



Arbor Covenant Church

Madison Wisconsin

Newsletter

December 2019

Advent 2019



We have some special things planned for Advent this year. On December 15th, the children's program will make up the bulk of worship time. They will help us reflect on the joy that visits us at Christ's birth. That Sunday we will also have a post worship potluck, during which you are invited to bring a favorite seasonal dish to share with our community. On December 22nd, we will worship with our friends at Foundry 414 at their location in the annex building at St. Dunstan's Episcopal Church (6205 University Ave.) The service that Sunday starts at 10:30. If you'd like to carpool over, meet at Arbor Covenant at 10am.

Besides these special worship services, there will be another slight but exciting change. Most Sundays at Arbor we read scriptures from something called the Revised Common Lectionary. It is a selection of scriptures employed by congregations around the world, arranged in a three-year cycle that highlights important biblical texts. This year, in Advent we are going to break away from it to follow the readings of something called the Narrative Lectionary.

The Narrative Lectionary is a relatively new arrangement of readings meant to provide a sweeping depiction of the story of God told and retold each year. This year's advent readings highlight a significant period of the experience of God's people that will provide poignant context for traditional Advent themes of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love as we wait once again for the arrival of our Emmanuel (*God with us*).

The readings begin the first week in Jeremiah 33, as the desperate people of Jerusalem, living on the precipice of exile and destruction, receive the hope-filled promise that "the days are surely coming" when righteousness and justice would replace the pain and sorrow they were enduring. Week two has us contemplating Isaiah's promise from chapter 40 of a return from exile — of a highway home through the desert — and the arrival of God's presence in their midst. A story of restoration from Ezra comes week three when we will look at how those who returned from exile picked up the broken pieces of a former life and followed God into a new future. And finally in week 4 we will look at Zechariah, the father of John the Baptist, who's angelic encounter left him speechless before he finally could share God's message and play his role in the preparation for Christ's arrival.

Together these readings comprise a story of hope taking root in the world, of people embodying that hope, and God showing up to do something new and transformative. This is the essence of Advent, and it's the heart of what we still long for today. May this hope take root in our lives again, and may Christ's arrival fill us with a sense of God's enduring promises.

We are always looking ways our community can share their gifts and participate in the life of our community. One idea is for members and friends to contribute artwork that we can incorporate on our bulletin covers or somewhere in our building. If you have art or ideas for art that you want to share, please let me know.

Thanks, Pastor Peter Morris

Arbor Christmas

Saturday December 7



MISSING THAT PINE SCENT?

If you want to experience the fragrance of a real pine tree this year, join your friends at Arbor as we decorate the big, beautiful tree that graces our sanctuary each year. After the lights are on it, we'll adorn it with our long-time handmade Christmas decorations. We'll also be putting up the candle-lit sconces so we can enjoy their warm glow on Christmas Eve. There will be coffee, cocoa and maybe some Christmas treats to complement our efforts to provide a warm, welcoming place for all who visit Arbor Covenant during this special time of year. We'll start at 9:00 am on Saturday, December 7th and probably be finished no later than noon.

Sunday, December 15

As we actively look for ways to better engage the surrounding community and churches in Madison, please join us for a community Christmas celebration on December 15! Worship will appear more youthful than usual as our kids from the Arbor community share the Christmas story. And then worship will continue after the children's program with a community potluck and discussion as we eat together. Bring a favorite dish or food to share with others. Also, if you wish, be prepared to tell a personal story about the holidays. Your stories can be heart-warming, exciting, meaningful, funny or melancholy – they are all important. Please join us as we celebrate the diversity of the Arbor Covenant community and God's Church with story and food! AND—cut out (or print out) a copy of the invitation below, to give to a friend!

Sunday, December 22

This year we will have a joint worship with Foundry 414 at St. Dunstan's Church in Middleton.

More details to follow

Tuesday, December 24

Christmas Eve Service at Arbor at 5:00 PM

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM AND COMMUNITY POTLUCK

You're Invited!



Christmas Program & Community Meal

Join the Arbor community as the children lead us in a short service celebrating the Christmas story—then stay for a potluck meal after the service!

There will be plenty of food, but bring something to share if you'd like.



Sunday, December 15 • 10 am

Arbor Covenant Church • 2509 McDivitt Rd • www.arborcovenant.org • (608) 271-1955



Pray for the kids in the Arbor community this Christmas: that they would experience the love and joy of Christ in new ways.

Pray for the kids' program and potluck on the 15th! That it would be an inclusive celebration of the Arbor community.

Pray for meaningful time with family over the Christmas season & winter break.

FINANCIAL REFLECTION

As the end of the year rolls around, Arbor's treasurer, Ulrika Swanson is paying the remaining 2019 bills and the Leadership Team is developing next year's budget for congregation approval.

You may find this information about prices for common items over the years interesting:

Items	1980	2000	2019
Gasoline (Gallon)	\$1.16	\$1.51	\$2.59
First Class Stamp	\$.25	\$.33	\$.55
Milk (Gallon)	\$2.16	\$2.79	\$3.11

Arbor Covenant is a tremendously generous congregation. Costs for maintaining our building, staff, and supplies, just as the items above, increase every year. The Leadership Team carefully and thoughtfully crafts a budget each year and watches expenditures to keep them generally within the scope of our offerings. This time of transition at Arbor makes it even more important and challenging. We respectfully ask that each of us review our giving history to make sure it reflects the support we intend for Arbor's mission in carrying out God's plans for the future of His ministry.

THE COVENANT COMPANION & THE HOME ALTAR

We are re-evaluating and updating our subscriptions to The Covenant Companion and The Home Altar and need some input. Subscriptions to The Companion costs Arbor Covenant Church \$18.00 per family. It would be helpful to know if each family feels that the publication is useful in their spiritual journey. We would also like to know if you use the The Home Altar, routinely, either individually or with your family.

There will be two sheets on the table in the Fellowship Room. Please indicate if you would like to continue receiving the Covenant Companion and if you use The Home Altar. Thank you for your participation in evaluating the value of these two publications in our worship life.

ARBOR COVENANT CHURCH FINANCIAL OVERVIEW					
	January	January 1, 2019 - October 31, 2019			
	Offerings & Creek	Actual Expenses	Net Income (Loss)		
	Reimbursements Received		Year-to-Date	Year-to-Date	
	Year-to-Date				
General Offerings	\$ 58,022.23				
Creek Day School Reimbursement	\$ 21,050.00				
TOTAL	\$ 79,072.23		\$ 87,581.62		\$ (8,509.39)
Special Funds (Non-Budgeted) Received YTD					
	TOTAL				
Deacon	\$ 237.00				
Good Neighbors Pantry	\$ 11,031.97				
Levin Camp	\$ 408.00				
Memorial					
Women's Ministries					
World Relief					
Youth Mission					
Other	\$ 330.00				



Congratulations and best wishes to Paul Kent and his family as they welcome Henry Benjamin Kent who was born on November 4, 2019. In addition to his grandfather Paul and his parents, Chris and Sarah, Henry has two older siblings, William (Liam) and Eleanor (Ella). Henry weighed 8 lbs.7 oz at birth and was 19 inches long.

God's blessings on this wonderful family.

Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry

Item of the Month

Hand and Body Lotion

10 oz. or more

Please leave donations in the box in the front hallway. Thank you.

December Birthdays

James Woofter	December 6
Harriet Anderson	December 18
Ann-Britt Keillor	December 18
Theo Morris	December 25

December Anniversaries

December 29	Tamsin Ford and Peter Morris
December 30	Harry and Sue Engstrom

Volunteer Ministries

	Host	Nursery	Children's Church	Reader	Projector
December 1	Elrene and Ken Lund	Amanda Pecotte	Mark Hanson	Jan Gietzel	Chuck Gietzel
December 8	Janis and Mark Hanson	Tamsin Ford	Ruth Hallblade	Joyce Boggess	Chuck Gietzel
December 15	Deb Levin and Ruth Hallblade	Ulrika Swanson	Rachel Woofter	Kris Brown	Chuck Gietzel
December 22	Tamsin Ford and Peter Morris	Joyce Boggess	TBD	Ruth Hallblade	Debby Meyer
December 29	Debby and Dan Meyer	Amanda Pecotte	Joyce Boggess	Ann-Britt Keillor	Sue Pecotte
January 5	Joyce Boggess and Mary Keehn	Amanda Pecotte	Ruth Hallblade	Sue Pecotte	Mark Hanson



December 2019



1 First Sunday in Advent 9:15 AM Adult Study Group 10:00 AM Call to Worship Communion Deacon Fund Offering	2	3	4	5 7:00 PM Small Group at Meyers	6 10:00 AM-noon Personal Essentials Pantry	7 9:00 AM Decorate church for Christmas
8 Second Sunday in Advent 9:15 AM Adult Study Group 10:00 AM Call to Worship	9	10 6:45 PM Leadership Team	11	12	13 10:00 AM-noon Personal Essentials Pantry 5:30 PM-7:00 PM Kids Fun Friday	14
15 Third Sunday in Advent 9:15 AM Adult Study Group 10:00 AM Call to Worship 10:30 AM Children's Christmas Program (during service) Potluck follows	16	17	18	19 5:30 PM-7:30 PM Personal Essentials Pantry 7:00 PM Small Group at Meyers	20 10:00 AM-noon Personal Essentials Pantry	21
22 Fourth Sunday in Advent Combined service with Foundry 414 at St. Dunstan's in Middleton	23	24 5:00 PM Christmas Eve Service	25  Merry Christmas!	26 7:00 PM Small Group at Meyers	27 4:30 AM – 7:00 AM Homeless Shelter @ Grace Episcopal 10:00 AM-noon Personal Essentials Pantry	28
29 9:15 AM Adult Study Group 10:00 AM Call to Worship	30	31 New Year's Eve				

*Shelter Volunteers: Roger Springman and Mark Hanson