



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF ORONOCO
April 2018 Newsletter

Holy Humor Sunday

The idea of setting aside one Sunday each year to celebrate God's gift of laughter and joy has a long and rich history in many congregations around the world. Laughter Sunday (also known as Holy Humor Sunday, Hilarity Sunday, God's Laughter Sunday, Bright Sunday or Holy Fools Sunday) has its roots in a number of different Christian traditions.

Churches in 15th century Bavaria used to celebrate the Sunday after Easter as Risus Paschalis ('God's Joke,' or 'the Easter laugh'). Priests would deliberately include amusing stories and jokes in their sermons in an attempt to make the faithful laugh. After the service, people would gather together to play practical jokes on one another and tell funny stories. It was their way of celebrating the resurrection of Christ – the supreme joke God played on Satan by raising Jesus from the dead. The observance of Risus Paschalis was officially outlawed by Pope Clement X in the 17th century. Perhaps people were having too much fun. In 1988, the Fellowship of Merry Christians began encouraging churches to resurrect some of these Christian traditions—to celebrate the grace and mercy of God through the gift of laughter and joy.

Last year, we celebrated Holy Humor Sunday on the Sunday following Easter. We read some funny stories out of the Bible, sang some fantastically joyful songs, and set aside time in the service for people to share some of their favorite (family-friendly) jokes. This year, we will be celebrating Holy Humor Sunday on Apr. 8.



From Our Pastor



When I was in seminary, I did my 9-month field education internship at a small Presbyterian Church in Galena, Illinois. For a children's sermon on Easter Sunday, I prepared something special for them. I blew out an egg, filled it with glitter, and resealed the ends the tissue and glue.

It looked like a regular egg straight out of the carton.

On Easter Sunday morning, when the kids came up for the Children's Time, I brought The Egg with me. I talked to the children about expectations and how sometimes the things that we expect can blind us and distract us from the flashy, beautiful, surprising glimpses of God in the world around us.

As we talked about that, we talked about how the women must have felt when they arrived at Jesus' tomb that morning – expecting to find the lifeless body of their friend and mentor and instead finding an empty tomb, folded grave clothes, and a resurrected Savior.

Now *that's* one heck of a surprise.

As I talked about this amazing phenomenon with those kids that Easter morning, I pulled out The Egg.

I asked them what it was:
“An egg.”

I asked them what was inside:
“Yoke and whites.”
“More egg.”
“Gooley stuff.”

I asked for a brave volunteer. 😊

One of the older boys – probably about 10 yrs. old – quickly raised his hand. The youth group was small enough that I could have told you before I even asked the question that this young man was going to be my volunteer.

I asked him one last time what he thought might be in The Egg:
“Egg stuff.”

And then I cracked The Egg over his head.

The gasp from the rest of the congregation was audible. The look on my volunteer's face was hilarious. The look on my supervising pastor's face was even better!

As the glitter from inside The Egg rained down, covering his shoulders and the carpet, the rest of the kids started to giggle. Then he started to giggle. Then the congregation started to giggle. Fortunately, my supervising pastor also started to giggle. 😊

We talked about how sometimes the most unexpected things can be the most incredible, the most beautiful, the most fun. We talked about how Jesus' coming back from the dead – how unexpected and incredible that was.

Sometimes the unexpected can be scary because we don't know the end of the story. By definition, we don't know what to expect – what might be coming: the good, the bad, the ugly, or something in between?

And the gospel of Mark is the gospel of the unexpected and unknown. Time and again, Jesus tries (in vain) to keep the secret of his identity hidden. Time and again, the disciples miss the significance of who and what and how Jesus is. This is so thoroughly the case that the gospel itself doesn't even have a particularly neat-and-tidy ending. The original ending of Mark simply says:

“He said to them, ‘Don't be alarmed! You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has been raised. He isn't here. Look, here's the place where they laid him. Go, tell his disciples, especially Peter, that he is going ahead of you into Galilee. You will see him there, just as he told you.’ Overcome with terror and dread, they fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid.” ~ Mark 16:6-8

Yes, we know the end of the story. Yes, we know the joy and hope on the other side of that empty tomb. But we cannot let the expectations of that foreknowledge blind us to the potential, unexpected, flashy, beautiful glimpses of God in the world.

Pastor Lisa

Pastor Out of the Office

Pastor Lisa will be out of the office on maternity leave from Apr. 17 until June 11. If you would like to stop by and visit her and the new baby, please call or text first: 507-995-7310.

Presbytery meeting

The next Presbytery meeting is **Tues., May 8 at 4:00 p.m.** at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Minneapolis. As always, Presbytery meetings are open to anyone.

In Our Prayers

Philippians 4:6
Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Karen Vallejo, Eunice Markham, Joan Swarthout, Joyce Rucker

All Around the Campfire

We had so much fun with our campfire gatherings last summer that we're at it again this summer! One Sunday a month, we'll be gathering in the evening on the church lawn. There will be a campfire. There will be lawn games. There will be s'mores. This is a chance for us to spend some fun, relaxed, unstructured time together, and to invite people who may not be as comfortable coming through the church doors for the first time. Bring your neighbors and friends. Bring kids. Let's have fun!

- June 24: 5:30-8:00 p.m.
- July 22: 5:30-8:00 p.m.
- Aug. 26: 5:30-8:00 p.m.
- Sept. 23: 5:30-8:00 p.m.



Clearwater Forest Summer Camps!



It may still be chilly outside, but camp is right around the corner! Clearwater Forest offers camp experiences for those entering third through recent graduates and more! With a wide variety of programs centered on the theme "Light the Fire," there is sure to be something for everyone this summer! Below are a few highlighted camps.

Check out www.clearwaterforest.org for more information about these and other programs happening this summer at Clearwater Forest!

Synod School 2018



Give yourself the gift of . . .

Engaging worship for all ages
with spirited music and singing

Daily reflections on the theme,
"Dance Joyfully Where'er You May Be"

Interesting classes for children,
youth and adults of all ages

Nightly coffee houses, intergenerational games
& creative endeavors

Intentional community centered in hospitality,
healing and hope



July 22-27, 2018

Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa

Discover Synod School!

www.lakesandprairies.org/SynodSchool
800-328-1880, ext. 207

**Dance Joyfully
Where'er You May Be**

Vacation Bible School

We're getting an early jump on things this year! We had so much fun with our vacation Bible school last year that this year, we're going to try 5 evenings right here in Oronoco. This year's theme will be "Hero Central: Discover Your Strength in God." 😊 Here are the details:

Where: Presbyterian Church of Oronoco

When: July 16-20, 6:00-8:00 p.m.

Ages: 4-12

Cost: \$15/person or \$30/family



We will be serving the kids dinner from 6:00-6:30 p.m., then enjoying some really fun programming after that. Registration is required, so check out www.oronocochurch.org/vbs for the registration link as well as more information.

We will be looking for volunteers to help and monetary donations to purchase the supplies that we'll need, so be on the lookout for more details!

St. Paul Saints Game



A couple of years ago, we had a blast going to some MN Twins baseball games together. The Twins' schedule and pricing didn't line up very well this year, so we're going to try something new: a St. Paul Saints' game!!

Here are the details:

- **Fri., Aug. 3 @ 7:05 p.m.** (includes post-game fireworks!)

- **seats in the Infield Reserved section** (see <http://saintsbaseball.com/chs-field1/stadium-maps/> for more info)

• **tickets: \$20 adults, \$19 youth (14 & under)/seniors (65 & over)**

We will need to know ahead of time how many tickets to purchase, so be on the lookout for a sign-up sheet.

Readings for the Month of April

Sun., Apr. 1 – Mark 16:1-8; 1 Corinthians 1:18-25

Easter Sunday

Sun., Apr. 8 – *Holy Humor Sunday*

Sun., Apr. 15 – Psalm 4; Luke 24:36b-48

Sun., Apr. 22 – *guest preacher, Rev. Kate Johnston*

Sun., Apr. 29 – *guest preacher, Rev. Kate Johnston*

Church Staff

Organist: Katha Johnson
Secretary: Sue Johnson
Custodian: Sue Johnson
Pastor: Rev. Lisa Johnson

Presbyterian Leadership Team

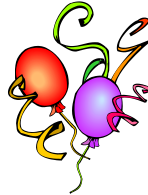
Kim Stanton, Treasurer
Kay Erdahl, Asst. Treasurer
Mike Rand, Clerk of Session
Ron Peterson Rucker, Ruling Elder
Ellen Warner, Ruling Elder
Janice Ostrom, Ruling Elder
Mike Rand, Ruling Elder
Linda Sorensen, Ruling Elder
Lance Sorensen, Ruling Elder
Ellen Simon, Deacon
Joanne Schenck, Deacon
Karen Peterson Rucker, Deacon
Jenny Rand, Deacon
Gail Rucker, Deacon

People of the Church

Janice Ostrom, Co-Moderator
Jenny Rand, Co Moderator

Birthdays for the Month of April

4/5 Vivien Williams
4/6 Linda Sorensen
4/10 David Midthun
4/16 Will Midthun



Secretary's Office Hours

Tuesday 10:00-1:00

Thursday 10:00-1:00

Office Phone# 507-367-4711

Email: oronocopc@bevcomm.net

KIDS EASTER WORD SEARCH

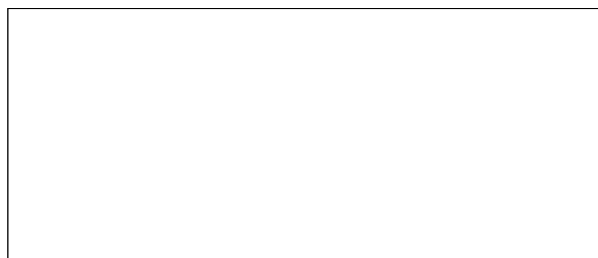
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 HOLY
 CHRIST
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 ROMANS
 SACRIFICE
 SINS
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 TOMB
 ALIVE

LORD
 GOD
 CRUCIFIXION
 SON
 FOREVER
 SALVATION
 SAVIOR
 LAMB
 LOVE
 JESUS
 EASTER
 CROSS

RESURRECTION
 ALMIGHTY
 MARY
 FASTING
 GOOD FRIDAY
 SUNDAY
 LENT
 LAST SUPPER
 PASSOVER
 RISEN
 REMEMBER
 KING

Presbyterian Church of Oronoco
PO Box 118
Oronoco, MN 55960
(507) 367-4711



**Check out our website at
www.oronocochurch.org**

**Worship is held at 10:00 each Sunday.
Communion is on the first Sunday of each month.
Adult Coffee & Conversation 9:00—9:45 a.m.
Sunday School for ages 6-12 10:45—11:30 a.m.**



Reverend Lisa Johnson- Contact Information
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