

## **JOURNEYING TOGETHER**

Shalom Mennonite Church

March 31, 2021

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

Chair: Grace Rhine

**Last Sunday (3/28)** we celebrated Palm Sunday, which marks one of the most important events in Jesus' life: his arrival in the temple. There, he confronted the corrupt religious and economic forces of his day and laid claim to being the Jewish Messiah.

**This Sunday (4/4) is Easter!** Join us at 10:30a on Zoom as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and the new life been made available through him. Communion will be offered during this service, so we invite you to prepare by bringing some bread and juice from which you can partake at home.

**Next Sunday (4/11)** we will receive the Great Commission and remember the ascension of Jesus, which brings Act V (Messiah) of the Story of the Bible to a close.

**Calendar** *(All events are Zoom meetings)*

#### **Friday, April 2**

- 7 pm – Good Friday service via Zoom

#### **Sunday, April 4**

- Sunday is Easter! Join us at 10:30 on Zoom as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus and the new life that has been made available through him. Communion will be offered during this service, so we invite you to prepare by bringing some bread & juice from which you can partake at home.

#### **Sunday, April 11**

2 pm - FHQ: Does Jesus' great commission ask Christians to convince the peoples of the world to leave their own beliefs, practices, and cultural traditions?

#### **Sunday, April 25**

2 pm - FHQ: What do we make of the discrepancy between the New Testament description of healing miracles - which the apostles performed frequently - and relative absence of healing miracles today?

#### **Sunday, May 2**

2 pm - FHQ: How should we respond to Biblical passages that seem to tolerate - if not defend - the institution of slavery?

#### **Sunday, May 16**

2 pm - FHQ: In light of all of the false prophecies regarding the end of the world, how are we supposed to read and interpret the book of Revelation?

#### **Sunday, May 30**

2 pm - FHQ: Can we still believe in the imminent return of Christ and the final judgment when two thousand years have passed and it has not happened yet?

#### **Celebrations**

Thursday April 1 - Becky Wigginton

Monday April 5 - Herb Troyer

Wednesday April 7 - Ruth Penner

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

Chair: Martha Yoder

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

"Story of the Bible" sermon series recommended daily readings at home. Next week's readings are:

**Monday** - Psalm 30, Matthew 28, 2 Corinthians 1-2

**Tuesday** - Mark 16, 2 Corinthians 3-5, Proverbs 12:28, 13:9-10

**Wednesday** - John 20, 2 Corinthians 6-7, Proverbs 19:11, 22:3-5, 28:11-13

**Thursday** - John 21, 2 Corinthians 8-9, Proverbs 11:24-28, 21:25-26, 30:7-9

**Friday** - Luke 24:1-35, 2 Corinthians 10-11, Proverbs 10:13-14, 15:14, 17:16

**Saturday** - Luke 24:36-53, 2 Corinthians 12-13, Proverbs 10:31-32, 15:5-7, 20:19-20

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

Chair: Brad Yoder

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The "Safely Gathering" committee met March 31. We had been watching the local case numbers going down over the past two months, and were hopeful that we would soon be able to start in-person gathering, but over the last ten days cases have started rising again. Michigan and northern Indiana are "hot spots" and it seems likely that cases will surge again in central Indiana as well. Following the guidance of Dr. Daniel Chin in his article in Christianity Today, we recommend that Shalom continue to meet via Zoom until local cases reach the level of no more than 6 cases/100,000 residents/day for at least 2 weeks. He advises that we use the local case load rather than the number of vaccinated persons in the congregation as our reference point. <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2021/january-web-only/church-reopening-vaccine-coronavirus-covid-advice.html>

It is encouraging to know that at least 39 people in our congregation are fully vaccinated, with at least another half dozen partially vaccinated. We did consider the option of having only vaccinated people meet together at Shalom, with others following on Zoom, but our committee felt that it would be better to wait until all of us are welcome to participate in person. It is considered safe for a few fully vaccinated people (at least 2 weeks after their last dose) to get together in person, so small groups may consider starting to meet in person if they have all been vaccinated, and vaccinated persons may visit each other. We will continue to monitor the case reports and keep you posted. **Linda Kandel, Jeanne Smucker, and Martha Yoder Maust**

Starting April 11 and continuing through the end of May, Wilma Bailey and Frank Kandel will lead us in a study called "Dismantling Institutional Racism in Congregations." Our intent is not to point fingers or assign blame but to help us understand how racism affects us all, including our congregation. We will be using materials from Widerstand Consulting. Each of you will receive an email in the next few days giving you access to the online materials; you may click on the link and create your own password. The video called "Dismantling Institutional Racism in Congregations" is divided into a number of segments with opportunity for reflection after each section, and occasional short quizzes. You may work through the material at your own speed. It allows you to go back and review but does not allow you to skip ahead. Our hope is that most of the congregation will be able to work through these materials in preparation for our Sunday sessions. Please do the "Introduction" and "Welcome" sections in preparation for April 11 and the "Developing a Common Vocabulary: Race, Bias, and Privilege" section for April 18. If you do not have time to work through the study materials now, you will still have access until February 2022, and we think it will be worthwhile for you to do that. You are certainly still invited to join the Sunday Adult Ed sessions. If you have technical problems, or if you do not receive your invitation email by Sunday April 4, please contact **Martha Yoder Maust**, [yodermaust@gmail.com](mailto:yodermaust@gmail.com) or 317-225-7071.

Shalom started a college fund about 20 years ago to support students attending Mennonite colleges. Somehow the original version was lost. Working from old minutes & drafts, Discipling Commission has created an updated version which also clarifies some of the questions that had arisen since the original fund was created. We are re-naming the fund, Mennonite Education Fund, because it will cover some non-college programs. Journey program (a joint program of Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference and Anabaptist Mennonite Biblical Seminary) was paid for in the past from Pastor-Elder Team funds, and we propose it be rolled into this fund. Please review the attached document and send comments & questions to **Martha Yoder Maust**, <mailto:myodermaust@gmail.com> by April 15.

Support Asian American Hoosiers - The Indiana chapter of the National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum (NAPAWF) has launched a rapid response campaign to speak out against the spike in anti-Asian violence across Indiana and the nation. If you are so inclined, please sign this petition so your name will be presented alongside fellow Hoosiers in solidarity with Indiana's Asian American communities. <https://www.napawf.org/indiana-anti-racism> **Becky Wigginton**

Opportunity to volunteer Habitat for Humanity: Wednesday, April 28 Build and Raise Walls, 7 volunteers, 7:45 a.m. – 2:30 p.m. Lunch provided. Downtown near Crown Hill (Exact address provided upon registration) First Mennonite Volunteer Registration: <http://vhub.at/FMChurch>. Please follow the link to register build date to reserve your spot. Upon successful sign up you should receive a confirmation email containing pertinent information regarding the build day. You will also receive a reminder email closer to the date. COVID precautions are listed on the site and in the confirmation emails, they can also be viewed here. If you have any questions please contact **Randy Stoesz** at [stoeszmd@gmail.com](mailto:stoeszmd@gmail.com)

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\\_ReoskuxUXA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCEn30AED17Q_ReoskuxUXA)

**Video recordings** of our Zoom worship services are located online with our normal worship service recordings. A link to this location is on the Member's page of our website.

**Please note:**

- Mike Wigginton manages Zoom scheduling, church calendar, and uploads minutes to the church website. To schedule a meeting using the church account or if you have minutes to post, email [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) or [mlwiggins@sbcbglobal.net](mailto:mlwiggins@sbcbglobal.net).
- Sam Bixler manages our church directory, email address list, and telephone number list. Email changes or additions to [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) or [bixlersc@gmail.com](mailto:bixlersc@gmail.com).
- Send announcements for Journeying Together to [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com) by 5PM Wednesday.

**RELECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY**

The Last Supper and Its Impact - We are in the midst of Holy Week, during which we commemorate several of the world-transforming events that occurred during that 8-day period nearly 2,000 years ago. This past Sunday, we celebrated the triumphal entry, which was the event through which Jesus laid his claim as the Jewish Messiah and began a reign on earth that would eventually spread all around the world. On Friday, we will commemorate the most tragic event in Christian history – the crucifixion of the Son of God – while acknowledging the good that God was able to bring out of it. And on Sunday, we will celebrate the great triumph of the Bible, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, upon which all of our hopes hinge and through which we find new life. We have set aside special time to commemorate each of these events on Zoom, but there is also a fourth event that we were not able to squeeze in the calendar, which nevertheless deserves special attention: the Last Supper. So I want to spend a few minutes reflecting on its significance here.

Knowing that this would be his last substantial opportunity to commune with his disciples before his crucifixion, Jesus introduced several important Christian principles during this meal. For example, he gave them the “new command” to love one another (John 13:34-35), he taught the concept of servant-leadership (Luke 22:24-27), and he explained that the Holy Spirit would continue to guide the community into truth after his departure (John 16:12-15). In addition to giving them these teachings, he also introduced practices that become central to the Christian faith ever since: namely, foot-washing, which reminds us of the way Jesus wants us to treat each other, and communion, which keeps Christians bound to each other through our joint memory of and commitment to the life of

Jesus. This can also be seen as one of the key moments when Jesus bestowed power and authority upon his disciples. He confers on them a kingdom (Luke 22:29), prays for their sanctification (John 17:17), and even tells them that they can ask for anything in his name and God will do it (14:13-14).

What amazes me about this is that Jesus is granting them this tremendous power and responsibility when he knows that they are about to fail him. Of course, he knows that Judas Iscariot is about to betray him – he makes that clear from the beginning. But beyond this, he also knows that all of the apostles would abandon him when he was arrested. At the time of this communion, they lacked the faith, courage, and character to carry out his will for them. Nevertheless, he entrusted them with it anyway. And this tells us something about how Christ treats all of us disciples – both those from the past and we who are trying to follow him today.

Speaking for myself, I often fall short of God's calling for me. I don't mean this in just a flippant way either. I have major character flaws, significant doubts, and have made big mistakes that threaten to sabotage the work that I believe God has called me to do. But I take comfort in the thought that Jesus knew these things about me and – for whatever reason – chose to call me anyway. In fact, whenever we fail, we do not surprise Christ, or even "disappoint" him. He knows us better than we know ourselves and chose to love and entrust us anyway. May that give us the hope and encouragement to stay in the race until we have received the prize. ~ Brian

Journeying Together is a weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church: 6100 E 32nd St, 46226; (317) 549-0577 <https://www.shalommennonite.com/>

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