

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Shalom Mennonite Church

April 28, 2021

WORSHIP: Our relationship with God

Chair: Grace Rhine

Last Sunday (4/25) we reflect on the most momentous decision made by the young church: to include Gentiles in their fellowship without requiring them to adopt all Jewish customs. This major decision still has implications for us today as we continue to think about how God calls us to relate to our brothers and sisters from other cultures and backgrounds.

This Sunday (5/2) we will discuss another major theme in Acts - the persecution of the church by the powers and principalities of this age - in a sermon preached by Herb Troyer.

Next Sunday (5/9) we will study a number of the later epistles in the New Testament and confront the greatest challenge that the early church - and arguably the Church today - has to face: distinguishing between false prophets who distort the gospel and true ones who speak the word of God.

COMMUNITY LIFE: Relationships at Shalom

Chair: Herb Troyer

Calendar (*All events are Zoom meetings*)

Sunday, May 2

Adult Sunday school, Dismantling Institutional Racism in Congregations - Wilma Bailey, Frank Kandel. We will cover the section titled: Individual Manifestations of Institutional Racism.

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

April 29 - Rosemary Harvey; April 30 - Liam Sanders; May 3 - Ernest Hodel; May 4 - Olivia Tackitt

DISCIPLING: Growing in our relationships

Chair: Martha Yoder

"Story of the Bible" Assigned Reading - During our "Story of the Bible" sermon series, daily at home recommended readings for next week:

Monday - 1 Timothy 1-4, Proverbs 14:22-24, 24:8-9, 27:11-13

Tuesday - 1 Timothy 5-6, Proverbs 16:31, 17:6, 28:24, 3 John, Jude

Wednesday - 2 Timothy 1-4, Proverbs 12:15-16, 18:8-9, 17, 26:27

Thursday - Titus 1-3, Proverbs 17:24-25, 18:1-2, 19:13-14

Friday - 2 Peter 1-3, Proverbs 26:1-4; 27:7, 20; 30:10, 15-16

Saturday - Revelation 1-3, Proverbs 13:7-8, 22:14-15, 25:26

OUTREACH: Relationships beyond Shalom

Chair: Brad Yoder

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The **Community Life Commission** (including Pastor Brian) is putting together a list of fully vaccinated members of our congregation so that we can help arrange meetings between individuals and small groups that are safe and appropriate. This list is completely voluntary and is not meant to be comprehensive. No one will be excluded from church-wide functions because their name is not on the list, and the list will not be shared with anyone outside of the CLC. With all that in mind, we invite those of you who have been fully vaccinated to email Brian at brian@shalommennonite.com once you have received your final dose and two weeks have passed if you are willing to have your name on a list of vaccinated volunteers whom we may call upon for specific tasks."

During the past 14 months, Shalom as a congregation has faced many challenges in carrying out the ministries that are part of our mission. But it is important to remember that through our giving, we are ministering every day to members of the human family around the Earth. Within the past few weeks, we have received thank you letters for our quarterly contributions to organizations Shalom supports, including Mennonite Central Committee, Meserete Kristos College in Ethiopia, Mennonite Disaster Service, Mennonite Mission Network (Ecuador and other countries), and Anabaptist Disabilities Network. Closer to home, we also minister through Faith in Indiana, Morning Star Ministries, Hoosier Interfaith Power and Light, and Circle City Clubhouse. If you are inclined to be discouraged about how we have been limited by the Coronavirus, thank God for the ongoing opportunities we have to reach out and serve! **Brad Yoder, for Outreach Commission**

Continuing Support for Gemima and family: Success! For 3 years, we have provided monthly financial support to Gemima and her family! Every 6 months a group of 10 people (7 from Shalom) evaluate the on-going need for monthly financial support for Gemima and her daughters that we began providing in 2018. The group has conducted the April evaluation and would like to invite Shalom members to continue donating to this fund so that the \$600 of monthly support can be provided for May-October. The primary reason for the support to continue is that Gemima's work permit has not yet arrived and there is no clear timeline on when she can expect it (even though it was authorized in August 2020).

The family is doing well with Melanie finishing her first year at IUPUI with a full scholarship. Jackie will be graduating from high school and joining the US Air Force in June. Lorraine has one more year of high school and has a 21st Century Scholarship to will cover tuition to attend an Indiana state school.

To donate: send a check to Shalom Mennonite or use the online giving link on the Shalom website. Make sure to put Trochez/Hernandez fund on the memo line. Please remember that these gifts are not tax deductible. Heartfelt thanks for this incredible demonstration of love and caring. Questions? Contact Laura Harms harms.laura@gmail.com

When God calls someone to leadership, a journey begins. Perhaps you are on that journey. Perhaps you are looking for mentors and companions along the way. Indiana-Michigan Conference invites you to join Journey: A Missional Leadership Development Program. This program is for lay leaders, pastors, church planters, and other emerging leaders who are called without specific training for ministry or who are exploring a call to ministry. The early registration deadline to apply for fall 2021 is July 13 with the final registration deadline on August 10. For more information contact your pastor, or Dan Miller at dan@im.mennonite.net or at 574-534-4006, or visit www.ambbs.edu/journey

Attached is the May prayer newsletter, also available at <https://im.mennonite.net/support/support-for-conference/prayer/>. May we "pray without ceasing for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus." **Indiana-Michigan Mennonite Conference.**

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_ReooskuxUXA

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 or mlwiggin@sbcglobal.net.

Sam Bixler manages our church directory, email address list, and telephone number list. Email changes or additions to office@shalommennonite.com or bixlersc@gmail.com.

Send announcements for Journeying Together to office@shalommennonite.com by 5PM Wednesday.

RELECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY

Paul's Missionary Success: This week, we are finishing the book of Acts, which brings us to the end of the Biblical history of God's people, although the story of the church continued long after the Bible was finished being written and continues to this day, and the Bible ends by giving us a sneak peek of Act VII, which is yet to come. The final portion of Acts highlights two simultaneous movements that were taking off in those early years: the spread of the gospel across the world known to the Jews and the equally intense backlash and resistance to the gospel. Herb will be focusing on the latter theme in his sermon on Sunday, so I want to offer a few thoughts about the positive missionary work of Paul in this reflection.

Paul was an extraordinarily influential individual. While churches like ours struggle to bring in a few new people to faith in Christ, Paul seemed to convert dozens, if not hundreds, of people everywhere he went. Now, as I noted in my sermon on the Great Commission, there are some significant differences between the context we live in and the context Paul lived in, which make it more challenging for us to have the same kind of missionary success. Nevertheless, there is much that we can learn from him as we seek to share the gospel with people in our time and place.

Although there are many aspects of Paul's ministry that deserve mention, the one that jumps out to me the most is his receptivity to the Holy Spirit. For example, consider this passage from Acts 16:7-10 that discusses Paul's travel plans: "When they had come opposite Mysia, they attempted to go into Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them; so passing by Mysia, they went down to Troas. During the night, Paul had a vision: there stood a man of Macedonia... When he had seen the vision, we immediately tried to cross over to Macedonia, being convinced that God had called us to proclaim the good news to them."

Paul was constantly listening to the Holy Spirit for guidance, and when he felt a prompting from the Spirit, he immediately acted upon it. This passage shows how Paul would instantly change plans if he sensed the Spirit of Jesus telling him to do so. Acts describes this characteristic as "boldness" and presents it as a Christian virtue. Now, boldness should not be understood as "rudeness" or a willingness to offend others. In fact, Paul went out of his way not to offend people unnecessarily, and our readings also made it clear that Christians should speak to all people "with gentleness and respect" (1 Peter 3:15-16). Instead, boldness is learning to trust that the promptings of the Spirit within you really are from God and to act upon them.

If we really want to make progress as a church in our evangelistic call, I believe that the key is learning to listen more closely to the Holy Spirit everywhere we go and learning to trust and act upon the Spirit's promptings. This is a skill that has to be practiced, and it is much easier to write about it than it is to do it. But I believe that God has a lot to say to us if we have the patience to listen and the courage to act upon it. ~ **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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