



These pictures highlight some of the special moments in Vacation Bible School . Thanks to Lissa Turner for the pictures and to all who helped out with the activities.

Arbor Covenant Newsletter

Arbor Covenant Church Madison Wisconsin

August 2015

Not Just a House, a Household

Tamsin and I are in the process of buying and moving into a new home. It's been an exhausting, exciting, and sobering experience. For the last few months we've been spending an inordinate amount of time thinking about numbers of bedrooms, the size of yards, the age of roofs, not to mention down payments, closing costs, and mortgage rates.

We've had a lot to consider. We've been looking for a home where our family can grow, a place where our lives can happen, something that is move-in ready, but also with the potential for us to make it our own. I'm pleased to say that we found one a few weeks ago and if everything continues to go as planned we will be moving in by the end of August.

It's got pretty much everything we've been looking for; a few bedrooms, a garage, a backyard, it's close enough to Tamsin's job that we can continue to be a one-car family. The foundation and the roof, the furnace and the wiring, all seem to be in good condition. As a physical structure it's more than adequate; but I've been reminded recently that a home is more than four walls and a roof, it's more than pipes and plumbing and electrical and HVAC and bathrooms and kitchens. It's more than a physical edifice. A real household is a place for relationships.

Scripture points this out. In both the Hebrew scripture and the New Testament, the imagery and reality of household are employed to explain God's work in the world. In 2 Samuel God establishes a household through David's family with which God reaches out to the world. In Ephesians, the Apostle Paul describes the Church as the household of God, where divisions cease and new family is formed. Houses in God's story are more than buildings they are units of love, neighborliness and human relationships.

The words for house, in Greek *oikos* and in Hebrew *bayith*, both imply more than a mere physical structure. They are words with relational connotations, words that imply belonging and kinship. They reference a place where a person's identity is derived not just by the walls they live inside. They imply the life inside the walls, the relational dynamics that exist under a roof; the laughter that fills the living room, the stories that are told around meals, the love between the people who live in a structure, and the love that extends to guests and neighbors. These are words with a dynamic collective sort of meaning that include the joy and grace and hospitality that animate a physical edifice. And as much attention and energy as any of us spend trying to find or make or maintain an ideal physical space, it's always these things — joy, grace, love, hospitality, laughter, stories, identity — that really make a household.

We're excited about our new home. We are grateful to have found it and grateful that we have the means to afford it. It's got just about everything we were hoping for and we have a vision for ways to make it even better. But the physical structure will never be what defines our home. The life that is lived inside it — the relationships strengthened and formed, the love and hospitality shared — will always be what makes our household.

Pastor Peter



Accumulation of the Ordinary

I was reading the Sunday paper before heading to Arbor this morning. One article sprang from the pages. The article was "A Quiet Act of Decency Soars over Messages of Hate." The article was about something Leroy Smith, Director of the South Carolina Department of Public Safety, had done at the South Carolina Capitol building. Leroy is an African American who leads in South Carolina what we in Wisconsin call the State Patrol. The setting was counter demonstrations by Loyal White Knights of the Ku Klux Klan and by Black Educators for Justice. One of the older Klan demonstrators in a black shirt of the National Socialist Movement complete with Swastikas was taken ill in the hot sun. Leroy went down the steps to help the man into the air conditioned Capitol and in the process a picture was taken and it went viral. To me this spoke of God's presence in a hateful situation through an ordinary action.

An hour later I was sitting in worship listening to Pastor Peter talking about five very ordinary barley loaves and two very ordinary fish (perhaps tilapia) that became food for 5,000 people. The Pastor's message was about seeing and living the small, ordinary ways God lives in us and through us. The accumulation of the ordinary is equal to God's goodness.

As we enter the second half of summer and look ahead to the fall, I'm thinking of the ordinary things, and perhaps a few things that are not so ordinary, that we are doing at Arbor. I must admit that I'm a bit more focused than I might otherwise be as I've been asked by the Leadership Team to be Chair this year (taking over for Jan Gietzel after three energetic years),

The Leadership Team and Pastor Peter will be meeting on August 6 to work on plans for the fall. Some activities are already taking shape. The Sunday Morning Small Group is planning a series of discussions and presentations by people in the congregation and outside of the congregation. You might think of some of these being our version of Ted talks of how we live out God's love in our everyday living including in our jobs. Joyce Boggess and I will be planning these sessions. The Thursday evening small group study is re-starting after Labor Day, and new participants are always welcome. We will be organizing meetings of various sizes and settings to share our experiences with LGBTQ friends, family, and neighbors and how we take on this timely issue as a congregation. Children's Church planning is underway with a kick-off Sunday for the fall on Sept 13.... And with Holly's departure for Stuart's new job in Appleton we need a new teacher to join Fabio, Ruth, Lissa, and me. Think about it.

And speaking of children of all ages, there are plans afoot for an overnight canoe trip on Friday and Saturday September 4 and 5 on the Wisconsin River. Please see Peter or me if you are interested or have a canoe to lend.

So look for the small, ordinary ways God lives in us and how we can share God's goodness. I saw many examples last week at Vacation Bible School, and I'm sure they will continue on the Mission Trip to the Pine Ridge Reservation (August 7 to 14).

Peace, Mark Hanson



Leadership Team Officers

The Leadership Team met in July to elect officers for the next year. Mark Hanson has agreed to be the chair. Mike Johnson will serve as Vice Chair. Ulrika Swanson will continue as the secretary and Deb Levin will take over as Treasurer.

Retiring members of the leadership team include Dale Hallblade and Susan Corrado.

New Members of the leadership team are Kris Brown and Joyce Boggess.





Vacation Bible School

*“The Harvest is Plentiful
but the Workers Were Many”*

More than 35 children from Arbor Covenant Church, Fountain of Life Covenant Church, the Early Childhood Learning Center, and the neighborhood met at Arbor Covenant last week for this year's summer's VBS which highlighted Bible stories about God's people who showed hospitality and welcome to others and the positive results they effected. Through four Biblical stories the children learned how to show guests hospitality, to receive strangers, care for others, seek peace, comfort one another, and meet Jesus.

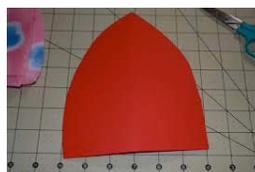
Each participant received a backpack and school supplies –The backpacks and school supplies provide students with much needed equipment for school plus it offers hope for a bright new school year. (Over 50 backpacks were donated by Arbor church members) Many - many thanks to all the many-many volunteers from both Arbor and Fountain of Life!

Blessings,
Joyce

Pine Ridge Indian Reservation Trip

On August 7, 2015 eight missionaries - six Arbor Church members and two Fountain of Life Church members will be traveling to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation for the second time and will spend 7 days installing bunk beds, building outhouses, skirting trailer/steps/decks. The weeklong trip is divided between service and cultural immersion and building relationships with the Oglala Lakota people. Cultural immersion activities are scheduled in afternoons and evenings, including guest speakers, Lakota crafts, tours, museums, and social gatherings with Lakota friends. Arbor missionaries to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation include; **Peter Morris, Mark Hanson Joyce Boggess, Sue and Roger Springman. Plus Gloria Farr and her 15 year old son Arnold, members of our sister church, Fountain of Life.**

Thanks to **Sue & Deb and Company** for making caps for the children of reservation – they really enjoyed them last year.



Last year we brought fleece hats for the residents at Pine Ridge. Not only were they welcomed, they were needed. This year Sue Pecotte and Deb Levin organized two sewing dates. Sue showed up at the first meeting with 60 completed hats. (WOW!). Others made 15 and the second date was cancelled. That is quite the effort – Arbor Rocks!!

Karin Brown marries Ryan Colby

Karin Brown and Ryan Colby were married in St. Joseph MI on July 18. Karin is the daughter of Phil and Kris Brown. When they return from their honeymoon, Karin will begin a new job as the Head Men's and Women's Swim Coach at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania. Ryan is the Operations Manager for Uber in Boston and will be moving to their Philadelphia office this fall.



Edison - Olive Wedding

Jocelyn Rene Edison and Andre Devon Olive III will be married on August 22, 2015 at 3 :00 pm at Arbor Covenant Church. Jocelyn is the granddaughter of Joyce Boggess.

Hallblade 50th Anniversary

Congratulations to Ruth and Dale Hallblade who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on July 31. They are an amazing couple and we are so privileged to have them in our congregation. Individually and together they are such a testament to Christian love.



Update on Duane and Harriet Anderson

Duane and Harriet are back in their home. Harriet has a new knee to show for her time away. They welcome visitors, cards, phone calls, emails and prayers.

ARBOR HAS BEEN BLESSED

Arbor Covenant has been blessed to have Stuart and Holly McCoy as part of our family twice in the 28+ years of their Covenant ministry. Together they served Grace Covenant Church in Chicago's Northwest side from 1986 to 1996 and revived a declining and changing congregation into a vibrant church with younger families and the strength to reach out into the world around it. They later served Evangelical Covenant Church in Providence, RI where they led and were part of anti-human trafficking efforts that resulted in new legislation at the state level. Stuart and others in the church sent a strong message saying, "We will not tolerate our young people being permitted to dehumanize and objectify themselves. We will do what it takes to be represented accordingly by our lawmakers." Many of their Evangelical Covenant membership signed a petition in favor of the anti-prostitution and trafficking laws

After attending North Park Seminary for Christian Education, Holly led and helped several churches develop children's programming. Holly relates that "her heart sings when children WANT, EXPECT and ASK to go to church. And when they are at church, they ENJOY themselves and feel that they are at HOME in worship, in children's church and in fellowship." Her contributions to our young children will not be forgotten by fellow teachers, parents, and most of all, the kids including the McCoy's daughter, Kayla. Of particular note was Holly's work on our Children's Christmas program, children's musical presentations and several interpretive dance performances by our young girls.

While a part of our family for the last two years, Stuart has been the chaplain at Mercy Hospice Care in Janesville. Recently, he accepted a chaplain position in a much larger hospice care system in Appleton, WI. So again, we will ask God's blessings on this wonderful family and consider that although they are again moving, they will always be part of the Arbor family.



Fall Small Groups



The Sunday Morning Small Group – Begins September 13 at 9:15 am

For the past three years a small group of adults have met at 9:15 on Sunday morning to discuss a variety of topics each month. The teachers/moderators/ facilitators explored a variety of topics and led participants in conversational formats. The topics offered were Bible-based, people-driven, need-sensitive and reflected the latest happenings and thinking in the world. Some topics were led by facilitators; other topics were vehicles for conversations. If you have an idea for a topic or would like to facilitate a conversation please let Mark Hanson or Joyce Boggess know by August 22, 2015.

Thursday Evening Small Group Begins September 17 at 7 pm. At Dan and Debby Meyers' home

This group meets weekly at the Meyers' home and welcomes others to join them as they study various topics chosen by the group. Please see Debby or Dan if interested in joining.

Beginning this fall and extending into the winter, Arbor Covenant will be conducting a series of conversations regarding human sexuality and the Church's relationship to the LGBTQ community (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer). These conversations will include monthly forums held after church and monthly Wednesday evening supper conversations. In addition to these gatherings, I am more than willing to meet with anyone individually or in small groups to address concerns or simply continue the discussion. Look for more information in the coming months as the conversation begins.

Human Sexuality Discussions Fall Schedule

September 20 @11:45-12:45— **First Human Sexuality Discussion Forum (our stories)**

September 30 @6:30-8:00PM — **First Human Sexuality Discussion Simple Supper (our stories)**

October 11 @11:45-12:45 — **Second Human Sexuality Discussion Forum (scripture)**

October 21 @6:30-8:00PM — **Second Human Sexuality Discussion Simple Supper (scripture)**

November 8 @11:45-12:45 — **Third Human Sexuality Discussion Forum (congregational/denominational distinctive & policies)**

November 18 @6:30-8:00PM — **Third Human Sexuality Discussion Simple Supper (congregational/denominational distinctive & policies)**

December 6 @ 11:45-12:45 — **Fourth Human Sexuality Discussion Forum (our hopes & fears)**

December 16 @ 6:30-8:00PM — **Fourth Human Sexuality Discussion Simple Supper (our hopes & fears)**

January 10 @11:45-12:45 — **Fifth Human Sexuality Discussion Forum (the inevitable loose ends)**

January 20 @6:30-8:00PM — **Fifth Human Sexuality Discussion Simple Supper (the inevitable loose ends)**

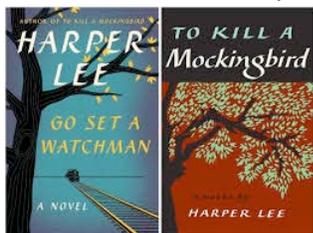
Book Discussion Group – A New Opportunity for the Arbor Community

Each spring, Covenant Women hosts a book discussion group and compiles a book guide that consists of recommended titles from members and friends. This year the finished product had more contributors and more titles than ever before. This is a wonderful resource – and many members and friends use it to guide their annual reading. Until now, discussions of books have been informal and usually between two or three people. Perhaps some discussions throughout the year would allow people to talk together.

We propose to offer a few discussion evenings throughout the next year that all have some social justice themes. I would like to have a multigenerational discussion with men and women of all ages. Perhaps we can read a book every few months. Anyone can attend with the expectation that everyone is interested in discussing the book. It would be great if you want to tell friends and neighbors about this. You certainly don't need to go to every discussion – but are free to pick and choose books that interest you.

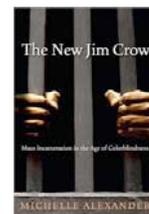
Our proposed books for this coming year were all discussed last spring and many people have already read and recommended them.

Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson - This book will be the Go Big Read this fall (The UW-Madison Common Reading), The author will be speaking on campus October 26. Stevenson has devoted his legal career to defending people on death row. Many of the issues discussed were new to me and I found the book very compelling.



Harper Lee's Go Set a Watchman. This is the sequel to To Kill a Mockingbird and sets the story of To Kill a Mockingbird in a new context. Discussion would center around the issues of racism in the novel. It was published July 16, 2015.

The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness – Michelle Alexander. This is a critically acclaimed look at Racism in the Justice and Prison Systems and has been recommended by many members of the church.



We are open to suggestions of other books as well as ideas for meeting formats.

Should we have a leader for each meeting? Should we meet in homes? We would like to hear from you!

We are thinking that we should start with Just Mercy and discuss it Wednesday October 7 at Jan and Chuck Gietzel's condo. Then, if there was a group that wants to go to hear the author speak on October 26 – there could be a follow up discussion.

Please see Kris or Jan if you want to talk about this. And please read Just Mercy if you are interested in joining the discussion in October.

Kris Brown and Jan Gietzel

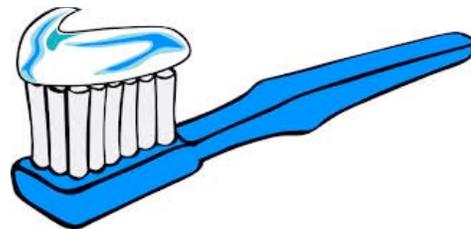
	Host	Nursery	Children's Church	Lay Reader	Projector
August 2	Amanda/Matthew Fledderjohann	Ulrika Swanson	Fabio Mora	Kris Brown	Debby Meyer
August 9	Ruth/Dale Hallblade	Susan Corrado	Fabio Mora	Rod Johnson	Mark Hanson
August 16	Deb McGill/Glenn Hanson	Hannah Lund Mora	Ruth Hallblade	Ulrika Swanson	Susan Corrado
August 23	Elrene/Ken Lund	Joyce Boggess	Lissa Turner	Ruth Hallblade	Michelle Stachowiak
August 30	Kris/Phil Brown	Michelle Stachowiak	Fabio Mora (?)	Debby Meyer	Chuck Gietzel
September 6 (Labor Day)	Hannah/Fabio Mora	Matthew Fledderjohann	Ruth Hallblade	Mike Johnson	Debby Meyer

August Birthdays

8/2 Tom Collins
8/8 Sue Engstrom
8/8 Dan Kessenich
8/9 Susan Corrado
8/13 Brenda Gonzales
8/13 Ruth Hallblade
8/20 Jim Stehley
8/22 Ulrika Swanson
8/26 Roger Springman
8/28 Paul Johnson

August Anniversaries

8/2 Dan and Debby Meyer
8/8 Carin and Bill Goettler
8/26 Tom and Lynda Collins



The Product of the Month for the Personal Essentials Pantry is a toothbrush. If you can donate one or more of these, they would be appreciated. Donations should be placed in the bin in the narthex. Thank you.

Please let Jan Gietzel or Kris Brown know birthday and/or anniversary information. We would like to include you in the monthly list.

August Calendar

2 10:25 Gathering 10:30 Worship Communion DeaconFund	3	4	5	6 6:30 Leadership Team	7 10 am-1 pm Pers. Essent Pantry MISSION	8 TRIP
9 10:25 Gathering 10:30 Worship Communion TO PINE	10 RIDGE	11 RESERVATION	12	13	14 10 am-1 pm Personal Essentials Pantry	15
15 10:25 Gathering 10:30 Worship Communion	17	18	19	20 10:30 am Community Meals at Luke House 5:30-7:30 pm Personal Essentials Pantry	21 10 am-1 pm Personal Essentials Pantry	22
23 10:25 Gathering 10:30 Worship Communion	24	25	26	27	28 4:30-7:30 a.m. Homeless Shelter * 10 am-1 pm Personal Essentials Pantry	29
30 10:25 Gathering 10:30 Worship Communion	31	1	2	3	4 10 am-1 pm Personal Essentials Pantry	5 CANOE TRIP WISCONSIN RIVER
6 10:25 Gathering 10:30 Worship Communion Deacon Fund	7 LABOR DAY				*Shelter Volunteers Ken Lund and Doug Keillor	

SAVE THESE DATES

- September 4-5- Overnight canoe trip on Wisconsin River
- September 13 – Rally Sunday – post-church cookout
- September 20 – First Human Sexuality Discussion 11:45 a.m.
- September 30 – First Human Sexuality Discussion Simple Supper 6:30-8:00 pm.
- October 7 – First Arbor Book Discussion – at Gietzels’ home
- January 31 – Dinner and Annual Meeting 5 pm