



Anabaptism
at 500

LOOKING BACK,
LIVING FORWARD

JOURNEYING TOGETHER

A weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church

**** To view graphics and a more colorful version, open the attached pdf file. ****

JANUARY 8, 2025

CALENDAR

- Mon, January 13: *BRO @ Northwest Panera, 9236 N Michigan Rd
- Tue, January 14: Commission Chairs Zoom meeting, 6:30 pm
- Thu, January 16: Community Life Commission Zoom meeting, 6:00 pm
- Sun January 19: Carry-In after Sunday School. (see announcement under Community Life)
- Mon, January 20: *BRO @ Greenwood Panera, 789 US Highway 31 N, Greenwood, IN
- Tue, January 21: 500-year anniversary of the Anabaptist movement Zoom service, 7pm
(see announcement)
- Sun, January 26: Congregational meeting following Sunday School (see announcement under VAT)
- Mon, January 27: *BRO @ Downtown Panera, 430 N Mass Ave
- Sun, February 9: Game Night, 4:30 pm (see announcement under Community Life)
- Sat, May 17: Celebration of 500 years of Anabaptism @ First Mennonite
*BRO: Brian's Roving Office

ADMINISTRATION

Mike Wigginton (chair), Andrew Martin, Dan Rosenberger
Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

COMMUNITY LIFE: RELATIONSHIPS AT SHALOM


Linda Showalter (Chair), Bethany Martin, Beverly Smith

Celebrations!

Thu, January 9 – Jim Showalter
Sat, January 11 – Phoenix Dunn
Mon, January 13 – Beverly Smith

Sunday January 19th **carry-in** after Sunday School. We will be having our Winter Soup Sunday! We're asking folks to bring soup or salad or bread! And please bring dishes ready to set out.

Sunday, Game Night, Sunday, February 9, 4:30 pm

We hear there's a major football game on Sunday, February 9! There is a large TV in our fellowship hall that could show that game. There could be table games for those not interested in football. And, what if a simple soup/bread meal was added? And, since Valentine's Day is the following Friday, what if there were valentine cookies for the kids to decorate? 



There's a sign-up sheet on the back window for soup, bread/cheese/snacks, un-iced valentine cookies.

DISCIPLING: GROWING IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS

Carol Bixler (chair), Wilma Bailey, Carol Bither

Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither



The last day for the Christmas Reading Program for ages 5 – 9 will be this Sunday, Jan. 12.

Children's Classes

Hall Monitor:

Jan. 12: Joann Buerge
Jan. 19: Bob Love
Jan. 26: Linda Showalter

Teachers:

2-yr old class: Abri Hochstetler and Carol Weaver will co-teach
Pre-K and K: Beverly Smith will teach with Joyce Troyer as a substitute
Elementary: Frank Kandel and Rod Maust will co-teach
Youth: Jeanne Smucker and Brad Yoder will teach

Adult Sunday School Classes:

January 12: Salt & Light: Session #7 (page 38) John 15:9-17; Confession of Faith Article 18
<https://www.mennoniteusa.org/who-are-mennonites/what-we-believe/confession-of-faith/spirituality/>

January 19: 500th Anniversary Sunday - Salt & Light: Session #8 (page 44) Luke 22:14-23;
Confession of Faith Articles 12 & 13
<https://www.mennoniteusa.org/who-are-mennonites/what-we-believe/confession-of-faith/the-lords-supper/>

<https://www.mennoniteusa.org/who-are-mennonites/what-we-believe/confession-of-faith/foot-washing/>

January 26: Antiracism Sunday

OUTREACH: RELATIONSHIPS BEYOND SHALOM

(chair), Chuck Dunn, Becky Wigginton
Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DISCERNMENT TEAM

Angie Buller

VAT Representative: Nizeet Deiter; Pastoral Representative: Craig Oury

As we are starting a new year here at Shalom thank you to everyone who has agreed to serve on our commissions. We do have one spot that is yet to be filled. Please be praying for the right person who is willing to serve as chair of the Outreach Commission.

VISION AND ACCOUNTABILITY TEAM (VAT)

Frank Kandel (Chair), Nizeet Deiter (Vice-Ch) Sam Bixler, Charity Bauman, Grace Rhine
Pastoral Representatives: Brian Bither, Craig Oury

The Vision and Accountability Team (VAT) invites you to a brief congregational meeting on **Sunday, January 26, 2025** at 12:00 PM to vote on the proposed Shalom Mennonite Church Statement of Welcome (drafted June 18, 2024, attached). The proposed statement is a result of significant congregational discussion over the last year, and incorporates congregational feedback on several prior drafts. For additional context, please see the appendix, which includes an excerpt from VAT minutes.

This vote is an important step, but it does not mark the end of our conversations on this important topic. We acknowledge that unresolved questions remain, making ongoing dialogue essential. However the vote goes, together we still must thoughtfully explore key questions around same-sex marriage, leadership, and pastoral expectations. These are challenging, yet meaningful conversations that we must approach with humility, care, and respect for all perspectives. With the Holy Spirit's presence among us, we can navigate these discussions faithfully and lovingly as a congregation. We ask for your prayerful consideration and discernment as we approach this important moment together.

Voting Information:

Members will have the opportunity to vote in person by paper ballot or online at the meeting on January 26. Absentee voting will also be available, with details to follow soon. A 75% affirmative vote is required to approve the statement. Please mark your calendars and plan to participate.

Frank Kandel, Chair, for the Vision and Accountability Team

VAT Members: Vice-chair: Nizeet Deiter; Congregational Representatives: Grace Rhine, Charity Grimes Bauman, Sam Bixler; Pastors: Brian Bither and Craig Oury

Appendix

From the August 20 VAT meeting minutes:

"... VAT continued work on seeking a way forward with the Statement of Welcome for Shalom. Feedback from the congregational session was shared and discussed. VAT felt that the current statement draft elicited significant positive responses along with some continuing concerns to keep working through the process. Many/most responses from the congregation acknowledged that a "perfect" statement simply won't ever be possible and that this draft is, overall, a likely livable/acceptable compromise for the time being. A VAT member then recommended that perhaps we are nearly ready to bring the statement, in its present form, to the congregation for a vote acknowledging that we might not, at this moment in time, find a closer "fit". "After significant discussion VAT decided that the draft as of June 18, 2024 should be brought to the congregation for a vote. Specifics regarding timing for a vote were not yet firmly decided."

WORSHIP: OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Brittany Bither (chair), Justin Hochstetler, Jeanne Smucker
Pastoral Representative: Brian Bither

Last Sunday (1/5), Craig brought the message from Luke 2:41-52, looking at the faith habits or customs of Mary and Joseph.

This Sunday (1/12), Brian will begin a mini-series called "Lessons from History," which will begin by offering a history of the early church and will consider how the complicated legacy of the Christian Emperor Constantine revealed the need to separate church and state.

Next Sunday (1/19), will be the 500-year anniversary of Anabaptism! Join us as we celebrate our theological heritage and as Brian continues the "Lessons from History" series with a focus on the sixteenth century Anabaptist movement.

On this week's Prayer List;

Church: Today, let us pray for our Conference pastors - Joanne Gallardo and Sharon Yoder - with all of the responsibilities they carry and for Clayton Gladdish, the Conference administrator.

Organization: We will also be praying for Mennonite Women USA, which is a sisterhood of women following Jesus who engage the voices of all women, honoring our/their stories, practicing justice, and embracing healing. (Contact: CoraLyn Turentine)

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Due to frigid temperatures in the forecast for next Wednesday, we will cancel Wild Church. However, as you look out on the recently fallen snow, in gratitude, think about the benefits that we derive from it.

An end-of-the-year letter from Peter and Delicia is attached.

January 21, 2025 at 7pm - Next January, we will cross the 500-year anniversary of the Anabaptist movement, which began when Conrad Grebel, Felix Manz, George Blaurock, and several others defied the orders of Zurich City Council to baptize their newborn babies and instead baptized one another as adults, which they understood as a voluntary decision to commit their lives to Jesus. Shalom will be celebrating this milestone later in the year, but for anyone who wants to celebrate on the exact day, College Mennonite Church will be broadcasting a special service which you can watch by registering at [this link](#).



Join us at Mennonite Arts Weekend, **February 7-9, 2025**, in Cincinnati, Ohio. This weekend celebrates the creativity and discipline of Anabaptist Mennonite artists. Presentations by musicians, visual artists, writers, and craftspeople start on Friday evening and conclude with Sunday morning worship. Activities and workshops designed specifically for Pre-K children through high school are planned throughout the weekend. A nursery will be available. Find the list of presenters and registration and location information at <https://mennoniteartsweekend.org>.



Mennonite Disaster Service 75th Anniversary event in Wichita, KS on **February 14th and 15th**. This is a unique opportunity to attend a large MDS gathering of celebration. More at MDS.org Registration is required but there is no charge for the event, lunches, and dinners. Lodging is up to you. Jim S.

Save the date! Shalom and First Mennonite Church are jointly planning a celebration of 500 years of Anabaptism which will take place during the day on **Saturday, May 17** at First Mennonite. More details will be announced as they develop, but we would like to give everyone an opportunity to participate in this major anniversary milestone.

REFLECTION

The People of Shalom

In the new year I thought it may be nice to try something different with the reflections that appear in the Newsletter. I thought it would be nice to get to know our community and I heard there used to be something like this in previous years, so I thought let's try interviewing different people at Shalom. I am not sure how often these interviews will appear in Journeying Together, it won't be every week, but

perhaps once or twice a month. If you would like to interview a person of Shalom, please let me (Craig) know.



Bek Linsenmeyer has agreed to be my first test subject. Thank you Bek for answering my questions!

Where did you grow up: Norfolk, VA

What was your first car: Never had my own car, didn't learn to drive until after we came back from Sierra Leone, in 1974.

What is one of your favorite Scriptures: Ephesians 2:13 (and 14-17) But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near and that through the blood of Christ.

Do you have any favorite hymns: Praise I Will Praise you Lord, Give me Jesus, Great is Thy Faithfulness

What is an early memory you have of going to church: Sitting with Mother, brother, sister, watching for my (deacon) Dad to help with offering. The Singing! I remember it as the best part of church (also was probably the only thing a preschooler was interested in). Also on Sunday nights, wondering how long the hymn of invitation would last.

Is there a funny story you have about attending any church: On a Sunday night near Christmas the teacher in the children's group asked "who came on the camels?" With absolute certainty my hand shot up and I stated that "John Cameron Swayze, he came on the camels." Silence, then laughter. Explanation: I always watched the evening news with my Dad. John C. S. newscaster, advertised for Camel Cigarettes every night. Of course he came on the camels. The teacher sent the story to Reader's Digest. My folks only learned about my slant on the Wise Men when the teacher dropped by with a little gift from her Reader's Digest money. I think I was asked every Christmas while I was still at home "Rebecca, who came on the camels?"

How long have you been coming to Shalom Mennonite Church: We think it's going on three years now that we've been at Shalom.

One thing that you like about Shalom MC: If I'm limited to only one thing: Anabaptist theology.

One final question. Tell us something we may not know about you Bek: I'm a faithful patron of the Fort Ben Library.

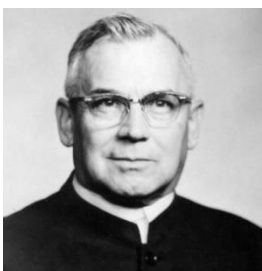
Thank you again Bek for being my test subject! I hope you all enjoy learning some things about Bek and camels. -- Craig

PERSON OF COLOR BIO



William and Clara Anderson, pictured here in plain Mennonite attire circa 1940, were early members of the Rocky Ridge Mennonite Mission near Quakertown, Pennsylvania. They were the first African Americans to join a Franconia Conference congregation, in 1932. That year, at the conference in Franconia meetinghouse, a resolution was passed: "That a colored applicant applying for admission at the Rocky Ridge Mission, be baptized and received into the Mennonite Church." This resolution, which was read from the pulpit in all conference congregations, established a standard of racial integration.

Forrest Moyer, Archivist, [Mennonite Heritage Center](#)



In 1955, white Mennonite church periodical editor Paul Erb wrote, "Perhaps in nothing have our Mennonite people so completely conformed themselves to a worldly idea as in this."

He was not referring to dancing, watching movies, cutting hair (women's! – not men's), wearing wedding rings, or any of the other worldly pursuits deemed anathema by Mennonite church leaders at the time. He was referring to racial discrimination and

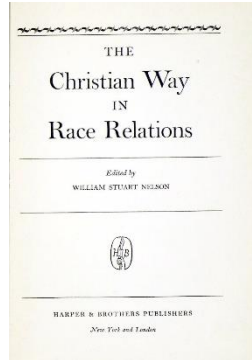
segregation.

He did so on the occasion of the release of the 1955 Mennonite uber race relations statement, "The Way of Christian Love in Race Relations." That carefully vetted document, largely a result of the wordsmithing provided by Guy F. Hershberger and Grant M. Stoltzfus, called the Mennonite Church community to repent of the sin of racism and embark on a "ministry of reconciliation" by working "against the evils of prejudice and discrimination wherever they may be found."

Read more here: <https://anabaptisthistorians.org/2019/10/03/state-of-the-race-a-short-history-of-mennonite-racial-statements-1940-1979/>



Guy F. Hershberger
with Martin Luther King
at Goshen College, 1960



Grant M. Stoltzfus



Need something? Have something to give away?

Does anyone know what happened to the 2 white, round tablecloths used for the communion tables?

ROUTINE INFORMATION

"SHARING OUR LIVES" weekly power point: We invite photo submissions of events / hobbies / interests in your lives. Send pictures to Linda Showalter at lindashowalter52@gmail.com by noon on Saturday. It will run before and after the service.

BULLETIN INFORMATION:

- Send announcements to Linda Showalter at lindashowalter52@gmail.com by Friday, 10 am.
- **Bulletins** are now attached with the Zoom link for those who are worshipping on Zoom. A link will continue to be sent out each week. If you have a prayer request or announcement you would like to share, **type your request live into the chat** feature on zoom and someone on the tech team will read it to the congregation at church.

JOURNEYING TOGETHER is compiled by Linda Showalter each week. Send information to office@shalommennonite.com by 5 pm on Wednesday.

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 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.

BUILDING USEAGE: If you want to use the building for a meeting or event, please check the online calendar first to be sure it's open, then email Craig at office@shalommennonite.com so he can add your item to the calendar. It's helpful to include the contact person and which parts of the building you expect to use.

YOUTUBE CHANNEL: In addition to our podcast, Shalom has a Youtube Channel. 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 youtube.com/@shalommennonite55.

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.

Journeying Together is a weekly email newsletter of Shalom Mennonite Church:

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Vision & Accountability Team: Nizeet Agular, Charity Bauman, Sam Bixler, Frank Kandel, Grace Rhine,
Pastors Brian Bither, Craig Oury