

Journeying Together

Shalom Mennonite Church

April 12, 2018

WORSHIP

Our relationship with God

Last Sunday, April 8:

We began focusing on the spiritual discipline of celebration and the virtue associated with it: joy. By thinking of joy as a "fruit" of the Spirit, we realized that we can't make it appear, but we can cultivate it, by caring for our bodies, minds, and spirits. Celebrating the good things God has done for us is one important aspect of cultivating joy.

This Sunday, April 15:

Frank will deliver the message. As we continue our journey through the seven weeks between Easter and Pentecost, this Sunday we will explore Thomas's reaction to the Risen Christ.

Next week, April 22, Herb will deliver the message.

COMMUNITY LIFE

Relationships at Shalom

Bible Found:

A NIV Bible was found at Shalom. If it's yours or you know who it belongs to and would like to retrieve it, please contact Brian at brian@shalommennonite.com.

Rachel Love Wedding Invite:

Dear Shalom family,

Thank you for all your love and support during my growing up years at Shalom! You nurtured my faith in so many ways and I have been blessed by your teaching and example.

Mike Johnson and I plan to be married on June 16, 2018 at 4:00 p.m. at Common Ground Christian Church, [4550 N. Illinois St.](#), where we attend. Seating at our reception is limited, but we would love to have you

celebrate with us at the wedding ceremony at Common Ground.

With much love, Rachel Love

Calendar

Sun. 9:30am Worship

11 am Sunday School

Apr. 19: 6:30pm Meal/Bible Study

Apr. 25: 7am Morning Breakfast Group

Apr. 29: 6:30pm 5th Sunday Hymn Sing

May 3: 6:30pm Meal/Bible Study

May 9: 7am Morning Breakfast Group

DISCIPLING

Growing in our relationships

Spiritual Gifts Discernment 101:

If you haven't been involved in spiritual gifts discernment in a small group, please consider joining the adult education class for this purpose April 22 – May 20. The main requirement is for consistent attendance (at least 4 out of the 5 Sundays) and commitment to spend some time beyond the Sunday school hour related to the class. Although most of the "work" will be completed during class, time for preparation, reflection, and "make-up" if a Sunday is missed will be needed. Joyce Troyer
troyers_hj@hotmail.com

Sunday school schedule:

- April 15--child safety training
- April 22-May 20 there will be two adult classes;
 1. Jay will lead an academic study of Psalms, complete with homework. This is your opportunity to put into practice the discipline of study.
 2. Joyce Troyer will lead a gifts discernment class. If you are not already in a small group that has been

focusing on gifts discernment, this is a good opportunity to learn more about your own gifts.

- May 27--Memorial Day weekend, no SS

OUTREACH

Relationships beyond Shalom

Womens Brunch: Celebrating and sharing about the women in our lives

You are invited to a women's brunch on Saturday, May 12. This will be a time to celebrate and share stories about the women in our lives, including mothers, grandmothers, and mentors. We invite you to wear or bring something that was given to you by one of your female role models.

John Swartzentruber and company will provide the meal with gluten-free, dairy-free, and vegan options to accommodate all.

Women can RSVP to Marie Harnish via text at 317-650-6388 or email

MarieHarnishCreations@gmail.com.

Feel free to bring mothers, daughters, friends, and mentors. (Invite attached.)

ADMINISTRATION

Congregational support systems

Wondering how our late spring is impacting Shalom woods? Very well and very interesting! The golden trout lilies (its speckled green leaves resemble trout) that carpet the woodland floor have emerged with a carpet of leaves—astounding. There will be white and yellow blossoms soon. Many trillium are up, and the little cutleaf toothworts (similar to spring beauties) are starting to bloom. Buds are ready and willing to come out of their dormancy. The most interesting shrub on the peace path right now is a spicebush which blooms before the leaves come out, and provides food for the spicebush swallowtail butterfly. The bark smells spicy. You can find it slightly to the right of the playground.

Needs for the Shalom outdoor campus? Volunteers are needed to organize a mulch party. Shrubs are needed by the back

entrance. Cutting honeysuckle and weeding is an ongoing issue. Please indicate your willingness to help in this ministry. - Ruth Penner

VISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM

Pastoral Team Search Committee Update:

The Pastoral Team Search Committee has begun looking at applications for the second pastoral position. Please join us in praying for wisdom during the discernment process. Also, if you are interested in the position or if you have names to suggest (from inside or outside the congregation), please contact Dan Miller at dan@im.mennonite.net. The conference is willing to contact potential applicants to gauge their interest.

- Carol Bixler, Linda Kandel, Kristen Metzler-Wilson, Brad Sommer (chair), & Herb Troyer

Milepost #390: **Celebration: An Emotional Discipline?**

As we study the spiritual discipline of celebration this month, we are guided by passages such as 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 that tell us to "rejoice" or "give thanks."

At first glance, it seems as if those verses are commanding us to have a certain emotional reactions to life events. Does this mean that we have an obligation to feel joyful or grateful, even in the face of difficult circumstances?

As I mentioned in my sermon last week, joy is the goal of the spiritual discipline of celebration, and joy does have an "emotional" component to it in the sense that joy entails tranquility, satisfaction with life, and eagerness to do the will of God. But as I also stated in the sermon, you cannot compel joy. You can't make yourself experience it, and so it makes no sense to read these instructions as commandments to feel joyful or grateful. Therefore, the spiritual discipline of celebration is not about how we feel but rather what we do. We celebrate God's faithfulness and providence regardless of how we feel about it, and we leave our emotional response in the hands of God.

This is important for us to remember because we often act as though feelings are something that we can command ourselves or others to do, and that can produce inappropriate guilt and shame. For example, some of us may come to church on Sunday morning wanting to worship God, but we didn't connect with the service emotionally that week, and as a result, we feel guilty for not having worshipped. Don't feel bad! If you were faithful in your worship, if you celebrated with your mouth and your body – in sincerity – what God has done, you practiced the discipline of celebration. And that's all that can be asked of you.

Or to cite a different kind of example, people often expect to have big emotions during major life events such as weddings or funerals (which are appropriately called "celebrations of life"), and then they think something is wrong when those emotions don't show up with the intensity they expected. I generally remind people in those situations that the heart is unpredictable and you can't control when or how it reacts, but you can honor the significance of the moment of a wedding or funeral by celebrating the occasion with your words, commitments, and actions.

As emotional beings, it is appropriate for us to seek emotional health and to honor our emotions, but we must remember that we can't directly control them. So whether we feel like it or not, let us practice the discipline of celebration and leave our emotional response to it in the hands of God.

- Brian Bither

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.

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

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

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