

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Shalom Mennonite Church

February 17, 2021

WORSHIP: Our relationship with God

Chair: Grace Rhine

Last Sunday (2/14), Sabrina Falls preached on “Prayer of the Heart”, based on Psalm 131.

This Sunday (2/21), we will consider Jesus' radical message to his disciples to deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow him.

Next Sunday (2/28), we will have an opportunity to hear from Craig Oury, the candidate for the open pastoral position at Shalom.

Lenten 2021 Resources

For the season of Lent 2021, we are offering two Lenten resources for you to use at home:

1. A Lenten Guided Prayer resource, offered each week during the 6 weeks of Lent (see attachment)
2. A “Lent at Home” guide from MCUSA that includes ideas for at-home rituals during Lent and Holy Week, including ideas for activities to do as a family unit. The link here will take you to a website where you can download the guide. <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/resource-portal/resource/lent-at-home/>

COMMUNITY LIFE: Relationships at Shalom

Chair: Herb Troyer

Calendar (*All events are Zoom meetings*)

Wednesday, February 17

- 9:30-10:30 am - *Toward a Just Society: Global Perspectives, Race, Caste, and Inequality: A Conversation with Isabel Wilkerson* Go [here](#)
- 12 noon EST – Virtual Luncheon with Peter and Delicia (Sign-in information: Join Zoom Meeting: <https://MCUSA.zoom.us/j/94800199934>)
- 7 pm - “Entering Lent” service

Sunday, February 21

- 9:30 am – Adult Sunday School: *The Bible Unwrapped: Making Sense of Scripture Today*, led by Emily and Tim Ludden
- 10:30 am – Worship Service on Zoom

Sunday, February 28

- 9:30 am – Craig Oury, pastoral candidate will share his faith story. There will be a time for questions.
- 10:30 am - Craig Oury, will bring the message.

Celebrations

Sun, Feb 21 – Barbara Abebe

Mon, Feb 22 – Brenda Smith

Wed, Feb 24 – Chris Deiter

DISCIPLINE: Growing in our relationships

Chair: Martha Yoder

“Story of the Bible” Assigned Reading

Throughout our “Story of the Bible” sermon series, we will recommend daily readings at home. Next week’s readings are:

Monday: Matthew 8, Psalm 107, 111

Tuesday: Matthew 9, Psalm 130, Proverbs 15:12, 21:4, 23-24

Wednesday: Matthew 10, Psalm 64, 91

Thursday: Matthew 11-12, Proverbs 3:21-26

Friday: Proverbs 11:22, 31:1-7, Matthew 14-15

Saturday: Psalm 82, Luke 10, Proverbs 3:27-32

OUTREACH: Relationships beyond Shalom

Chair: Brad Yoder

See the attached Outreach Commission newsletter information.

Go [here](#) to read the February Hoosiers Concerned About Gun Violence newsletter.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM (SGDT)

Chair: Joyce Troyer

VISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM (VAT)

Chair: Jeanne Smucker

ADMINISTRATION

Chair: Mike Wigginton

Needed: A volunteer to organize and publish the weekly *Journeying Together* for the rest of February, March and April. Talk to Mike Wigginton, or contact Linda Showalter if you need more information on what is entailed.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- There is encouraging news on the Covid front, as cases and deaths in central Indiana have dropped and some Shalom folks are receiving vaccinations. The not-so-good news is that cases and hospitalizations are still higher than they were in the summer, and new more contagious variants are spreading rapidly. For the time being, we should continue to wear masks, keep our distance from people not in our households, and avoid large gatherings. The Safely Gathering Committee will continue to monitor trends to see when it might be safe to begin in-person or hybrid services. ~ Martha, for the Safely Gathering Committee
- We are excited to celebrate Tiga and Farah moving into their first home! It has been a long journey, and both are very thankful to God for providing for them along the way and blessing them with their own place to call “home.”
We wish to celebrate and give thanks by having a virtual housewarming on Sunday February 21st at 2:00pm. They will be giving a tour of their home, and we will take time to pray over each room and the family. There will also be time for chatting and socializing with the family.
The family has registered at Walmart for anyone who wishes to send them a gift. Purchases can be made online, and will be mailed automatically to their new addresses. To view the registry visit

<https://www.walmart.com/lists/view-events-registry-items?id=27c11675-7f8d-4175-8985-1d599b1b3f55>.

The family would like to thank everyone who encouraged them, prayed for them, and helped them to obtain their status here in the US. Now that they are in their own home, they will be taking in their nephew, so the blessings continue to be shared.

We hope to see you next Sunday! You can participate by going to our zoom link.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86775356676>

Thank you! ~ CoraLyn and OlaJowon

- **Pastoral Search:** The Pastoral Search Committee is pleased to announce that we have a candidate to introduce to Shalom. He has met several times with the search committee and also with Brian and the Vision and Accountability Team. Craig Oury will join us (virtually) on Sunday, February 28. We will have a chance to hear his faith story during the Sunday School hour and to ask him questions. He will then present the sermon during our worship service. That day, after a "lunch break" of 30 minutes, we will offer the opportunity to return to ask any further questions that you may have of him. (Sorry, no potluck this time.) Two weeks later (March 14), we will have a congregational meeting immediately after worship for any further discussion about Craig's calling and follow that with a vote. A vote of 85% approval is required to go ahead and call Craig to be our copastor. A brief biographical sketch for Craig is attached to the newsletter. ~Jeanne Smucker, CoraLyn Turentine, Carol Bixler, Herb Troyer and Linda Kandel.

- 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!

- **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:

- o Mike Wigginton manages 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 or mlwigg@sbccglobal.net.
- o 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 or bixlersc@gmail.com.
- o Send announcements for Journeying Together to office@shalommennonite.com by 5 pm on Wednesday.

RELECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY

Practicing Lent During a Pandemic

Today is officially the first day of Lent, which is the time of year that Christians normally dedicate to fasting, confession, and introspective prayer. But as Sabrina noted in her sermon on Sunday, it almost feels as though we have been in a continuous Lenten season for the past eleven months. We have had to reduce or eliminate our social activities, such as going to restaurants or visiting friends, which feels a lot like fasting. We have agonized over whether to participate in activities or not, which feels a lot like confession. And we have spent more time at home thinking about those things that we miss and that which we value most, which feels a lot like introspective prayer. So the prospect of giving up *more* this year when we have already been deprived or delving *deeper* into

introspection when we have already been isolated may not appeal to us right now. How, then, can we celebrate Lent during an ongoing pandemic?

There is one more aspect to Lent that we often overlook but which is especially important for us this year: giving. The Bible does not ask us to deprive ourselves of the pleasures of life because they are inherently bad, but in order to create more space in our lives for God to speak in us and move us to loving action. The passage that is perhaps most closely associated with Lent says, "If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake for the gospel, will save it." (Mark 8:34-35) Notice, losing your life is only valuable if you do it for Jesus' sake. And what does that look like – doing something for Jesus' sake? Jesus fleshes it out in the next chapter: "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me." (Mark 9:37) In other words, we deny ourselves and even lose our lives in order so that we may welcome others, give to others, and show others the love of God. Isaiah makes the same point: "Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?" (Isaiah 58:6-7)

For those of us who find ourselves feeling isolated, lonely, and depressed, one of the best things we can do to help get through it is to give generously to others. Because giving costs us something, it *is* a kind of fasting, but one that fills you up with more than it takes away. Because it requires us to think about what we have in excess, it *is* a kind of confession and prayer, but one that connects us with others rather than leaving us more isolated. I encourage all of us to spend Lent this year practicing a new pattern of giving, whether that means giving our time, our money, our empathy, or our physical labor for the sake of others. We still may not be in the mood to do this, but if we do, we'll discover the truth in the statement that those who try to keep their lives for themselves will lose it, while those who give of themselves to others for the sake of Christ will find new life.

~ Brian

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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