

YOU'RE HAVING A LAUGH!!!!



Did you know that 2nd May 2021 was World Laughter Day?

Probably not, nor did I until I read it in the newsletter sent to me by my previous church, but what a wonderful idea. One day when people across the world make a decision to laugh and make others laugh. Some of you may be thinking that, in the current circumstances, that may seem a little disrespectful, but is it?

What are the benefits of laughing? Endorphins are released, which are the natural painkillers within your body. Laughter can also boost T-cells (these are specialized cells in your immune system). Laughter is an exceptional cardio workout. There is a reduction in your level of stress hormones! Laughing can lower your blood pressure.

So, worth it physically, but generally you are going to feel better after laughing, it is good for mental health and, I would suggest, for your spiritual health!

I find it quite easy to see the silly side of things (an unfortunate trait inherited from my parents), which can get me into trouble. In my previous Circuit we had the first Circuit Meeting with the new Superintendent. We were going to go into groups and the Minister who introduced that didn't quite say what he intended to say and what he did say set me giggling. I tried to control it, but it kept returning, after that for a while the new Super called me 'trouble'.

The Lead Chaplain at the hospital where I volunteered had a very keen wit (sometimes quite quirky) and because of that he usually left patients feeling much, much better, despite their difficult situation. Would they have felt better if he had ministered to them only in a serious tone? He did once organise for the chaplains to take part in Laughing Therapy. We all went outside, lay on the grass in a circle, heads in the centre, and were encouraged to just laugh. Some who know me better will understand that I am not an extrovert and really struggled to make such an idiot of myself. I did finally forgive him for that - just.

When I was teaching, we had one member of staff who was constantly joking. After he told us one joke, I said I would use that in a sermon. He looked very confused (I thought they all knew what I did in my spare time) then said, "Are you allowed to tell jokes in a sermon?".

Strange, isn't it, the perception people have of Christians and what we can/can't do. Surely, we feel better after laughter, it lifts our spirits, it changes how we see things, it puts things into perspective, it gives us a glimpse of a more positive future, it relaxes us.

So, how about setting ourselves the target of celebrating World Laughter Day, but doing so every day! Try to find a way to make someone laugh this week.

And how about learning to laugh at ourselves. Maybe as individuals, and as the church, we take ourselves too seriously! Learning to laugh at ourselves enables us to be more approachable and more authentic.



Blessed are those who can laugh at themselves for they shall never cease to be amused.

Liz