

April 23, 2023

HOLY HUMOR or BRIGHT SUNDAY DINNER CHURCH

“Bright Sunday” is an ancient tradition, started by the Greeks in the early centuries of Christianity. Continuing the celebration of Jesus’ resurrection, the faithful held parties and picnics and played practical jokes on their pastors. They danced and sang and told jokes.

The custom was rooted in the musings of early church theologians (like Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa, and John Chrysostom) that God played a practical joke on the devil by raising Jesus from the dead. “Risus paschalis – the Easter laugh,” the theologians called it.

Today, this custom lives on in Christian churches of many different denominations with what is referred to as “Holy Humor or Laughter Sunday,” offering an opportunity for congregations to join in the frivolity of Christ crucified and risen. (See: 1 Corinthians 1:22-24)

On the Bulletin Cover

Jack Jewell’s painting of a joyful, triumphant Risen Christ surprising his disciples at the Sea of Tiberias.

GREETING



“Hear that? People in heaven have ever-laughing life.”



from JoyfulNoiseletter.com
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Welcome & Introduction

Disclaimer: In the sharing of corny jokes throughout this evening's worship service, let us remember that these aren't meant to offend or make fun of anyone. All are pretend and are not based on any known real experience. With this in mind, let us relax and share in the gift of joy and laughter.

Getting Started...

Responsive Scripture Reading

Yet, we *know* that scripture is filled with passages upon passages reminding us to be joyful and to laugh. Let's consider those in our worship bulletin, beginning with:

Liturgist: Mouths Filled with Laughter

All: *From Psalm 126, verse 2: "Then our mouth was filled with laughter, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them.'"*

Liturgist: This passage tells us that after God restored Zion, the Israelite's celebrated God's amazing work with laughter and singing. Thus, we too should celebrate God's goodness in our lives with singing and so much joy that our mouths will be filled with *laughter*.

Liturgist: A Time to Laugh

All: *From Ecclesiastes, chapter 3, verses 1 and 4: "For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven...a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance..."*

Liturgist: In this passage, King Solomon tells us that there will always be a time for something, and that includes a time for *laughter*. So, when it's time to enjoy, and *laugh*, don't be afraid to *laugh* out loud!

Liturgist: God Will Fill Mouths with Laughter

All: *From the book of Job, chapter 8, verse 21: "He will yet fill your mouth with laughter, and your lips with shouting."*

Liturgist: Behind this passage is the story of a good and faithful man, by the name of Job, who suffers the tragic loss of *all* his loved ones—his children, wife, and faithful servants. In a senseless tragedy, he too, lost his home and financial stability. His body, covered in oozing sores, makes him weak with pain. His closest friends do their best to offer words of explanation and hope. One of them lovingly reminds him, and us, that God will restore

us with joy in the end. Even at the lowest point in life, God is actively present. What joy to know that laughter is a promised gift of God!

Liturgist: God's goodness will be known by our Laughter

All: *Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, "The LORD has done great things for them."*

Liturgist: According to Psalm 126, verse 2, when the mouths of God's people are filled with laughter and their tongues sing with joy - then all who see and hear God's people rejoicing will say, "The LORD has done great things for them!" Laughter and joy are a witness to the goodness of God in our lives! So, throughout our Holy Humor Dinner Church Worship Service let us laugh and be joyful and after each joke pops up, let us *joyfully* sing together the response as printed in your bulletin, with the congregation and the choir having separate parts.

Sung Response

All sing:

I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy - down in my heart.

Choir shouts:

Where?

Congregation responds:

Down in my heart!

Choir shouts:

Where?

Congregation responds:

Down in my heart!

All sing:

I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy - Down in my heart. Down in my heart to stay!

A Little Holy Humor...

Table Grace

(Tune: doo wa ditty ditty dum ditty doo)

Thank you Lord, for the food that we receive.

Singing doo-wa-ditty, ditty-dum-ditty doo!

Thanks to Thee, for bread and butter, and the meat.

Singing doo-wa-ditty, ditty-dum-ditty doo!

Looks good!

(echo: looks good)

Tastes Fine!

(echo: taste fine)

Looks good! Tastes fine!

And we praise God for all time!

Singing doo-wa-ditty, ditty-dum-ditty doo!

AMEN!

Fill Plates and Eat

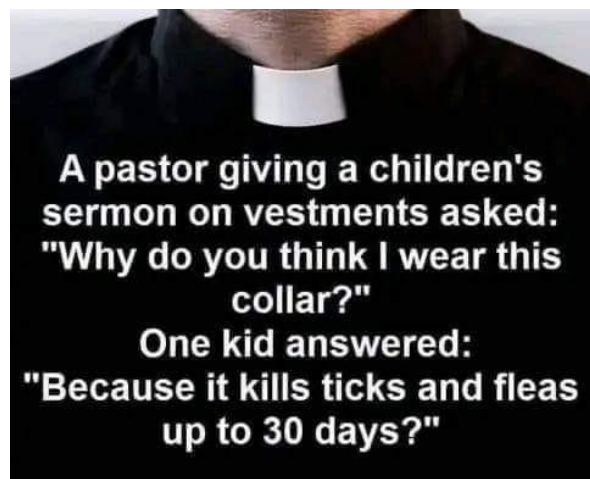
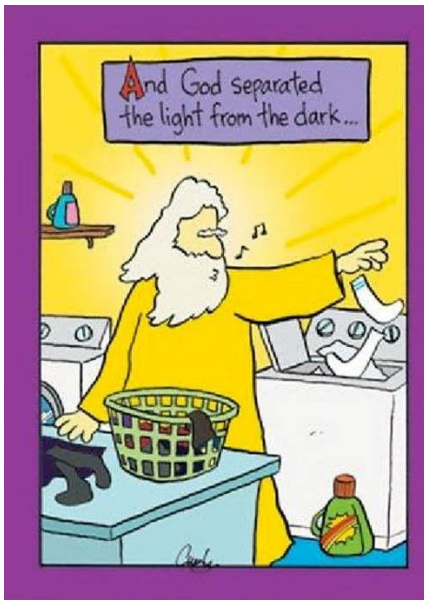
First-time guests are invited (and sometimes coaxed) to go first.

To Tickle your Funny Bone...

Announcements and Birthdays

Between April and September of this year. (In October, we will gather for another Dinner Church Sunday evening and celebrate birthdays. SING HAPPY BIRTHDAY. Any anniversaries? Have everyone shout, "Happy Anniversary.")

Jokes and Story Telling by the Congregation



Confession and Forgiveness

Pastor: We worship today with joy and humor remembering that Jesus defeated death. But we still make mistakes in life and so we come to God humbly asking for forgiveness. Today, we confess our sins together through song and a familiar tune.

If you've sinned and you know it clap your hands...(clap, clap)

If you've sinned and you know it clap your hands...(clap, clap)

If you've sinned and you know it and you're ready to admit it...

If you've sinned and you know it clap your hands. (clap, clap)

If you want to be forgiven stomp your feet...(stomp, stomp)

If you want to be forgiven stomp your feet...(stomp, stomp)

If you want to be forgiven and you turn away from sin...

If you want to be forgiven stomp your feet...(stomp, stomp)

If you know that you're forgiven, nod your head...(nod, nod)

If you know that you're forgiven, nod your head...(nod, nod)

If you know that you're forgiven, and you really want to live it...

If you know that you're forgiven, nod your head...(nod, nod)

If you're grateful for forgiveness do all three...(clap/clap, stomp/stomp, nod/nod)

If you're grateful for forgiveness do all three...(clap/clap, stomp/stomp, nod/nod)

If you're grateful for forgiveness and you want your life to show it....

If you're grateful for forgiveness do all three...(clap/clap, stomp/stomp, nod/nod)

Assurance of Forgiveness

Pastor: Jesus Christ sacrificed himself for our redemption.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven and blessed.

All: Thanks be to God for God's eternal love! Amen!



"It's an innovative way to boost attendance."



The Lord's Supper

Scripture Reading – Luke 24:13-35

Mrs. Anna Mae Schriver

Popcorn Prayer

Special Music

Hark the Herald Angel Said

JAM Choir

Benediction

Pastor: Let us share the joy and love of the resurrection. So go with God's blessing to laugh, to dance and to sing God's praises.

All: Amen.

Pastor: Go in peace and rejoice in the Lord always! Again, I say: Rejoice!

All: Thanks be to God!

Communal Clean-Up