

Parson to Person by Pastor Dave

As I write to you today, birdsong is beginning to creep back into town. Trees are leafing out, the mosquitos are doing great, and it is 67 lovely degrees. A perfect Spring-ish afternoon to talk to you about ancient things.

We are steadily slogging through Lent and have managed, thus far, to be serious enough to get the value of the time without increasing our depressive tendencies. Our world stage provides plenty of anxiety fodder, and, even in Lent, I don't feel the Church needs to add appreciably to that load. So today, right now, I want to look forward and talk glancingly about Easter, but directly about the human thoughts that came *before* Jesus. There

is much to get excited about...

Our founder, John Wesley, was British, through and through. But several centuries before Wesley, that magnificent island was invaded and eventually populated by Germanic tribes with familiar names: Angles, Saxons, and Jutes. Several waves of Danes, Norse, and other Scandinavians were vying for the same lands, and all of these groups brought with them a loosely shared pantheon of gods and goddesses, including the star for today, Eostre herself. Goddess of the spring, of the dawn, of fertility and new life, the festival of Eostre has been with us for thousands of years.

Our Purpose
To ENGAGE people in joyful relationships with God and with each other, so we will GROW in Christ-like compassion, and SHARE the blessings of the Holy Spirit.



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And *that* festival was a much-beloved ritual that happened on or around the Spring equinox. Our Lady of the Spring was accompanied by several animal consorts, most often by the German *osterhase*... you guessed it, Eostre's hare. And these assorted people, no longer a hybrid horde but now known collectively as the English, steeped in the old ways but steadily converting to the Christian faith, already had a solid foundation for the festival that would eventually come to be known as Easter.

Stravinsky allegedly said: "Mediocre artists borrow. Great artists steal". And so in honor of the greatness they perceived in Christ, the early Christians literally *stole* Eostre's feast and yoked it to their God, who was also strongly tied to rebirth and new life, and whose miraculous resurrection happened in the spring. Easter was born!

This has been a fantastic way of spreading the faith, by the way: by allowing it to absorb the cultural habits it encountered everywhere it went. Some practices obviously had to change in respect to the teachings of Christ, but a lot of local color remained. Just off the

top of my head, the Celtic Christians, the Mexican Christians, the Samoan Christians, each of these iterations of our faith story are hardly 'pure', whatever that means, but they are all vibrant. Samoa is – ready? -98% Christian! And it never would have become so if that abandonment of the indigenous religious understandings were persecuted or abolished.

So, our prime holiday is 'on loan', as it were, from one who was venerated long before Christ and is still actively worshipped today. But I am certain that we humans will always need ways of expressing gratitude and awe for the fresh rebirth of the Earth after the dark, desiccated dreariness of Winter. Eostre still gets the credit in some regions of our planet, but far more goes to Jesus, the rising Son. And so, in a few short weeks, we too can dance and rejoice that Life has come again. And now we even know where the Easter bunny entered our story!

UWF News

UWIF (United Women in Faith) Because of the delay in our monthly meeting, there are no UWIF updates...except for THE RUMMAGE SALE!! The sale will be Friday, March 8th from 9 am – 2 pm and Saturday March 9th from 9 am to noon. Starting February 17th (once Safe Space has vacated), bring your donations to the stage in Hadley Hall. If you need help (i.e. a truck) to haul stuff, contact Jody Gordon at [REDACTED]

Keep in mind that any items left-over are taken to Salvation Army – **BUT...Salvation Army limits what it can take, so DO NOT BRING THE FOLLOWING TO THE RUMMAGE SALE:**

Car seats, microwave ovens, humidifiers, mattresses, toilet-related items, medical devices, cribs, tires, car parts, blinds, anything flammable, chemicals, refrigerators, hide-a-beds, exercise equipment

If you have any questions, please contact Katya Yarosevich, 520 [REDACTED]

New Photo Directory

Efforts to produce an in-house directory are moving forward! The directory will include members and regular attendees. We will use digital photos. There will be 2 ways to provide us with a photo: 1) take advantage of the photo sessions provided after church services in Hadley Hall (see schedule below) OR 2) provide your own digital head-shot photo. If you choose to provide your own photo, be sure it has a resolution of 2256 x 1496 pixels or better. *Also be sure to provide up-to-date address, email and home/mobile phone information!*

Hadley Hall photo sessions are based on

the first letter of your last name. Sessions will be after church services on the following dates:

A → J: March 3rd
 K → R: March 10th
 S → Z: March 17th
 Make-up photos: March 24th

The Directory Committee (Mary Wahl, Candy Murphy, Nancy Mayr and Katya Yarosevich) hope to complete the directory by May.

Submitted by Katya Yarosevich

Church & Society

Thanks to everyone's wonderful support over the Holiday Season, Church and Society has been able to donate \$1000 to C.H.A.T's Valentine Day Campaign. This is a matching fund campaign so they will actually receive \$2,000. Thank you all for your continued support of our Fair Trade Table.

<https://www.chicohousingactionteam.net/>

<https://www.facebook.com/chicohousingactionteam/>

Gary Estep
 TUMC Church/Society Committee

Submitted by Gary Estep

THE JOSEPH BRADLEY KOEHLI MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Koehly Family is soliciting applications from this year's High School seniors who wish to compete for a scholarship. This award is made each year in memory of Joseph Bradley Koehly to an outstanding high school senior who is accepted in an institution of higher learning this Fall. If the recipient attends a 2-year college, the award will be \$500, and if he/she attends a 4-year college, it will be \$1000. The applicant must be an active, participating member of Trinity United Methodist Church. The primary criteria in determining the recipient of the scholarship will be academic excellence, church activity, school activity, personal recommendations and personal goals.

The recipient will be determined by a committee of one family member and two from the church and will be notified by June 30. Applications are available in the Church Office. Deadline for submitting applications is 4:30 p.m., April 30, 2024. The completed applications are to be mailed or hand delivered to the Church Office, 285 East Fifth Street, Chico, CA 95928.

Donations to the scholarship fund may be made through the Church Treasurer at any time.

Submitted by Rich Wolff

Trinity United Methodist Church

285 East Fifth Street
Chico, CA 95928

Phone: 530-343-1497
Email: chicotrinity@yahoo.com

ENGAGE

GROW

SHARE



WORSHIP IN MARCH

Sunday, March 3 Third Sunday of Lent, Holy Communion

Today we get all riled up with Jesus as he ‘cleans house’ in Jerusalem, as described in John 2:13-22. “Setting the Stage” is the title of the homily; Holy Communion will be celebrated, and a beloved organist will return...

Sunday, March 10 Fourth Sunday of Lent, Scout Sunday

Our annual celebration of our ministry with the Scouting program will share the day with the more Lenten themes found in Ephesians 2:1-10. The message is entitled, “Once Upon a Time”, but this is no fairy tale, friends.

Sunday, March 17 Fifth Sunday of Lent, CELTIC SUNDAY

How I enjoy our yearly Celtic Sunday! And this year it falls squarely on Saint Patrick’s Day, even better! Our scripture is from Jeremiah 31:31-34, and the homily will be called “Core Covenant”. Caroline Fairchild will be fiddling, and expect another special guest or two to add their expertise to the musical delight of this day.

Sunday, March 24 Sixth Sunday of Lent, PALM/PASSION SUNDAY

ONE SERVICE ONLY, 10:30 am

Today we gather for the deep dive into the last week of Jesus’ earthly life. Guest musicians and readers will take us on a chanted journey through the entire Passion as recorded by St. Mark. There will be no need for a sermon today; this holy text speaks for itself.

Sunday, March 31 EASTER SUNDAY!

A familiar story told in a less familiar way; we usually use the text from St. John, but this year St. Mark is preeminent. Mark 16:1-8 is the text; “Odd Pairings” will be the homily, and the Easter Egg hunt will be on the front lawn between services, about 9:45 on the front lawn.