

# Journeying Together

Shalom Mennonite Church

December 7, 2018

## WORSHIP

Our relationship with God

### Last Sunday, December 2:

Thad Wilson introduced our series on guidance during the season of Advent. Looking to the Magi as our ongoing example, he reminded us that we need to be ready to pack our bags and go if and when our guiding light from God appears. And even if no clear "light" does appear in our lives, there are ways that we can seek God's voice by listening to the still, small voice within each of us.

### This Sunday, December 9:

Pastor Brian will preach from Luke 3:1-20 on the theme of preparing for the unexpected. Two thousand years ago, John the Baptist went around preaching the message, "Prepare the way of the Lord." He taught the people that a Messiah was coming who was unlike anything the people of Israel had ever seen before. But if they had no idea what this Messiah would be like, how could they know how to prepare for him? In this sermon, Brian wrestles with the mysterious claim that prayer and repentance can somehow "prepare the way" for religious, social, and even political change.

### Next Sunday, December 16:

Pastor Frank will draw from Luke 1:39-45 to preach on the joy that can emerge in seeking God's guidance in community and anticipating what God might do next.

## COMMUNITY LIFE

Relationships at Shalom

### Calendar

Sun. 9:30am Worship  
11:00 am Sunday School

Dec 9 – Pastoral Search Discussion during Sunday School hour

Dec 9 – Congregational Budget Meeting after Sunday School

Dec 12 – Morning Breakfast Group @ Ill. Food Emporium, 7am

Dec 15 – Christmas Banquet: 5:30 caroling, 6:15 appetizers, 6:30 meal.

Dec 20 – Meal, 6:30pm; Bible Study 7-8

Jan 6 – Fellowship potluck after SS

Feb 3 – Pizzas for Peace lunch after SS

### Birth Announcement!

Phil and Anne Shenk want to announce that their baby boy, Levi Scott Shenk, made his arrival on Monday, December 3rd at 1:28pm. He weighed 6lbs 15oz and was 20.5 in long. They are so thankful for how healthy he is and how smoothly things have gone. (And they think he is pretty cute :) ). They are now back at home, and look forward to introducing him to Shalom sometime in the future.

### Rosales-Harms move:

Laura, Erik, Marcela, and Jason are planning for an in-town move on Friday, Dec. 14 after closing our purchase that morning. Please email [harms.laura@gmail.com](mailto:harms.laura@gmail.com) if you can help with moving starting around 1pm. The chance of delays in the date is still high so we'll contact any helpers on Thursday with the latest update.

### Prayer Request:

Please pray for Luke and Rachel Yoder Penner and baby Margaret who will be having open heart surgery at Riley on Monday. She is the grand daughter of Mil and Ruth Penner and Mike and Mary Lehman Yoder.

### Save the Date:

The Penner family invites everyone to an open house on Saturday, December 29, to greet and congratulate Sara and her husband, Ignacio Ramos. They were legally married in

November and plan a formal wedding in June in Guatemala.

#### Membership Exploration Class:

Are you new or newish to Shalom? Would you like to learn more about who the Mennonites are, what the different Mennonite acronyms mean (MCC, MDS, MMN, etc.), and how Shalom works? Pastor Brian is preparing to hold a "Membership Exploration" class in January and February of 2019 for anyone who would like to learn more about these subjects or consider getting more involved at Shalom. If you have interest, please email him at [brian@shalommennonite.com](mailto:brian@shalommennonite.com).

### **DISCIPLING**

Growing in our relationships

#### Sunday School Schedule:

- Dec. 9--Pastoral Search Committee will have a time of debriefing with the congregation
- Dec. 16--Christmas hymnsing
- Dec 23 and Dec 30--no SS

### **OUTREACH**

Relationships beyond Shalom

#### Giving Corner:

This month, in addition to food pantry items, we are collecting mittens and caps.

### **ADMINISTRATION**

Congregational support systems

#### Pastoral Search Process:

This week during the Sunday school hour the Pastoral Team Search Committee would like to have further discussion regarding our pastoral search process. We want to hear further what you believe God desires in the pastoral team for Shalom.

During the time the Search Committee will review with the congregation the search process, seek additional clarification to refine our desired candidate profile and discuss the next steps.

Please join us on the 9th as we collectively

experience God's love and guidance.

#### VAT Update for Pastoral Team:

The VAT will be seeking affirmation of Sabrina Falls and Frank Kandel to continue to serve as temporary pastors, on our pastoral team for a period of 6 months- January to June of 2019. Sabrina will be working the equivalent of 0.25 FTE and will be compensated for the 6 months she is serving on the temporary pastoral team.

Frank will continue to fill the role he is currently filling as a non compensated temporary pastoral team member.

We will seek your affirmation during the Sunday school hour meeting on December 9th for both Sabrina and Frank.

Please also feel free to provide your words of affirmation or concerns to Jeanne Smucker or Brad Sommer if you are unable to attend the December 9th meeting.

#### MC USA Survey:

Mennonite Church USA wants to hear from you! Visit [mennoniteusa.org/jf](http://mennoniteusa.org/jf) to find the Pathways Study Guide and complete the Journey Forward Feedback Survey by Dec. 31, 2018. Available in English and Spanish.

### **Milepost #611**

#### **Looking Back, Looking Forward**

For Advent this year, we are traveling with the Magi on a journey of guidance. We are looking to Heaven to ask the question, "As we wait for Christ to redeem the world, what it is that God wants us to do?" If you read the actual story of the Magi in Matthew 2 carefully, then you will notice that the guiding light disappeared for a while – which is why the Magi went to Herod's court to ask for advice. That inspired the chief priests and the scribes to look back in the Scriptures to see if there was any word that addressed their question – and sure enough, they found an answer in an ancient prophecy that Micah had given to the people of Judea.

As Thad mentioned in his sermon on Sunday, discernment can be tricky, and there is not always a clear "guiding light" to tell us what to do. Even when we do feel like God has given us a strong calling or inspiration,

that sense of clarity may flicker or disappear for a time, when we question whether we are doing the right thing. That can be quite unnerving!

In such situations, it is sometimes helpful to look back: to consider what God has said or done in the past, whether we look back to our own most formative religious experiences or to the stories of others who have gone before us. In recalling these experiences, we may recall and rediscover something that helps us see a way forward. After all, that is why we re-read the ancient prophecies every year. Even though they testify to events that have already occurred, they remind us of God's faithfulness and God's promises, and they take on new and fresh meaning when applied to our own day.

May God bless us all as we seek to discern the will of God during this holy season..

- Pastor Brian Bither

*Do you have some thoughts to share about this month's spiritual discipline? The Pastoral Team invites you to share your thoughts as one of the weekly milepost entries. Please email Sabrina, Frank, or Brian to explore this further.*

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

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Vision & Accountability Team: Brad Sommer, Jeanne Smucker, Wilma Bailey, Carl Rhine, Kim Johnson, Brian Bither

Please submit information by Thursday, 12pm, to [office@shalommennonite.com](mailto:office@shalommennonite.com)