**RISE UP** in 2021

December 17, 2021

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**A Christmas You’ll Never Forget**

The Practice of ***Merriment***



How many of you like to laugh? What makes you laugh?

**Merriment** – cheerful or joyful gaiety; mirth; hilarity; laughter.

What do call it when Batman skips church?

***A Christian Bale.***

What would happen if God clapped His hands …

**A *Big Bang*!** Just a theory.

Who is a Christmas tree's favorite singer?

***Spruce Springsteen*!**

What do you get when you mix a Christmas tree and an iPad?

***A pineapple*!**

What did the gingerbread man put on his bed?

***A cookie sheet*!**

What is a Christmas tree's favorite candy?

***Orna-mints*!**

Laughter is good for all of us … as a matter of fact, the Bible says …

***A joyful heart is good medicine****, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones.* Proverbs 17:22

As a matter of fact, according to research at the Mayo Clinic …

**Good medicine** – laughter has a positive impact on your blood pressure, stress levels, anxiety, illness, immune system, short term memory, relationships, marriage and more. Laughter can increase oxygen to the heart, lungs and muscles, increase the endorphins that are released by your brain, improve your mood and reduce physical pain.

<https://kao.kendal.org/news/laughter-for-good-health/>

Sometimes life is **difficult** and we need a **laugh** to make it through.

What did one Christmas tree say to another?

***Lighten up*!**

Who is never hungry at Christmas?

***The turkey — he is always stuffed***.

*And Sarah said, “****God has made laughter for me****; everyone who hears will laugh over me.”* Genesis 21:6

Derived from the Hebrew יִצְחָק (Yitzhak), the name Isaac means “**one who laughs**” or “**one who rejoices**.” In the Old Testament of the Bible, Isaac is the firstborn son of Abraham.

*Then* ***our mouth was filled with laughter****, and our tongue with shouts of joy; then they said among the nations, “****The LORD has done great things for them****.”* Psalm 126:2

**Why don’t we laugh more?**

We get older and we are told not to laugh or be loud or cut up. Go to bed. Stop laughing. We worry, stress, experience anxiety, illnesses and not wanting to feel the pain of our lives. So we numb ourselves, turn down the volume on all our emotions.

**Let’s laughter together!**

This is a TEDx Talk by Michael Jr. Comedian

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=twSvd5bQLDw>

What is your **setup** and **punchline**?

*“… revelation, fulfillment, and joy expressed through laughter.”* Michael Jr., TEDx Talk

For Sarah … it was a story of barrenness and unfulfilled promises.

**But God** … life was going one direction … But God …

I did not know what I was going to do … But God …

Laughter really is **good** for the soul.

*Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.* Luke 6:21

Be **intentional** about experiencing **laughter** and joy.

* Play a game.
* Watch a clean comic or funny movie.
* Be around people you enjoy laughing with … not at.
* Share a **Christmas** **Cracker**!

Knock, knock! Who’s there? Mary. Mary who?

**Mary Christmas!** And Happy New Year

… See you Friday evening for our Christmas Eve Service … and do not forget to **pick up your Christmas Crackers.**