**(Large Print)**

**Springfield Presbyterian Church (USA)**

7300 Spout Hill Road, Sykesville, MD 21784 410-795-6152

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**April 14, 2024 - 10:30 am – Holy Humor Sunday**

**WELCOME VISITORS!**

We're glad you are here! Cards at the ends of each pew are for you to fill out and drop in the Offering Plate. Please let us know you are visiting and join us for refreshments and fellowship following the service. The Sanctuary has an induction loop system to assist the hearing impaired. The system will also work on the telephone setting of hearing aids.

Springfield Presbyterian Church is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ, led by the Holy Spirit, and called to loving relationships through vibrant worship and service. Valuing all people, we are committed to developing disciples and fostering stewardship.

**PREPARATION FOR THE WORD**

(**\*** those who are able are invited to stand)

**PRELUDE**

**GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE**

The Lord be with you! **And also with you!**

(Greetings and Announcements)

**LIGHTING THE CHRIST CANDLE**

Leader: Whenever we light this candle we proclaim:

**People: Christ is the Light of the world and the center of our lives.**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Joy is loose,

**People: In the wiggles of the children,**

Leader: The whispers of the youth,

**People: The smiles of the adults.**

Leader: We praise God for this glorious day.

**People: Let the praise break forth in the most unlikely places and in silly ways.**

Leader: Joy and praise fills our hearts and in our songs.

**People: Let the laughter be deep, for we are God's people.**

**\*HYMN***Take Time to be Funny* (to the tune of *Holiness* below)

Take time to be funny, rejoice in the Lord

Let laughter explode and have fun with God’s Word

For laughter is healing, gives strength to the weak

God loves to see smiles, for they lift up the meek.

Take time to be silly, it’s good for the soul

Too many are somber, grabbing control.

Let go and let God’s love wash over your soul

Heavenly transcendence can be your life’s goal

For humor is holy, it sanctifies life,

Replenishes hope and oft softens advice

It undercuts sorrow, deflates haughty pride

So smile and hang on, and rejoice in life’s ride.



**CALL TO CONFESSION**

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, as we pray, saying:

**PRAYER OF CONFESSION**

**You know better than we do, Amused God, what important people we believe we are. Believing we have to be serious all the time, we miss out on the joy of your creation. Choosing to feast on the pain of the world,**

**we skip the picnic offered in paradise. Clinging to the despair which is our best friend, we ignore Jesus, who can bring us home to your heart. Forgive us, Heart of Joy, and make us open to the startling, and upside-down, ways**

**in which you work. Fill us with Easter's laughter; fill us with your healing joy; fill us with the love poured into us through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.**

**SILENT PRAYERS OF CONFESSION**

**RESPONSE***Restore in Us, O God*  Tune #434 (v.3)

Bring us, O Christ, to share the fullness of your joy;

Baptize us in the risen life that death cannot destroy.

**WORDS OF ASSURANCE**

Leader: The Gospels tell us over and over again of the joy which comes to us through Christ. When Jesus was around, lives were changed, the sick were healed, the sorrowful began to laugh with joy. The good news is that this joy is now given to us.

**People: Through the Holy Spirit, we are gifted with joy. We are sent forth to bring good news to the oppressed, to bring healing to the broken, to anoint everyone with the oil of gladness. Thanks be to God, we are forgiven. Amen.**

**\* MUSICAL RESPONSE OF PRAISE** *We Are Forgiven* Tune #447

We are forgiven. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

We are forgiven. We are forgiven. Thanks be to God. Thanks be to God.

**\* THE PEACE** The peace of Christ be with you! **And also with you!**

 (You may greet those around you.)

**\* RESPONSE** *Here I Am, Lord*

 Here I am, Lord, Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night.

 I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart.

**THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

**PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION**

Generous God, as we gather to hear your Word, we ask that you fill our hearts with joy to hear the Word anew. Restore in us the power of wonder and awe, so that we can hear a story we’ve heard many times in a new way. Cast out distractions, renew our spirits so we see the impossible becoming possible, and help us to live with the faith of Abraham, Sarah, and Isaac, as it is revealed to us today. Amen.

**FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON**  *Genesis 18:1-15*

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. 2He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. 3He said, ‘My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. 4Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. 5Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant.’ So they said, ‘Do as you have said.’ 6And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, ‘Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes.’ 7Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. 8Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate. 9They said to him, ‘Where is your wife Sarah?’ And he said, ‘There, in the tent.’ 10Then one said, ‘I will surely return to you in due season, and your wife Sarah shall have a son.’ And Sarah was listening at the tent entrance behind him. 11Now Abraham and Sarah were old, advanced in age; it had ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. 12So Sarah laughed to herself, saying, ‘After I have grown old, and my husband is old, shall I have pleasure?’ 13The Lord said to Abraham, ‘Why did Sarah laugh, and say, “Shall I indeed bear a child, now that I am old?” 14Is anything too wonderful for the Lord? At the set time I will return to you, in due season, and Sarah shall have a son.’ 15But Sarah denied, saying, ‘I did not laugh’; for she was afraid. He said, ‘Oh yes, you did laugh.’

**SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON** *Genesis 21:1-7*

The Lord dealt with Sarah as he had said, and the Lord did for Sarah as he had promised. 2Sarah conceived and bore Abraham a son in his old age, at the time of which God had spoken to him. 3Abraham gave the name Isaac to his son whom Sarah bore him. 4And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac when he was eight days old, as God had commanded him. 5Abraham was a hundred years old when his son Isaac was born to him. 6Now Sarah said, ‘God has brought laughter for me; everyone who hears will laugh with me.’ 7And she said, ‘Who would ever have said to Abraham that Sarah would nurse children? Yet I have borne him a son in his old age.’

Leader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

 **All: Thanks be to God.**

**SERMON** *God Brought Me Laughter*Rev. Becca Price

**THE RESPONSE TO THE WORD**

**\*HYMN** *Ten Lepers Facing Constant Scorn* GTG #179

Ten lepers facing constant scorn, emboldened by their daily plight,

Encountered One whose healing touch was known to put disease to flight.

The ten outsiders sought relief: “Have mercy, Master, hear our plea.”

“Seek out the priests,” the Healer said. He knew the walk could set them free.

A nameless junction in the road became a holy turn-about.

One awestruck convert spun around and, praising God, began to shout.

God gave the space to turn around to all the others on the way,

But only one resolved to seize the miracle of grace that day.

Would we have stopped, retraced our steps, and then embraced the living Lord whose word had banished all our sores?

What kind of thanks would we afford? God, make of us your living tithes; the first fruits, fit to work for you.

Let each be like that one in ten: transformed and cleansed, restored, made new.

**PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD’S PRAYER**

**PRESENTATION OF TITHES AND OFFERINGS**

 OFFERTORY

**\*** SONG OF THANKS  *Sing to God, with Joy and Gladness*Tune #657

Sing to God, with joy and gladness, hymns and psalms of gratitude;

With the voice of praise discover that to worship God is good.

God unites the scattered people, gathers those who wandered far,

Heals the hurt and broken spirits, tending every wound and scar.

 **\*** PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**\* HYMN** *God of Earth and Outer Space* (see last page)

**\* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

Leader: May the God of surprises

**People: Bring smiles and joys to the everyday and ordinary.**

Leader: May the God of love

**People: Be seen in all we do and say.**

Leader: Go forth rejoicing,

**People: For the good work has just begun!**

**ALL: Amen.**

**\* UNISON AMEN**

**POSTLUDE**

*Portions of this liturgy have been written by different contributors: Trinity Parish Church, The Rev. Thom Shuman, and UCC Resources. We are grateful for their words and their ministry.*

**Sunday April 21, 2024 Lectionary**

Acts 4:5-12; Psalm 23; John 3:16-24; John 10:11-18

**Assisting in Worship: We appreciate those who serve:**

 Today 4/14 Next Week 4/21

Sunday Opener: Linda Caviglia Ron Holmes

Ushers/Greeters: Beth Oates Connie Gibbons

 Don Vasbinder Cynthia Smith

Lay Leader: Tim Oates Barbara Cornell

Fellowship Host: Mark & Diane Chaplik Bob & Diana Steppling

**Happy Birthday!** April 15 – Belle Vasbinder

 April 19 – Debbie Sperling

**Announcements**

**Concert: TODAY** at 3:00 pm, we welcome Springfield Tradition to our Sanctuary. Denny Kopp and Max Allision, formerly members of the bluegrass group known as Iron Ridge, will perform traditional bluegrass music. Bring your family and friends for good music and good food at the reception following the concert.

**A Message from Connie Robinson: “**My dearest SPC Family and friends, sometimes words do not seem to mean so much. Please know how grateful I am for everything! Maybe you wrote a card, a gift card, a visit, a trinket. I am grateful. It truly helped my healing, especially the power of prayers. Love & Blessings, Connie”

**ESCAPE Lunches:** Four times a year our church contributes 48 free lunches for ESCAPE to distribute  at St Paul's in downtown Sykesville. Our next turn is Tuesday **April 30**. Join us at the Manse at 7 pm, or sign up to bring some of the food needed. Thank you to everyone involved in this outreach!

**Fellowship:** A new sign-up sheet is available at fellowship for upcoming months. Remember,  you can sign up to host a  Sunday or you may just want to bring something to celebrate a family event or to wish a friend a happy birthday!

**It’s Springtime!** Our annual Plant Sale is coming up! Save some of your spring flower purchases to buy at Buppert's. When you purchase with their flier, Buppert's will donate a percentage for our local missions. More information to follow…

***Today:***

 **Sunday April 14 – Holy Humor Sunday**

10:30 am Worship

 11:30 am Fellowship

 3:00 pm Concert (Sanctuary)

***This Week:***

**Wednesday April 17**

6:15 – 7:15 pm Bell Choir Practice

 7:30 – 8:45 pm Adult Choir Practice

***Next Week:***

**Sunday April 21**

10:30 am Worship

 11:30 am Fellowship

 **Wednesday April 24**

6:15 – 7:15 pm Bell Choir Practice

 7:30 – 8:45 pm Adult Choir Practice

 **Saturday April 27**

7:00 pm Family Game Night (Fellowship Room)

**Office Hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday, 10 am – 3 pm**

**Springfield Presbyterian Church**

 10:30 am Worship (and Sunday School 1st & 3rd Sundays)

11:30 am Fellowship

**Website:** [*www.springfield-church.org*](http://www.springfield-church.org)**Church Office**: 410-795-6152

**Like us on Facebook:** www.facebook.com/SpringfieldPresbyterianChurch

**Pastor:** Rev. Becca Price

**Email:** springfieldpastor@gmail.com

**Clerk of Session:** Sharon Pappas

**Minister of Music/Accompanist:** Aaron Thacker

**Bell Choir Director:** Daria Dodonova

**Youth Group Coordinator:** Dylan Vasbinder

**Administrative Assistant:**Donna Mazer **Email:***spc.office@verizon.net*