



## ARBOR COVENANT NEWSLETTER

APRIL 2019

### God's Infinite Love

In life most of what we experience is finite. There are limits, formulas of debits and credits that determine what we can give or what we can expect to receive. We each have only so many waking hours, only so much energy, a figure of money in a bank account or a wallet that we can spend on our needs. Just like our cell phone batteries won't last forever on a single charge, we need to account for the limits we encounter and plan accordingly.

Living with these limitations is inevitable and necessary. But sometimes it triggers anxiety and a crippling attitude of scarcity wherein we become so worried about having enough that we don't engage what we have or hoard things we don't actually need. We can end up avoiding worthwhile risks or shutting ourselves off from the joy that comes with generosity, spending our lives worried and preoccupied by a sense that we lack something essential. The feeling you get when you're driving with the needle on "E" and no gas station on the horizon can be a feeling that takes over your life. The anxiety can be consuming, an abiding sense of insecurity can weigh on us.

Foreign from most of what we experience, infinity is limitless. Infinity divided by 2 is infinity. It's a boundless sum greater than any assignable quantity or countable number that can't be changed by simple arithmetic. It can't be drawn down or depleted. No matter what you subtract or add, it remains limitlessly unbound.

This is the reality of God's unceasing love. We can rest in it, rely on it, pull from it, make withdrawals of it and it remains inexhaustible and limitless. It will never cash out. It will never diminish or subside. No matter what debits or credits we sense we've accrued it remains limitlessly unbound. There will always be more to fill in the gaps of a willing heart, always enough to mend the fabric of torn relationships, always plenty left to restore broken people, to vanquish shame, and inaugurate abundant life.

We see the limitlessness of this love in the story of the Prodigal Son. In it a wayward child demands his inheritance early, leaving home for adventure and indulgence in a far-off country. Once there, after squandering his money, famine strikes and he's left in desperate poverty. With no other recourse, seemingly at rock bottom, he returns home, hoping merely for a job as a hired hand. As he nears his childhood home, rehearsing his plea for mercy...his father begins to run towards him,

embracing him, and welcoming him home with a kiss. The father then throws an exuberant party to celebrate, “for,” as he says, “this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!”

But the father’s older son is aggrieved and distressed by the details of this reconciliation. He resents the father’s willingness to forgive, he resents the love that is being lavished on his brother, he resents the resources being spent to welcome his younger brother home. He feels like his faithfulness has been taken for granted, his willingness to follow the rules — to live up to his responsibilities — has been overlooked. Where is his party? Where is the acknowledgment that he deserves? All these years he’s been home, making deposits into the household’s collective life, earning his keep — earning his father’s love. His younger brother had made a withdrawal, he’d cashed out and went on his way. Surely he’d used up all of his father’s love, squandering it along with his inheritance.

But in the story the father’s love doesn’t work like that. Its reserves aren’t bound by any logical formula. It’s depths aren’t limited by a shallow bottom or conserved merely for the one son who did things to top off his account. It’s big enough to embrace both without incurring any decrease or depletion, and ebullient enough to invite all to join the celebration.

God’s love is like this. If it’s divided by 2 or by 8 billion it’s still infinite. It embraces and includes without depletion. It persists in the sure hope that all people will know the joy of salvation and experience the peace of knowing that they are beloved. At Easter we celebrate that neither rejection nor death could slow or diminish this love, Neither a cross nor a tomb could contain it. It abides unending for all of creation.

*Pastor Peter*

## *Easter/Holy Week Schedule*



*Thursday, April 18 - Maundy Thursday Service 7:00 pm*

*Sunday, April 21 - Easter Sunday Worship Service 10:00 am*

## April Events

All Are Welcome!

The April Vasa meeting is to be a concert by the UW's Mimmi Fulmer, with Arbor being suggested as a preferred venue to the usual meeting space at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. The meeting starts at 1:30 pm and lasts until around 3:30 pm. The program is mostly by Grieg and also includes two songs by Finnish composers. Here is the repertoire.

Grieg songs: Med en vandlilje, Jeg elsker dig, Og jeg vil ha mig en Hjertenskjær  
Voice and Piano

Im Feld ein Mädchen singt (Sibelius)  
Voice and Piano

Grieg Op. 12: Arietta, Elfentanz, Volksweise, and Norwegisch (numbers 1, 4, 5, and 6)  
Violin and Piano

Kehtolaulu (Järnefelt, arranged by Tyrone Greive))  
Voice, Violin and Piano

Sætergjentens Søndag (Ole Bull, arranged by Tyrone Greive)  
Voice, Violin and Piano

The performers are Michael Keller, piano, Tyrone Greive, violin, and Mimmi Fulmer, soprano.

## May Events

Book Review Night Monday, May 6 (This is a new date)



### Book Review Night

Covenant Women will hold their Annual Book Review Night May 6. Time and place to be decided. In keeping with tradition, Kris Brown will also prepare a list of all recommended books (whether included in the discussion or not). All genres are welcome. You may



simply submit a title and author – or you may write about the book. Several past examples are on the [church website](#) under “past and present announcements”. If you would like to submit a book (or more) to include on the list, please send to Kris at [kristinelbrown@yahoo.com](mailto:kristinelbrown@yahoo.com). Kris would really like to have these materials as soon as possible.

### May 12 Fledderjohann Celebration

The Fledderjohann family will be leaving Madison in June to move to Syracuse NY. Their family has made such important contributions to Arbor and will be sorely missed. Matthew will be receiving his PhD that weekend AND the twins will be dedicated in church on Sunday morning. We are planning to have a celebration party after church to celebrate this extraordinary family and wish them the best of life in their new home. Matthew and Amanda asked if they could use the church Sunday afternoon for a celebration. We, of course, said that we would like to host the party. They want to invite friends and colleagues from the community along with the church family. Please save that Sunday for this celebration. More details to follow.



Arbor Covenant would LOVE to help any kids get to camp this summer--cost should never be a reason for children (or families) to miss out on camp! Be sure to ask Jordan, Aubrey, and Jackson about their time at Covenant Harbor Day Camp last summer!

# First Friday

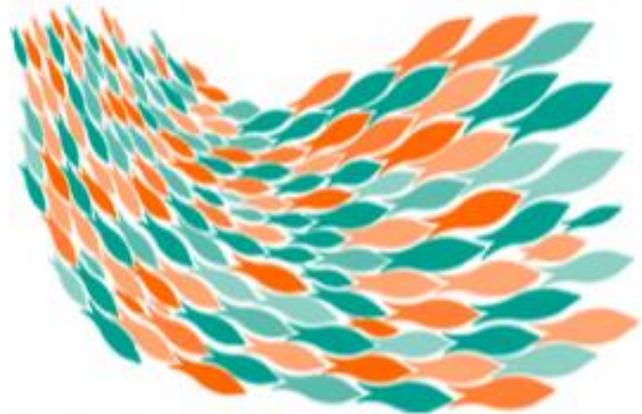
A monthly kids program  
@ Arbor Covenant Church

**JOIN US!**

April 5

5:30-7:00 pm

For kids **ages 4-11**



Enjoy a Friday evening while your kids explore their Christian faith in a safe environment!

**APRIL**

Jesus shares abundant life with his disciples, and asks us to bring others into that abundance!

Dinner provided!

Come for a Bible story, songs, craft, and games!



**Questions?**

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Children's Ministry Leader  
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**Arbor Covenant Church**

2509 McDivitt Rd  
Madison, WI 53713  
(608) 271-1955



## April Birthdays

April 9 Teresa Foster  
April 10 Duane Anderson  
April 12 Jan Gietzel  
April 25 Sue Pecotte  
April 26 Lowell Nordling  
April 29 Gunnard Swanson

## April Anniversaries

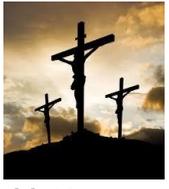
April 16 Deb McGill and Glenn Hanson  
April 19 Holly and Stuart McCoy

Good Neighbors Personal Essentials  
Pantry  
Item of the Month  
**Toilet Paper**  
Please leave donations in the box in the  
front hallway.

## Volunteer Ministries

	Hosts	Nursery	Children's Church	Reader	Projector
April 7	Joyce Boggess and Mary Keehn	Amanda Pecotte	Mark Hanson	Joyce Boggess	Michelle Stachowiak
April 14	Deb McGill and Glenn Hanson	Tamsin Ford	Ruth Hallblade	Ruth Hallblade	Chuck Gietzel
April 21	Sue and Roger Springman	Ulrika Swanson	Rachel Woofter	Kris Brown	Debby Meyers
April 28	Rachel and Mike Woofter	Amanda Pecotte	Joyce Boggess	Sue Pecotte	Mark Hanson

## April Calendar

	1	2	3	4 7:00 PM- 9:00 PM Lenten Series	5 10:00 AM-noon Personal Essentials Pantry 5:30 PM Fun Friday	6
7 5th Sunday in Lent 9:15 AM Adult Study Group 10:00 AM Call to Worship Communion Deacon Fund Offering	8	9	10	11	12 10:00 AM-noon Personal Essentials Pantry	13
14  9:15AM Adult Study Group 10:00 AM Call to Worship	15	16 6:45 PM Leadership Team	17	18  Mundy Thursday Service 7:00 PM Mundy Thursday Service	19 Good Friday  10:00 AM-noon Personal Essentials Pantry	20
21 Easter  10:00 AM Call to Worship	22	23	24	25	26 4:30 AM-7:30 AM Homeless Shelter @Grace Episcopal 10:00 AM-noon Personal Essentials Pantry	27
28 9:15 AM Adult Study Group 10:00 AM Call to Worship	29	30				

Shelter Volunteers: Ken Lund and Glenn Hanson