



The Good Tidings

Arena Congregational Church

April 2018

CELEBRATING OUR PAST-EMBRACING OUR FUTURE

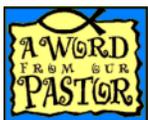
Affiliated with the Wisconsin Congregational Association

Thoughts from here and there...Jesus does not build walls he breaks them down.

There's a famous poem by Robert Frost about the walls we build in life. "Something there is that doesn't love a wall," he writes, looking over at his New England-farmer neighbor, who's heaving yet another stone upon the wall that runs between their two properties. The poet asks his neighbor why the wall is necessary: ¹

My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.
He only says, "Good fences make good neighbors."
But then the poet is led to wonder:
Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out.

When we build walls between ourselves and others, it's truly an open question whether we are walling the other out, or walling ourselves in. Prejudice exacts a heavy toll on those who practice it -- just as it does on its victims.



Jesus knew all about walls. He knew about the wall of privilege and exclusion. He knew about the wall of education and ignorance. He knew the wall of separation used by the

Jews to keep out the Gentiles. Jesus came to tear down the walls that his own people had built. Take a moment and read Ephesians 2 that follows:

¹¹ So then, remember that at one time you Gentiles by birth, called "the uncircumcision" by those who are called "the circumcision"—a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands— ¹² remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the

¹ From a poem by Robert Frost, "Mending Wall," in *The Oxford Book of American Poetry*, ed. David Lehman (Oxford, 2006), 212-13.



Communion will be served following the sermon on April 1ST.

commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. ¹⁵ He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it. ¹⁷ So he came and proclaimed peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near; ¹⁸ for through him both of us have access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God, ²⁰ built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. ²¹ In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into a holy temple in the Lord; ²² in whom you also are built together spiritually into a dwelling place for God. Ephesians 2:11-22 (NRSV)

"To Althea, from Prison" is a poem written by Richard Lovelace in 1642. ² The poem is one of Lovelace's best-known works, and its final stanza's first line "Stone walls do not a prison make, Nor iron bars a cage" is often quoted. Lovelace wrote the poem while imprisoned in Gatehouse Prison to encourage the Clergy Act 1640 to be annulled.

The fourth stanza contains the famous lines:

Stone Walls do not a Prison make,
Nor Iron bars a Cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an Hermitage.
If I have freedom in my Love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone that soar above,
Enjoy such Liberty.

(Continued on [page 2](#))

² Cummings, Michael. "To Althea, From Prison: Analysis". Retrieved 2018-01-23.

The danger for us is that we make our own prisons of thought and attitude. Jesus can help us to break the bonds that bind us and set us free to enjoy the freedom that he provides.

Sermons for April

The Sermon On the Mount has much to teach us about life and relationships. "Jesus began his sermon with words that seem to contradict each other. However



God's way of living usually contradicts the world's. If you want to live for God, you must be ready to say and do what seems strange to the world. You must be willing to give when others take, to love when

others hate, to help when others abuse. By giving up your own rights in order to serve others, you will one day receive everything God has in store for you."

April 1 Easter Sunday, Communion Sunday, April

Fools Day: Lesson: Isaiah 25:6-9; 1

Corinthians 15:1-11, Sermon Title: He Lives

We do not serve a dead lord, but a risen Savior who provides salvation to all who will accept him and his way of life.

April 8, Holy Humor Sunday: Lesson: Psalm 34.1-8, Sermon Title: Taste and See

I bless God every chance I get; my lungs expand with his praise. I live and breathe God; if things aren't going well, hear this and be happy: Join me in spreading the news; together let's get the word out. God met me more than halfway, he freed me from my anxious fears. Look at him; give him your warmest smile. Never hide your feelings from him. (The Message)

THE GOOD TIDINGS is a monthly publication of the Arena Congregational Church, 383 Oak St., PO Box 125, Arena, WI 53503-0125.

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April 15: Lesson: Matthew 5.1-2, 21-22, Sermon

Title: Words of Power

"You're familiar with the command to the ancients, 'Do not murder.' I'm telling you that anyone who is so much as angry with a brother or sister is guilty of murder. Carelessly call a brother 'idiot!' and you just might find yourself hauled into court. Thoughtlessly yell 'stupid!' at a sister and you are on the brink of hellfire. The simple moral fact is that words kill. (The Message, Eugene Peterson)

April 22, Earth Day: Lesson: Matthew 5.1-2, 23-24, Sermon Title: Working Out

"This is how I want you to conduct yourself in these matters. If you enter your place of worship and, about to make an offering, you suddenly remember a grudge a friend has against you, abandon your offering, leave immediately, go to this friend and make things right. Then and only then, come back and work (Continued on [page 3](#))



Earth
Day

April 22

Earth Day

The idea came to Earth Day founder Gaylord Nelson, then a U.S. Senator from Wisconsin, after witnessing the ravages of the 1969 massive oil spill in Santa Barbara, California. Inspired by the student anti-war movement, he realized that if he could infuse that energy with an emerging public

consciousness about air and water pollution, it would force environmental protection onto the national political agenda.

As a result, on the 22nd of April, 20 million Americans took to the streets, parks, and auditoriums to demonstrate for a healthy, sustainable environment in massive coast-to-coast rallies.

Earth Day achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats, rich and poor, city slickers and farmers, tycoons and labor leaders. The first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water, and Endangered Species Acts. "It was a gamble," Gaylord recalled, "but it worked."

things out with God. (The Message, Eugene Peterson)

April 29: Lesson: Matthew 5.1-2, 25-26, Sermon Title: First Moves

"Or say you're out on the street and an old enemy accosts you. Don't lose a minute. Make the first move; make things right with him. After all, if you leave the first move to him, knowing his track record, you're likely to end up in court, maybe even jail. If that happens, you won't get out without a stiff fine. (The Message, Eugene Peterson)

May 6 Nurses Day: Lesson: Matthew 5.1-2, 27-28, Sermon Title: Preserving Virtue

"You know the next commandment pretty well, too: 'Don't go to bed with another's spouse.' But don't think you've preserved your virtue simply by staying out of bed. Your heart can be corrupted by lust even quicker than your body. Those leering looks you think nobody notices—they also corrupt. (The Message, Eugene Peterson)



Special Days in the Secular and Church Calendar

Mark Your Calendar! April 1 (S) Easter Sunday, Communion Sunday, April Fools Day
April 8 (S) Holy Humor Sunday
April 12, Holocaust Remembrance Day
April 17, Income Taxes Due
April 22, (S) Earth Day
April 25, Administrative Professionals Day
April 27, National Arbor Day
April 27-28, Wisconsin Congregational Association Annual Meeting and Leadership Summit at First Congregational Church, Wauwatosa

A Promise and A Prayer

A Promise

But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ, (1 Corinthians 15:57, NRSV).



(Continued on [page 4](#))

Recipe of the Month

Irish Soda Bread (my favorite and easy to make and serve)

From the Recipe Files of Helga Shultz

4 to 4 1/2 cups unbleached flour
2 Tbs sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking soda
4 Tbs butter 1 cup raisins or currants 1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 3/4 cups buttermilk

Preheat oven to 425 degrees

Whisk together 4 cups flour, sugar and baking soda into a large bowl.

Work in butter with pastry blender (I use my hands) until it looks like coarse meal, stir in the raisins or currants.

Make a well in the center and add egg and buttermilk and stir with a wooden spoon until it gets too stiff to stir. With floured hands gently knead the dough to form a rough ball. If the dough is too sticky add a little more flour.

Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface and knead in just enough flour that it holds together. (Do not over-knead).

Transfer dough to a greased baking sheet or iron skillet. With a serrated knife score top of dough about an inch deep in an X shape.

Bake for 35 to 45 minutes until golden and the bottom sounds hollow. (Or use the skewer method.)

If the top gets too dark tent the bread with some aluminum foil.

Let the bread cool in pan for 5 to 10 minutes.

It tastes great warm.



A Thought

Easter is a day to celebrate victory. The victory of good over evil. The victory of life over death. The victory of Christ over Satan. Easter is a day to celebrate victory. It is also our victory. Thanks be to God who give us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

A Prayer

Blessed God thank you for making it possible for me to live a victorious life. Because of what you have done I can live with confident hope and rejoice in the faith which you have made possible. Help me not only to enjoy what you have done for me, but to share this grand news with others. Amen.

Spotlight on the family

Easter is on April 1. You will probably not have time to create these ornaments before Easter. You can create them after Easter and the theme will work just as well.



These suggestions may take a little more work than some that you usually find here, but they will be worth it as you create lasting memories of Easter and Family Time.

Egg-citing Ornaments: Create these unique Easter ornaments to hang in your window. You'll need metal egg-shaped cookie cutters, foil, toothpicks, a baking sheet, cooking spray, Jolly Rancher candies, ribbon, and plastic suction-cup hooks. Lay each cookie cutter on a foil square that's 1 inch wider than the cookie cutter. Pull the foil edges up and around the cookie cutter. Spray these molds with cooking spray and place on a foil-covered baking sheet. Place the candies inside the cookie-cutter molds in single layers. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Remove from oven. Use a toothpick to swirl the melted candies inside the molds. Allow to cool until almost firm. Then use a toothpick to poke a hole near the top of each egg. Allow to cool completely. Carefully remove the foil from the molds, thread ribbon through the hole in each egg, and hang on a window with suction-cup hooks.



Officers for 2017 - 2018

Governing Board

President: Jim Favreau, 753.2334

Vice-president: Joanne Brown, 753-2316

Treasurer: Steven Wilkinson, 753.2131

Clerk: Joe Hodgson, 753-2520

Financial Secretary: Ray Johnson, 753-2845

Church Secretary: Steve Wilkinson, 753.2131

Officers

Sunday School Superintendent, Karen Wilkinson, 753-2131

Choir Director, Leslie Shultz, 574-0707

Head Usher Jim Favreau, 753.2334 and Ray Johnson, 753.2845

Meetings this Month



Governing Board: Second Monday, April 9, 6:30 p.m.

Men's Breakfast: Third Saturday, April 21, 7:30 a.m., at Grandma Mary's.



Greeters

April 1 – Steve and Karen Wilkinson

April 8 – Judith and Doug Bradshaw-Rouse

April 15 – Jeff and Joanne Brown Family

April 22 – Pastor and Helga Shultz

April 29 – Kathy Johnson

May 6 - Jim Favreau Family



Adult Bible Study

We are meeting at the home of Steve and Karen Wilkinson, 817 Brown St., Arena. Our study guide is "John: The Way to True Life" by Douglass Connally. The Gospel of John has much to reveal; to us that helps us to explore the divinity of Jesus. We will not meet on April 25.



Worship On Compact Disks

The Worship Services are recorded each week on a CD so that you may share in the fellowship and enjoyment of worship. If you would like to listen to a service to share the music, pray the prayers and learn from the sermon call either Steve Wilkinson, 753-2131 or Pastor Shultz, 574-0707 and a CD will be delivered to you. Let us know if you need a CD player.

Missions



We are supporting the Congregational Mission of Jardin America with a gift of \$40 a month through the missions program of the National Association of Congregational Christians. We also contribute \$50.00 a month to the Arena Food Pantry, and \$25.00 a month to the Food Pantry at the Spring Green Community Church. Thank you for your support of our local and foreign mission projects.



Something to Think About

Anne Morrow Lindbergh gives us a key insight with these words: "If one sets aside time for a business appointment, a trip to the hairdresser, a social

engagement, or a shopping expedition, that time is accepted as inviolable. But if one says: I cannot come because that is my hour to be alone, one is considered rude, egotistical or strange. What a commentary on our civilization: when being alone is considered suspect; when one has to apologize for it, make excuses, hide the fact that one practices it, like a secret vice."

-Anne Morrow Lindbergh, *Gift from the Sea* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1975), 50.



Humor

I'm great at multi-tasking. I can waste time, be unproductive and procrastinate all at once.

Mikey's Funnies <funnies-owner@lists.MikeysFunnies.com>



Things You Wouldn't Know Without The Movies

1. Kitchens don't have light switches. When entering a kitchen at night, you should open the fridge door and use that light instead.
2. All grocery shopping bags contain at least one stick of French Bread.
3. If your town is threatened by an imminent natural disaster or killer beast, the mayor's first concern will be the tourist trade or his forthcoming art exhibition.
4. When paying for a taxi, don't look at your wallet as you take out a bill - just grab one at random and hand it over. It will always be the exact fare.
5. It is not necessary to say hello or goodbye when beginning or ending phone conversations.
6. A detective can only solve a case once he has been suspended from duty.
7. If being chased through town, you can usually take cover in a passing St. Patrick's Day parade - at any time of year.
8. All beds have special L-shaped cover sheets which reach up to the armpit level on a woman but only to the waist level on the man lying beside her.
9. The ventilation system of any building is the perfect hiding place -- no one will ever think of looking for you in there and you can travel to any other part of the building undetected.

10. A man will show no pain while taking the most ferocious beating but will wince when a woman tries to clean his wounds.

From Laugh & Lift GCFL.net
docsdailychuckle@freegroups.net



Once upon a time there was a woman married to an annoying man named Steve. He complained about everything.

One day he went to the creek with his mule and as he went he complained so much that the mule got annoyed and kicked him to death.

At the funeral, as men walked by Steve's wife she shook her head "yes." Every time women walked by she shook her head "no."

The minister asked "Why are you shaking your head "yes" for men and "no" for women?"

Her response was, "When the men walk by saying how sorry they feel for me, I respond saying, 'Yes, I'll be alright.' When the women walk by, they keep asking if the mule is for sale"

Pastor Tim <posts@cybersaltlists.org>



A Quaker farmer was milking his cow when she switched him in the face with her tail.

He patiently said, "Cow, thou shalt not do that."

He kept milking until she kicked and sent the half-filled milk pail tumbling across the barn, spilling and ruining the milk.

The farmer went around to face the cow and took her horns in his big, calloused hands. He looked at her and said, "Cow, thou knowest that I am a Quaker and that I cannot strike thee. But cow, thou also must know that I can sell thee to a Baptist."

[forwarded by Dennis Fast] Mikey's Funnies <funnies-owner@lists.MikeysFunnies.com>



Kathy was shopping in the mall with her two children and a display in the window of a lingerie store caught her eye.

"Do you think Daddy would like this?" she asked the kids, as she pointed to the lacy pajamas with matching robe.

"No way," four-year-old Rian replied. "Daddy would NEVER wear that!"

Received from Steve Sanderson. The Good Clean Funnies List [20170413] <gcfl-info@gcfl.net>

death and the devil.
 through the victory of Jesus Christ who overcame life,
 Let us be glad and rejoice and enjoy the life created for us
 "Leave sadness to the devil. The devil has reason to be sad."
 down through the centuries. St. Francis of Assisi advised,
 It is called the "Easter Laugh." The theme has been carried
 bottom of your heart."

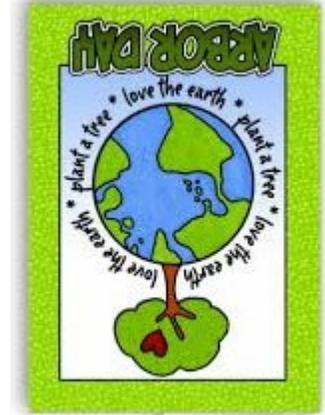
the dear God whenever you rejoice and laugh from the
 is a God of great joy. It is pleasing to
 God of sadness, but the devil is. God
 Martin Luther wrote: "God is not a
 time to rejoice and be glad.

Bring a funny story. Tell a humorous
 tale. Share a comical cartoon. It is
 time to rejoice and be glad.

Holy Humor Sunday
Sunday April 8



April 27, 2017



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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED