

There's someone at the door

One of my favorite people on earth is the UPS man. Don't get me wrong, I am also fond of our mail lady who promptly drops off the mail at 4:30. It's just that I get more bills dropped off in the mail box than packages. The UPS man on the other hand only brings good news – Birthday gifts, father's day gifts, new jeans, new ties, and especially new clown props. When I see that Brown truck pull into the parking lot I feel like little Ron Howard in the music man: "Oh oh, the UPS truck is a comin' down the street oh please let it be for me. It could be curtains, or dishes or a double boiler or it could be...somethin' special just for me"

The UPS man though is a humble worker. He's very focused on his job. He is there to deliver a package. He's not there to *be my buddy*. "Hey Pastor., how are you feeling about this carpet scrubber? I know anxiety can be part of the process of receiving a package so I just want to reassure you that it will be a positive addition to your home."

No, my UPS man is there to ring the doorbell, hand me the package, and hold out the clipboard for me to sign for it.

The angels in Matthew's gospel are like my UPS man. They are focused on their job—to deliver the Good News. They are not there to sell it to us. They are not there to be our buddy or to empathize with us. They're there to deliver their package, and it's up to us to sign for it, open it, and use it.

The Good News is only ever preceded by one short, preliminary sentence: "Don't be afraid."

"Don't be afraid, Zechariah, your wife Elizabeth will bear a son and you will name him John."

"Don't be afraid, Mary."

"Don't be afraid, shepherds. I bring you good news of great joy that shall be to all people."

"Don't be afraid, Joseph, take Mary as your wife. Her baby is conceived by the Holy Spirit. Name him Jesus; he's going to save all people from their sins."

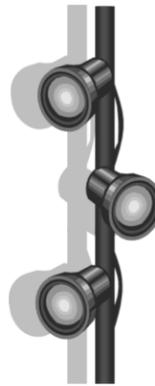
"Don't be afraid," the angels say. And then they deliver the package, you sign for it, open it, and use it.

I especially love the angel in Matthew's version of the Resurrection. This is an angel who knows how to make an entrance. He comes in with a flourish! This is a *buff angel*. He rolls back the large, sealed stone. This is *an angel with attitude*. After he rolls back the stone, he sits on it, and crosses his angelic arms. He glances over at the guards who are displaying certain physical symptoms of extreme terror we won't go into. He doesn't tell them not to be afraid, I assume, because he doesn't care if they are afraid or not. That message is being reserving for someone else, or two someone elses. This angel rolls his eyes, as if to say: "Take that, Caiaphas. Take that, Pilate. That's what God thinks of your effort to put the Messiah in a tomb! A tomb as a prison for the Son of God? Think again!

Then, for his main message, he turns his bright angelic eyes toward Mary Magdalene and the other Mary (whom in Matthew is probably the mother of Jesus) and says: "Do not be afraid. I know that you are looking for Jesus who was crucified. He is not here. He has been raised, *as he said*."

Matthew wants to make sure we notice these three little words "as he said." Because in Matthew's gospel, *Jesus told you so*—three times. Jesus tried to deliver the good news package to the disciples three times, but they refused to sign for it. (cont. next page)

They're at it again



April 30th will be Holy Humor Sunday and "The Life IN Christ Circus" is coming back. That's right. The "Life In Christ Circus" Clowns will be here on Sunday April 30th to lead us in worship.

What do you need to do?

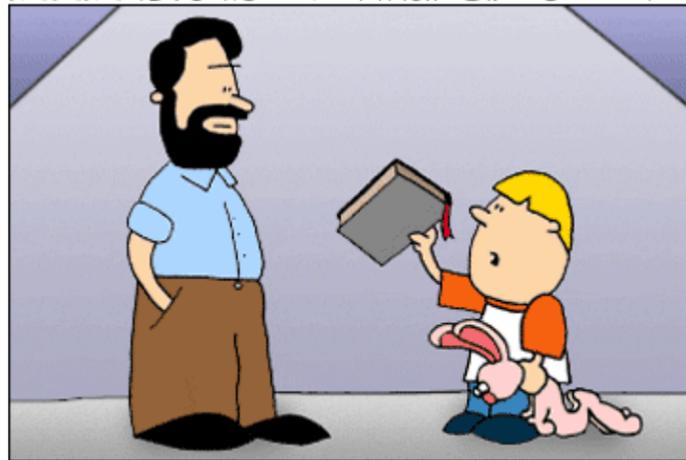
That's a great question. You are invited to be part of the Sunday's festive atmosphere by wearing your favorite costume. Maybe you have a left over Halloween costume hanging in your closet. Maybe you feel like coming to worship in your PJs. Maybe you have always wanted to dress up as a superhero but needed the right excuse. Well the excuse is provided: Holy Humor Sunday 2017 is coming.

Invite your neighbors. Invite your friends. Invite your friend's neighbors. Just join us and the clowns from "The Life In Christ Circus, on Sunday April 30th for Holy Humor worship.

You'll laugh. You'll cry. You'll pee your pants. (remind me to edit that last part out). Just don't miss it.

Keep the celebration of Easter alive. April 30th at 10:30am.

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DAD, I NEED YOUR HELP TO FIND OUT WHERE IT TALKS ABOUT THE EASTER BUNNY IN THE BIBLE

04-13-2006

DID YOU KNOW...

- that Trinity has two worship opportunities: Sundays at 10:30am and Wednesdays at 6:30am. Come and join us.
- We are going to have baptisms at the Easter Service this year. Don't miss it.
- 2017 is a yearlong celebration of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.
- May 14th is Mother's Day and June 18th is Father's Day.
- Pastor Brent is taking the Boy Scout Buckskin training to better understand the kind of training a Boy Scout leader must undergo. Go Troop 511.
- Trinity's magnolia tree is in full bloom
- Holy Humor Sunday is April 30th.
- Christopher Sturm will be filling in for Pastor Brent while he is in the woods doing Buckskin training.



Guess the owner of this birthday cake and win a prize.



New Cooks At Neighbor Night

Meet Diane Shroul and Dinah Clark two of our Wednesday Neighbor Night Cooks.

Come by on the second Wednesday of the month at 5Pm to check out their delicious recipes.

Welcome Diane and Dinah



Congratulations to Jarrod Studebaker Jr. and his family upon his baptism into the eternal family of God April 15th, 2017

And

Congratulations to Miles Hortsman and his family upon his baptism into the eternal family of God April 16, 2017



Trinity's Guiding Principles

Jesus is our Lord and Savior

We meet all people with compassion

We are God's hands and voice for the world

We grow disciples

God's grace is enough

(cont)

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and undergo great suffering at the hands of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. Matthew 16:21 Lord this must not happen Peter

As they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, 'The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into human hands, and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised.' And they were greatly distressed. Matthew 17:21 disciples greatly distressed

While Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, he took the twelve disciples aside by themselves, and said to them on the way, 'See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be handed over to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn him to death; then they will hand him over to the Gentiles to be mocked and flogged and crucified; and on the third day he will be raised.'

Matthew 20: 17-19 sons of Zebedee mom

Why do we—like them—despite the witness of Scripture, tradition, and our life of worship and service, still come to so many situations looking for death when we have been promised life is waiting there for us?

Is it because when we look to the past we see that life has let us down so many times? Things didn't turn out like we hoped? Circumstances went against us? Other people disappointed or hurt us?

"You're breaking up with me now? And through a text?"

"I thought I was in line for that position."

"I've watched my diet and exercised three times a week. What do you mean I have cancer?"

"Shouldn't there be a heartbeat at twelve weeks?"

"There were no signs that she was depressed. She baked a cake this morning."

Why is it that we only hear the first half of Jesus' prediction: "The Son of Man will suffer and be killed..." but forget what comes next? Why do we come to so many situations alert to signs of death, disappointment, and defeat, when we have been promised life and hope and victory is waiting there?

Is it because, when we look to the future, with what we know of life, we know that difficult situations lie ahead?

. Many years ago when we first moved to Omaha I was doing pulpit supply. I remember going to a small brick church on a country road north of Elkhorn. I arrived at 9:20 for 10:00 worship. I came in the side entrance, went up the stairs and turned right. I was met by an elderly couple. They greeted me, introduced themselves and showed me to the sanctuary. There were about 14 people waiting for worship to start. 10:00 rolled around and the only other people who showed up were the couple who met me at the door. After worship one little lady come up to shake my hand. "My husband and I joined this church in 1955. These members of the church have been together for years. But now all of us are old and a lot of us are dead." Then, realizing how that sounded, she smiled brightly and added, "And we're so glad to have you join us this morning!"

"We're all old and a lot of us are dead."

Too often this is our attitude when we know there is a difficult road a head of us. We talk ourselves into believing there is no hope, that there is no way things are going to turn around, there is not power that can change this outcome.

To all those moments in your life where past heartbreak and future worries try to sum up life is a series of death like pictures, God sends to you through the words of Matthew package of good news.

"Don't be afraid. He has been raised from the dead and is going ahead of you to Galilee. There you will see him. This is my message for you." Sign here.

The angel's work is done. And now yours begins. Will you sign for the good news, unwrap it, and live by it?

Will you sign for the good news that your future is a series of situations, whether garden walkways or graveyards, where Christ awaits you to meet defeat with victory, to meet disappointment with hope, to meet death with life?

He is not here. He has been raised. Come and see the places where he lay. The Good News – a gift for you from God – sign for it, unwrap it and use it.

Pastor Brent