

St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church  
229 South Broad Street  
Jersey Shore, PA 17740  
570-398-1676

Second Sunday of Easter  
Holy Humor Sunday!  
Thursday, April 16, 2023

### Introduction to the Day

Many American churches are resurrecting and old Easter custom begun by the Greeks in the early centuries of Christianity – “Holy Humor Sunday” celebrations of Jesus’ resurrection on the Sunday after Easter. For centuries in Eastern Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant countries, the week following Easter Sunday, “bright Sunday” was observed by the faithful as “days of joy and laughter” with parties and picnics to celebrate Jesus’ resurrection. Churchgoers and pastors played practical jokes on each other, drenched each other with water, told jokes, sang, and danced. 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 early theologians called it.



Jesus loves a good party!

He performed His first miracle at a wedding reception in Cana, turning water into wine. In the parable of the Prodigal Son, Jesus tells us that the overjoyed father threw a big party for his returning son. “We are going to have a feast, a celebration,” the father declared, “because this son of mine was dead and has come to life; he was lost and is found.” (Luke 15:23-24)

Reader Luke 24:13-25

### The Return of the Blues Brothers

Announcer: Karen Aucker      Elwood: Pastor Aucker      Jake: Kaye Long  
Jesus: Bob Dittmar      James: Roman Dittmar      John: Dominic Dittmar

### \* HYMN

If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)

If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)

If you’re happy and you know it, then your face will surely show it

If you’re happy and you know it, clap your hands (clap clap)

If you’re happy and you know it, stomp your feet (stomp stomp)

If you’re happy and you know it, shout “Amen” (Amen)

If you’re happy and you know it, do all three (clap-clap, stomp-stomp, Amen)

P: Christ is Risen!

C: **He is Risen indeed! Alleluia!**

### Call to Worship

P: “Smiling is infectious. You catch it like the flu.”

C: **“When someone smiled at me today, I started smiling, too.”**

P: “I passed around the corner, and someone saw my grin.”

C: **“When he smiled I realized I’d passed it on to him.”**

P: “I thought about that smile. Then I realized its worth.”

C: **“a single smile just like mine could travel the whole earth.”**

P: “So if you feel a smile begin, don’t leave it undetected.”

**C: “Let’s start an epidemic quick, and get the world infected!”**

**Confession and Creed**

**P:** We believe in God, who made us in His image.

**C:** **We live, we love, we laugh, because we are like Him.**

**P:** We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord and Savior.

**C:** **He had the last laugh on the devil when He rose from the dead.**

**P:** We believe in the Holy Spirit, coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Son.

**C:** **Our counselor, our guide, our motivator - He is our joy!**

**P:** Forgive us, Lord, when we take ourselves too seriously, when we don't claim the happiness that is rightfully ours as your children, when we forget that you will have the last laugh in this world.

**C:** **Restore to us the joy of our salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**PRAYER OF THE DAY**

**P:** Knock. Knock. **C: Who’s there?**

**P:** Lettuce **C: Lettuce who?**

**P:** Lettuce pray.

**O Great Laughing God, we come into your presence with joy and longing to be surprised. We thank you that you have given to us the gift of laughter and delight. These things give hints as to the nature of your purpose for us and for all the earth. May we find that in giving up to laughter there is healing and hope and abundance and blessing. Tickle our souls with the brush of your Spirit to renew our worship and our living. C: Amen.**

*The assembly is seated.*

**First Reading: Acts 2:14a, 22-32**

*After the Holy Spirit comes to the apostles on Pentecost, Peter preaches the gospel to the gathered crowd. He tells them that Jesus, who obediently went to his death according to God’s plan, was raised from the dead by God. Finally, he appeals to scripture, quoting Psalm 16:8-11, to show that Jesus is the Messiah: though crucified, the risen Jesus is now enthroned.*

<sup>14a</sup>Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed [the crowd], <sup>22</sup>“You that are Israelites, listen to what I have to say: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with deeds of power, wonders, and signs that God did through him among you, as you yourselves know—<sup>23</sup>this man, handed over to you according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of those outside the law. <sup>24</sup>But God raised him up, having freed him from death, because it was impossible for him to be held in its power. <sup>25</sup>For David says concerning him,

‘I saw the Lord always before me,  
for he is at my right hand so that I will not be shaken;

<sup>26</sup>therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced;  
moreover my flesh will live in hope.

<sup>27</sup>For you will not abandon my soul to Hades,  
or let your Holy One experience corruption.

<sup>28</sup>You have made known to me the ways of life;  
you will make me full of gladness with your presence.’

<sup>29</sup>“Fellow Israelites, I may say to you confidently of our ancestor David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. <sup>30</sup>Since he was a prophet, he knew that God had sworn with an oath to him that he would put one of his descendants on his throne. <sup>31</sup>Foreseeing this, David spoke of the resurrection of the Messiah, saying,

‘He was not abandoned to Hades,  
nor did his flesh experience corruption.’

<sup>32</sup>This Jesus God raised up, and of that all of us are witnesses.”

**L:** The word of the Lord. **C: Thanks be to God.**

Psalm 16 **L** Let us read the Psalm responsively by verse.

## Psalm: Psalm 16

<sup>1</sup>Protect me, O God, for I take refuge in you;

I have said to the LORD, “You are my Lord, my good above all other.”

<sup>2</sup>**All my delight is in the godly that are in the land,  
upon those who are noble among the people.**

<sup>3</sup>But those who run after other gods  
shall have their troubles multiplied.

<sup>4</sup>**I will not pour out drink offerings to such gods,  
never take their names upon my lips.**

<sup>5</sup>O LORD, you are my portion and my cup;  
it is you who hold my lot.

<sup>6</sup>**My boundaries enclose a pleasant land;  
indeed, I have a rich inheritance.**

<sup>7</sup>I will bless the LORD who gives me counsel;  
my heart teaches me night after night.

<sup>8</sup>**I have set the LORD always before me;  
because God is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.**

<sup>9</sup>My heart, therefore, is glad, and my spirit rejoices;  
my body also shall rest in hope.

<sup>10</sup>**For you will not abandon me to the grave,  
nor let your holy one see the pit.**

<sup>11</sup>You will show me the path of life;  
in your presence there is fullness of joy, and in your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

## Second Reading: 1 Peter 1:3-9

*This epistle was written to encourage Christians experiencing hardships and suffering because of their faith in Christ. The letter opens by blessing God for the living hope we have through Christ’s resurrection even amid difficult circumstances and surroundings.*

<sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he has given us a new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, <sup>4</sup>and into an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you, <sup>5</sup>who are being protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. <sup>6</sup>In this you rejoice, even if now for a little while you have had to suffer various trials, <sup>7</sup>so that the genuineness of your faith—being more precious than gold that, though perishable, is tested by fire—may be found to result in praise and glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed. <sup>8</sup>Although you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and rejoice with an indescribable and glorious joy, <sup>9</sup>for you are receiving the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.

L: The word of the Lord.   **C: Thanks be to God.**

### \*\*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

(Women stand and sing “Hallelu” then sit,

Men stand and sing “Praise Ye the Lord” then sit.) Repeat twice:

(W) Halle-lu, Halle-lu, Halle-lu, Halleluiah – (M) Praise Ye the Lord

(W) Halle-lu, Halle-lu, Halle-lu, Halleluiah – (M) Praise Ye the Lord

(M) Praise ye the Lord – (W) Halleluiah! (M) Praise ye the Lord – (W) Halleluiah!

(M) Praise ye the Lord – (W) Halleluiah! (M) Praise ye the Lord!

P: The holy gospel according to St Matthew.   **C: Glory to you, O Lord.**

## Gospel: John 20:19-31

*The risen Jesus appears to his disciples, offering them a benediction, a commission, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. But one of their number is missing, and his unbelief prompts another visit from the Lord.*

<sup>19</sup>When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>20</sup>After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. <sup>21</sup>Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." <sup>22</sup>When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. <sup>23</sup>If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."

<sup>24</sup>But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. <sup>25</sup>So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe."

<sup>26</sup>A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." <sup>27</sup>Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." <sup>28</sup>Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" <sup>29</sup>Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe."

<sup>30</sup>Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. <sup>31</sup>But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

*The assembly is seated.*

Sermon

**\*CREED**

We believe in God, who made us in His image.

**C: We live, we love, we laugh, because we are like Him.**

We believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God, our Lord and Savior.

**C: He had the last laugh on the devil when He rose from the dead.**

We believe in the Holy Spirit, coequal and coeternal with the Father and the Son.

**C: Our counselor, our guide, our motivator – He is our joy!**

Forgive us, Lord, when we take ourselves too seriously, when we don't claim the happiness that is rightfully ours as your children, when we forget that you will have the last laugh in this world.

**C: Restore to us the joy of our salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**Prayers of Intercession**

A: United in the hope and joy of the resurrection, let us pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence*

God of rebirth, the good news of your resurrection brings refreshment to a weary world. Following the women at the tomb, empower us to boldly share your radical love through our words and our work. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: As you breathed your Spirit into the disciples, breathe your spirit of healing upon all creation. Nourish the earth with sufficient rains. Strengthen us to counter the effects of pollution and destruction. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: You prepared the disciples for their ministry by calming their fears and granting them your peace. Equip our communities' leaders (*especially*). Give them a spirit of peace and hearts that burn for justice, that their leadership reflects your love. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: You come among us in unexpected ways. Send us to those who hide in fear or question your love. Be a healing presence for any isolated by addiction, incarceration, mental illness, chronic pain, sickness, or grief (*especially*). Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: As you met the disciples on the road to Emmaus, show us your presence along our journeys. Bless our doubts and questions. Provide trusting and safe relationships for all ages, to nurture our connection to you and one another. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

A: Merciful God, we ask for traveling mercies to all who will be attending the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual African Conference of the ELCA in Liberia this week. May they see You at work through the power of the Holy Spirit in the Lutheran Church of Liberia and its mission and ministries throughout Liberia. May Bishop Miller and Pastor Karen Ward come back to help us deepen our partnership with the Lutheran Church of Liberia. Hear us, O God

**C: Your mercy is great**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

A: Resurrecting God, you bring us to new life every day. Thank you for blessing us with companions on our faith journey, especially those who now rest in your love (*especially*). Strengthen us with the eternal peace of your promises. Hear us, O God.

**C: Your mercy is great.**

P: Rejoicing in the victory of Christ's resurrection, we lift our prayers and praise to you, almighty and eternal God; through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord. **Amen.**

*The assembly is seated*

**CHOIR ANTHEM *Don't Make Me Have to Come Down There***

**\*Offering Prayer**

Generous God, in this meal you offer your very self.

We give thanks for these gifts of the earth.

In the breaking of this bread reveal to us the Risen One.

In the pouring of this wine pour us out in service to the world;  
through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE**

### **Words of Institution**

We give you thanks, Father, through Jesus Christ, your beloved Son, whom you sent in this end of the ages to save and redeem us and to proclaim to us your will.

He is your Word, inseparable from you, through whom you created all things, and in whom you take delight. He is your Word, sent from heaven to a virgin's womb. He there took on our nature and our lot and was shown forth as your Son, born of the Holy Spirit and of the virgin Mary. He, our Lord Jesus, fulfilled all your will and won for you a holy people; he stretched out his hands in suffering in order to free from suffering those who trust you.

He is the one who, handed over to a death he freely accepted, in order to destroy death to break the bonds of the evil one, to crush hell underfoot, to give light to the righteous, to establish his covenant, and to show forth the resurrection, taking bread and giving thanks to you said; "Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

In the same way he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Remembering, then, his death and resurrection, we take this bread and cup giving you thanks that you have made us worthy to stand before you and to serve you as your priestly people.

Send your Spirit upon these gifts of your church; gather into one all who share this bread and wine; fill us with your Holy Spirit to establish our faith in truth, that we may praise and glorify you through your Son Jesus Christ; through whom all glory and honor are yours almighty Father, with the Holy Spirit, in your holy church both now and forever. **Amen**

**THE LORD'S PRAYER p 145**

**INVITATION TO COMMUNION** Come and know Christ,

**COMMUNION**

*When giving the bread and cup, the communion ministers say*

The body of Christ, given for you.  
The blood of Christ, shed for you.  
and each person may respond **Amen.**

### Communion Song

### Lamb of God (Baby Shark Mass)

$\text{♩} = 112$

1. Lamb of God do do do do do do, Lamb of God do do do do do do, Lamb of  
2. way sins do do do do do do, Take a - way sins, do do do do do do, Take a -  
3. God do do do do do do, Lamb of God. 2. Take a way sins do do do do do do, Lamb of  
God. 3. Grant us  
6. peace do do do do do do, Grant us peace do do do do do do, Grant us  
4. God do do do do do do, Lamb of God do do do do do do, Lamb of  
8. peace do do do do do do Grant us peace, 4. Lamb of  
God do do do do do do, Lamb of God.

### SONG AFTER COMMUNION *Jesus, Name Above All Names*

(repeat twice)

*Jesus, name above all names, beautiful Savior, glorious Lord,*

*Emmanuel, God is with us, blessed Redeemer, living Word.*

*The assembly stands.*

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Gracious God, in you we live and move and have our being.

With your word and this meal of grace, you have nourished our life together.

Strengthen us to show your love and serve the world in Jesus' name. **Amen.**

### BENEDICTION

**C:** "Lord, grant me a joyful heart and a holy sense of humor. Please give me the gift of faith, to be renewed and shared with others each day. Teach me to live this moment, looking neither to the past with regret, nor to the future with apprehension. Let love be my guide, and my life a prayer."

Pastor: "Go in laughter, go in grace. Keep the Lord in your heart and a smile on your face."

### SENDING SONG *I've Got the Joy, Joy, Joy, Joy TFF 257*

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!

I've got the peace that passes understanding down in my heart,  
down in my heart, down in my heart.

I've got the peace that passes understanding down in my heart,  
down in my heart to stay!

**I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus down in my heart,  
down in my heart, down in my heart.  
I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus down in my heart,  
down in my heart to stay!**

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS

We welcome our visitors and ask that you sign a Visitor Attendance and Holy Communion Card that is located in the pew rack. We ask that cards be returned via the offering plate during the receiving of the offering. We practice "open Communion" here at St. John meaning that all who believe in the "real presence" of Christ are welcomed to receive the Sacrament of Holy Communion. We offer two choices for Holy Communion, wine or grape juice. Those worshipers desiring grape juice are asked at the communion rail to place their right hand over their heart after receiving "The Body of Christ."

**Remember in prayer:** Rowan Aldridge, Jim Allen, Agnes Cryder, Don & Helen Delaney, Joanne Fisher, Mick Miller, David Mitchell (WeCares of Loyalsock), Cora Pelletier, Shane Snyder, and all of our shut-ins.

We also remember in prayer Family Promise; Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton – ELCA; Bishop Craig A. Miller - USS; for our Companion Synods in Liberia and Ansbach-Wurzburg, Germany; and we pray for peace in Ukraine and an end to war; those effected by the tornadoes and flooding and snow.

We pray for the safety of our military troops around the world including Mark Baier, Isaac Boring, Jade Cordrey, Ben Cramer, Trevor and Nehemiah Eberhart, Patrick Hamlin, Paul Laidacker, Kenny Leitch, Steven Moore, Maddison Myers, Tyler O'Neal, Adam Shaffer, Richie Speicher, Aaron Stabley, Paul St. James, Kevin Titus, and Jenna White. We also lift up in prayer their families who strive to keep a normalcy in the family and continue on often with added stress.

Special thanks to this week's helpers: Lector –Cozette Stoltzfus; Assisting Ministers –Gary Johnson, Karen Aucker; Head Usher –Shane Snyder; Teller –Dawn McCloskey; Bulletin Sponsor—Pastor and Mrs. Aucker. Flowers—Shelby Rice

Next weeks' helpers: Lector – Deb Heudrich; Assisting Ministers—Joyce Braucht, Carl Schaefer; Head Usher – Shane Snyder; Teller – Dawn McCloskey; Bulletin Sponsor –Pastor and Mrs. Aucker; Flowers –

The flowers are in honor of Isabella and Chloe's baptism by Shelby Rice.

The Sanctuary Candle in April is in memory of loved ones by Pastor and Mrs. Aucker.

The Lutheran Church Women's Prayer Chain is a vital ministry of St. John Lutheran. Anyone in need of prayers is asked to contact any of the following persons:

Gloria Ely – 570-873-3597      Joyce Braucht - 570-398-2852

**EASTER BREAKFAST FOLLOW-UP:** Just wanted to take a moment to express our gratitude to all the volunteers who donated and helped prepare and serve the Easter Breakfast. It was pleasing to see all the father and son combinations working together. Both the kitchen and dining room staffs did a great job. A special thank you to Margaret Ely and Theresa Ely Levins for donation the ham. Dean & Gloria Ely

**This bulletin and more** can be found on church site [www.stjl.org](http://www.stjl.org)

**Spring Cash Sunday** will be held on May 7 this year. Donations will be used for a new speaker in the front of the sanctuary to improve the audio in our recorded worship services. A Spring Cash Sunday envelope will be mailed to every household in the congregation in April. A return envelope can be used for your donation. Your donations are greatly appreciated.

**Our on-going Needs.** Sponsors sheets are available on the second-floor tower bulletin board for the Sanctuary Candle, Weekly Bulletins, Flowers, and Bread Donors (starting in April). You can sponsor any of the above by

placing your name on the sponsor sheets and they will be listed in the bulletin. Enclose money in your offering envelope: Sanctuary candle \$6; Weekly bulletin \$10; Flowers provided by Russell Florists (\$50), or use our beautiful arrangement of silk flowers \$25; or you can provide your own. If you wish to provide your own, please contact Mrs. Aucker. Payment should be made to "St. John Lutheran Church."

### Calendar

Sunday, April 16, 2023

*Holy Humor Sunday*

- 8:30 a.m. Sunday School *Please wear tie-dye or BRIGHT colors*
- 9:30 a.m. Children's Church and Worship Service
- 10:30 a.m. **WOMEN OF THE CHURCH MEETING**
- 10:30 a.m. Outreach Committee meeting
- 2:00 p.m. Catechism Class

Monday, April 17, 2023

- 1:00 p.m. Bible Study
- 6:00 p.m. Christian Ed Meeting

Wednesday, April 19, 2023

- 6:30 p.m. Choir Rehearsal

Sunday, April 23, 2023

3<sup>rd</sup> Week of Easter

- 8:30 a.m. Sunday School
- 9:30 a.m. Church
- 1:00 p.m. Nippenose Worship
- 3:00 p.m. Conference Assembly at St. Luke



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