

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

East Moline, Illinois

Pastor Becky Sherwood

April 28, 2019, The 2nd Sunday of Easter—HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

Psalm 30 (CEV), John 15:9-15 (The Message)

HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

INTRO BEFORE CALL TO WORSHIP

There is a quote which has been attributed to Bishop Barbara Harris, the first black female Bishop in the American Episcopal Church. She was talking about Christians generally as carrying on as if they were:

“Good Friday people in an Easter world,
rather than Easter people in a Good Friday world”.

Today we are going to worship like we are Easter people

- people who share in God’s victory
- and celebrate God’s practical joke on sin and evil and death when Christ rose from death to Eternal Life.

WHAT PUTS THE HUMOR IN HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY?

In 2004 I first came across this idea of an ancient tradition that has only been reclaimed in the last 31 years in many churches. In the second and third centuries A.D. theologians focused on the resurrection of Jesus in a way that may seem surprising to us.

They helped people understand that God played a practical joke on evil and death by raising Jesus from the dead.

Easter was “God’s supreme joke played on sin and death.”

In those early 200& 300's, the theologians called the Sunday after Easter: “*Risus paschalis*” “which means the “Easter laugh” in Latin.

In time the thoughts of the theologians became a religious practice in churches. As you may have read in your bulletins “Easter Monday” and “Bright Sunday” (the Sunday after Easter) were observed by the faithful as “days of joy and laughter’ with parties and picnics to celebrate Jesus’ resurrection.”

It is said that in the past “parishioners and pastors played practical jokes on each other, drenched each other with water, sang, and danced. It was a time for clergy and people to tell jokes and to have fun.... (Information from the Homepage of the Fellowship of Merry Christians.)

This morning we are celebrating Jesus’ resurrection and triumph over sin and evil and death.

We are here to join our laughter

with the joyful laughter that has echoed through the ages since Jesus’ resurrection.

We are here to celebrate the joyful good news that:

love is stronger than hate,
the cross and empty tomb are stronger than any evil,
and the power of Jesus Christ is a reason to celebrate!

So in the fine tradition of those who have gone before us, today is a day for Holy Humor. And I’d like to begin with the following story that I’ve been compelled to tell on several of our Holy Humor Sundays:

A mother went in to wake her daughter, to tell her it was time to get ready for church, to which she defiantly replied,
"I'm not going!"

"Why not?" her mother asked.

"I'll give you two good reasons," she said. "(1), they don't like me, and (2), I don't like them."

Her mother replied, "I'll give YOU two good reasons why you SHOULD go to church.

(1) You're 50 years old, and (2) you're the pastor!"

"In Sunday School, they were teaching how God created everything, including human beings. Little Johnny seemed especially intent when they told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs. Later in the week, his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and said, "Johnny what is the matter?"

Little Johnny responded: "I have a pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

And now I'd like to turn to you and ask if any of you have a joke you'd like to share, remembering my request that it be a joke you could not only tell in front of your grandparents in church, but hearing it they would laugh!

JOYOUS JOKE BREAK WITH THE CONGREGATION

CHILDREN'S SERMON

Knock, knock. Who's there? Easter. Easter, who? The Easter Bunny.

Knock, knock. Who's there? Anna. Anna, who? Anna nother Easter Bunny!

Knock, knock. Who's there? Moira. Moira, who? Moira Easter Bunnies.

Knock, knock. Who's there? Howie. Howie, who? Howie gonna get rid of all these Easter Bunnies?

Knock, knock. Who's there? Boo. Boo, who? Don't cry, the Easter Bunnies will come back next year!

Knock Knock... ya...yahoo

JOYOUS JOKE BREAK WITH THE CONGREGATION #2

Joke from Al Uzzell's friend Lois Jones (she will tell if here):

A new usher graciously asked an elderly woman where she would like to sit in church.

She said she would like to sit in the front pew. "Oh, you don't want to sit there," the usher said. "Our pastor can be so boring."

"Do you know who I am?" the woman asked.

"I'm sorry, but I don't," the usher replied

"I am the pastor's mother!" she said.

"Do you know who I am?" the usher asked.

"No, sir, I don't," she replied.

"Good—let me show you to the front pew," the usher said

OFFERING

In prayer, a person asked, "God, how long is a million years to you?"

God answered, "It is but a second."

"God, how much is a million dollars to you?"

"It is but a penny."

"God, could you please give me a penny?"

"Sure, just a second."

Now let us offer our pennies – and our dollars – to God as we receive our morning offering of gifts

and of tithes and prepare to share the joy of our God with others!

BEFORE BENEDICTION:

The Sunday School Teacher told her class that we will never know what Jesus said when he came out of the tomb on that first Easter Morning. One of the six year olds raised her hands and said "I know what he said, he said "Ta-Da!"

We follow our Risen Savior who conquered sin and death and evil for all time with the joyous mystery of the resurrection. Let us leave this morning's worship with the joy of our Savior as we turn to each other across the aisle to bless each other with the Benediction:

BENEDICTION

UNISON And now may you know the glee of the Lord Jesus Christ,
the mirth of God,
and the laughter of the Holy Spirit,
this day and 24/7. Amen! Alleluia! Amen!

EXTRAS IF NEEDED

Someone Took My Seat, and while I'm sure we won't recognize ourselves in this reading, you may recognize people in other churches.

A lady took my seat in church a while back.

It's not that important, really.

She's a very nice lady, kind and considerate.

A good friend in fact.

There were several other seats available. I can sit anywhere.

The people in our congregation are as friendly and caring as you will find any place in the world.

A person should be comfortable sitting any place in the world...It's no big deal.

My seat is in the seventh row back from the front of the church;

I'm sure she didn't intend to take my seat. She just wouldn't do that.

Nor would anyone else in our fine church.

It doesn't make that much difference.

My seat is on the end of the pew, on the north side, by the windows.

On your left as you come into the sanctuary.

I can rest my left arm on the end of the pew.

It's a good seat...

I suppose she came early, and my seat appeared available.

She probably didn't intend anything personal by taking my seat,
but I would never raise a fuss about a seat,
or hold a grudge.

There are several seats available on the south side.

On your right as you come in.

I could have taken one of those.

Those people who sit over there are very nice...

I know most of those people.

I would be welcome over there, on the south side.

Actually, it was about three months ago when she took my seat.

I really don't know why she took it.

I've never done anything to her.

I've never taken her seat.

I suppose I'll have to come an hour early now to get my seat.
 Either that or sit on the south side.
 She really took it because it's one of the best seats in the house.
 That's why she took it.
 She had no business taking my seat...
 I'm not going to sit on the south side.
 That's for southsiders. I'm a northsider.
 I can just hear those southsiders, if I sat over there,
 "what's she doing over here?"
 I'll tell you what she's doing over here
 Some unscrupulous person took her seat, that's what.
 She took it because it's the best seat in the house.
 And I'm not going to church two hours early
 to get what is rightly mine from the beginning.
 This is the way great social injustices begin:
 abusive people taking other people's seats in church.
 This is the way the seeds of revolution are sown.
 A person can only stand so much.
 Where is it going to end?
 If somebody doesn't stand up and be counted,
 nobody's seat will be safe.
 People will just sit any place they please,
 and the next thing they'll do is to take my parking place, too.
 World order will be in shambles..." (Unknown)

Who was the greatest babysitter in the Bible?

David - he rocked Goliath to sleep. . .

Who was the greatest comedian in the Bible?

Samson - he brought the house down!

What was the first Sport mentioned in the Bible?

Baseball . . . In the Big inning Eve stole first, and Adam stole second

What kind of car did the disciples drive?

the Disciples were in one accord.

Best Babysitter in Bible,

David, he rocked Goliath to sleep

The first tennis game in the Bible?

Joseph served in Pharaoh's court

Q: Who was the best business woman in the Bible?

A: Pharaoh's daughter – she drew a profit from the rush at the bank.

And finally, to put you out of your misery, only one more of these:

What was Boaz before he married Ruth?

Ruthless!

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Little Johnny responded: "I have a pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

Billy Graham was returning to Ashville after a speaking engagement and when his plane arrived there was a limousine there to transport him to his home. As he prepared to get into the limo, he stopped and spoke to the driver. "You know" he said, "I am 87 years old and I have never driven a limousine. Would you mind if I drove it for a while?" The driver said, "No problem. Have at it." Billy gets into the driver's seat and they head off down the highway.

A short distance away sat a rookie State Trooper operating his first speed trap. The long black limo went by him doing 70 in a 55 mph zone. The trooper pulled out and easily caught the limo and got out of his patrol car to begin the procedure. The young trooper walked up to the driver's door and when the glass was rolled down he was surprised to see who was driving.

He immediately excused himself and went back to his car and called his supervisor. He told the supervisor, "I know we are supposed to enforce the law but I also know that important people are given certain courtesies. I need to know what I should do because I have stopped a very important person." The supervisor asked, "Is it the governor?" The young trooper said, "No, he's more important than that." The supervisor said, "Oh, so it's the president." The young trooper said, "Not, he's even more important than that." The supervisor finally asked, "Well then, who is it?" The young trooper said, "I think it's Jesus because.....he's got Billy Graham for a chauffeur!"

In Las Vegas on Sundays some worshippers put casino chips into the offering plates instead of money. Since the chips are worth money, the Catholic churches are required to send all the chips from the many different casinos for sorting.

After the chips are sorted, a young priest is given the job of making the rounds to the various casinos and turning the chips into cash.

He is know as—"the Chip Monk."