who's Coming for Dinner

March 25 – No Roving Office Hours

March 27 – Morning Breakfast Group, 7am

April 1 – "Roving Office" 10:30am to 3:30 pm – Panera, 789 US 31 N, Greenwood

April 4 – Meal 6:30pm; Bible Study 7-8

April 8 – "Roving Office" 10:30am to 3:30 pm – Della Leva Esp Bar, 8220 E 106th

April 10 – Morning Breakfast Group, 7am

April 21 – Easter Breakfast 8am

Membership at Shalom

Brad Yoder has requested that his membership be transferred from Manchester Church of the Brethren to Shalom Mennonite Church. The Pastoral Team has affirmed that Brad is a disciple of Jesus Christ and active member of our church and welcomes this membership transfer. If you have any affirmations or reservations about Brad becoming a formal member of our congregation, please email a member of the pastoral team.

Brian's vacation

Pastor Brian will be on vacation from Monday, March 25 to Sunday, March 31. Please direct any pastoral care concerns to Pastors Frank and Sabrina during that time.

VAT – VISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM

Pastoral Sabbatical

As many in the congregation know, Shalom provides for a period of time every few years for our pastors to rest and rejuvenate their spirits as well as provide a time for independent study and reflection. This year, Pastor Brian is eligible to take a sabbatical and he has requested from July 8th until Nov 3, 2019. (This length is consistent with the congregational agreement in place with Pastor Brian).

The VAT has been in conversation with him and the pastoral team and is working on a plan that will allow for many of his duties to be covered during this sabbatical time. As we

work to organize coverage of his responsibilities it will likely be necessary for others to assume some of his normal duties. The pastoral team is willing to support this sabbatical by fulfilling some areas while other responsibilities will likely fall to VAT, commission chairs, and some tasks may be most appropriately covered by others attending Shalom.

The VAT appreciates in advance your consideration and willingness to work in areas that may be new to you...or to use our collective gifts in new and exciting ways during this sabbatical time. We will be communicating more information about the sabbatical plans as they develop.

During this time, let's continue to look for God's leading, love, and guidance for Shalom.
-VAT chair, Brad Sommer

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM

Visitation Team:

In connection with Brian's sabbatical from July 8 to November 3, there is a need for a visitation team to be in place to help the remaining pastoral team members. This visitation team would be for hospital or crisis events that the pastors are unable to attend or for those who need ongoing support for a time. CLC would like to compile a list of those interested in participating on this team. Please contact one of the members if interested Linda Kandel, Rose Love, or Herb Troyer.

Spiritual Gifts Database:

The Spiritual Gifts Discernment Team (SGDT) is excited to announce that Shalom's online database of participants' spiritual gifts has been updated! To date, gifts are listed for 36 individuals, or 42% of the congregation including high schoolers. Goal #2 of our 2017 [Vision Statement](#) called for 85% of the congregation to "have clarity about their passion, spiritual gift, and personal style . . . to serve Christ in or through the congregation by mid 2020."

If you have clarity about your passion, spiritual gifts, and personal style but you are not in the database, it's because the SGDT does not know these things about you. Please send this information to Joyce

Troyer troyers_hj@hotmail.com or put it in the SGDT mailbox at church. Small groups with members who have not yet completed gifts discernment are encouraged to make this a priority. [This link](#) takes you to the questionnaire which can be used for discussion and affirmation in small groups. For guidance on gifts discernment in small groups or if you want to participate in a small group, please contact Herb Troyer troyers_hj@hotmail.com.

Please go to [the SGDT page](#) and click on "The Shalom Spiritual Gifts Database" to view this snapshot of God's gifts to us.

DISCIPLING

Growing in our relationships

Middler's Sunday School

Jason's Parable Poem:

Safe in the flock
Searching for food
Scared and lost
Nothing to do –
Happy!
And safe!
We all rejoice.

OUTREACH

Relationships beyond Shalom

Giving Corner:

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.

AMBS Learning Tour: Encountering Egypt

Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary is sponsoring a learning tour to Egypt titled "Encountering Egypt: Past and Present" which will leave on January 25, 2020 and return on February 8, 2020. The tour will be

led by Old Testament Professor Safwat Marzoik (who is Egyptian) and New Testament Professor Drew Strait. They are estimating the cost to be between \$3,700 and \$4,000. AMBS is asking you to contact Ron Ringenberg at rringenb@ambs.edu by April 5 if you are interested. Expressing interest does not obligate you to take the tour.

MCC Pipeline to Prison Learning Tour

Join MCC Great Lakes for a week-long Pipeline to Prison learning tour on August 4-9. Based in Goshen, IN, the tour will focus on the challenges and complexities of the US criminal justice system and include day trips. Participants will journey from the local community level through the criminal justice system, learning about law enforcement, sentencing, incarceration and re-entry. For more information and registration visit [the webpage](#) or contact Juan Sebastian Pacheco Lozano at JuanPacheco@mcc.org or 574-534-4133.

ADMINISTRATION

Congregational support systems

We are happy to report that the building's drain system has been fixed, the boiler has been replaced, and arrangements have been finalized for weekly cleaning of the facilities.

MILEPOST #672

Either with Jesus or against him

For the past three weeks, we have spent a lot of time in our Sunday services reflecting on demons because they play a major role in Luke's gospel. As I understand it, a demon is the manifestation of a destructive spiritual force that exists within a community or institution, such as militarism, racism, or consumerism. As we think about how we as followers of Jesus can continue the work of driving out the demons of *our* culture, one of the most instructive passages comes from Luke 9:49-50. There, one of Jesus' disciples comes across an exorcist who was casting out demons, but who was doing it in his own way, without getting Jesus' explicit permission to do

so. What did Jesus have to say about this? "Do not stop him, *for whoever is not against you is for you.*"

If we really want to drive out the spiritual forces that plague our communities today, then we need all of the help we can get. I take Jesus' comment here as an encouragement for us to partner with Christians of other denominations and even people of other faiths in the work of uprooting the evils that plague our society. Partnering with others in this work does not imply that we view other traditions and religions as equally true or as equally valid as ours. Instead, it implies that we believe Jesus can work through people who have different beliefs than us, even if they don't fully understand how Jesus is working through them.

That seems like clear advice, but then in Luke 11:23, Jesus makes a very different claim. In another conversation about casting out demons, Jesus says, "*Whoever is not with me is against me.*" Now, I have heard some people point to these two passages contradict each other, but if we follow the logical implications of these two statements carefully, we can see that they are not actually contradictory. It is possible for all of the people who are not against Jesus to be for him *and* for all of the people who are not for him or with him to be against him. These two statements do not contradict each other, but they *do* remove the middle ground. Either you are with Jesus and for Jesus, or you are against him. What does this mean for us? It means that when it comes to spiritual battles, we can't sit on the sidelines. We can't avoid the politics and practices of militarism, racism, and consumerism. If we aren't actively fighting them, then we will end up perpetuating them. As C.S. Lewis once wrote, "With all your innumerable choices, all your life long you are slowly turning this central thing [your life] into a heavenly creature or a hellish creature... Each of us at every moment is progressing to one state or the other." May Jesus give us the strength to join him in his mission to drive evil out of the world.

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