

**Rangeley Congregational Church**  
**Order of Worship – April 11, 2021**  
**Bright Sunday ~ Holy Humor Sunday**

*Why was the Easter bunny upset? He was having a bad hare day!*

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*Why is the Easter bunny the luckiest of all animals? Because he has 4 rabbits' feet!*

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*Knock, knock! // Who's there?*

*Noah! // Noah who?*

*I Noah a guy, if you need an ark!*

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*Q: What piece of music do they venture to play in a Surfer's Church during the assurance of pardon?*

*A: Wipe-out! (from Isa. 25: 8 & Rev. 7: 17)*

*Q: What song do they venture to play in a Surfer's Church during the time of silent prayer?*

*A: Pipeline*

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*What music was invented on the first Easter? Rock and Roll! (John 20:1)*

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*What do you say to someone who says they don't believe in marriage because it is "just a piece of paper"? "Okay, then you won't mind if I take all your paper money, right?"*

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*How do you spot the Anti-Christ at a party?*

*He's the jerk turning wine into water.*

**RINGING OF THE BELL**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**PRELUDE:** 1st Gymnopédie  
Erik Satie (1866-1925)

**CALL TO WORSHIP ~ Liturgist & Officiant**

**Liturgist:** **When the Lord restored the fortunes of Zion,  
we were like those who dream.**

**Officiant:** Then our mouth was filled with laughter,

and our tongue with shouts of joy!  
**Liturgist:** **When God raised Jesus from the dead,  
we were like those who dream.**  
**Officiant:** **Now our mouths are filled with laughter,  
and our tongues with shouts of joy!**  
**Liturgist:** **The Lord has done great things for us! Let us rejoice!**  
**Officiant:** May all those who have sown in tears  
reap with shouts of happy hilarity!  
Let us clap our hands and shout with joy ~  
our yays and our woohoos! Yes! - Let's applaud God!  
**Liturgist:** **Let us bring our gift of laughter,  
and sing ourselves into God's presence.**  
**Officiant:** Know this: God is God. God made us; we didn't make God.  
**Liturgist:** **We're God's people, God's well-tended sheep.**  
**Officiant:** Enter with the password: "Thank you!"  
Let's make ourselves at home, talking praise.  
**Liturgist:** **We applaud, we laugh, we thank you. God!**  
**Officiant:** Let us worship God with joy!

**INVOCATION ~** **Officiant**

**OPENING HYMN:** Now the Green Blade Rises  
Tune: NOËL NOUVELET

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION and ASSURANCE ~** **Liturgist**

**Liturgist:** None of us likes to look foolish, but which is sillier?  
Chasing after the world and all its gaudy trinkets, which flatter our  
souls, or being a 'fool for Christ', imitating him in service to  
others, offering ourselves in love and joy to the world?  
Let us admit to God the foolish choices we make each and every  
day...

**PASTOR'S PRAYER**

*...time for silent prayer...*

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE ~** **Officiant**

**SCRIPTURE**

**Isaiah 25:6-12 ~ from Eugene Peterson's "The Message"** **Officiant**

<sup>6-8</sup>But here on this mountain, GOD-of-the-Angel-Armies  
will throw a feast for all the people of the world,  
A feast of the finest foods, a feast with vintage wines,  
a feast of seven courses, a feast lavish with gourmet desserts.  
And here on this mountain, GOD will banish  
the pall of doom hanging over all peoples,  
The shadow of doom darkening all nations.

Yes, he'll banish death forever.  
And GOD will wipe the tears from every face.  
He'll remove every sign of disgrace  
From his people, wherever they are.  
Yes! GOD says so!

**Psalm 126 ~ from Eugene Peterson's "The Message" Liturgist**

**126** <sup>1-3</sup> It seemed like a dream, too good to be true,  
when GOD returned Zion's exiles.  
We laughed, we sang,  
we couldn't believe our good fortune.  
We were the talk of the nations—  
"GOD was wonderful to them!"  
GOD *was* wonderful to us;  
we are one happy people.  
<sup>4-6</sup> And now, GOD, do it again—  
bring rains to our drought-stricken lives  
So those who planted their crops in despair  
will shout "Yes!" at the harvest,  
So those who went off with heavy hearts  
will come home laughing, with armloads of blessing.

**Acts 4:32-35 ~ from Eugene Peterson's "The Message" Officiant**

<sup>32-33</sup> The whole congregation of believers was united as one—one heart, one mind! They didn't even claim ownership of their own possessions. No one said, "That's mine; you can't have it." They shared everything. The apostles gave powerful witness to the resurrection of the Master Jesus, and grace was on all of them.

<sup>34-35</sup> And so it turned out that not a person among them was needy. Those who owned fields or houses sold them and brought the price of the sale to the apostles and made an offering of it. The apostles then distributed it according to each person's need.

**1 John 1:1-2:3 ~ from Eugene Peterson's "The Message" Liturgist**

From the very first day, we were there, taking it all in—we heard it with our own ears, saw it with our own eyes, verified it with our own hands. The Word of Life appeared right before our eyes; we saw it happen! And now we're telling you in most sober prose that what we witnessed was, incredibly, this: The infinite Life of God himself took shape before us.

We saw it, we heard it, and now we're telling you so you can experience it along with us, this experience of communion with the Father and his Son, Jesus Christ. Our motive for writing is simply this: We want you to enjoy this, too. Your joy will double our joy!

This, in essence, is the message we heard from Christ and are passing on to you: God is light, pure light; there's not a trace of darkness in him.

If we claim that we experience a shared life with him and continue to stumble around in the dark, we're obviously lying through our teeth—we're not *living* what we claim. But if we walk in the light, God himself being the light, we also experience a shared life with one another, as the sacrificed blood of Jesus, God's Son, purges all our sin.

If we claim that we're free of sin, we're only fooling ourselves. A claim like that is errant nonsense. On the other hand, if we admit our sins—simply come clean about them—he won't let us down; he'll be true to himself. He'll forgive our sins and purge us of all wrongdoing. If we claim that we've never sinned, we out-and-out contradict God—make a liar out of him. A claim like that only shows off our ignorance of God.

I write this, dear children, to guide you out of sin. But if anyone does sin, we have a Priest-Friend in the presence of the Father: Jesus Christ, righteous Jesus. When he served as a sacrifice for our sins, he solved the sin problem for good—not only ours, but the whole world's.

Here's how we can be sure that we know God in the right way: Keep his commandments.

John 20: 19 -31 with a twist of Dr. Seuss

Officiant

SERMON

HYMN OF RESPONSE I Come to the Garden Alone  
C. Austin Miles (1912)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE ~

**Liturgist**

Please offer the names of those whom you would like added to our Prayer time this morning.

(As you name a joy or concern later in the prayer, please finish by saying "This is my prayer." The church family responds by saying "This is our prayer.")  
We pray for: Marcia Baker, Paula Hatfield's sister and her family on the death of their son, Thomas Yoder, Mike and Marley Cerminara and family on the passing of Mike's mother Angelina Cerminara, Janet House, Becky and Dave Walker, Carol Ellinwood Judy Wicken and her family on the loss of her father John Sheeler, Patrick Egan, Sam Meehan's Mom and her husband Nicole & LeRoy Hileman, Erin Smith, Tony McNaughton, Scott and Janet Wilson and Janet's father John Owens, Marcia Baker's niece, Kris Nozal, Dave Walker's brother, Peter Walker, Sandy Reynolds' family member Rick Lewis, Haelyn Vorous, the Daileys' son Rob, and our Members in Discernment Becky Walker and Scott Hatfield. Our law enforcement personnel, medical personnel and first responders, and our military personnel worldwide, and all those who serve our country. We pray for the people around us this day for those who are upon our hearts and minds because of a need that they have...

PASTORAL PRAYER

OUR LORD'S PRAYER in a Setting especially for Holy Humor Sunday

Our Father, who art in heaven let your holy name be known, let your kingdom come, and your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today the bread that we need, and forgive us our wrongs, and Okay.... we'll forgive those who have done wrong to us, too. Do not lead us into trial, but save us from evil. For we want You alone to rule in our hearts.  
You have power to transform, and in the light of your smile is your glory. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN: Peace I Leave with You, My Friends  
Ray Repp (1967)

**Closing Commission/ Dismissal ~**

**Liturgist**

**The Laughing One has called us together this day  
so we could share in the laughter of life.  
The Laughing One sends us out,  
to carry the joy of life and love to the world.  
Go out to laugh, to live to love. And when you hear a good joke...  
remember that sharing is a great thing!**

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE: Make Me a Channel of Your Peace (*Prayer of St. Francis*)  
Music: S. Temple, Words: Francis of Assisi / Arr. Mark Hayes

Special thanks to Kathy Brittain for being our Liturgist, Kit Caspar for leading the singing, Dave Walker for the PowerPoint slideshow presentation and Sam Meehan for setting up the Zoom live stream so we can worship together.

Deacon of the Month: Claire Chase (207) 712-0490