

RESPONDING

Hymn *We Come* VT 225

Prayer of Confession

Holy God,
Somewhere in our childhood we face pressure to outgrow awe.
We turn into adults who obsess over data and facts.
We praise those who have answers,
and assume that wonder is an answerless game.
Forgive us for closing that door to you.
Remind us that the kingdom of God belongs to children.
Teach us the ways of awe and wonder,
so that like Zechariah,
when we find ourselves speechless,
our first words will be words of praise.
With hearts open wide, we pray, amen.

Special offering

Offering Hymn *What Child Is This* VT 267

Prayers of the People

SENDING

Introductions, Announcements

Sending Song *Joy to the World* VT 240

Benediction and Passing the Peace

The peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Joy Versluis, Worship Leader
Joel Ross, Music Leader
Brian Bolton, Prayers
Michaela and Hetti Blosser,
Candlelighting

Theda Good, Peter Fairfield, Doug
Root, Leland Ropp, AV Tech
John Lehman, Offering/Mics

Advent Season

As we move through our Advent & Christmas series, we hope to create space for acknowledging the weariness of our world while celebrating God's closeness with great joy.

Today at Shalom

8:30 am: Christmas Pageant practice

10 am: Christmas Pageant during worship

4 pm: Caroling (meet at EMS)

5:30 pm: Christmas Party @ EMS

Coming up at Shalom:

Dec 17, 6:30-8 pm: Shalom Christmas Hymn Sing @ Stan & Susan Godshall's home

Dec 21, 5 pm: Longest Night Service @ EMS

Dec 24, 5 pm: Christmas Eve Service @ EMS

Announcements

Each year, we take a special offering during the Christmas pageant to benefit an outside organization not included in Shalom's budget. This year, the actors in the pageant selected the World Wildlife Fund, the world's leading conservation organization, as the beneficiary. The WWF funds scientific research, advocates for public policy, and provides education about endangered wildlife in more than 100 countries. Its priorities are the preservation of forests, marine life, freshwater ecosystems and wildlife; rebuilding food systems; and creating climate resiliency.

Christmas party tonight: Please join us for the Christmas party this evening here at EMS! Meet at 4 pm for caroling at VMRC, and 5:30 pm for a potluck and festivities. Please bring your own plates/bowls/cups/utensils and a finger food to share!

Longest Night Service: All are invited to a contemplative worship service (less than an hour), on December 21 at 5 pm, at EMS, to acknowledge the various ways we experience the darkness, and to hold together the more challenging parts of this season.

Budget Summary (December 8, 2024)

<u>ACTUAL</u>		<u>BUDGETED</u>	
Weekly Offering	\$5,129.22	Weekly Offerings	\$5,672.00
December	\$9,340.96	Average Monthly	\$ 24,579.00
YTD	\$263,943.66	YTD	\$277,928.00

Attendance: 174, **Zoom:** 8, **Youtube:** 10

Shalom welcomes donations online (scan the QR code or go to shalommc.org/give), via mail, or in-person using the offering box in the foyer.

Visitors: Welcome to Shalom! If you would like to be on our mailing list or be contacted by someone on the pastoral team, please send your name and email to office@shalommc.org. You can also scan the QR code to fill out a survey about yourself or access the giving link for Shalom.



Shalom Mennonite Congregation

December 15, 2024 | Third Sunday of Advent/Christmas Pageant

Covid/Flu Policy - Masks are optional at our gatherings, but please join virtually if you are sick or mask if you are unsure or being cautious.

Shalom Mennonite Congregation is a welcoming and inclusive community rooted in Jesus' radical call to love, justice, and peace.

We seek to grow our welcome and inclusion as we deepen our spirituality, build meaningful relationships, work for peace and social justice, and cultivate diverse community connections.

Visit our website at shalommc.org/vision to find out more about who we are, what we do, and what we strive for. You can also read there about our commitment statements regarding inclusion of many who identify as LGBTQIA+, and our policy and practices around maintaining an environment that protects children from abuse.

Office and Mailing Address: 1086A Smith Ave, Harrisonburg VA 22802

Phone: 540-432-1659

Staff Pastors: Brian Bolton, Georgia Metz, Krista Showalter Ehst; Administrative Assistant: Sandy Wenger; Bookkeeper: Joo Kim; Facilities Setup Coordinator: Norys Robles; Nursery & Safe Congregations Administrator: Ellen Miller.

Congregational Chair: Austin Sachs

Please contact any member of the Safe Congregation Team if you have questions or concerns regarding inappropriate sexual conduct, violence, intimidation, or physical abuse by child-care workers, teachers, or others in the congregation: Ellen Miller, 540-383-4209, Georgia Metz, 540-830-8490, Ross Erb, 540-435-0350; Doug Root, (814) 233-9870

GATHERING

Centering Bell

Gathering Song

O Come, All Ye Faithful

VT 241

Welcome

Call to Worship

One voice: With the Psalmist,

Many voices: let us shout for joy!

One voice: As the proverb advises,

Many voices: let a joyful heart brighten our face!

One voice: Like the baby in Elizabeth's womb,

Many voices: let us leap for joy at the coming of Christ!

One voice: As Jesus prayed for all his followers,

Many voices: let us share and complete his joy!

One voice: As the Holy Spirit moves in our midst,

Many voices: let the fruit of joy grow in us!

HEARING THE WORD

Christmas Pageant (*see insert*)

Advent Candle Lighting

One: How does a weary world practice joy?

Many: By dancing, and throwing birthday parties.

One: By hanging Christmas lights, and holding sleepy babies. By singing loudly, and looking for good news.

Many: By telling the story of Jesus, and showing up for our community.

One: There are a million ways to practice joy. So today we light the candle of joy as a reminder and a charge.

Many: With God's help, may we bring joy into a weary world. Amen.