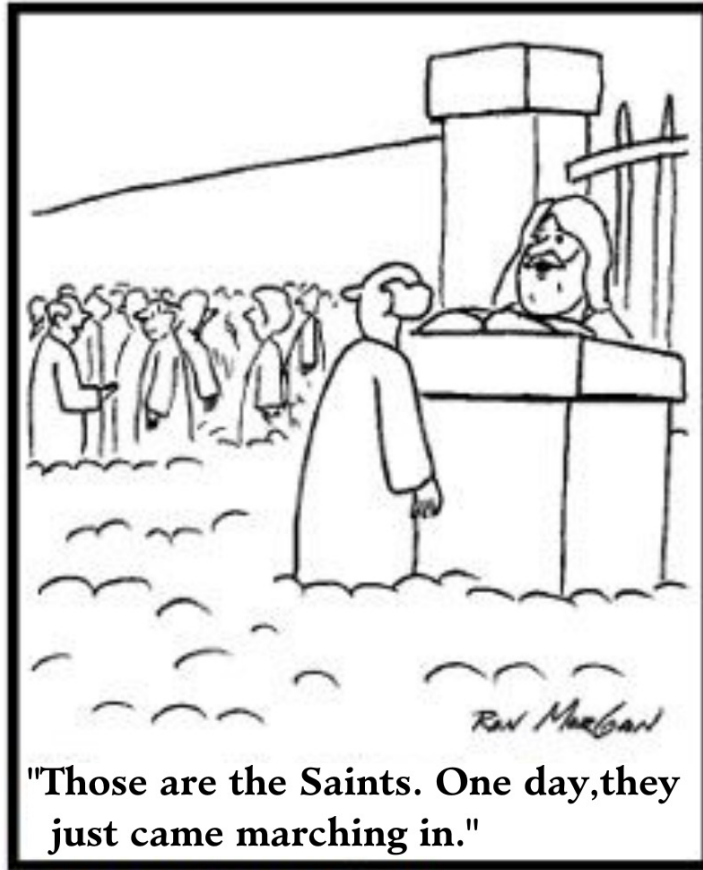


The Riverside Church

in the City of New York



APRIL 16, 2023
HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

WELCOME TO THE RIVERSIDE CHURCH

Interdenominational · Interracial · International · Open · Affirming · Welcoming

WORSHIP is at the center of the life of The Riverside Church.

As you prepare your heart and mind for worship, consider this quote and question:

“Laughter and tears are both responses to frustration and exhaustion. I myself prefer to laugh, since there is less cleaning up to do afterward.”

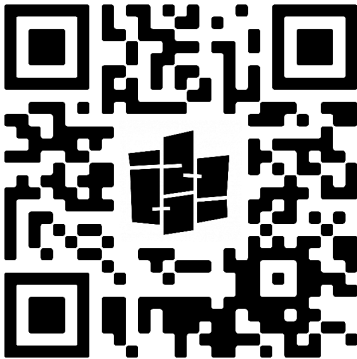
-Kurt Vonnegut

A question for reflection:

What is your favorite joke?

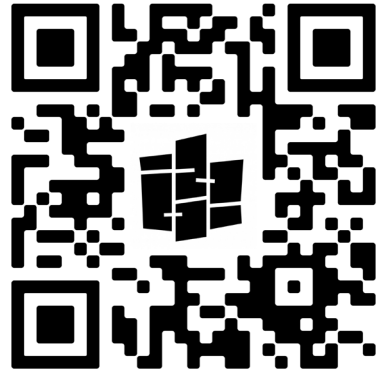
What's happening at Riverside?

You can find a printed calendar listed in the back of your bulletin!



Give by your phone

Text TRCNYCGIVE to 833.833.4035.



Bulletin cover from JoyfulNoiselette.com © Ron Morgan

*Riverside worship services are filmed, recorded, and broadcast online.
If you do not want to appear in any videos or photos we invite you to sit in the balcony.*



GATHERING

We gather as a community and prepare our hearts to worship God.

CARILLON

Ode to Joy

Prelude on Slane (Give to us Laughter)

Unser Herrscher (Sing a Happy Alleluia)

Jesu, Joy of Man's Desiring

Ludwig van Beethoven, arr. Gerard de Waardt

arr. Sally Slade Warner

arr. Betty Buchanan

Johann Sebastian Bach, arr. Johann Wagenaar

Charles Semowich, carillonneur

HANDBELLS

Appassionata

Milele

Michael Joy

Jason Krug

The Combined Choirs of the Annual English Handbell Festival

Nick Hanson, Guest Conductor

LIFE OF THE COMMUNITY

Rev. Adriene Thorne

✝ CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Once again Lord, we come before you with a wild, overwhelming desire to dance.

All: Let us dance like David with more clothes on!

One: Give us the ability to understand the complexities of your Word.

All: May we perceive it as easy, like the prophet Ezekiel.

One: In our moments of sorrow, let us remember the promise.

All: We Noah God who will give us joy. Let us worship with joy!

How many evangelists does it take to change a light bulb?

Only one, but the bulb must repent of its darkness and be willing to be changed.

✝ *All who are able, please stand*

†INVOCATION 🕯️

†PROCESSIONAL HYMN 464 🧑🧑🧑🧑
Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Hymn to Joy

PRAYER OF CONFESSION 😞

Rev. Lynn Casteel Harper

WORDS OF ASSURANCE 😊

HANDBELLS 🛎️

When In Our Music God is Glorified

arr. Arnold B. Sherman

LISTENING

We listen for the word of God through song, Scripture, and preaching.

PSALTER

Rev. Jim Keat

Psalm 40: 9-10

(pg. 513 *in the Old Testament*)

One: The Word of God for the People of God.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

How many liberals does it take to change a light bulb?

Ten, but they will need to debate whether or not the bulb actually exists. Even then they still may not change it, for fear of alienating those who use fluorescent bulbs.

†*All who are able, please stand*

HYMN

Give To Us Laughter¹

Slane

1. Give to us laugh - ter, O Source of our life.
2. Give to us laugh - ter as sign of deep joy;
3. E - ven in sor - row and hours of grief,

Laugh - ter can ban - ish so much of our strife!
let us in laugh - ing find Chris - tian em - ploy,
laugh - ter with tears brings us heal - ing re - lief!

Laugh - ter and love give us whole - ness and health.
join - ing with stars and with bright north - ern lights,
God, give us laugh - ter, and God, give us peace,

Laugh - ter and love are the coin of true wealth.
laugh - ing and prais - ing and shar - ing de - lights.
joy of your prom - ise a - mong us in - crease.

GOSPEL LESSON

Matthew 28:16-20

(pg. 34 in the New Testament)

Anita Robinson

One: This is the Gospel of Christ.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

*How many Presbyterians does it take to change a light bulb?
None. God has predestined when the lights will be on and off.*

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†All who are able, please stand

SERMON

The Innkeeper's Response to the Resurrection

Rev. Thorne

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION^{zZ}

RESPONDING

We respond to the hearing of God's word through prayer, passing the peace, offering and monthly communion.

PASTORAL PRAYER †

Rev. Casteel Harper

One: The Lord be with you.

All: **And with your spirit.**

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: **We lift them up unto the Lord.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

Pray in the language or version of your heart.

Our Father in heaven,

Hallowed be Your name.

Your kingdom come,

Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Save us from the time of trial, deliver us from evil.

For Yours is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CHORAL AMEN

†PASSING OF THE PEAS

One: The peace of the Lord be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

INVITATION TO GIVE AND SERVE 💰

Imelda Isles

How many Roman Catholics does it take to change a light bulb?

None. They use candles.

²From the oratorio "St. Paul"

†*All who are able, please stand*

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Happy and Blest are They²

Felix Mendelssohn

Happy and blest are they who have endured. For though the body dies, the soul shall live for ever.

✦ AT THE PRESENTATION: THE DOXOLOGY

The congregation rises row by row as ushers pass to symbolize the offering of our whole selves to God

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, you heavenly host;

Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

✦ PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & DEDICATION

Rev. Keat

Today we celebrate the work of our Children and Families Ministries, which provide a worshipful space for children and families to engage the stories of our faith through the lens of love and justice.

How many Pentecostals does it take to change a light bulb?

Ten: one to change the bulb, and nine to pray against the darkness.

✦ *All who are able, please stand*

† RECESSIONAL HYMN

Sing A Happy Alleluia³

Unser Herrscher



1. Sing a hap - py al - le - lu - ia, sing it out with heart and style
2. We're the proof of God's good hu - mor, we're the twin - kle in God's eye,
3. Sa - rah laughed at God's good tim - ing, Ma - ry sang and Da - vid danced,
4. Ev - ery day sing al - le - lu - ia! We are loved, though so ab - surd,



we're the e - cho of God's laugh - ter, we're the im - age of God's smile.
made to shine, re - flect the glo - ry, giv - en light and space to fly.
Je - sus smiled and hugged the child - ren so is life for us en - hanced.
hu - man, fool - ish, cho - sen peo - ple, God still takes us at our word!



Al - le - lu - ia, all cre - a - tion, al - le - lu - ia, ev - ery - one!

† BENEDICTION

Rev. Thorne

POSTLUDE

Sortie in E-flat

Louis Lefébure-Wély

Alan Montgomery, organist

How many Baptists does it take to change a light bulb?

At least 15. One to change the light bulb, and two or three committees to approve the change. Oh, and also one to provide a casserole.

³Words: Shirley Erena Murray, © 1992 Hope Publishing Company. All rights reserved. Used with Permission. Reprinted under OneLicense.net #A-717132

Special thanks to our congregational leaders Jacq Gregg, Anita Robinson, and Imelda Isles.

† All who are able, please stand

HISTORY OF HOLY HUMOR SUNDAY

Laughter Sunday (also known as Holy Humour Sunday, Hilarity Sunday, God's Laughter Sunday, Bright Sunday or Holy Fools Sunday) has its roots in a number of different Christian traditions.

Churches in 15th century Bavaria used to celebrate the Sunday after Easter as Risus Paschalis ('God's Joke,' or 'the Easter laugh'). Priests would deliberately include amusing stories and jokes in their sermons in an attempt to make the faithful laugh. After the service, people would gather together to play practical jokes on one another and tell funny stories. It was their way of celebrating the resurrection of Christ – the supreme joke God played on Satan by raising Jesus from the dead.

The observance of Risus Paschalis was officially outlawed by Pope Clement X in the 17th century. Perhaps people were having too much fun.

In the Orthodox tradition, people would gather on Easter Monday to tell jokes and funny stories, and to dance and eat together.

Other traditions celebrate Laetare Sunday (also known as 'Mothering Sunday') on the fourth Sunday in Lent. "Laetare" simply means 'rejoice,' and comes from the opening collect for that day: 'Rejoice with joy, you that have been in sorrow.' On this Sunday, the usual Lenten purple vestments and altar cloths are replaced by rose-coloured ones instead. Flowers (not normally present during Lent) are also brought into the sanctuary.

In 1988, the Fellowship of Merry Christians began encouraging churches to resurrect some of these Christian traditions—to celebrate the grace and mercy of God through the gift of laughter and joy.

TODAY AT RIVERSIDE

Sunday, April 16

Fresh Start | 8:30 AM | Online

Seekers Book Study Small Group | 9:00 AM | 323 MLK & Online

Open Bible Study | 9:30 AM | 330 MLK

Beginner Biblical Hebrew I | 9:30 AM | 314 MLK & Online

Lent Bible Study | 9:30 AM | 330 MLK & Online

Church Nursery Open | 10:30 AM

Limitless- Children & Youth Service | 10:30 AM | 9T

Sunday Morning Worship | 11:00 AM Prelude begins at 10:30 AM | Nave & Online

Virtual Coffee Hour | After Worship | 318 MLK & Online

Coffee Hour | After Worship | Assembly Hall

Latino Ministry | 1:00 PM | Online

Theatre of the Oppressed | 1:00 PM | Multipurpose Room

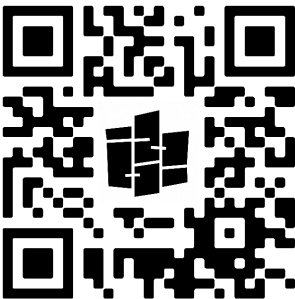
Intermediate Biblical Hebrew | 1:00 PM | 314 MLK & Online

Faith in Full Color: Faith Passage Confirmation | 1:00 PM | Youth Room

Holy Land Trip Prep Class | 1:00 PM | 411 MLK

Sunday Afternoon Carillon Recital | 3:00 PM

44th Annual English Handbell Festival | 4:00 PM | Nave



Visit trcnyc.org/LOC or scan the QR code to find out more about all the programs and events happening in the life of our community.

THIS WEEK AT RIVERSIDE

Monday, April 17

Morning Prayer | 8:00 AM | Online

Tai Chi Class | 3:00 PM | Cloister Lounge

Tuesday, April 18

Morning Prayer | 8:00 AM | Online

Wednesday, April 19

Morning Prayer | 8:00 AM | Online

Beginner Biblical Hebrew II | 5:00 PM | Online

Young Adult Bible Study | 6:30 PM | 313 MLK & Online

Space for Grace | 7:00 PM | 9T & Online

Thursday, April 20

Morning Prayer 8:00 AM | Online

Tower League | 12:00 PM | Assembly Hall

Riverside Writing Group: Writing Spiritual Memoir and Justice | 6:30 PM | Online

Friday, April 21

Morning Prayer | 8:00 AM | Online

COMING SOON

Sunday, April 23

Earth Day Sunday with Special Guests - Omega Dance Company | 11:00 AM | Nave & Online

Holy Land Forum | 1:30 PM | South Hall

Saturday, April 29

Family Zoo Outing at Prospect Park Zoo in Brooklyn | 10:00 AM

Sunday, May 7

Older Adults Sunday | 11:00 AM | Nave & Online

Sunday, June 4

Queering the Bible Workshop | 1:00 PM | Assembly Hall

Stacey Robinson's One Man Show | 3:00 PM | Assembly Hall

Sunday, June 18

Juneteenth Lunch and Learn | 1:00 PM | Assembly Hall

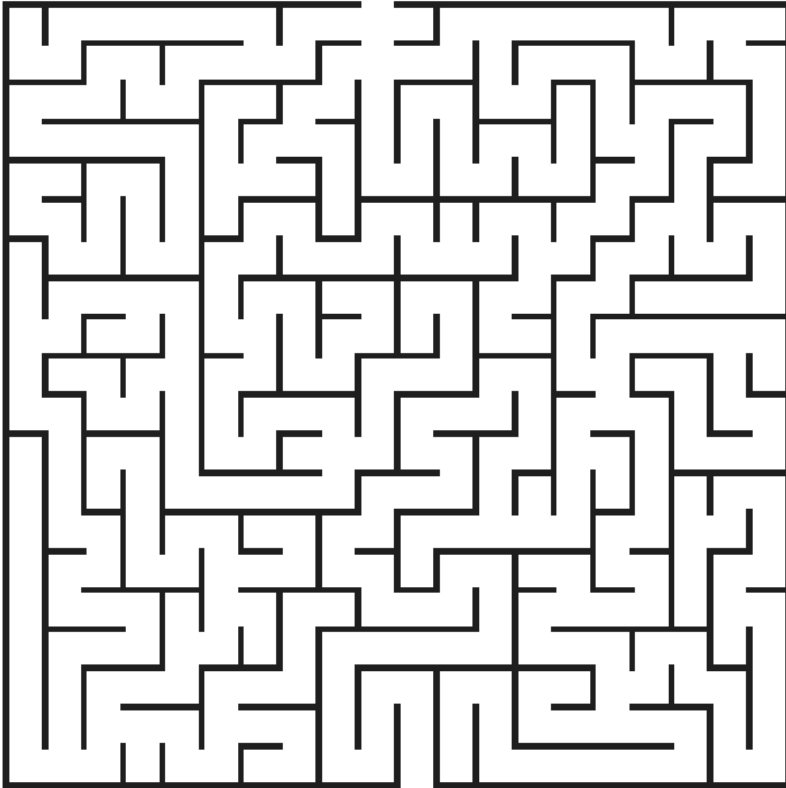
CHILDREN'S WORSHIP • BULLETIN

Activities based on Psalm 118, Acts 5, John 20.



SOLVE (the) MAZE

Help Peter find his way to the council where he will share his faith and testimony.



for (I am) about to

CREATE

new Heavens

&
A NEW EARTH

the former

shall not be

THINGS

REMEMBERED

or come to

MIND

ABOUT RIVERSIDE

The Riverside Church is an interdenominational, interracial, international, open, welcoming, and affirming church and congregation. The church is a member of the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A. and the United Church of Christ. Riverside cooperates with the Council of Churches in the City of New York and with the New York State, National, and World Council of Churches. Whoever you are: You are safe here. You are loved here. You are invited into full participation in our life together.

Rev. Adriene Thorne, Senior Minister
Rev. Dr. James Forbes, Senior Minister Emeritus

RIVERSIDE EMAIL LIST

Get the latest news and events at The Riverside Church from our weekly emails. Sign up at trcnyc.org/email. If you're not receiving them, add communications@trcnyc.org to your "Safe Sender list."

VIRTUAL COFFEE HOUR

Go deeper with the sermons from The Riverside Church every Sunday after worship for a sermon talkback as part of Virtual Coffee Hour. Visit trcnyc.org/VirtualCoffeeHour to join us online or go to 318 MLK to join us in person.

MEMBERSHIP AT RIVERSIDE

Membership is about responding to God's call on your life to step up and belong to this community as you pursue the passion God has set in your heart. By joining The Riverside Church you are taking the next step to partner with us as we seek to cultivate a community of justice, peace, and love that transforms the world. Visit trcnyc.org/membership to find out more.

DOWNLOAD THE RIVERSIDE APP

Take Riverside with you, wherever you go. Text TRCNyc to 833.833.4035 or visit trcnyc.org/app to download the app and stay connected to all the videos, podcasts, and events from The Riverside Church.

SUNDAY AFTERNOON CARILLON RECITALS

These recitals take place most weeks at 3:00 PM and can be best heard outdoors listening from Sakura Park, immediately north of The Riverside Church at 122nd Street. Visit trcnyc.org/CarillonRecitals for the complete schedule.

CHURCH NURSERY

Babies and toddlers are not too young to start learning about God's love for them. The nursery is open every Sunday from 10:30 AM-12:30 PM during worship staffed by trained nursery workers. For location please see an usher or security guard.

SUNDAY MORNING PARKING

Visit the Security Desk on the Claremont Level to pick up a \$5 parking coupon. Bring this coupon and your parking ticket to the attendant to receive this discounted rate.

CONNECT WITH US.

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For full staff directory visit trcnyc.org/directory



trcnyc.org



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