

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

Shalom Mennonite Church

June 9, 2021

WORSHIP: Our relationship with God

Chair: Grace Rhine

Last Sunday (6/9), Wilma Bailey preached from Micah 4:1-5 as it relates to militaries and war.

This Sunday (6/13) we will have our first hybrid service, with some Shalom members meeting in-person and others continuing to worship on Zoom. Let's pray for God's blessing as we enter this new chapter together!

Next Sunday (6/20) Next Sunday (6/20), Brad Yoder will deliver the message.

Minutes from the latest Worship Commission meeting are attached.

COMMUNITY LIFE: Relationships at Shalom

Chair: Herb Troyer

CALENDAR

Sunday, June 13

10:30 am - Hybrid Worship service. See details below (following Reflections) or attached document

Sunday, June 20

10:30 am - Hybrid Worship service. See details below

Monday, June 21

9 am – 3 pm - Roving Office at McDonald's, 9851 E. Washington St, Indianapolis, IN

Monday, June 28

9 am – 3 pm - Roving Office at Fishers Panera, 8510 E 96th St, Fishers, IN

Monday, July 26

9 am to 3 pm - Roving Office at Panera Bread, 789 U.S. Highway 31 N, Greenwood, IN

Celebrations

Today – Carol & Mark Stocksdales, 1989

Thu, Jun 10 – Erik Rosales

Sat, Jun 12 – Bill Albrecht

Mon, Jun 14 – Bob & Rose Love, 1980

Tue, Jun 15 – Frank & Linda Kandel, 1969

DISCIPLING: Growing in our relationships

Chair: Martha Yoder

Children's Church: Are you willing to provide care to Shalom children during in-person services this summer? For Children's Church, we have developed the following guidelines:

- * Children ages 2-8 will be dismissed after Children's Story
- * One adult volunteer and one youth volunteer will provide a short program and/or supervise play time
- * Children's Church will be an outdoor activity when possible. Fellowship Hall will be used when being outdoors is not possible.
- * Children and adults should be prepared to wear masks. Indoors this will be required. Outdoors everyone will either need to keep a mask on or stay 6 feet from others.

We have volunteers for all June dates. THANK YOU! Please contact Laura if you'd like to volunteer for a date in July or August. harms.laura@gmail.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

From Chuck Dunn: My cousin called and told me my mother's health was fading fast. Monday night I was told she wasn't going to last ten days. My dad came to Indy to pick me and Phoenix up so we could be with her in her final moments of life. My mother was surrounded with love and we all got to tell her how much we loved her. She will be missed. I'm relieved for her pain to be over. I am truly grateful for God's grace. This is the first time I've been with anyone as God has come to take them home.

Thank you for all your prayers. My plans are to spend the rest of the week here in French Lick and Paoli. I hope to spend time at Shalom soon.

Please read the notes from a meeting with commissions and the Safely Gathering Team included at the end of this newsletter. The document is also attached.

Mennonite Church USA is proposing changes to their bylaws, for which there will be a vote at the biannual convention that meets July 6-10. As a member of MCUSA, our church is impacted to some degree by these changes, and so you all are welcome to review them [here](#) and offer any feedback you have either directly to MCUSA leaders or through our delegate.

- 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.
- 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 mlwiggint@sbcglobal.net.
- 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.
- Send announcements for *Journeying Together* to office@shalommennonite.com by 5 pm on Wednesday.

REFLECTIONS ON THE JOURNEY

Be Like Ananias

In the book of Acts, the apostle Paul arguably stands out as the most extraordinary figure of the early church, having had a dramatic conversion from a persecutor to a disciple and constantly going on daring and dangerous adventures to bring the gospel to new people and places. Although many Christians admire the apostle Paul, the truth is that few of us will really live a life like his. Only a small fraction of Christ's followers are called to leave their homes and identities *entirely* behind to bring the good news into new territories, for this requires - among other things - a freedom from the responsibilities and attachments that usually keep us locked in place. However, there is a much lesser known individual, Ananias, who was nevertheless very influential and whom we have a much greater chance of emulating.

In Acts 9, Paul (known as "Saul" at the time) is traveling on the road to Damascus with the intention of persecuting Christianity, when he is knocked off his horse by a blinding light and informed by God that he is working against God's purposes. This is an extremely vulnerable moment in Paul's life, as he is both physically and spiritually weak and disoriented. Further complicating matters, Paul doesn't have any personal connections with Christians in Damascus. He was from Tarsus himself and had been stationed in Jerusalem, so he was just a passerby who happened to be in the area. Fortunately, God has servants everywhere, and one of them - Ananias - was available at the exact moment when Paul needed him.

We don't know very much about Ananias. He doesn't seem to be an extraordinary figure; he's not described as a prophet, deacon, or apostle. All we know about him is that he was a local who was rooted in Damascus (well

enough that he knows the streets by name) and who happened to be a follower of Jesus. But he apparently was close enough to God that God was able to communicate with him and tell him to reach out to invest his time and risk his safety for this man he had never met. Ananias expressed discomfort at this idea, but he did it because he was in tune with the Holy Spirit.

Although many of us live pretty normal lives and interact with largely the same people, we really don't know what God may be doing just down the street or across the hall. The Bible suggests that God is always at work trying to save everyone, and with that in mind, God seems to rely on local followers of Christ to respond to the call from time to time. The question is - when someone shows up in our life needing some light or love or guidance from love, will we see this as direction from God or not? May God give us all the insight and courage to be like Ananias.

~ Brian

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

Pastor: Brian Bither, (317)-332-7320

Vision & Accountability Team: Jeanne Smucker, Cheryl Martin, Carol Bixler, Rod Maust, Thad Wilson, Brian Bither

How will we gather safely?

Notes from a meeting on 5/27/21

Present: Jeanne Smucker, Linda Kandel, Grace Rhine, Jim and Linda Showalter, Brian Bither, Tim and Emily Ludden, Sam Bixler, Mike Wigginton, Laura Harms, Martha Yoder Maust

Masks: All those 2 years and older need to wear masks while in the building. The rule of thumb is to do 2 of these 3 protective strategies: mask, distance, or be outside. This means we will need to distance and mask while inside. Outside we can choose to mask and stand a little closer, or remove masks and stand at least 6 feet apart.

Ventilation: We will use fans and open windows, or air conditioning, as needed for comfort. Sanctuary doors can be left open throughout the service if AC is not on. Outside doors can be left open as people are arriving, then closed.

Disinfectant wipes and hand sanitizer are located by both doors. Sam will donate a box of adult masks and Admin Commission will purchase a box of children's masks, in case anyone arrives unmasked.

Ushers will not be handing out bulletins at this point but will greet people and offer masks if needed.

Most of those involved in leading worship, preaching, etc. will sit on the stage or on the front pews. Folks who are managing the technology have their designated areas on the south side. In the rest of the sanctuary, every other pew has been roped off. This leaves 20 spots (one at each end of each open pew) for 1-3 people from a household to sit, with 6 feet of empty pew between households. Households with 5-6 persons may use a full pew, and if a household has 4 persons then only 1-2 people can sit at the other end of that pew. Chairs in the back are available for ushers and in case we have guests or other overflow needs.

Tim is working on a signup system, which would have 2 parts. One part will be for those for those having an active part in the service (musician for prelude, preacher, worship leader, children's storyteller, people doing children's activities, ushers, and 2 tech persons, one for sound and one to manage camera and Zoom). The second part will be for people not having a specific role, who will sign up and be entered in a lottery system, with people who are not participating in person one Sunday being given priority the next time. There are a lot of factors to consider, such as how to count persons who ride with others. This is still being worked out and you will hear more later.

There was conversation at the meeting about putting tape on the floor of the sanctuary to indicate the preferred flow of people, but in conversation between Linda S. and Martha after the meeting we decided not to do so,

since those at the middle of the sanctuary will enter and leave from the middle aisle, and those sitting at the outsides will enter and leave from the outer aisles.

Nursery will not be staffed at this time but parents or other caretakers may use the space as needed (to change diapers, for example) then use disinfectant wipes to wipe down the areas used.

Children's play area in the back of the sanctuary will be closed for now.

Children's story will be told from the south side of the pulpit instead of the north side, for better viewing by the folks watching on Zoom. We will attempt to keep some distance between children from different households.

We will not be having Sunday school at this time, but Laura Harms is organizing a "children's church" time for children 2-8 years old, outside (or, if the weather is bad, in the fellowship hall) starting after the reading of the Bible text for the day.

A camera is mounted on a tripod to show the pulpit, the projection screen, and the children's storyteller. This connects to Zoom, so that persons at home can watch. Occasionally the camera can be turned to show the in-person participants to the folks on Zoom. Microphones transmit sound to Zoom. Zoom participants will be muted until sharing time.

Preacher and worship leader may remove their masks once they are in the pulpit if they have been fully vaccinated (at least 2 weeks after final dose) so they can be heard and seen better on Zoom.

For the time being we will not be singing inside, but persons are welcome to hum, stand, move, clap, wave hands, or play percussion instruments brought from home. A final song might be sung outside.

For sharing time and announcements, persons in the building who want to share will be asked to use a microphone standing in the front of the sanctuary, if able. Persons on Zoom who want to share will raise their hands and Jim (or another person managing Zoom) will call on them one at a time. This will likely take a little longer than we are used to, so that their faces can be seen on the projection screen in the sanctuary while they share. Brian will lead the sharing and prayer time initially.

Tim will record the service and post the recording on the website, or ask someone to do so.

Offering baskets will be at the back of the sanctuary on either side. Admin Commission will make sure that someone collects the offering, since the usual persons to do so might not be present in person.

Worship leader or person closing the service might remind people to do 2 of 3 safety practices—mask, distance and be outside.

Drinking fountains are turned off for the time being.

Handles have been affixed to the inside of the restroom doors so that the door can be pulled open with the forearm instead of the hand, to minimize touching after washing hands. New soap dispensers are in place.

The church sign will be changed to say we are starting to open. Website will be changed to indicate that we are starting hybrid services on June 13 and to contact office@shalommennonite.com for further information.

We will continue to have worship at 10:30 for the time being.