



# Shalem Digest

Mental Health Network

Topics of Interest to friends of Shalem Mental Health Network

## From the Board

### What's in a Name?

Salem is on the cusp of becoming a new Salem—a dynamic mental health organization which seeks to equip and empower all of us to meet real emotional and mental health needs in the name of Jesus. New services, a three-year strategic plan, a Board committed to good governance, all are driven by Gospel values like *healing, reconciliation, community for all,* and *restoration,* in the service of our Redeemer.

Of course, this is not truly “new”. Salem has a long history, reaching back to the early 1960s, of dedication to these Gospel truths. Its original vision, captured in its original legal name, “Salem Christian Sanatorium Inc.,” was to build a Christian psychiatric hospital. Many people gave sacrificially—including the gifting of tracts of land—for this dream to be realized. Though the hospital did not materialize, the dream of reaching people with mental health needs never died.

The Gospel values that define what we do are captured beautifully in the name “Salem”. “Salem” is a rich biblical word which means “wholeness”, “restoration”, “peace”.

Undergirding the “new” Salem is an ethic of partnership and collaboration—in the last four years new partnerships have developed with various mental health agencies and faith communities throughout Ontario.

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# Launched!

A new name, a new look

New services

A new website

(check us out at [www.shalemnetwork.org](http://www.shalemnetwork.org))

A rekindled organization

*The same vision: reaching people  
in emotional or psychiatric  
distress in the name of the Gospel*

*Renewing, Restoring, Rebuilding*

HOPE

At Shalem, we seek to help define a new relationship between communities, including faith communities, and professional mental health services.

*Turn the page to learn about practical tools we offer to help further equip you and your church to respond to emotional and psychiatric needs* ➡

## Jesus calls us to follow him.

At Shalem, we believe that means following Jesus to where he has gone and continues to go, namely to the margins of society—to the disenfranchised, the stigmatized, the isolated. Following him therefore means reaching out to those who are hurting. But it also means reaching in—going to those areas within ourselves that we often try to repress because of deep pain, sorrow or trauma. Both forms of reaching involve grappling with difficult things that we prefer not to face. But as we move, we realize that reaching out and reaching in are surprisingly connected. And we have the promise of Jesus' abiding presence, his profound and effective blessing.

Shalem's services offer individuals, families and congregations some tools needed for that journey.

Many of our services are available across Ontario; some are offered in the greater Hamilton and Durham regions. I invite you to check us out and to contact us!



*Mark Vander Vennen*  
Mark Vander Vennen, MA, M.Ed, R.S.W.  
Executive Director

Look for other aspects of service, such as the use of Restorative Justice in school settings, on our website, [www.shalemnetwork.org](http://www.shalemnetwork.org). All of our services are guided by an ambitious three-year Strategic Plan (available on request) and a Board committed to good governance.

Shalem also looks forward to support from Kerncliffe Heights, a Christian senior's residential community being planned for Waterdown, Ontario.

As you consider these tools for yourself and your church, we covet your prayers and your financial support. Above all, thank you for what you already do in the name of Christ with those who are most vulnerable among us.

# At a Glance: Tools Reaching Out

## Faith-based WrapAround

In the old days, when a barn burned, members of the community rallied around, and each then made a contribution in his or her own area of strength, ability and time. Today barn-raising is rare. But people's lives can undergo life-shattering, persistent challenges. *Wrap-Around* is the practice of "people-raising".

*Faith-based WrapAround* is meant for persons or families who face complex challenges at the same time—perhaps mental illness combined with poverty, special needs, medical issues, risk of homelessness, significant behavioural difficulties, or other challenges.

*Faith-based WrapAround* provides your church with the tools you need to support people in your faith community who face multiple, complex challenges—needs which are persistent and tend to burn out your church's caregivers.

Shalem is rapidly becoming a national leader in *WrapAround*. To find out more, check out our website at [www.shalemnetwork.org](http://www.shalemnetwork.org).

To inquire about your church becoming a *WrapAround* church, contact Shalem's Director of WrapAround Services, Elske De Visch Eybergen, at [elske@shalemnetwork.org](mailto:elske@shalemnetwork.org).



## Restorative Justice Hosting

With the *Hosting Program*, faith communities of all faiths—Christian, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Jewish and other—act as hosts of restorative processes that happen in their local communities. Hosting connects deeply with Biblical themes of hospitality and sanctuary.

Currently faith communities recruited by Shalem are hosting Family Group Decision-Making meetings run by professionals - meetings where extended family members create a plan of care for a child who otherwise will become a permanent Crown Ward of the Children's Aid Society. Faith communities provide space that has multiple rooms, a kitchen and a nursery. Shalem provides an orientation for faith community volunteers and follow-up support, and ensures that all legal and liability issues are covered.

*Hosting* is an ideal way for a faith community to live out its mission in its local community. Become the host of reconciliation processes that happen in your community!

For more information contact, our Executive Director, Mark Vander Vennen, at [markvv@shalemnetwork.org](mailto:markvv@shalemnetwork.org) or 905-531-7227.

## RE-create

*RE-create* is Shalem's open arts studio in downtown Hamilton, where street-involved youth can begin to reconnect to themselves, others, and their community through the creative arts while gaining valuable life and work skills. From painting to poetry, performance art, photography and other multimedia projects, *RE-create* offers an opportunity for street-involved youth to try a variety of art forms under the guidance of local established artists and members of the wider arts community.



*RE-create* works in partnership with the community, government, local area churches, schools, local business and individuals to facilitate social change. *RE-create* is guided by a Steering Group of interested community members.

*RE-create* is always looking for volunteers for a variety of tasks. To find out more, go to our website at [www.shalemnetwork.org](http://www.shalemnetwork.org) or contact *RE-create*'s Artistic Director, Betty Brouwer, at [re.create@sympatico.ca](mailto:re.create@sympatico.ca).

# Available to Your Congregation

## Reaching In

### Congregational Assistance Plan (CAP)

(CAP) provides each member of your congregation who wants it up to six counselling sessions per year from a highly qualified local Christian therapist—anonously and at no cost to the client. After a successful three-year pilot project involving five churches across southern Ontario, we are pleased to be able to offer CAP to any interested church.

Shalem's CAP program alters the Employee Assistance Plan (EAP), a counselling program widely offered by companies to their employees as a health care benefit, to apply to churches. Interested? Contact our Director of CAP Services, Marg Smit-Vandezande, M.S.W., R.S.W. She can be reached at margsv@shalemnetwork.org or 905-515-4758.



### FaithCARE (Communities Affirming Restorative Experiences)

Shalem has assembled some of the best practitioners of restorative justice and conflict transformation in Ontario to help your church transform conflict, restore relationships and become a "conflict-friendly", restorative congregation. One of the mysteries of faith is that some of the most difficult, painful and damaging conflicts between people take place in church settings. Likely almost all of us know of congregation-based disputes that have left people hurt and embittered—perhaps even questioning the faith itself.

For more information, check out our website, [www.shalemnetwork.org](http://www.shalemnetwork.org). To inquire about the FaithCARE service, contact our Executive Director, Mark Vander Vennen, M.S.W., R.S.W., at [markvv@shalemnetwork.org](mailto:markvv@shalemnetwork.org), or 905-531-7227.

### Sunshine from Darkness

In your quest to support people with mental illness in your church, sometimes what's needed is good, reliable information. Shalem's *Sunshine from Darkness* offers information about specific mental illnesses, about where to go for support, and about navigating the mental health system. Our website has a section devoted to providing you with such materials. And Shalem's Director of Mental Health Resources, June Zwier, M.Div., will tailor-make information at your request. June has a passion for helping churches become supportive communities around mental health needs.

Contact her at [junez@shalemnetwork.org](mailto:junez@shalemnetwork.org) or 905-623-9901.



### Shalem Christian Counselling Services

*Shalem Christian Counselling Services* is made up of a team of Christian counsellors committed to offering a high standard of service to the greater Hamilton and Durham regions.

Our counselling service seeks to support individuals, couples and families of any age around a broad range of issues, such as Anxiety, Depression, Conflict, Anger, Grief, Abuse, Communication, Couple or Family difficulties, Parenting, Self-esteem, Separation/Divorce and Sexuality.

Our forms of counselling include traditional talk therapy and art therapy. We are client-centered in our approaches and respect each person's journey. We will partner with you to create a treatment plan that best addresses your areas of concern.

Overseeing *Shalem Christian Counselling* is our new Clinical Director, Jennifer

Bowen, M.Div, R.M.F.T. Jennifer is experienced working with a diverse population, including individuals, couples and families, on issues related to recovery from abuse, trauma and addictions.



Contact Jennifer at [jenniferb@shalemnetwork.org](mailto:jenniferb@shalemnetwork.org)

### Linking Lives/Building Attachment

A specialty within our counselling work is *Linking Lives/Building Attachment*. It is well-known among child protection services that a sizable number of foster parents and adoptive parents are people of faith. At Shalem, we wish to encourage and support this practice. For foster,

adoptive and other parents in your church, *Linking Lives* provides cutting-edge mental health counselling support for children and youth who struggle with attachment disorders due to early trauma and neglect, and their caregivers. *Linking Lives* is available at both our Hamilton and Durham offices. To find out more, go to our website at [www.shalemnetwork.org](http://www.shalemnetwork.org).

*Linking Lives/Building Attachment* is directed by Betty Brouwer, M.Sc., R.C.A.T. She has completed the advanced level training with Dr. Daniel Hughes, a leading North American practitioner and trainer in attachment therapy. Contact Betty at [bettyb@shalemnetwork.org](mailto:bettyb@shalemnetwork.org).



To inquire about counselling or to book an appointment call:

Hamilton: 905-528-0353 or 866-347-0041    Durham: 905-623-9901



## Farewell to Judy Cook

Judy Cook served Shalem for 22 years, most of them as Clinical Director. She played that role with utmost distinction. Judy consistently brought to Shalem high degrees of clinical professionalism and personal integrity. She was fully committed to Shalem and its work. Above all, she was passionate about bringing the healing of Christ to those who are hurting, particularly in relation to the impact of abuse.



Judy has moved into a new chapter of her life—retirement—and we miss her. Happily, she has not entirely disappeared: she has agreed to continue as one of our FaithCARE providers (see p. 3). We thank her for her service and wish her every good thing in this new phase of her life.

Mark Vander Vennen

Shalem is committed to best practices in mental health and is a member of Family Service Ontario. All services are offered in strictest confidence.

Shalem Digest is a publication of Shalem Mental Health Network, a non-profit, charitable organization. RN 13056 6011 RR00011

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## From the Board

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Salem staff have found a greater openness to the perspectives of faith in the mental health world than at any time in the past 20 years. Praise God for this! We view it as God's invitation—even directive—to seize this opportunity to help spread the Good News.

In the course of this partnership work, the name "Salem" has become an issue. For almost all people who have been born and raised in Canada, "Salem" is inextricably linked to the witch-burning episodes that took place in Salem, Massachusetts in early American history. That story is taught in grade schools and has become deeply embedded in popular culture. The association of "Salem" to this story is ingrained, visceral, and widespread. It comes up repeatedly in Salem's interactions with mental health professionals—people who are eager to be supportive of Salem but who have an immediate and forceful reaction to the name. Of course, the visionary European immigrants who started Salem could not have known of this association. The sad irony is that some of the so-called witches at that time may have had mental illness.

For the past three years, the Salem Board has engaged in an extensive search for a new name that would express the same life-giving values but would not generate the widespread visceral association to the witch-trials and burnings. To that end, the Board recommended this solution to our

members: to reclaim the word "Salem" by returning to the original biblical Hebrew word "Shalem" (pronounced ShaLAME). "Salem" is the Anglicized version of "shalem". "Shalem" affirms, honours and recaptures the beautiful vision of what God intends for God's people and the beautiful vision of the original founders of Salem. At the same time, it also together bypasses the popular culture association with witch-burning. It affirms continuity while also positioning us to meet new challenges by means of engagement with others.

We are grateful that the members unanimously approved adopting the new name at a special membership meeting on February 19, 2009, and that the Ontario government has approved the legal name change.

On June 15, God willing, we will hold our Annual General Meeting (see Box below). Please come, celebrate and give thanks for what God is doing in our midst! We as a Board give thanks for your support and partnership in this work.

Yours in Christ's service,

*The Board of Directors:*

*Marten Mol, Nenke Jongkind,  
Peter Dale, Linda Thompson, John  
Lutgendorff, Sidney Harkema,  
Katie Karsten, Jeff Neven*

## Don't miss Shalem's Annual General Meeting

**Monday, June 15, 2009**

7:30 - 9:00 pm

**CrossPoint Christian Reformed Church**

444 Steeles Avenue West, Brampton, ON L6Y 0J3

Please join us to celebrate and review the activities of 2008, and to introduce new programs and staff.

There will also be an update from Kerncliffe Heights. Kerncliffe's aim is to build a Christian seniors retirement complex, whose purpose in part is to financially support the work of Shalem.

Become a member of Shalem at [www.shalemnetwork.org/Members.html](http://www.shalemnetwork.org/Members.html)