

SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 2023

HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

Caldwell United Methodist Church, 8 Academy Road, Caldwell, N. J. 07006

Rev. Vivian L. Rodeffer, Pastor

Ms. Maxine Alstrom, Music Director



PRELUDE

WELCOME AND INVOCATION

Pastor Viv

*“Surely the presence of the Lord is in this place; I can feel his mighty power and his grace. I can hear the brush of angel wings, I see glory on each face; surely the presence of the Lord is in this place.” **Amen.***

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

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

We live, we love, we laugh, because we are like Him.

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

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

We believe in the Holy Spirit,

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,

Restore to us the joy of our salvation, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

HYMN TFWS #2008*"Let All Things Now Living"**

**1 Let all things now living a song of thanksgiving
to God the Creator triumphantly raise;
Who fashioned and made us, protected and stayed us,
who guides us and leads us to the end of our days,
God's banners fly o'er us, God's light goes before us,
a pillar of fire shining forth in the night:
Till shadows have vanished and darkness is banished,
as forward we travel from light into light.**

**2 The law God enforces, the stars in their courses,
the sun in its orbit obediently shine,
The hills and the mountains, the rivers and fountains,
the depths of the ocean proclaim the Divine.
We too, should be voicing our love and rejoicing;
with glad adoration, a song let us raise:
Till all things now living unite in thanksgiving:
To God in the highest, hosanna and praise.**

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

Almighty God, You give us the joy of celebrating our Lord's resurrection. Give us also the joys of life in your service, and bring us at last to the full joy of life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

HYMN MEDLEY CONTEST**Maxine Alstrom, Piano**

Congregants are invited to "name the ten hymns" in this all-encompassing medley of favorites played by our beloved Music Director Maxine Alstrom! The winner will have the most number of songs correctly identified after listening to the entire medley. Jot them down as you recognize them.

EASTER "FAMILY FEUD"

So you think you know stuff??? Prove it! Two teams will compete.

SCRIPTURE**John 20: 24-28**

24 But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. **25** 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."

26 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." **27** 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." **28** Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!"

The word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

THE MESSAGE **From Doubting Thomas to Trusting Thomas**

DEDICATION OF OURSELVES AND OUR GIFTS TO THE LORD

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

We offer our gifts to you, Lord, grateful, cheerful hearts.

Thank you that you meet our needs on the journey, providing what we need when we need it. Trusting you, we can share what we have with others, and we do this joyfully. Amen.

***DOXOLOGY**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
 Praise God all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!
 Praise God the source of all our gifts!
 Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts!
 Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

THE MORNING PRAYER, SILENT PRAYER & THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, 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.

***HYMN # 310**

"He Lives"

1 I serve a risen Savior, He's in the world today
 I know that He is living, whatever foes may say
 I see His hand of mercy, I hear His voice of cheer
 And just the time I need Him He's always near

REFRAIN

He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today
He walks with me and talks with me
along life's narrow way
He lives, He lives, salvation to impart
You ask me how I know He lives?
He lives within my heart

2 Rejoice, rejoice, O Christian Lift up your voice and sing
Eternal hallelujahs to Jesus Christ, the King
The Hope of all who seek Him, the Help of all who find
None other is so loving, so good and kind.
REFRAIN

***BENEDICTION** **(based on Philippians 4)**

Be glad in the Lord always! Again I say, be glad!
 Focus your thoughts on all that is true, all that is holy, all that is just,
 all that is pure, all that is lovely, and all that is worthy of praise.
 Practice these things, and the God of peace will go with you. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE

***Stand as able.**

THE FLOWERS ON THE ALTAR this morning are given to the glory of God and in celebration of the season of Easter.

CALENDAR

Monday, April 17	10 AM Zoom Prayer/Discussion Group
Saturday, April 22	11 AM Funeral for Nancy Lee Mudd

FISH 'N CHIPS TAKEOUT DINNER Purchase your tickets NOW on the church website, caldwellchurch.org, for Sunday, April 30.

WHY HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY? 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.

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.