

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Shalom Mennonite Church

November 3, 2021

WORSHIP: Our relationship with God

Chair: Brittany Bither

Last Sunday (10/31), Brian wrestled with some of the difficult passages of God's wrath from the books of Numbers and Joshua and consider how that might relate to the concept of "unintentional sin" in Numbers 15.

This Sunday (11/7), In our Numbers series Craig will look at how God's sovereignty is seen in the story of Balak and Balaam.

Next Sunday (11/14), Brian will continuing the Numbers series by covering chapters 25-27.

COMMUNITY LIFE: Relationships at Shalom

Chair: Herb Troyer

CALENDAR

From Sept. 19 to Nov. 21, at 9:30, Wilma Bailey is leading us in a study of the book of Numbers.

Sat, November 20, from 9 am-noon, Fall work day at the church.

Sun, December 5, Congregational Budget Approval Meeting on Zoom after worship.

Celebrations

Fri, Nov 5 – Ernest Turentine

Sat, Nov 6 – Peter Wigginton

Sun, Nov 7 – Martha Yoder & Rod Maust, 1981

Mon, Nov 8 – Caleb Martin

Opportunity to Team-Teach Sunday School: What is team teaching? It means working with two teachers for each classroom so that each teacher can benefit from schedule flexibility and extra creativity. We have some great teachers ready to re-start Children and Youth Sunday School when we return to in-person worship and they have all expressed their interest in the benefits of team teaching.

Tentative class break-down:

- PreK (3 students)
 - Layla, Calvin, Leo
- K-2nd (5 students)
 - Liam, Lexie, Mia, Sydney, Melanie
- JYF/MYF (probably 4-5 students)
 - Jacob, Phoenix, Gabby, Caleb, Jason

Since we'll be using the indoor classrooms, we request that all teachers be vaccinated against Covid-19. Due to the challenges of getting 2-yr-olds to wear masks, we are not planning for a classroom setting for them at this point. There is no set date for the start of Sunday School yet.

I'll be reaching out with requests for help with team teaching but it would also be great if you reached out to me! harms.laura@gmail.com or 317-572-0017.

DISCIPLING: Growing in our relationships

Chair: Martha Yoder

Last spring we had a Sunday school class on Dismantling Institutional Racism in Congregations, using an online curriculum from Widerstand Consulting. You should have received an email in March inviting you to participate in Niche Academy, which provided the structure for our participation. If you would like to review any of that material, or if you would like to see their material on how to do a congregational audit, your username is your email address and your old password should still work. If you have lost your password, you can click on "forgot password" to create a new one. If you need help, email Martha Yoder Maust at yodermaust@gmail.com and I can send you a new invitation. We have access to this material until the end of February.

Mennonite Central Committee is providing a free webinar on "the complicity of the Church in racism and how all can journey as a witness and transformative presence with God's beloved inclusive global community." You can register for the December 2 webinar and view recordings of 3 precious webinars at https://mcc.org/color-compromise-honest-look-racism-church?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Great_Lakes_In_Touch_November_2021&utm_content=Great_Lakes_In_Touch_November_2021+CID_263624a36ff3d5d9defa9dbd211e902c&utm_source=CM&utm_term=Learn%20more
<https://mcc.org/color-compromise-honest-look-racism-church?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Great_Lakes_In_Touch_November_2021&utm_content=Great_Lakes_In_Touch_November_2021+CID_263624a36ff3d5d9defa9dbd211e902c&utm_source=CM&utm_term=Learn%20more>

OUTREACH: Relationships beyond Shalom

Chair: Zenebe Abebe

On Monday, November 8, at 9:00AM, Circle City Clubhouse is holding their annual fundraiser breakfast at St. Luke's United Methodist Church, 100 W 86th Street, Indianapolis. Jeanne and I will be hosting a table, and would love to have you join us. There is no charge for the breakfast.

Circle City is a day-time program for persons experiencing mental illness to find emotional support, opportunities toward employment, and development of new skills. Shalom's Jay Brubaker is the executive director. Please consider joining us by calling 260-479-5128 or emailing blyoder2@gmail.com.

Brad Yoder

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM

Chair: Joyce Troyer

SGDT is grateful for all who serve Shalom! At this time, the official positions for the church year are filled, but volunteers are always needed and appreciated. Although the pandemic limits what we can do in person, the work of the church continues. If you are interested in an area of service, please contact Joyce Troyer (troyers_hj@hotmail.com), Frank Kandel (kandel93@gmail.com), or Raphael Edou (raphaedou@gmail.com).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Dear Shalom Family,

We would like to share the miracle of Abigail Mae Aguilar Deiter. Her due date is Christmas Eve (ultrasound attached). We are so blessed for this opportunity from God to be parents. You have been with us throughout our journey from dating, to our marriage and now our baby girl. We are beyond blessed to have Shalom as our church family. We love you.

Chris, Nizeet and Baby Abigail Deiter

Safely Gathering Committee Safely Gathering Committee met on October 21. We reviewed data on local cases at <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/2393.htm> and new cases/100,000 population/day at <https://globalepidemics.org/key-metrics-for-covid-suppression/> Marion County is currently (as of November 1) at 15.7 cases/100,000/day and surrounding counties range from 16.9 in Hendricks County and 17.8 in Hamilton County to 25.9 in Shelby County. We also looked at vaccination rates at <https://www.coronavirus.in.gov/vaccine/2680.htm> and reviewed CDC guidance for schools at <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/schools-childcare/k-12-guidance.html>

Our guide in making decisions about when to meet has been epidemiologist Daniel Chin in his article <https://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2021/january-web-only/church-reopening-vaccine-coronavirus-covid-advice.html> who recommends starting in-person worship when cases/100,000/day are below 5-6. In May 2021 we reached that level and by the time we started meeting 4 weeks later we had reached 2 cases/100,000/day. Based on that experience, we plan to start hybrid services two weeks after reaching 10 cases/100,000/day in Marion County.

Those who meet in person will need to wear masks at all times when in the building, and sit by households with 6 feet of separation from other households. Song leaders, worship leaders, and preachers may remove masks to perform those ministries on the stage if they are fully vaccinated. Participants are encouraged to exit the building after worship and fellowship outside. The nursery space will be available for parents to use but will not be staffed by volunteers at this time.

Sunday school for children will follow the CDC guidelines of having teachers and students mask and try to keep a 3-foot distance. We will also ask teachers to be vaccinated. Increasing ventilation by opening classroom doors and windows and/or using fans is encouraged as feasible. Adult Sunday school will initially be in the sanctuary to allow distancing.

Commission Chairs Team had previously decided that when both worship and Sunday school started in the building, we would change to our old schedule of **worship at 9:30** with Sunday school following. There will not be fellowship time between worship and Sunday school, or coffee or tea, at this time.

Questions will surely arise, as they did when we started hybrid services the first time. Feel free to contact any member of the Safely Gathering Committee: Jeanne Smucker, Linda Kandel, and Martha Yoder Maust.

Dear Shalom family,

Thank you for the beautiful flowers and cards wishing me well heading into treatment this week and beyond. It means so much to us to know that you're thinking of us and praying for us. I continue to feel grateful for early detection and hopeful for a positive outcome.

Kristen

MCC Thanks

Shalom Mennonite Church

Dear Friends

Greetings in the name of Christ. Thank you for your donation to Mennonite Central Committee which will be used to help those who are suffering around the world.

Item(s): 263 School Kits

Relief kits and boxes of canned meat from Mennonite Central Committee brought joy and relief to recipients who are struggling to recover from the August 14 earthquake that devastated the southern peninsula of Haiti. The supplies were the first of any to reach Saint-Jean-du-Sud, a southwestern municipality, on August 31, more than two weeks after the earthquake occurred.

"Thank you for not leaving us alone," one woman told Paul Shetler Fast, MCC's health coordinator and former representative in Haiti who was present for the distribution. "We've felt very alone these last days waiting after the earthquake, hoping someone would come, hoping someone would not forget us."

MCC Relief kits provide valuable supplies to families whose lives have been disrupted by war or disaster.

Advent Devotional

Mennonite Church USA is once again offering its **free Advent at Home devotional**. Written by Talashia Keim Yoder, pastor of Christian Formation at College Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana, the 2021 guide follows the theme of Leader magazine and is appropriate for all ages. Download your copy here. <https://www.mennoniteusa.org/adventathome>

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 (MP4) of our Zoom worship services are available online. A link to the worship service recordings is on the Member's page of our website.

PLEASE NOTE: You can only watch the first 60 minutes of a recording while online at this site. However you can watch the **entire recording if you download it** onto your computer/tablet and then watch it from the downloaded MP4 file. Be aware that these files are 300MB - 1200MB in size. First click on the recording and then the download (direct download) function is at the top right. When finished watching, delete that downloaded MP4 file from your computer/tablet so you gain back that space. -Jim

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.

Craig Oury is now compiling *Journeying Together* each week. You can continue to send information to office@shalommennonite.com by 5 pm on Wednesday. Craig is now managing our Zoom calendar, church calendar, and uploads minutes on the church website. If you need to schedule a meeting using the church zoom account or have minutes to upload, you can email the office at office@shalommennonite.com or craig@shalommennonite.com.

REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY

Striking the Rock

One of the stories that we had to skip in our sermon series was Numbers 20:1-11, which is the story in which Moses disobeys a commandment from God. This plays a significant role in the larger Biblical story because it is repeatedly cited as the reason why Moses was prevented from entering the Promised Land himself, despite having had such a close relationship with God for so many years. So what happened in this incident that led to such a harsh punishment?

Moses and the Israelite community were running out of water, and so Moses appropriately went to the tabernacle and asked God what to do. God told him to take his staff and gather the Israelite community around the most prominent rock in the place where they were staying and to command that rock to bring forth water. So Moses obeyed. He grabbed his staff, gathered the community around the rock that God had pointed out, and struck the rock in question, which resulted in water coming out of the rock and meeting the needs of the Israelites. But wait... where is the disobedience? Well, God commanded Moses to *speak to the rock*, but instead of doing that, Moses *struck the rock*. He did everything else correctly and it led to the intended result, but because he struck the rock instead of speaking to it, he incurred the wrath of God.

My first instinct upon hearing this story is to complain that God is being unreasonable. Yes, I understand that “those who teach will be judged more strictly” (James 3:1), but this was such a minor deviation from God’s command that it’s hard to see what Moses did wrong! Maybe Moses thought that God meant “speak to the rock” figuratively, and tapping on it twice would work just fine. Maybe he assumed that this is why God had him take a staff with him. It seems like splitting hairs for God to get so frustrated with Moses over such a minor deviation from the plan. But if you look closely at the story, you’ll see that Moses didn’t just misunderstand God’s command; he lashed out in anger. In so doing, he made the miracle about Moses rather than God. And that was a problem.

This story hits close to him for me. Sometimes, I say or do the right thing but I do it with an attitude or a scowl. At other times, I follow a rule to the letter of the law but willingly defy the spirit or principle behind it. In these situations, it’s tempting to say, “I didn’t do anything wrong,” but we must remember that *how* we do God’s work is nearly as important as *whether* we do. In truth, our minor offenses such as giving people the silent treatment or being half-hearted in our generosity can inflict wounds on people that they will never forget. So let us aspire to learn from Moses’ mistake and to be faithful both in what we do and in how we do it. ~ Brian

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

Pastors: Brian Bither, (317)-332-7320; Craig Oury, (301) 302-3181

Vision & Accountability Team: Cheryl Martin, Carol Bixler, CoraLyn Turentine, Frank Kandel, Mark Stocksdales
Brian Bither