April 20, 2017 Milepost 33***Following Jesus in an Easterly Direction***

The first Easter season was a 40-day process of transformation for Jesus’ followers, to prepare them for his Ascension, and the Holy Spirit’s outpouring ten days later at Pentecost.

Last Sunday, Pastor Brian mentioned that Matthew’s account of Jesus’ resurrection was primarily an invitation by the angel to the women at the tomb, to go in an ‘Easterly’ direction to tell the disciples that Jesus was alive and would meet them in Galilee. We need seven weeks of Easter Season, to allow the resurrection power of Jesus to penetrate and transform our lives, so we are ready to be empowered and sent by the Holy Spirit on Pentecost (June 4).

Shalom’s goals have potential to transform our lives, and congregational life…if we take the first steps in faith in that Easterly direction where at some point, Jesus will meet us.

*By mid-2020,* *Shalom will be a dynamic congregation:*

* *with an organizational STRUCTURE which facilitates responsiveness to the Holy Spirit’s direction, empowers all to use his/her Spirit given gift, and makes decisions effectively and efficiently to increase its missional potential;*
* *which is GROWING as individuals and as a community, in our walk with God, by the power of the Holy Spirit;*
* *which is using our gifts to SHARE God’s love, justice and peace with those in our communities.*

Our immediate focus in the next month or two, is the first goal

area: structure. But groundwork is being laid for the other two goals.

In the meantime, as Pastor Brian encouraged us, listen for God’s

direction, and when you hear it, start heading in that direction. And like the two women in the Easter story, tell others what you have seen and heard. -Gary Martin

P.S. *Journeying Together* is a great way to share your good news!