

ARBOR COVENANT CHURCH
MADISON WISCONSIN

Newsletter

September 2015



Human Sexuality Discussions

Over the coming months, Arbor Covenant will conduct a series of discussions. We'll be talking about human sexuality and our congregation's posture to the LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, transgender, queer) community. Human sexuality is complicated, it's beautiful, it's messy, it's an expression of love and intimacy and often times a reflection of a person's brokenness. Because it is so complex, we'll be considering multiple facets; we'll be studying scripture, exploring church and denominational policies, engaging some science, hearing each other's fears and concerns, hesitations and hopes. This conversation will extend in multiple settings through the end of the calendar and perhaps beyond with Sunday forums after worship, simple supper conversations on Wednesday nights, and personal conversations over cups of coffee or lunches. These months are meant to intentionally carve out space to listen to each other, to the voices of our neighbors and to encounter the Spirit's movement, there is no other agenda.

Crucial to our approach is the understanding that when we talk about the LGBTQ community, we are not merely talking about an "issue." When we talk about this community, we are not talking about an abstraction or just a political cause. We are talking about people. We are talking about friends, family, neighbors, coworkers, etc. We are talking about people we care about, people who have dreams and hopes, who long for authentic human relationships, belonging and wholeness.

Because we are talking about people and not just theories or opinions, or even our most deep felt and honest convictions, we'll begin our discussion with an opportunity to share our stories with one another; stories of friends and loved ones who have challenged or shaped our thinking; stories of friends and loved ones that have struggled to understand themselves or find acceptance, stories of ways we've walked beside these friends and loves ones, stories of the frustrations we've felt when we've been ill-equipped to do this or have offered people we care about indelicate words.

The first conversation will happen after worship on September 20th. It is for members and friends of our congregation who feel comfortable sharing in a larger group. Space will be made for the same conversation to happen on Wednesday September 30, this is meant for people who may want to share and listen in a smaller gathering. **(This will be the same set up each month — Sunday forum conversations and Wednesday supper discussion will essentially be the same — while all are welcome at both, attending one will allow you to participate).** If neither of these settings feel comfortable for you, I'll be available to meet with you individually to recap the conversation and to hear your stories.

Pastor Peter

Eight intrepid volunteers participated in this year's mission trip to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. The Indian Nation that we worked with is the Oglala Lakota (a Sioux tribe in English speak). The organization that we worked through is Re-Member. The participants in this year's trip are shown in the picture below on their last evening on the Reservation. They are from left to right Roger Springman, Sue Springman, Joyce Boggess, Peter Morris, Arnold Farr, Mark Hanson, Gloria Farr, and Betty Carroll. Arnold and Gloria are a son and mother team from Fountain of Life Covenant and Betty is an old friend of Joyce's from Freeport.

One of the highlights of the trip for me was the day spent at Henry Red Cloud's Renewable Energy Center (see picture). We worked all morning with Henry's son Silas making large, adobe-like bricks for a new home. That afternoon, we set the foundation forms for a pour coming the next day. Another highlight was hearing the description of how the Lakota think of children. "We build our lives around our children." Children are the precious things.

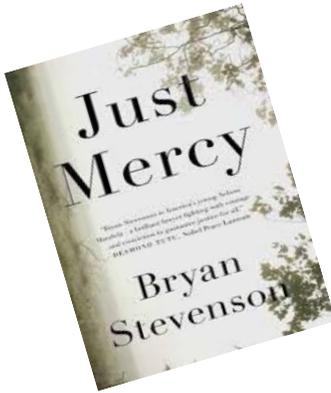
2015 Mission Trip to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation



So many thoughts come to mind that I hardly know where to begin. As a second year volunteer, it was familiar and in an odd way comforting to be back. As we came before the school year began, we worked with a much younger group on average this year compared to last when we participated after school had begun. The engagement with Lakota friends went further this year, with many hours spent working with adult Lakota men that I did not experience last year. Hearing of the seven major Lakota rituals, including the pow wow (see picture) was transformative. We heard more and different stories on the historic crimes these original residents of North America experienced, and we heard more on their efforts to claw back their traditions, knowledge, and language. As Jim Gustafson our friend and missionary in Thailand would say, God was present here before we arrived. God's love is evident.

Re-Member continues to work forward with the Lakota and hopes to have its expanded facilities ready by 2018. The expansion includes work and training in sustainable agriculture in the form of private and community gardens. I think it fair to say that we received blessings greater than we gave.

Mitakuye Oyasin (We are One).
Mark Hanson



“There is perhaps no greater evidence of injustice and inequality in our society than the brutality, unfairness and racial bias displayed by our criminal justice system,” (Professor William Jones)



You are invited – to a book discussion on Bryan Stevenson’s book Just Mercy

This fall we are going to start a new book discussion group at Arbor – It is open to anyone – anyone from teenagers to senior citizens is welcome. The first book we are going to discuss is Just Mercy by Bryan Stevenson. This book will be the Go Big Read this fall at the University ([The U-W Common Reading](#)), The author will be speaking on campus October 26. Stevenson has devoted his legal career to defending people on death row. According to the website, Archbishop Desmond Tutu has called Stevenson America’s Mandela. The New York Times review said, “‘Just Mercy’ will make you upset and it will make you hopeful.” “Stevenson forces us to confront the contradictions between our criminal justice system and our nation’s founding principles of equality, freedom and justice.” (UW professor William Jones)

We will have our first discussion at Jan and Chuck Gietzel’s condo on Wednesday October 7. If there was a group that wants to go to hear the author speak on October 26 – there could be a follow up discussion. You do not have to be committed to be a part of the group in the future. Please see Kris or Jan if you want to participate in this group. And please read Just Mercy if you are interested in joining the discussion in October.

Kris Brown and Jan Gietzel

Thursday Evening Small Group



The small group meeting at the Meyer home (1141 Elizabeth St on the near eastside) will resume meeting on Thursday, September 17. Meetings are from 7-9 pm. We meet every Thursday except the week that Leadership Team meets. We will decide what we want to study - either a book or scripture passage - when we get together. Our regular meetings have time for worship, study and prayer. If you are new to small groups or have questions, please give Dan or Debby a call at 257-2578. We'd love to have you join us.

Summer Highlights

Reba goes to Covenant Harbor!

Reba Turner went to Covenant Harbor for the first time at the beginning of July. The first picture is Reba in her camp shirt, the second is with her Rockford friend, Langsea Dibley.

Camp Pre-Dinner Song

Thank the Brown Cow for the Chocolate Milk, Thank the pig oink oink for the bacon on the grill,
Thank the chicken for the egg and the egg for the chicken.
Thank God for the food AMEN

She enjoyed: the banana boat, arts & crafts, water trampoline, archery, journal time (Flashlight Time),

Title/Theme: "Life Mysterious, so it was about God's plan for us."

If you want to know more, you'll have to ask Reba!

She may even sing for you!



Women's Ministries

Fall Fellowship Retreat

Fall Fellowship Retreat at Covenant Harbor September 18 - 20. There is still space available and those of us who are going would love to have more of you join us. It is always a great time to visit with others from church in a way we seldom have opportunity to do. In addition to that, it is a time to become acquainted with other women from the Central Conference. Our speaker this fall is evangelist Renee Shepherd. Come and renew/refresh your faith in Christ through the messages



Holiday Bazaar

Holiday Bazaar - We will once again participate in the Holiday Bazaar at the Monona Community Center November 21 and 22. Perhaps you like to knit, crochet, sew, bake, etc. If so, we would love to have you make some items for the bazaar. Right now, the women are using the money made from the bazaar to buy coffee that we enjoy during our fellowship hour and Personal Essentials Pantry guests enjoy on Friday morning.. If you have questions about the bazaar, talk to Sue Engstrom or Ruth Hallblade.

Canoe Trip



Rally Sunday – September 20

**Would you like to join in on this fun trip?
Contact Mark Hanson or Lissa Turner as
soon as possible.**

September 4-5, 2015

September 4

- 9:30 am Meet at church (Group I)**
- 10 am Head out to Blackhawk Landing**
- 11 am Unload, Pack up, transport vehicles(s)
and lunch**
- noon Launch**
- 12-4pm Cruise the River & Play Along The
Way**

3:30pm GROUP 2 Meet @ Church

- 4pm Head out to Camp-Site (Group 2)**
- Set up Camp, Search for Wood (Group 1)**
- 5pm Dinner**
- 6pm Hike, Camp Fire Songs, Relax**

September 5

- 8am Breakfast & Pack Up**
- 9am-3pm Launch, Lunch & Play Along The
Way**
- 3pm Pack the Vehicles, Transport Vehicles**
- 5pm Reach Church**

We will spend a few moments in church recognizing those who will be part of our Sunday School program this year. After church, there will be a lunch picnic for the children.

The first Human Sexuality forum will also take place after church – Adults will be encouraged to have a snack in the fellowship room and then to join the forum at noon. We are planning to have childcare for children whose parents are in the forum. We will announce the exact plan as soon as possible.

It will be a busy morning at Arbor – Please plan to join us as we worship, celebrate our Christian Education program, and then begin an important study forum.



Early Morning Group 2015-2016

This season Small Group on Sunday mornings from 9:15 to 10:15 will consist of a series of topics where facilitators will lead participants in a conversational format on where and how we encounter God in our lives and activities. The topics offered will be Bible-based, people driven, need sensitive and reflects the latest happenings and thinking in the world.

*Topics will be facilitated for three weeks and on the fourth week of each month the group will discuss **current events** focused on the news that affects our lives.*

September 13: The first two sessions on Sept 13 and 20 will be lead by Mark Hanson. In the first session he'll be reading and discussing some of the important and inspiring scriptures on Creation Care. Some of the current movements will be discussed including the growing interest in various church communities and the Pope's recent Encyclical.

September 20: Mark Hanson will continue to lead the discussion on *Creation Care* –The second session will focus on Mark's work in green practice in commercial building design and operation, including work with religious orders. Mark will describe the work that's going on and reflect on professional and personal activities in Creation Care/Stewardship of God's creation.

September 27: Discussions will be focused on *Current Events* in the news relevant to spiritual living. **Format:** individuals will participate in two ways; one by summarizing the main point(s) of view presented in the article and by revealing their opinion or reaction to the issue.

In October Amanda Fledderjohann will lead discussions on *Medical Wisdom from the Bible* – using a book by Russell Thomsen MD. Some aspect of the discussion will be rules regarding germs and quarantine were given in the Law of Moses (1,400 B.C - In Leviticus 13:45 the leper was to cover his "upper lip" as we would cover a cough or sneeze, and when near people cry "leper, leper" so they could keep clear of him. And many others...

In November the topics will include sessions on the Church's Mission Trip to the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. A panel of missionaries to the Indian Reservation will be on hand to speak to some of the conditions on Pine Ridge Reservation- an area that represent a part of our world that is broken.

Plus updates on Arbor's work with GDN (Global Development Network) work in Thailand

The season entire schedule will be available soon. We welcome your attendance and presentations if you feel led to share your reflections and insights in your walks of faith. You might think of this as a Ted Talk at Arbor on matters of your Walk with the Lord.

Please contact Joyce Boggess or Mark Hanson for more information - or to facilitate a session.

**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)

September Birthdays

- September 2 Peter Morris
- September 10 Joyce Boggess
- September 17 Tiffany Goettler
- September 21 Jennifer Johnson
- September 24 Hannah Lund
- September 24 Reese Simmons
- September 25 Ardeth Lindgren

September Anniversaries



September 5 – Lowell and Trudy Nordling
(60 years!)

September 24 – Paul and Peggy Kent

Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry Item of the Month Toilet Paper

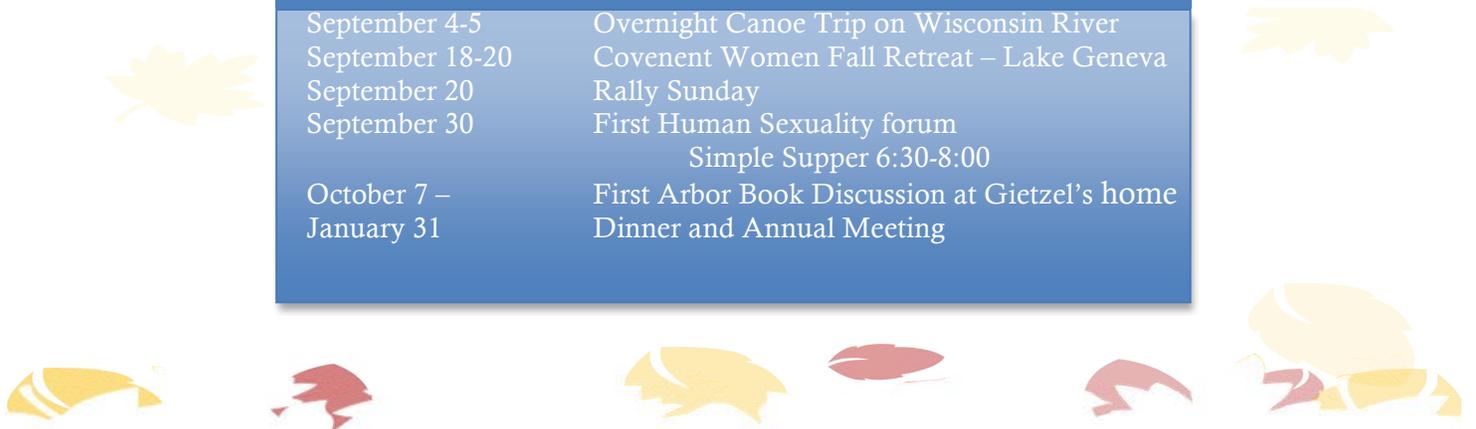
Please leave your contributions in the bin in the narthex. Thank you.

Volunteer Schedule

	Host	Nursery	Children's Church	Lay Reader	Projector
September 6	Hannah/Fabio Mora	Matthew Fledderjohann	Ruth Hallblade	Mike Johnson	Debby Meyer
September 13	Ann-Britt Keillor Rod Johnson	Deb Levin	Fabio Mora	Lissa Turner	Mark Hanson
September 20	Gunnard/Ulrika Swanson	Debby Meyer	Mark Hanson	Michelle Stachowiak	Susan Corrado
September 27	Debby/Dan Meyer	Ulrika Swanson	Lissa Turner	Ann-Britt Keillor	Michelle Stachowiak
October 4	Mark /Janis Hanson	Michelle Stachowiak	Ruth Hallblade	Jan Gietzel	Chuck Gietzel

Save These Dates

- September 4-5 Overnight Canoe Trip on Wisconsin River
- September 18-20 Covenant Women Fall Retreat – Lake Geneva
- September 20 Rally Sunday
- September 30 First Human Sexuality forum
Simple Supper 6:30-8:00
- October 7 – First Arbor Book Discussion at Gietzel's home
- January 31 Dinner and Annual Meeting



September Calendar

		1	2	3	4 10 am-1 pm Personal Essentials Pantry Canoe Trip 	5
6 10:25 Gathering 10:30 Call to Worship Communion Deacon Fund Offering	7 LABOR DAY	8	9	10 6:30 Leadership Team	11 10 am-1 pm Personal Essentials Pantry	12
13 9:15-10:15 am Small Group 10:25 Gathering 10:30 Call to Worship	14	15	16	17 10:30 am Community Meals@ Luke House 5:30-7:30 pm Personal Essentials Pantry 7:00 pm Small Group @ Meyers	18 10 am-1 pm Personal Essentials Pantry Covenant Women Fall Retreat 	19
20 9:15-10:15 am Small Group 10:25 Gathering 10:30 Call to Worship 11:45 am-12:45 pm First Human Sexuality Discussion Forum RALLY SUNDAY 	21	22	23	24 7:00 pm Small Group @ Meyers	25 4:30-7:30 am Homeless Shelter @ Grace Episcopal * 10 am-1 pm Personal Essentials Pantry *Shelter Volunteers Dan Meyer and Glenn Hanson	26
27 9:15-10:15 am Small Group 10:25 Gathering 10:30 Call to Worship	28	29	30 6:30-8 pm First Human Sexuality Discussion Forum	1 7:00 pm Small Group @ Meyers	2 10 am-1 pm Personal Essentials Pantry	3
4 9:15-10:15 am Small Group 10:25 Gathering 10:30 Call to Worship						

