



No portion of this article may be reproduced without
express written permission of Style Publishing Group, LLC.
©2007 • All rights reserved.



Style Publishing Group
P.O. Box 1676
Frisco, Texas 75034
Phone: 972.335.1181
Toll Free: 877.781.7067
Fax: 214.722.2313

E-mail: info@friscostyle.com
Web: www.friscostyle.com

Ad Sales: (972) 335-1306

Building a good fence
photo by Beth Robinson



circumstances. To provide a safe place for kids to play, to detain prisoners, or even extra security, fences have a place. But fences will not strengthen relationships.

Aren't there times when relationships and peace outweigh fear and personal security? From a political perspective,

I have to believe that it is in our best interests to develop, not damage relations with our closest neighbors. And from a personal perspective, Christ set the example of reaching out to others in spite of inherent security risks. In every encounter throughout Christ's ministry, he faced the risk of being rebuked and worse, put to death for his claims. His calling was a ministry of building relationships, touching lives to empower others to make a difference. In response to a personal encounter with Jesus, Zacchaeus, a hated tax collector, rejoiced, "Look, half of my possessions Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay them back four times as much." (Luke 19:8 NRSV).

Robert Frost was right, there is an unseen power that undermines a fence. That power is the power of God, seeking to break down the walls that separate people from His love and compassion. Good fences don't make good neighbors. Reaching out to one another in peace, compassion and love do. It is the example Christ set for us.

Reverend Erik Buteyn is the associate pastor of the Celebrate Life! Reformed Church in Plano. To receive a daily devotional contact goodnews@reformedchurchplano.org

Good Fences Make Good Neighbors

By Reverend Erik Buteyn

"GOOD FENCES MAKE GOOD NEIGHBORS" is a line from the poem "Mending Wall" by Robert Frost that depicts the regular springtime ritual of resetting stone walls, separating land between neighbors. The underlying tone of this poem is that each year this ritual is undermined by an unseen force that knocks down the walls people build. The poet reflects throughout his musings that "Something there is that doesn't love a wall."

It would seem that the United States is leaning towards a "good fence, good neighbor" policy towards our borders to the north and to the south. With the recent debates over border control regarding illegal immigration, some legislators seem excited about the prospect of erecting a fence or a wall to prevent the influx of immigrants from Mexico.

At the same time, legislators are up in arms over the recent terrorists plot foiled by Canadian authorities. A group of 12 men and five minors were arrested

with large amounts of ammonium nitrate and alleged to have planned the bombing of parliament buildings, broadcast studios and even threatened to behead the Prime Minister the *Washington Post* reported. Canadian leaders were rankled on the eve of the success of this sting operation because of comments made by American authorities challenging the adequacy of Canadian border security. A member of the Canadian Parliament, Mark Holland, state that he was "concerned" about Canada being referred to as "the gateway to terrorism." Anyone want to build another fence?

I recently built a beautiful fence in my backyard. Now, when I want to speak to my neighbors, I have to walk to their homes and knock on their doors. The more I think about it, the more I disagree with a good fence, good neighbor policy. A good fence provides privacy, a good fence provides security, a good fence provides boundaries....it doesn't enhance a relationship. I am not saying that fences aren't appropriate in specific