



Wisconsin Gospellers

April 2021 Newsletter

The Greatest Commandment

“Hearing that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, the Pharisees got together. One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’ Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

- Matthew 22:34-40

Reflective Prayer



Let us pray.

Dear God, Amid the many blockades that get in the way of justice, send the angel of peaceful gentleness upon us. Give us inner strength and self-confidence. Help us to meet those who want evil and do evil against you with serenity and love. Help us to wish them good and bless them.

Give us compassion, Loving God, to look at the being of those trapped in their fearful thoughts and anti-human actions. Help us to meet them with full respect for their dignity and the necessary distinction towards their talking and doing.

May God grant each of us a way to find thoughts and words of love for all people to make our world more peaceful and better.
Amen.

(Inspired by Rev. Angelika Scholte-Reh, pastor in Kroppen, Germany. Adapted by David Wernecke.)

Cries of Rage and Hope

by Hans Rodenbeck, 2020

I spoke a flowing language of love.
You spewed only hatred.

I prayed for peace.
You screamed for war.

I begged for compassion. You had no mercy.

I got to my knees and prayed for justice. You pushed me down in the dirt and held your foot on my neck.

I died that day.

You lived.

But there are more of me. They have been silent while you made fools of yourselves and the systems you live in. We have tried to counteract your hatred and injustice and war with love and compassion and mercy.

You laughed at us.

Now we will set aside that love and compassion and mercy. We will seek justice with the only tools we have left.

If the only language you understand is violence then in this hour of darkness we will speak your language. We will speak your language louder and clearer and more forcefully than you can ever imagine.

We will rise.

We will overcome.

And when there is no more need to speak your language because there are no more ears that need to hear it then once again

We will speak our language of love.



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Alex Zamalin: On civility

[Many of us] want to believe civility is a great tool for promoting racial justice. But this isn't true. Look at the historical record...

Civility substitutes the goal of unity... over confronting systemic racism. This empowers people who want to maintain the status quo... Pres. Ulysses S. Grant's rhetoric of civility was a gift for Southern states, who wanted to surgically circumvent the 13th Amendment, which ended slavery, and dismantle Reconstruction. If the North committed to reconciliation, [they'd have to] respect the rights of Southern states— who were busy passing “Black Codes” that punished Black people more severely for crude gestures and vagrancy...

Civility also provides ammunition for silencing anti-racist protest. The language of “civil” and “uncivil” sets the stage: In 1837, SC Senator John C. Calhoun condemned “uncivil” anti-slavery activists as filled with “deadly hatred,” to justify violent reprisals.

...To reject civility isn't to embrace violence. Far from it. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 1963 “Letter from a Birmingham Jail” was addressed to White clergy, who worried that direct nonviolent protest would [lead to] “hatred and violence.” King wrote, “The greatest stumbling block is the white moderate,” who chose compromise over equality. In a 1967 sermon(!?!), King said “Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is love correcting everything that stands against love.”

- excerpted from *Yes* magazine, March 2, 2021

Fisk University Jubilee Choir

PBS's *The American Experience* has a 55- minute documentary on Nashville's Fisk University Jubilee Choir. This is the group that basically brought African-American spirituals into White society and churches.

Here's a link to stream it for free!

<https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/americanexperience/films/singers/>

If the link doesn't work, just search for “Fisk Jubilee Singers” and “American Experience;” it should pop right up!



Cranberry Farming 101

Alicia Gardner wants to share that you can learn about Cranberry Farming by searching “Mike Gardner Cranberry Farming” in YouTube.





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Prayer Chain

Prayer is an important part of our lives whether we are gathered or scattered. Please e-mail David Wernecke (kdwerbec@yahoo.com) with any prayer requests you may have. David will compile a list & share with members regularly via email.

“This is the Day” Virtual recording

As of April 14, the “This is the Day” virtual recording is still being assembled. Due to the large contribution of music submissions, it is taking longer than anticipated to assemble the recording. Additionally, there has been a small setback with technology that is being worked on. The leadership team will share the recording as soon as it becomes available. We thank everyone who has submitted a recording. We encourage everyone to share the recording as soon as it comes available.

WI Gossellers have 501c3 status

The Wisconsin Gossellers' application for 501c3 status was approved on 3/16/2021. The application for independent 501c3 status had been submitted back in December, with the pro bono help of CPA Thomas Koplin. Thanks Tom!

Sharing Memories Through Pictures


The Wisconsin Gossellers had the opportunity share music at St. Barbara Church in Ortrand, Germany during one of our concerts in partnership with the Evangelische Kirche Berlin-Brandenburg-schlesische Oberlausitz. We are thankful for this opportunity and the many opportunities to share the transformative power of God's love through Gospel music.





Mission Statement: To bridge cultural divides and touch souls through the transformative power of gospel music.

Vision Statement: A world where God's love triumphs over that which divides us.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Thru Spring 2021	All gatherings online due to COVID-19 pandemic		
May 8	11am - 1pm 2 nd Saturday rehearsal/fellowship		May 9th is Mothers Day
June 12	11am - 1pm 2 nd Saturday rehearsal/fellowship		June 20th is Father's Day
Future	Leadership team (LT) is monitoring this and are looking at trying to meet in person again in September. This of course is pending how the trends look this Spring and Summer. The leadership team will keep you posted.		

Songs you might enjoy listening to:

Kirk Franklin: [Lift Every Voice and Sing](#) Alicia Keys: [Lift Every Voice and Sing](#)

Merry Clayton: [Beautiful Scars](#)

Dan Nichols: [End of the Storm](#)

Kara Comparetto: [Wind Scene](#)

Willie Nelson: [Rainbow Connection](#)

What music lifts YOU up?

We'd love to share! Please email your favorites to wisconsingospellers@gmail.com



Music-based assignment

Listen to one of the songs we've suggested (see box to the left). Sit quietly for a few minutes, then listen again. How does your mind respond? Your body? Your heart?

Mission based assignment

Email the Gossellers LT (WisconsinGospellers@gmail.com) about a mission project you or your church is working on. Look for these in the next newsletter!