

**Arbor Covenant Church**

**Newsletter**

**Madison WI**

**March 2023**



## **WORSHIP SERVICES**

Arbor Covenant Church now worships at Memorial United Church of Christ in Fitchburg. Here are several ways you can worship at Memorial UCC on Sundays at 9:30 AM.

### **YOU MAY ATTEND IN PERSON**

5705 Lacy Road Fitchburg

### **YOU MAY ATTEND on ZOOM**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/773905311?pwd=NDITTGk0NlpZaDNvZXpodWxvZFIQQT09> - success

Meeting ID 773905311 Password 5705

Or call in 1 -312-626-6799

(depending on your phone carrier, long distance charges may apply)

(If you experience technical difficulties during worship on Zoom, consider shifting to YouTube to join the service.

**YOU MAY ATTEND ON YOUTUBE** <https://www.youtube.com/user/MemorialUCC>

## **Update on Collaboration with Common Wealth Development**

Sometimes it feels like months go by without much for big news items. February 2023 did not fit that description. The Congregation at its Annual Meeting on February 5 unanimously approved proceeding with the sale of the property to Common Wealth Development with the purpose of developing affordable housing along with an emerging set of continuing and new activities at 2509 McDivitt Road. Creek Day School, the Personal Essentials Pantry, the Community Garden, and various Congregational activities continue. New things are emerging as discussed in Pastor Peter's article at the beginning of the February Newsletter. So, we have BIG NEWS.

The remaining details for the OTP (offer to purchase), Land Contract, Lease (between Common Wealth and Arbor), and sub-lease (between Arbor and Creek Day School) have been worked out. Arbor is meeting with Creek to answer any questions that Creek has on the sublease and make adjustments (if any should be needed). Pastor Peter has been working with Marge on the sub-lease.

Arbor will be meeting in the coming days with Common Wealth for our Chair, Jan Gietzel to sign the offer to purchase. A closing date will be set after that to sign all the other documents at one time.

We are now beginning a new, emerging, and exciting chapter at Arbor in collaboration with Memorial UCC, Common Wealth and many others. This has been a long journey for Common Wealth and the excitement at Common Wealth by its Executive Director Justice Castaneda and other staff is obvious. As Justice put it in a recent email, "This is great news to come back to .... Thank you, again, for all the work on this process."

Mark Hanson

## **Arbor Good Neighbor House**

For more than three years Arbor Covenant Church and Common Wealth Development have worked together on a deal intended to create affordable housing on the church's property on McDivitt Road. Along with this much-needed community asset, the project also assures space for Arbor Covenant and it's collaborating partners to maintain a presence on the property.

This means Creek Day School and the Personal Essentials Pantry will be able to continue operations on site. It also ensures that groups like the Arbor Hills Neighborhood Association, the African American Jewish Friendship Group, and Jewish Social Services can continue hosting meetings and programming in the building. It also retains for Arbor Covenant, Memorial UCC, and other potential partners among Madison's faith communities the possibility to collaborate on events and gatherings focused on spiritual engagement, authentic worship, and missional outreach.

Maintaining these exciting possibilities is only the beginning of what this deal has the potential to generate. Since before conversations with Common Wealth Development even began, Arbor Covenant has been asking questions about how the building and the property around it could be more fully utilized as a community asset and less so merely as a congregational one. During that time Arbor has begun to shift its conception of the facility from church building to "mission house." Without precluding the possibilities of a worshipping community gathering there regularly for activities traditionally associated with congregational life, this shift looks outward towards the needs and opportunities presented by the wider South Madison community. It's our hope that this new understanding of our facility can spark a collective vision of cooperation that makes the property on the end of McDivitt Road a place where more and more people can collectively pursue the common good and explore ways to contribute to shared goals.

To mark this shift in thinking, we've been contemplating a name change that better communicates our hopes and intentions. Instead of Arbor Covenant Church, we are beginning to refer to the building as the Arbor Good Neighbor House. This new name is not set in stone, but in the coming months it will serve as a placeholder that potentially might become permanent. It's not entirely new — for more than 10 years Arbor, Memorial UCC, All Saints Lutheran, and other community partners have called our collective effort to provide household and personal hygiene supplies to neighbors in need, the Good Neighbors Personal Essential Pantry. Originally this name was chosen in part as a reference to a sentiment central to the Pietist movement that beget the Covenant Church — the conviction that people of faith should live their lives in pursuit of "God's glory and neighbors 'good." This new placeholder name is a reflection of a commitment that this idea that has inspired and directed so much of who we have always been will remain central to what we are becoming.

If you have questions or suggestions or ideas for a permanent name, or other things that are happening as the Arbor intentionally reaches out to our neighbors, please feel free to contact me.

Pastor Peter Morris

## “Softer, More Permeable Aliveness”

Recently I was introduced to poem by an author named Ann Hillman. Since reading it, it's stuck with me, providing some vocabulary that's helping me set an intention for a Lenten fast. It reads:

We look with uncertainty  
beyond the old choices for  
clear-cut answers  
to a softer, more permeable aliveness  
which is every moment  
at the brink of death;  
for something new is being born in us  
if we but let it.  
We stand at a new doorway,  
awaiting that which comes...  
daring to be human creatures,  
vulnerable to the beauty of existence.  
Learning to love.

Its language reflects Lenten themes like mortality, human limitation and uncertainty. It wades into mystery while embracing the sure hope that new possibilities can be born into our lives. But the phrase that particularly resonates is this: “*a softer, more permeable aliveness.*”

When I read those words, I feel an invitation to a deep, abundant life filled with genuine interaction and authentic relationships. There is a call to open heartedness that lets the people around us in, a beckoning to a deep sharing of stories and experiences capable of creating understanding and empathy, a summons to the sort of courage that doesn't shy away from discomfort but leans vulnerably into love.

But I also feel a sheepish fear. *Softer, permeable aliveness* is not always my typical approach to life. All too often I'm prone to *harder, resistant numbness* that tends to skim by on the surface instead of risking exposure to things that might make me too uncomfortable. Sometimes it's easier (and feels safer) to stiffen up and do my best to rush past potential discomfort or simply hide from people behind thickening walls of complacency and cynicism.

Isaiah 58 is a passage of scripture often read on Ash Wednesday that helps sets the stage for Lent. In it, the prophet writes about the fast that God intends for God's people. It's not one filled with pious self-denial or characterized primarily by a retreat into personal spiritual practices. Instead, the fast God intends is one that breaks down barriers and opens us up to one another. It's a fast that seeks justice and liberation for the oppressed and instructs against hiding ourselves from our neighbors. It's a fast that resists the tendency to use religion or anything else to isolate ourselves from the world around us and encourages us to be engaged and connected. What it describes is life free of hard, resistant barricades that separate us from the people around us and numb us to the feelings those relationships inevitably inspire. It's a fast that embraces the sort of *softer, more permeable aliveness* that allows us to show up for each other and collectively participate in the work God intends for God's people — work that repairs breaches and restores wholeness, work that allows God's light to shine throughout the whole world.

Pastor Peter Morris

## **WANT TO KNOW MORE ABOUT ARBOR GOOD NEIGHBOR HOUSE?**

For a long while we have been talking about the concept of the use of our church building to host new and existing missions to support God's work in our community. Creek Day School, The Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry, the African-American/Jewish Friendship Group and the Arbor Hills Neighborhood Association are some of the current examples of how our building is actually living into this purpose. The concept is now reality and we want everyone to know what is going on with frequent updates such as "What's on the Calendar", "The Missions of the Groups Using the Building", "Events", "Ways You Can Be Involved", etc. By April or sooner, look forward to receiving news about new developments in our exciting, ongoing journey!

Jan Gietzel

## **A NEW LOOK FOR THE NEWSLETTER**

As of April, the Arbor Covenant and Memorial UCC newsletters will combine, giving both congregations a more convenient way to learn about new friends and share in each other's activities. We'll also be able to include individual interviews from each congregation to get to know each other and celebrate important events in all of our lives. Memorial's church administrator, Jamie, will be reworking Memorial's newsletter software in March in preparation for the change and will eventually combine information from articles and other communication sent to her each week by individuals from both congregations. It will also be a place to learn what is happening at the Arbor Good Neighbor House and other new ministries. To receive this combined newsletter starting in April, please send Jan Gietzel (gietzelj@gmail.com) the email address at which you would like to receive it. More information on how and when to send in information will follow.

## **COFFEE AND CONVERSATION TIME**

**Are You Missing Getting Together with Your Arbor Friends on a Regular Basis?**

How about getting together at Arbor and sharing some conversation and coffee together in the Fellowship Room on the first Sunday of every month after the worship service at Memorial United Church of Christ. We'll start at about 11:15 a.m. Depending on the wishes of the group, maybe we can expand it to a simple, light lunch to enjoy as a community each month. Many of us miss the relationships that formed over the years and decided this might be a small way to try to address that loss.

## Beckett Troy Collins



Ann-Britt Keillor is pleased to share the news that she has a new great-grandson (her fourth great-grandson). Kiley and Lukas Collins are the proud parents of Beckett Troy Collins who was born on February 21 in Madison. He weighed 9 lbs.2 oz.

Beckett's very happy grandparents are Lisa and Mike Collins. His big brother, Rhett Philip Collins, is very excited to play with him.

### Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry

Item of the Month

Toothpaste 6 oz

ARBOR COVENANT CHURCH FINANCIAL OVERVIEW				
January 1, 2023 - January 31, 2023				
	Offerings & Creek		Actual Expenses	Net Income (Loss)
	Reimbursements Received		Year-to-Date	Year-to-Date
	Year-to-Date			
General Offerings and CD Interest	\$ 2,219.55			
Creek Day School Reimbursement	\$ 2,318.00			
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 4,537.55</b>		<b>\$ 5,524.09</b>	<b>\$ (986.54)</b>
<b>Special Funds (Non-Budgeted) Received YTD</b>				
	TOTAL			
Deacon				
Good Neighbors Pantry	\$ 2,630.07			
Levin Camp				
Memorial				
Women's Ministries				
World Relief				
Youth Mission				
Other (bank interest)				

### Arbor Birthdays

March 1 Ken Lund

March 7 Lindsey Lund

Ulrika Swanson shared this information on the Middleton Community Orchestra concert. Ulrika plays in the orchestra.

**The concert has been rescheduled for 2:00 PM March 4 because of the snowstorm.**



# 2023 YOUNG ARTIST COMPETITION WINNERS CONCERT



**Christopher Ramaekers,**  
Principal Conductor



**KAITLYN MCINTOSH, VIOLA**  
Walton Viola Concerto  
mvt. I Andante comodo



**ANGELINA CHANG, PIANO**  
Chopin Piano Concerto No. 1  
mvt. III Rondo



**ELLEN ZHOU, VIOLIN**  
Sibelius Violin Concerto  
mvt. I Allegro Moderato

## WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2023 7:30 PM • MIDDLETON PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

**\$20 GENERAL ADMISSION. STUDENTS ARE FREE.**

Tickets are available at Willy Street Co-op West and at the door.  
Students can get tickets at the door only on the night of the show.  
Box office opens at 6:30 p.m. Doors open at 7:00 p.m.

**MIDDLETONCOMMUNITYORCHESTRA.ORG**

**Macura** | An Unquiet Overture  
**Elgar** | From The Wand of Youth Suite 2: The Wild Bears  
**Walton** | Viola Concerto, Kaitlyn McIntosh, viola  
**Chopin** | Piano Concerto No. 1 in E minor, Op.11, Angelina Chang, piano  
**Sibelius** | Violin Concerto in D minor, Op. 47, Ellen Zhou, violin  
**Dvorak** | Carnival Overture



This project is supported in part by a grant from the Wisconsin Arts Board with funds from the State of Wisconsin and the National Endowment for the Arts.

## Memorial UCC Events

### Potluck after Service (Memorial UCC – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of month after service)

Join us for a potluck community meal together on Sunday, March 26 following the church service. Bring a favorite dish to share, if you are able, but please know that all are welcome. There will be plenty of delicious food! The kitchen and ovens are available for heating and assembly, if needed. Future meals together will be on the fourth Sunday of the month, April 23<sup>rd</sup> and May 28<sup>th</sup>.



### MUCC BOOK GROUP: Monday, March 6 at 8:30 am at The Rolling Pin Bakery

The next book selection is: CARRY, A Memoir of Survival on Stolen Land, by Tori Jensen.

### EVENING OF MUSIC: Saturday, March 11 at 7 pm.

**Please join us Saturday, March 11 at 7pm** for an Evening of Music at MUCC. You won't want to miss this wonderful concert. It's a great time for folks in the congregation to share their music with one another. All ages welcome. This year, you can sign up electronically here: [Evening of Music 2023](#). Sign-up deadline is March 5.

After the concert, join us for delectable desserts, wine and other treats. Invite your friends to join you at this fun event.

#### WISCONSIN INTERFAITH DAY of ADVOCACY

March 21 | 9:30-2:00pm | Madison

Join the Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin and Faith in Place on March 21 from 9:30 am to 2:00 pm at First UMC (203 Wisconsin Ave) and the Capitol for a day of action to advocate for hunger relief, climate justice, and clean water in the Wisconsin State Budget. Speakers include WKOW-TV Chief Meteorologist Bob Lindmeier and other experts on climate as well as on hunger and water issues. Hear also from guest legislators to gain tips on how to engage with our government officials.

There is no charge, but any donation would be welcome on the day of the event to help defray costs. Sponsors include the Wisconsin Council of Churches and Wisconsin Faith Voices for Justice. **Register [HERE](#).**

March 21  
9:30 a.m. CT

First UMC Church  
Madison, WI

**Wisconsin Interfaith  
Day of Advocacy**

#WIForClimate23





## **ADULT FAITH DEVELOPMENT**

Starting March 1st at 6:30 pm and going for four weeks, we're offering a Lenten study that will be both in person and online. We'll explore Jesus's last week using books by New Testament scholar and historian of early Christianity, John Dominic Crossan. Through visual lectures we'll also look into Easter from both Western and Eastern traditions of Christianity. To sign up contact [Rebecca Malke](#) or use the signup sheet in the hallway at Memorial UCC..

Another class of interest that people can choose to do on their own is [Empty Altars: American Saints in a Cynical Age](#). This Lenten study is led by Dr. Diana Butler Bass and is a 6-week exploration of American saints. From the website: *"We live in iconoclastic times. All around us, saints and heroes are being knocked off or taken down from public altars. Taking down statues is nothing new, especially in Christian history...People always put statues back up. But of who? And to commemorate what? How do we move ahead with new saints and a less troublesome iconography? What 'saints' can inspire us to address the hurts of our hearts, the brokenness of our communities, and the pressing issues of our time?"* If interested, people can meet to discuss each class on their own.

## **MOVIE NIGHT**

On Friday, March 31st, at 6pm at Memorial UCC we'll be watching PBS's *The Last Days of Jesus*. This 2-hour video looks at the Gospels in a different direction, one that shows the historical Jesus in a different light based on a new interpretation of contemporary historical events in Rome. During this time, children and youth will be in another room watching a family movie.



Throughout Lent we will encounter "many stories of Jesus encountering people who are seeking: Nicodemus comes to him in the veil of night, he approaches a Samaritan woman at a well, he heals a man born without sight. In these stories, each person is seeking a new beginning, a different life, a deeper faith. What unfolds is an exchange filled with questions and exploration. Often, an unveiling occurs—assumptions are disrupted, a new perspective is revealed, mystery grows.

Like the characters in our Lenten scriptures, we are also seeking many things: clarity, connection, wonder, justice, balance. We are seeking our calling, the sacred, and how to live as a disciple. Throughout the turbulence of the past few years, many of us are asking big questions about our lives and our faith. We hope this series will help us unpack some of those big questions in ways that are honest and faithful. Throughout this season, we hope you will continually ask yourself: what am I seeking? What is God seeking?

February 22	Seeking: Is this the fact that I choose?
February 26	Seeking: Who will you listen to?
March 5	Seeking: How do we begin again?
March 12	Seeking: Will you give me a drink?
March 19	Seeking: Who sinned?
March 26	Seeking: Can these bones live?
April 2 Palm Sunday	Seeking: Where are you headed?
April 7 Good Friday	Seeking: Why have you forsaken me?
April 9 Easter Sunday	Seeking: Who are you looking for?

(Reprinted from the Memorial UCC Newsletter)

## March 2023

			1 <i>6:30 PM Adult Faith Development MUCC</i>	2	3 10:00 AM – noon Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry ACC	4
5 <i>Lent Week 2</i> 9:30 AM Worship Memorial UCC Communion 11:15 AM Coffee and Conversation at ACC	6 <i>8:30 AM MUCC Book Group</i>	7	8 <i>6:30 PM Adult Faith Development MUCC</i>	9	10 10:00 AM – noon Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry ACC	11 <i>7:00 PM Evening of Music MUCC</i>
12 <i>Lent Week 3</i> 9:30 AM Worship Memorial UCC	13	14 3:00 PM ACC Leadership Team	15 <i>6:30 PM Adult Faith Development MUCC</i>	16 5:30 PM- 7:00PM Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry - ACC	17 10:00 AM – noon Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry ACC	18
19 <i>Lent Week 4</i> 9:30 AM Worship Memorial UCC	20	21 <i>9:30 AM- 2:00 PM Wisconsin Interfaith Day of Advocacy</i>	22 <i>6:30 PM Adult Faith Development MUCC</i>	23	24 10:00 AM – noon Good Neighbors Personal Essentials Pantry ACC	25
26 <i>Lent Week 5</i> 9:30 AM Worship Memorial UCC <i>Potluck after Service MUCC</i>	27	28	29	30	31 <i>6:00 PM MUCC Movie Night</i>	

### Holy Week

**April 2 Palm Sunday**

**April 7 Good Friday**      **7:00 PM**

**April 9 Easter**

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After many years, this is the last issue of the Arbor Newsletter.

It has been my privilege to share Arbor News with you each month since 2014.

Fondly,  
Kris Brown