

The Presque Isle Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
April 16th, 2023 - Holy Humor Sunday

Prelude

Barbara Merryman

Words of Welcome

Jennifer Gillis-White

Introit

Laughing Hallelujah

Strathdee Music

Call to Worship¹

One: Jesus calls us with a rollicking sense of humor, chuckling at our faltering steps.

Many: We find it hard to believe that we are loved so deeply, so we giggle with the nervous laughter of disbelief.

One: God calls us amidst our everyday living, grinning at the irony of our actions.

Many: May we, too, grin and allow laughter to fill our worship, feed our faith, and rejuvenate our spirit.

Opening Prayer² (In Unison)

God of merriment, beckon us into the frolic of worship, that we may grasp your hand of new life. You are the joy in our happiness and in our sorrow. We pray for the gift of a holy sense of humor, the ability to laugh at ourselves, the ability to keep life in perspective. We rejoice in our transformation into people of joy and embracing our identity as your children. Amen.

Opening Hymn

"Give Us Laughter"

Prayer of Confession: (unison)

Loving God, we confess that many times, we find it hard to celebrate you. When it is difficult to see you, we become more doubters than believers. We fail to see your infinite love, and instead, focus on the sickness and violence in the world. As we gather today, help remind us of the joy and love that surrounds us. Let your spirit move us to laugh together as we celebrate the resurrection. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Friends, the spirit of God cries when we cry, laughs when we laugh, and delights in our joy. Know that even when we doubt, we are always forgiven and loved.

Two-Minute Message

Jennifer Gillis-White

Children's Hymn

"Make A Joyful Noise"

Scripture Reading

John 20:19-31

Common English Bible

It was still the first day of the week. That evening, while the disciples were behind closed doors because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities, Jesus came and stood among them. He said, "Peace be with you." After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they were filled with joy. Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I am sending you." Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, they are forgiven; if you don't forgive them, they aren't forgiven."

Thomas, one of the Twelve, wasn't with the disciples when Jesus came. The other disciples told him, "We've seen the Lord!" But he replied, "Unless I see the nail marks in his hands, put my finger in the wounds left by the

¹ Resources provided by Deer Lake United Church, 5135 Sperling Ave, Burnaby, BC V5E 2T2, Canada

² Resources provided by Deer Lake United Church, 5135 Sperling Ave, Burnaby, BC V5E 2T2, Canada

nails, and put my hand into his side, I won't believe."

After eight days his disciples were again in a house and Thomas was with them. Even though the doors were locked, Jesus entered and stood among them. He said, "Peace be with you." Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here. Look at my hands. Put your hand into my side. No more disbelief. Believe!"

Thomas responded to Jesus, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus replied, "Do you believe because you see me? Happy are those who don't see and yet believe."

Then Jesus did many other miraculous signs in his disciples' presence, signs that aren't recorded in this scroll. But these things are written so that you will believe that Jesus is the Christ, God's Son, and that believing, you will have life in his name.

Reflection

Jennifer Gillis-White

"Holy Spirit. Holy Laughter"

Choral Anthem

"I Want Jesus to Walk with Me"

PIUCC Choir

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

Our **Creator***, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day, our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen

**Please use whatever name is most familiar/comfortable when you pray to God.*

Closing Hymn

"Sing A Happy Hallelujah"

Benediction

Postlude

Barbara Merryman