

Announcements!

Weekly Bible Study We invite each of you to attend the mid-week Bible Study, held upstairs each Tuesday evening beginning at 6 pm. We encourage you to attend these vital and exciting studies!

Children's Church Children's Church is available upstairs on the 2nd-5th Sundays starting at 11:00 am. Ages 2-10 are welcome to attend. Please sign your children in and out. A snack is served. Please pick up your children promptly after services. ALL DONATIONS ARE WELCOMED. If you are interested in serving in Children's Church, please see Sarita Agee.

Words of Wisdom: A Baby's Hug...

We were the only family with children in the restaurant. I sat Erik in a high chair and noticed everyone was quietly sitting and talking. Suddenly, Erik squealed with glee and said, "Hi." He pounded his fat baby hands on the high chair tray. His eyes were crinkled in laughter and his mouth was bared in a toothless grin, as he wriggled and giggled with merriment.

I looked around and saw the source of his merriment. It was a man whose pants were baggy with a zipper at half-mast and his toes poked out of would-be shoes. His shirt was dirty and his hair was uncombed and unwashed. His whiskers were too short to be called a beard and his nose was so varicose it looked like a road map. We were too far from him to smell, but I was sure he smelled. His hands waved and flapped on loose wrists.

"Hi there, baby; Hi there, big boy. I see ya, buster," the man said to Erik.

My husband and I exchanged looks, "What do we do?"

Erik continued to laugh and answer, "Hi".

Everyone in the restaurant noticed and looked at us and then at the man. The old geezer was creating a nuisance with my beautiful baby. Our meal came and the man began shouting from across the room, "Do ya patty cake? Do you know peek-a-boo? Hey, look, he knows peek-a-boo."

Nobody thought the old man was cute. He was obviously drunk. My husband and I were embarrassed. We ate in silence; all except for Erik, who was running through his repertoire for the admiring skid row bum, who in turn, reciprocated with his cute comments. We finally got through the meal and headed for the door.

My husband went to pay the check and told me to meet him in the parking lot. The old man sat poised between me and the door. "Lord, just let me out of here before he speaks to me or Erik," I prayed. As I drew closer to the man, I turned my back trying to sidestep him and avoid any air he might be breathing. As I did, Erik leaned over my arm, reaching with both arms in a baby's "pick-me-up" position. Before I could stop him, Erik had propelled himself from my arms to the man's.

Suddenly a very old smelly man and a very young baby consummated their love and kinship. Erik in an act of total trust, love, and submission laid his tiny head upon the man's ragged shoulder. The man's eyes closed, and I saw tears hover beneath his lashes. His aged hands full of grime, pain, and hard labor, cradled my baby's bottom and stroked his back.

No two beings have ever loved so deeply for so short a time. I stood awestruck. The old man rocked and cradled Erik in his arms and his eyes opened and set squarely on mine. He said in a firm commanding voice, "You take care of this baby."

Somehow I managed, "I will," from a throat that contained a stone.

He pried Erik from his chest, lovingly and longingly, as though he were in pain I received my baby, and the man said, "God bless you, ma'am, you've given me my Christmas gift." I said nothing more than a muttered thanks.

With Erik in my arms, I ran for the car. My husband was wondering why I was crying and holding Erik so tightly, and why I was saying, "My God, my God, forgive me."

I had just witnessed Christ's love shown through the innocence of a tiny child who saw no sin, who made no judgment; a child who saw a soul, and a mother who saw a suit of clothes. I was a Christian who was blind, holding a child who was not.

I felt it was God asking, "Are you willing to share your son for a moment?" when He shared His for all eternity. The ragged old man, unwittingly, had reminded me, "To enter the Kingdom of God, we must become as little children."



Welcome to the

Everlasting Covenant Church



600 Robert Jemison Road; Birmingham, Alabama 35209-3008

Telephone: (205) 942-2252

Web Site: <http://eccweb.org> E-Mail: Info@eccweb.org



Follow Us: "The Everlasting Covenant Church", Birmingham, AL

"THE_ECC2015"

Eric R. Agee, Jr., Pastor

April 15, 2018

Vision Statement:



Enhancing Our Knowledge of Jesus Christ,
Empowering All Believers for Ministry, and
Encouraging Continuous Dedication to the Lord.

Order of Services

Fellowship | Refreshments — 9:30 a.m.

Sunday School — 10:00 a.m.

Morning Worship Services — 11:00 a.m.

Announcements & Recognition of Visitors

Call to Worship: Scripture Reading & Prayer

Tithes and Offerings; Prayer of Thanksgiving

Praise and Worship Selections

Sermon

Invitation to Christ

Benediction

April Fools...

Taken from <https://www.snopes.com/fact-check/april-fools39-day-origins/>

It has become tradition on the first of April to pull jokes of the harmless variety on those near and dear to us. We plot and we scheme, and often the yuks are funnier in our imaginings than how they play out in reality, but that doesn't stop us from sending the little kid in us out on a rampage. Even the most staid among us have been known to indulge in a practical joke or two, so beware of trusting anyone on that day. How the custom of pranking on April 1 came about remains shrouded in mystery.

When the western world employed the Julian calendar, years began on March 25. Festivals marking the start of the New Year were celebrated on the first day of April because March 25 fell during Holy Week. The adoption of the Gregorian calendar during the 1500s moved the New Year to January 1. According to the most widely-believed origin postulated for April Fools' Day, those who could be tricked into believing April 1 was still the proper day to celebrate the New Year earned the sobriquet of April fools. To this end, French peasants would unexpectedly drop in on neighbors on that day in an effort to confuse them into thinking they were receiving a New Year's call. Out of that one jape supposedly grew the tradition of testing the patience of family and friends.

But that's only one theory. Others are:

The timing of this day of pranks seems to be related to the arrival of spring, when nature "fools" mankind with fickle weather, according to the Encyclopedia of Religion and the Encyclopedia Britannica.

The Country Diary of Garden Lore, which chronicles the goings-on in an English garden, says that April Fools' Day "is thought to commemorate the fruitless mission of the rook (the European crow), who was sent out in search of land from Noah's flood-encircled ark."

Others theorize it may have something to do with the Vernal Equinox.

Some think to tie in with the Romans' end-of-winter celebration, Hilaria, and the end of the Celtic new year festival.

Wherever and whenever the custom began, it has since evolved its own lore and set of unofficial rules. Superstition has it that the pranking period expires at noon on the 1st of April and any jokes attempted after that time will call bad luck down onto the head of the perpetrator. Additionally, those who fail to respond with good humor to tricks played upon them are said to attract bad luck to themselves.

Not all superstitions about the day are negative, though — fellas fooled by a pretty girl are said to be fated to end up married to her, or at least enjoy a healthy friendship with the lass.

In Scotland, an April fool is called an April "gowk" — Scottish for cuckoo, an emblem of simpletons. In England, a fool is called a gob, gawby or gobby. In France, the victim of a hoax is called a "poisson d'avril," an April fish. ("April fish" refers to a young fish, thus one easily caught.) The French delight in shouting "Poisson d'Avril!" at the denouement of the foolery. Some also insist all such pranks include a fish or at least a vague reference to same within the joke. Asking someone during a phone conversation to hold the line, then later returning to the call and inquiring of the victim if there'd been any bites is a popular groaner. So are pranks which trick the victim into placing calls to fish shops or the local aquarium.

Sermon Notes

Scripture: _____

Subject: _____

Notes: _____
