

Knock. Knock. Who's there? Holy Humor Sunday. Holy Humor Sunday, who?

by: The Rev. Chasity L. Wiener

The Saturday before Easter Sunday last year, I was giddy. Easter 2018 fell on April Fool's Day and I was wild with creative excitement for preparation. I had snuck into the church to deposit "\$20 bills" (see picture) in every hymnal. I placed it in such a way that it looked like the corner of a real twenty was sticking out, but when the folks grabbed the bill, they got a special message that "Jesus has risen! No joke!" I also told everyone that I had gotten up early Easter morning to bake a homemade batch of brownies, which were literally "brown Es" cut from construction paper (they were gluten and sugar free!). I opened the sermon with some *hilarious* jokes like "How do you make a tissue dance?" (You put a little boogie in it!) and "What do you call cheese that isn't yours?" (Nacho cheese!).



I was in my glory. Not only do I appreciate a good practical joke, but Easter coinciding with April Fool's made for some good theology! At the crucifixion and those long three days following the death of Jesus when it seemed like hope had been lost, Death and the Devil must have thought that they had won. Imagine that first Easter when to everyone's surprise, the tomb was empty—God had played the ultimate joke (prank?) on Death and the Devil!

And, it wasn't *too* far of a stretch connecting Easter with April Fool's because there is a centuries-old Easter tradition in the church called, "Holy Humor Sunday" or "Bright Sunday." In the Eastern Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant countries, the week following Easter Sunday was observed 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. This custom was rooted in the musings of the very first church fathers (like Augustine, John Chrysostom and Gregory of Nyssa) in the 4th century—that God played a practical joke on the devil by raising Jesus from the dead. *Risus paschalis*, or "the Easter laugh" as the early theologians called it. More specifically, some theologians suggest the festival was inspired by the famous Easter midnight sermon in the late 300s by one of those church fathers who described a vision of Christ confronting the devil and laughing at him.

I just love this imagery! A laughing Christ!

I can only imagine the devil's pompous and self-congratulatory grin as Jesus' body was delivered to the tomb. Then, just as the devil had gotten used to the idea of a dead Savior and

ruling the world (for the people would have nothing to save them from themselves) and then—on the third day—April Fool's! The tomb is empty! He is Risen!

What better way to capture how our "divine trickster" defeated death and the grave than to spend extra time rallying around the good news of Jesus' resurrection. The idea behind Holy Humor Sunday following Easter is that the joy of Easter can hardly be contained in one day. The resurrection changes *everything* and is a continuous feast of intense happiness and spiritual joy. It is—as one pastor called it, "a chance to celebrate the joy of Easter in a fun way after we've celebrated it in a glorious way."

So, here is what I am proposing this year: while Easter 2019 does *not* fall on April Fool's (it's April 21), let us spend extra time celebrating the resurrection by incorporating Holy Humor Sunday in the life of our church this year. Let's dedicate the week following Easter (Sunday, April 28) and pay homage to the joy-fest. [Invite you to bring your best joke, wear silly hats, or even bring a fun \(safe\) practical joke! The worship leaders and I are already planning some holy mayhem: mixed up songs, playful prayers, and sermon skits, to name a few. Laughter will "interrupt" and fill our worship.](#)

And, if this "ain't" your kind of thing and your first reaction is of resistance, may I give you these humble words of invitation: It might not be your "thing," but—as a Christian, it IS your theology...so revel in it. Take joy that God played the ultimate prank and that you are saved from sin and death.

Dancing in the joys of the resurrection, soon to come,

Pastor Chas

1 Pastor Jim Arends of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in La Crescent, MN

In this Issue



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and so much more!



HOLY WEEK WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Palm Sunday: 8:30 & 10:15 with
dramatic reading and music

Maundy Thursday @ 6:15 Dinner Church with
foot washing

Good Friday @ 7:30 Tenebrae Service at
St. Mark's Catholic Church

Easter Sunday: 8:30A & 10:15A

Holy Humor Sunday @ 8:30A & 10:15A
(see front page article)

Next Service Project for all ages: No-Sew Blankets for Vets

Help us say **THANK YOU** to our veterans, while providing a little comfort to them during their hospital visits and nursing home stays.

This project is for anyone...from 3—99! If you can tie a knot, you can bring warmth to someone!

We are partnering with Fallston United Methodist Church to provide personal blankets by Veteran's Day (11/11/19). Our community goal is to create 1111 blankets!

So, start watching for sales on patriotic fleece fabric!

Directions on how to create the blankets will be coming soon, so keep watching!



Books and Broth Series
Hosted by Holy Communion Lutheran Church
in Fallston, MD

*Present
over
Perfect*
by Shauna
Niequist

Join us on Wednesdays
(March 13-April 10) at 5:45P-
7P for soup supper and book
discussion

Books and Broth Reading Schedule:

Present over Perfect, by Shauna Niequist

April 3 @ 5:45P: Discuss Part 5

April 10 @ 5:45P: Discuss Part 6

MOLST

Medical Orders for Life - Sustaining Treatment

Effective January 2013, MOLST became the new transferable and durable medical form defining options for life sustaining treatments. The form is completed after conversations with your physician, family and other important individuals in your life (i.e. clergy). The completed form may be signed by a physician or nurse practitioner. The Maryland MOLST form consolidates information at all levels of care, standardizes language and definitions, outlines all treatment options and increases the likelihood that the patient's wishes are respected. Health care decisions are to be completed by patient and reflect their wishes. An authorized decision maker, selected by the patient, may make decisions based on the understanding of the patients' goals and wishes. The health care decision worksheet includes questions about CPR (cardio-pulmonary resuscitation), artificial ventilation, blood transfusions, hospital transfers, medical tests, antibiotics, fluids and nutrition, and dialysis. Please take a few minutes to review important information and instructions at www.marylandmolst.org This site will also allow you to download forms and worksheets.



With blessings, Barb Huber RN FCHN

Maundy Thursday Dinner Church: Frequently Asked Questions

What is "dinner church?" Dinner church is a unique worship experience unlike traditional Sunday worship. In Jesus' time, people gathered in each other's home to worship, which often included a meal. Breaking bread together is holy—food (preparing, making, eating) is love shared in community. The church is also love shared in community, so it makes sense to put the two together!

What can I expect? Expect the unexpected! We worship while we eat and commune each other (e.g. give each other bread and wine/grape juice as Jesus did at The Last Supper). We sing, light candles, and pray for the world. The sermon is conversational and will create space to reflect on the message in conversation with those sitting around the table. We collect a free-will offering to help off-set the cost of the meal and to support the ministries within our church.

Do I need to RSVP? Yep...because we believe that it is such a tragedy to waste food when so many other people go hungry in our world. There is a sign-up sheet on our church website for each time that dinner church is offered. Our website is www.HolyCommunionFallston.org

Is dinner church appropriate for kids? Uh, yeah... especially because children have to eat and because children are some of our best theologians/"light bearers!" Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me for the kingdom of heaven is theirs." Children are hard-wired for faith and this experience helps to nurture that. Unlike traditional Sunday worship where children are ushered into their own age-appropriate learning setting (e.g. Sunday School), dinner church supports a sense of family because everyone is gathered around the dinner table for conversation about living life faithfully.

What can I do to help? Come. Invite someone. If you would like to do more, we are always looking for "host" families who plan and prepare the meal. Ideally, we like to have three host families for every dinner church. Planning and preparing is done on your own schedule and availability. Each host family will coordinate with the other host families and then cook the bulk of the meal in their own homes (since our church does not have a commercial kitchen). Food can be warmed on-site. If you are interested in becoming a host family, please contact Pastor Chasity Wiener at PastorChas@HolyCommunionFallston.org

What kind of menu can I expect? Sometimes it might be pasta or pizza; sometimes it might be meatloaf or a vegetarian dish...and sometimes we might be grilling in our backyard at the Outdoor Worship area and making smores. We are a small church, not a full-service restaurant, and the point is to create a "dinner table conversation" atmosphere!



But, if you have food sensitivities, we can give you some advance notice of what we are serving by contacting our host families (see above, What can I do to help?). If you have severe food allergies, we invite you to bring your own dinner—but still come for the conversation and experience. Lastly, we do offer gluten-free communion wafers if you have gluten sensitivities.

Rain Barrel Mini-Grant

by: Arlene Weber

We have submitted a mini-grant to the Chesapeake Bay Trust, with the support of the Interfaith Partners for the Chesapeake, for a Rain Barrel Project. This grant includes conducting a Rain Barrel Workshop led by a water conservation expert along with provision of rain barrels to workshop participants. This project continues to build upon our congregation being faithful stewards of our environment as we have planted trees on our property, built an outdoor altar, hosted an outdoor creation themed vacation bible school and held liturgical workshops on ways to protect our environment.



Once we receive this grant, we will notify our congregation along with the Fallston community as to the date & time of this workshop. The workshop will be held at HCLC.

Please consider participating in this worth while project!!!!

Our Story to Share

by: YOU, the people of Holy Communion Lutheran Church

On March 2nd 2019, I was privileged enough to be invited to attend a Prom for teenage inpatients at Johns Hopkins Children's Center (JHCC). I attended as a volunteer on behalf of the Teen and Children's Council or TACC. I was so overjoyed when I found out I got on this council because the teens on this council act as a liaison to patients in JHCC, and I thought this would be a perfect opportunity to connect with teens who are really just like me, besides the fact they live in the hospital. My journey as a hardcore JHCC patient had come to an end, so I wanted to give back to others. The TACC Prom was the first event I went to as part of the council and it started off with a BANG! The theme was Under the Sea, which I think pretty much EVERYONE was excited for, including myself. So you get the jist, it's safe to say that I was pretty amped up for the night; but I was also anxiously tapping my foot in the car on the way downtown because I didn't know what to expect. Would the patients there think I was simply doing them a favor? Would they be respectful and enjoy the company? Would they think I was judging them? Would they be comfortable talking to me? I wasn't sure...after all, this was their turf. So I went in open minded and ready to serve. I wasn't expecting to see God in so many places, but it was overwhelming. First, I got my hair and makeup done by professionals donating their time to the hospital and the patients. I saw God in these young ladies, and while the word religion never left our mouths, they, as well as I, were doing some HOLY work. Next I traveled up the 11th floor to the Great Room where I really did feel under the sea! I walked in and expected to see hundreds of kids who were different than me, but I walked in and saw only other teens who wanted to have a night of fun. Sure some were in wheelchairs, some wearing surgical masks, some couldn't speak, some were hooked to IV's, but all were enjoying themselves. I saw this as a beautiful gift from God. I danced the night away with these fun souls. The food was AMAZING and they even had a photo booth that some of the kids were getting a huge kick out of! This night made me realize how blessed I am, and how amazing it is that I get to share God's gifts with others.

Katie Airey



Member Spotlight

by: Ed Davis

What brought you to HCLC?

“God, of course. During my move to Harford County last summer, I had several heart-related fainting spells that could have been fatal to me (and possibly others) if they had occurred while driving. When that realization set in, I was in absolute panic mode. I asked God to let me live long enough to complete the move, and then I would have my heart issue investigated and resolved. Long story short – He did and I did. With my pacemaker in place, I felt the need to investigate the Lutheran Churches of Harford County. My intent was to visit them all, then choose the one that I liked the best. The first one I visited was HCLC, back in September of last year. I haven’t visited any of the other churches. No need to – I have found where God wants me to be. How do I know this?”



Well, every time I attend a HCLC service or event, I feel that I am living inside an episode of “Cheers”. You know the place – it’s where everybody knows your name. And that’s a good thing. It’s one of the reasons I like HCLC. We are more than a church, we’re family.”

What do you see as your gifts to serve God, God’s people, and the church?

“That’s really hard to say. We mostly think of “gifts” as obvious forms of artistic talent, such as music, painting, or working with stained glass. My skills must be less obvious; perhaps it’s my unusual sense of humor. No? OK, then perhaps my compassion.”

Favorite ice cream flavor?

“Peach. But if Peach is not available, my backup go-to-flavor is Strawberry.”

What is something people may be surprised to know about you?

“My hobbies are photography and riding (and chasing) trains powered by steam locomotives.”

What bible verse is meaningful to you?

“I confess that I have never actually *read* the Bible. But I have begun attending the Bible Study group here at HCLC. It’s going to be a challenge, but so is *anything worth doing*.”

How do you serve at HCLC?

“After helping with The Sharing Table, I learned what a joy it is to help the needy, while also working as part of a team with other members of HCLC. That was a powerful lesson. HCLC is really strong in its community outreach ministry. It will be my pleasure to assist those efforts whenever I can.

And please, do not call me Mister Ed – he was a horse (of course).”

Celebrating Easter

by: Pastor Bob Ridenour

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth” Revelation 21:1

Most people believe that Christmas is the prime Christian festival. However, Christmas, as important as it is, is second to the supreme Christian festival: Easter.

While the birth of Jesus is important, the Resurrection of the Lord is the center of our entire faith. It is the center because the Resurrection testifies to God’s eternal power over sin and death, and to the promise of new and abundant life for us and for all people. We are a world that stands much in need of this promise.

As Good Friday shows us our sin and sorrow in the old life, so Easter’s joy presents the world with the hope and love and power of God. It is in the resurrected presence of the living Christ that we receive hope and salvation from God.

Our worship on Easter day and through the Easter season (until the day of Pentecost, seven weeks after Easter Sunday) is a season of celebration of Christ’s victories over sin and death in all its forms, as well as a season of joy in these gifts of our loving God. The church is hung with a joyous white or gold. The hymns are sung with enthusiasm and vigor. Our prayers are prayers of praise and Thanksgiving and hope.

The season of Easter and the joyous celebration that it brings are the foundation of the church—the true essence of our faith.

It is no wonder that we say Christ is risen! Lift up your hearts. The old has passed away. The new has come. Alleluia!

Church App

Did you know you can listen to sermons and access calendars, events, an electronic Bible, and the newsletter on our church app for your smartphone? Here’s how:

Download the **Church app (Tithe.ly)** in the Google Play or Apple Store and then select **Holy Communion**

Lutheran Church as your **default church**.

You can read our facebook posts and see pictures posted on Instagram even if you do not subscribe to Facebook or Instagram. There is

also space for you to write prayer requests on our prayer wall. Take us wherever you go!



Youth News

New Youth Director

by: Heather Henderson

Hi, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Heather Henderson and I will be serving as the Youth Leader. My goal for our youth program is to create a safe space where kids of all ages can learn about their faith and exemplify the church's mission of "Reaching Out to Share Christ's Love". I am looking forward to working with the Youth Think Tank and welcome your input and feedback to our youth program. Parental and church members involvement is very important. It takes a village to raise a child, and the church community needs to be the village for our youth. In addition to working



with the youth, I am a Human Resource Director at a civil engineering firm which designs bridges and highways. I live in Towson with my dog, Rosie. In my spare time, I enjoy traveling, reading, and spending time with my family. If you have any questions, or would like to provide feedback please feel free to contact me at Youth@HolyCommunionFallston.org

Palm Sunday Family Celebration

On Sunday April 14th Come to Holy Communion continue our Palm Sunday tradition, the Annual HCLC Easter Egg Hunt and Luncheon Eggstravaganza. Festivities will include our Easter Egg Hunt, games and what Lutherans do best, a pot luck luncheon. We will provide the main course and drinks; you bring the sides and dessert. There will be games, crafts and videos in addition to the Easter Egg Hunt.

The potluck luncheon will begin 12 noon with the Easter Egg Hunt to begin at 12:45 PM.



Hope to see you there and share God's love, bring a friend.

Looking Ahead to VBS

Believe it or not, VBS planning has begun! In planning for VBS 2019, we would like your input! There are currently two weeks being considered.

We need to know which works better for your family? Regardless of the week chosen, camp will be held during evening hours. The weeks being considered are:

- June 24-28
- July 15-19
- No preference, either will work for us



Please let the church office know your preference through email at office@holycommunionfallston.org Thanks for your continued support of our youth!

Sunday School

by: Carrie Dorsey

Can you believe it? Within 3 weeks of this newsletter being published we will be celebrating the Resurrection of Jesus. As we continue our Lenten Journey in preparation for this celebration, I hope that your children are enjoying their Lent Passports and learning about the gifts of prayer, fasting and giving.

We will be continuing our journey through the spring lectionary. We are learning the same thing in our lesson that you are through the sermon so ask your children what they have learned. This makes a great dinner table conversation.

Remember our mission to "Reach Out and Share Christ's Love." What better way to do this then to have your kids invite their cousins, friends and neighbors to join them for Sunday school and for our Pre-Easter family celebration on Palm Sunday. See the insert in the bulletin and grab an extra copy to give to someone else. The Sunday school and Youth Ministry team are providing the main course and drinks and activities. We ask that you come with a side dish or dessert to share and of course ready to have some fun.

Remember to keep reviewing the 10 Commandments and the Books of the Bible at home. We have lots of pins to handout for those that memorize and recite to Pastor Chas. They can also recite to me for practice.

Lovin' Life Seniors

LOVIN' LIFE SENIORS

Our goal is to offer friendship and support to one another through social events. Please join us! Invite your friends! Our 2019 schedule and sign-up sheets for upcoming events are posted on the senior's bulletin board in the hallway. Please read the Sunday bulletins and Bread and Wine for any changes to the schedule below. All activities take place on 2nd Tuesdays of the month unless otherwise noted.

2019 CALENDAR

Tuesday, April 9 at noon

Sunshine Grille—Fork Road

Tuesday, May 14 at noon

Della Rose's Restaurant—Fountain Green and Churchville Roads

Tuesday, June 11 at noon

Bayou Restaurant—Rte.40 Havre de Grace

Tuesday, July 9 at noon

Baldwin's Crab House—Rte.40 Joppa

Tuesday, August 13 at noon

Friendly Farm—Upperco

Tuesday, September 10 at noon

Crab Feast at church

Tuesday, October 8 at noon

Tuesday, November 12 at noon

Tuesday, December 10 at noon

We welcome new ideas as well as new members.

Contact Ellen Priebe 410-679-8655; Frances Gosnell

410-893-4622; Nancy Campbell 410-836-7688.

“Good Grief” Group

The Good Grief Group will meet **May 21st** at the church.

Please note: There will not be an April meeting during Holy Week.



April Birthdays



04/03	Neale Wirtanen	
04/04	Camden Brautigan	
04/05	Katie Brautigan	
04/05	Owen Snyder	
04/06	Margaret Frieman	
04/07	Susan O'Connor	04/16 Sheri Hoffmann
04/07	Noah Thanner	04/16 Patricia McClean-Miller
04/08	Sandra Moll	04/17 Colin Perkins
04/10	Reed Phillips	04/20 Joyce Ey
04/11	Kyle Giordano	04/21 Ally Schromsky
04/11	Dylan Snyder	04/22 Rob McCombs
04/11	Rooney Peterson	04/23 Chasity Wiener
04/14	Jackie Gray	04/24 Patricia Doering
04/14	Judith Meyer	04/27 Kathy Sanner
		04/28 James Appel
		04/30 Amber Knapp

Happy Birthday

Do you have a **April** birthday but do not see your name printed here? That means we do not have your complete information on file. Please contact Hailea in the church office to update your information.

Church Webcam

People get sick. People travel. We understand that and try to find new ways that you can still remain connected with our community. While you are away, join any service by watching our webcam at webcam.HolyCommunionFallston.org

This is an innovative way to connect the gifts of technology to practical faith. However, this gift of technology comes with its own limitations, in that, this webcam can never fully create the sense of community that one is part by actually being in the pews. The webcam is on for all services and only shows the front portion of the sanctuary. The webcam works on most devices (smartphones, tablets, PCs, iPhones®, and iPads®). It does not work on Amazon Kindle Fire® tablets.

Let us know if you are watching our services. Please send comments or issues relating to the broadcast to webcam@HolyCommunionFallston.org

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