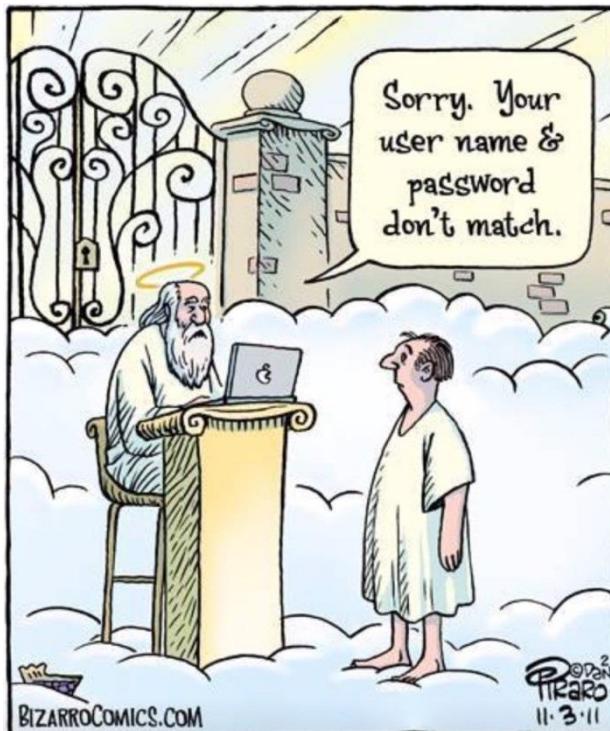


SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

APRIL 11, 2021

HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY



11:00 AM

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

OPENING VOLUNTARY

HUMORESQUE
BRYAN LOHR, ORGAN

PIETRO YON

WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SHARING OF JOYS & CONCERNS

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Sing God a brand new song! Earth and all people, sing!

God is great and worth a thousand Alleluias!

Let's hear it from the sky, with earth joining in, and thundering applause from the sea!

Let the hills turn cartwheels. Animals, come dance!

Get out the message: God rules!

God comes to set everything right on earth. Alleluia!

* HYMN

ZIPPITY DOO DAH

Zip-a-dee-doo-dah, zip-a-dee-ay
My, oh, my, what a wonderful day!
Plenty of sunshine heading my way,
Zip-a-dee-doo-dah, zip-a-dee-ay!

Mister Bluebird's on my shoulder,
It's the truth, it's actual,
Everything is satisfact-ual.

Zip-a-dee-doo-dah, zip-a-dee-ay
Wonderful feeling, wonderful day!
(Repeat twice)

CALL TO CONFSSION

PRAYER OF CONFSSION

Forgive us, O God, for being so deadly serious about life.

Forgive us whenever we forget to laugh—at life's absurdities, at things that are funny, at ourselves.

Forgive us for holding on to sadness and worry, for failing to reach for the joy and hope we find in our Risen Christ. May we cultivate smiles day by day, and may we be beacons of joy to each other and to the world.

We pray in the name of your son, Joyful Jesus. Amen.

(Silence for personal prayer and reflection.)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

* HUMMED RESPONSE #582

GLORY TO GOD, WHOSE GOODNESS SHINES ON ME

"GLORY TO GOD"

Glory to God, whose goodness shines on me, and to the Son,
whose grace has pardoned me,
and to the Spirit, whose love has set me free!
As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. Amen.

A TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

SCRIPTURE READING

LUKE 15:1-3, 11-32

15 Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him. ² And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling and saying, "This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."

³ So he told them this parable:

The Parable of the Prodigal and His Brother

¹¹ Then Jesus^[bl] said, "There was a man who had two sons. ¹² The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. ¹³ A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living.

¹⁴ When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. ¹⁵ So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. ¹⁶ He would gladly have filled himself with^[cl] the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. ¹⁷ But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! ¹⁸ I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you;

¹⁹ I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands." ²⁰ So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. ²¹ Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.'^[dl] ²² But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. ²³ And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; ²⁴ for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

²⁵ "Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. ²⁶ He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. ²⁷ He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' ²⁸ Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. ²⁹ But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. ³⁰ But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' ³¹ Then the father^[el] said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.

³² But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'

* HYMN #157

I DANCED IN THE MORNING

"LORD OF THE DANCE"

1 I danced in the morn-ing when the world was be-gun, and I
 2 I danced for the scribe and the Phar - i - see, but
 3 I danced on the Sab - bath and I cured the lame. The
 4 I danced on a Fri - day when the sky turned black. It's
 5 They cut me down and I leapt up high. ♫

danced in the moon and the stars and the sun, and I
 they would not dance and they would not foll - ow me. I
 ho - ly peo - ple said it was a shame. They
 hard to dance with the dev - il on your back. They
 I am the life that will nev - er, nev - er die. I'll

came down from heav - en and I danced on the earth. At
 danced for the fish - er - men, for James and John. They
 whipped and they stripped and they hung me high,
 bur - ied my bod - y and they thought I'd gone,
 live in you if you'll live in me, ♫

Beth - le - hem I had my birth.
 came with me and the dance went on.
 left me there on a cross to die.
 I am the dance and I still go on.
 I am the Lord of the Dance, said he.

Refrain Am Dm Am Dm F Dm

Dance, then, wher-ev - er you may be; I am the Lord of the

Dance, said he, and I'll lead you all, wher - ev - er you may be,

and I'll lead you all in the dance, said he.

MORNING OFFERING AND OFFERTORY PRAYER

(The offering is to be placed in the dish at the rear of the sanctuary. We are not passing the plate at this time)

* DOXOLOGY

PRAISE GOD, FROM WHOM ALL BLESSINGS FLOW

"YOUR CHEATING HEART"

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God above, ye heav'nly hosts;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE CONCLUDING WITH THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

* HYMN

I'VE GOT THE JOY, JOY, JOY

"I'VE GOT THE JOY"

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

Refrain:

And I'm so happy,
So very happy;
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart.
And I'm so happy,
So very happy,
I've got the love of Jesus in my heart.

2.) I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus...

Refrain

3.) I've got the peace that passeth understanding....

Refrain

* BENEDICTION

Lord, as I stumble through this life, help me to create more laughter than tears, dispense more happiness than gloom, spread more cheer than despair. Never let me become so indifferent that I fail to see the wonder in the eyes of a child, or the twinkle in the eyes of the aged. And, Lord, in my final moment, may I hear you whisper: "when you made My people smile, you made Me smile." Amen.

—from the "Clown's Prayer" of Smiles Unlimited, a clown ministry in hospitals, nursing homes and prisons, based in Indianapolis.

* RESPONSE AFTER BENEDICTION #750

GOODNESS IS STRONGER THAN EVIL

"GOODNESS IS STRONGER"

Goodness is stronger than evil; Love is stronger than hate.
Light is stronger than darkness; Life is stronger than death.

Victory is ours, victory is ours! Through him who loves us.
Victory is ours, victory is ours! Through him who loves us.

POSTLUDE

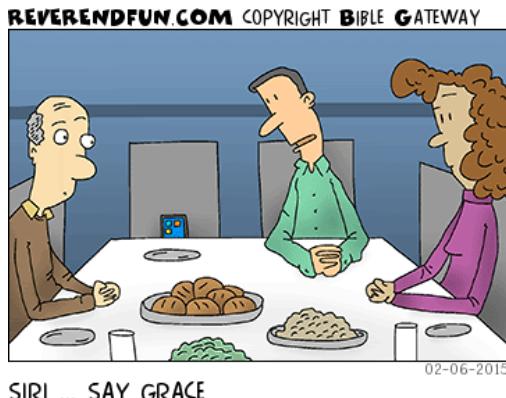
SORTIE NO. 3 IN E-FLAT
BRYAN LOHR, ORGAN

L. J. A. LEFEBURE-WELY

* When this symbol precedes an element of the service, if you are able, please stand.
Please join in reading or singing those parts of the service printed in **bold**.

This Morning's Worship Leaders

Preacher.....	Rev. Rebecca Vardiman
Liturgist.....	Sharon Kazary
Director of Music Ministries.....	Bryan Lohr
Audio/Video Technicians.....	Joe Aurigemma and Eric Ringler
Ushers.....	David Stickler and Barbara Leasure



Worship & Music Notes

Today we welcome back our guest preacher, Rev. Rebecca Vardiman, to the pulpit. She is a native Texan where she taught piano. She attended Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, DC. In 1993 Rev. Vardiman moved to Allegany county, serving Ellerslie, Frostburg, Centenary, and Zion United Methodist Churches. She was also a staff chaplain at the former Western Maryland Health System. Rev. Vardiman retired in 2017, becoming an Earthkeeper in the UMC, focusing on creation care and education about the environment. She is also helping to form a Braver Angels chapter in Allegany County. She is married to Nelson Cleavenger.

History of Holy Humor Sunday

Today's celebration is based on an old custom begun by the early Greek Christians. For centuries in Eastern Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant countries, the week following Easter Sunday, including "Bright Sunday" (the Sunday after Easter), was observed by the faithful as "days of joy and laughter" with parties and picnics to celebrate Jesus' resurrection. The festivities included jokes, singing and dancing.

In 1988, the Fellowship of Merry Christians began encouraging churches to resurrect this practice on the Sunday after Easter, often known as Low Sunday because of the usual letdown after the celebration and crowds at Easter Services. Many churches responded enthusiastically, naming it "Holy Humor Sunday", and the practice has continued to spread since then.

Please feel free to join in the spirit of the day as we laugh at ourselves and celebrate the greatest joke ever played!

Next Sunday, April 18th, we will welcome back Lay minister, Lucas Taylor as our guest preacher and Buck Belt will serve as liturgist.



GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME: A very warm welcome to everyone who comes to worship with us here at First Presbyterian Church! Whether you are very young, in your teens, adult, older adult; black, white, brown, or any other color; straight, gay, transgendered; very well off financially or not so much; feel great today or your bones are hurting again; have little cares or are weighed down with a lot of concern; speak English fluently or speak little English; raised in a church, not raised in a church; haven't been in church since that special person was baptized, or just exploring spirituality; whoever you are, YOU are welcome here!

WELCOME VISITORS: We are glad you found your way to First Presbyterian Church of Cumberland. For more information about opportunities to worship, learn and serve with us, we encourage you to visit the table outside the church office. You can also learn more about us at www.fpc-cumberland.org and www.facebook.com/First.Pres.Cumberland. Childcare is provided in the nursery. An usher will be glad to direct you there.

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP: While we do provide a nursery for young children, we also welcome you to bring your child with you to worship. We have "worship bags" in the back of the sanctuary that include materials for drawing and coloring, as well as Bible stories and Bible word-find games. Our "Young Children in Worship" pew card contains information about why young children should be encouraged to come to worship and how parents and others can engage them more fully in worship.

THE PRAY-GROUND is a special space in the sanctuary for our youngest children and their families. All families are welcome to come and sit in the right front pews with their children seated on the rug. This front row seat will allow God's youngest children to participate in the service in a place where they can see and hear best. There will be activities provided so that their little hands are kept busy while participating in worship. "Jesus said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I tell you, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it'" (Mark 10:14-15).

PERSONAL LISTENING DEVICES: (amplifiers) are available in the back of the church for use during worship. Please see an usher for assistance.

SANCTUARY FLOWERS: The balloons in the sanctuary this morning are given to the Glory of God in celebration of God's Great Joke by Sharon and Bob Kazary. Please contact Michael Levitas or the church office if you would like to sponsor flowers for a special occasion like a birthday or anniversary or in memory or honor of someone. You may specify live or silk flowers. Silk flower money will be directed to the Special Ministries Fund. We have flower openings for 18th & 25th.

OFFERING PLATES: Offering plates are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary. Please deposit your gifts, offerings, and tithes into the plate as you enter or exit the sanctuary.

Church Office Hours

Monday 8:30 AM- 4:00 PM, Tuesday 8:30 AM- 4:00 PM
Wednesday 8:30 AM- 4:00 PM, Thursday 8:30 AM- 4:00 PM, Friday 8:30 AM- 1:00 PM

Please note that on Fridays when the office closes at 1:00 PM, Brittany is still available by phone and email until 4:30 PM.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE

RULING ELDERS: GARY HENDRICKSON & CINDY CORLEY

ANNUAL GIVING YEAR-TO-DATE:	as of April 4, 2021
Total 2021 Pledges Promised	\$192,124.00
Pre-paid pledges	\$ 400.00
<u>2021 Pledge Balance Promised</u>	<u>\$191,724.00</u>
Pledge Balance Received Year-to-Date	\$53,326.00
Pledge Balance Promised Year-to-Date	\$52,668.00
Over/(Under)	\$ 658.00

APRIL 11, 2021 SECOND SUNDAY OF EASTER

taking faith home

Seeing is believing, and believing is seeing.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	John 20:19-31	Come and see and believe
Monday	Acts 4:32-35	The sharing of goods
Tuesday	1 John 1:1-2:2	The word of life
Wednesday	Hebrews 11:1-40	The meaning of faith
Thursday	2 Corinthians 4:7-18	Living by faith
Friday	2 Corinthians 5:6-10	We walk by faith
Saturday	Psalm 133	The blessing of unity
Sunday	Luke 24:36b-48	Jesus appears to the disciples

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

Jesus said to [Thomas], "Have you believed because you have seen me?"

Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

John 20:29 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:
Come Holy Spirit, Give us the eyes of faith that we may believe and have life in the name of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. Amen.

Mealtide Prayer:

Come Lord Jesus, be our guest, and let this food to us be blessed. Let there be a goodly share on every table, everywhere. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Holy Spirit give you eyes to see and believe in the Risen Lord Jesus Christ.

APRIL 11, 2021 HYMN OF THE WEEK

We Walk by Faith

taking faith home

WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- Talk or think about something you need to see in order to believe it is real.
- What does the expression "seeing is believing" mean to you?
- Jesus wants us to see with the eyes of faith. How is this possible?

DEVOTIONS

Read: John 20:19-31.

Thomas wants what the other disciples experienced: seeing the risen Lord. Seeing is a major theme in the Gospel of John. Jesus says to two disciples, "Come and see" (John 1:39). The woman at the well tells the townspeople to "Come and see a man who told me everything I have ever done" (John 4:29); the man born blind sees Jesus and says, "Lord, I believe" (John 9:38). Mary Magdalene sees the resurrected Jesus in the garden and tells the disciples, "I have seen the Lord" (John 20:18). Our reading for this week ends with sensitivity to those who will not see the resurrected Lord Jesus yet will come to believe. The Gospel of John wrote down enough signs from Jesus that people "may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God" and "have life in his name" (v. 31). Today's disciples, like the ones in the Gospel of John, believe because they see through the eyes of faith. We have the Holy Spirit that we may have a living relationship with Jesus through today's disciples, those who continue to tell the stories of the Scriptures that we may come "to see," to believe and have life in the name of Jesus. Who or what has helped you see with the eyes of faith? Pray: Risen Lord, we thank you for blessing us with a community of faith and the Scriptures that we may see that you are the Messiah, the Son of God. Amen.

SERVICE

In Acts 4:32-35 the first Christians gave witness to their faith by how they lived and cared for one another so that there was no needy person in their midst. It is still important for Christians to care for the needs of others. How can you reach out to someone in need this week?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

John 20:19-31 tells us that Thomas found it hard to believe that Jesus had risen from the dead. Jesus appeared to him and invited Thomas to touch him. God's love is not turned away by our questions and doubts. Complete this statement: Something I wonder about the Christian faith is _____. Then pray: Lord Jesus, please come to me so that I may see you and believe. Amen.

