



# Olive Tree Newsletter

## April 2024



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# Minister's Musings



Thomas Fedorka, LLM

The following excerpt was first published in Sundays and Seasons 2024, Year B, copyright © 2023 Augsburg Fortress

An overarching theme of the Easter season is one of belonging. From Thomas still finding his place despite, or perhaps because of, his doubts, to our place in the sheepfold and on the vine, to the embrace of the Spirit, we are reminded repeatedly about our place in God's family. Russian nesting dolls may be helpful in illustrating this theme. Jesus is within God, and we are in turn within Jesus as his sheep, his fruit, his people. Just like those smaller dolls inside the larger doll, we are embraced and protected at every level. We are not just with Jesus but within Jesus, as much a part of him as he is of God. The security that knowledge brings can be a springboard for action in the world: sharing the good news, spreading the love of Jesus, and working for justice. [People of God should be inspired to] act with the knowledge that, no matter the outcome, possible missteps, questions, or doubts, there is always a place for [us] in the fold or on the vine. Jesus does not ask us to be perfect but to abide in him and to bear fruit.

When we find our place and sense of belonging within the abiding, triune God, we are also reminded that there are others who belong to God with whom we are encouraged to build community despite our differences. The Easter texts use multiple images of "the many": a flock of sheep (Easter 4), the branches of a grape vine (Easter 5), and a multitude of strangers of various nationalities and languages gathered on the Day of Pentecost. There is a push for unity within the body of Christ throughout the Easter texts. As we move through them, the images of what binds us together become more and more abstract. The resurrected Jesus gathers his followers around him behind locked doors (Easter 2) and then around a beach fire and breakfast (Easter 3). Images of physical gathering give way to metaphorical nonhuman images of flocks of sheep (Easter 4) and vineyard branches full of grapes (Easter 5). Then the invisible but powerful Holy Spirit begins to move and push us together (Easter 6 and 7). It all builds to Pentecost when we are brought together through language and deeper understanding. Through this journey, we are taken from the very familiar group of disciples, to images out of nature that show unity without diversity, and then finally to an image that is highly relatable: a large group of people who go from only seeing their differences to being unified by the Holy Spirit. It is this unity, within God and within the body of Christ, that drives our Easter season and should continue to drive our efforts to live out our roles as disciples in the world.

[Our] worship should reflect this unity in all its complicated and beautiful forms as God calls us to be one with each other in the same way we are one with the Trinity. This is necessary in our lives because we must rely on each other in some of the same ways the disciples relied on Jesus while he walked among them, like the ways he taught them, loved them, and sacrificed for them. Through the stories of this season, we see how the early disciples and followers of Jesus struggled to find their bearings after Jesus ascended into heaven. These stories reflect our own struggles with belonging

and faith and can be used as encouragement to come together and show God's presence to one another, to work together to show God to others, and to follow the example of Jesus in how we bring communities together through justice, peace, and love.





# Saint Patrick's Day & Pi Day Celebration

Submitted by Sara Kjendal

On March 14th over 30 folks connected to Gethsemane Lutheran Church gathered to celebrate Pi day and St. Patrick's Day. It was a delicious dinner and lots of love and laughter to share. Thanks to Mary Franck and Barb Connors for planning and decorating for this event. It was a great way to get to know each other better.





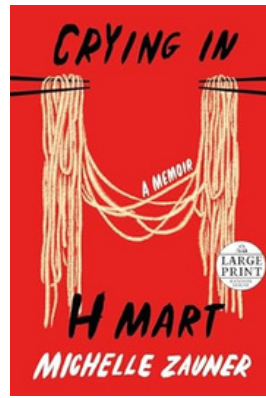
# The Touch of the Master's Hand

## Submitted by Hank Chary

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer  
Thought it scarcely worth his while  
To waste much time on the old violin,  
But he held it up with a smile;  
“What am I bidden, good folks,” he cried  
“Who’ll start the bidding for me?”  
“A dollar, a dollar, now two, only two  
Two dollars, and who’ll make it three?  
“Three dollars once, three dollars twice  
Going for three.” But no—  
From the room far back, a gray haired man  
Came forward and picked up the bow.  
Then wiping the dust from the old violin  
And tightening up all the strings  
He played a melody pure and sweet,  
As sweet as the angle sings.  
The music ceased and the auctioneer  
With a voice that was quiet and low  
Said, “What am I bid for the old violin?”  
And he held it up with the bow.  
“A thousand dollars, and who’ll make it two?  
Two thousand and who’ll make it three?  
Three thousand once, three thousand twice  
And going, and gone,” said he.  
The people cheered, but some of them cried,  
“We do not quite understand—  
What changed its worth?” Swift came the reply,  
“The touch of the master’s hand.”  
And many a man with life out of tune,  
And battered and torn with sin  
Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd,  
Much like the old violin.  
A mess of pottage, a life of shame,  
A game and he travels on.  
He’s going once and going twice,  
He’s going and almost gone.  
But the Master comes and the foolish crowd  
Never can quite understand  
The worth of a soul and the change that’s wrought  
By the touch of the Master’s hand.

# Book Review

Submitted by Theo Groh

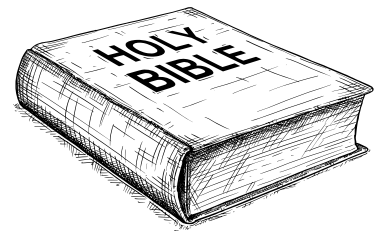


Crying in H Mart is a story of familial love, loss, and cultural identity by musician Michelle Zauner. It follows her often complicated relationship with her Korean mother, her Korean heritage, and her bi-cultural identity through childhood into young adulthood. When Michelle's mother is diagnosed with cancer, she moves back in with her parents to help care for her mother through her ultimately unsuccessful battle with the disease. Throughout the book, food plays a very important role. It's a core part of the relationship between Michelle and her mother, and one of the main things that connect her to her Korean heritage. Food can hold memories and evoke and symbolize things. The title "Crying in H-Mart" refers to the Korean grocery store chain in America 'H-Mart' and the cultural link it serves for those with Korean heritage to their culture, community and their family members. Food is both form of grief in this book, and also a source of healing.

I connected with this book on a couple of levels. Having a German father and an American mother, I could relate to Michelle's questions around identity, as well as understanding the important role that food played in connecting me with my father and his German heritage. As someone who also lost a parent while in their 20's, I appreciated the authors clear eyed exploration of how complicated parent-child relationships can be in that transition from childhood to young adulthood, and the unique challenges of losing a parent at that time in your life. This book is moving, and superbly written, and I would recommend it to anyone, especially if you've experienced loss.

# Bible Study Update

Submitted by Janine Danzi



We have recently started on the Book of Psalms. Using many different versions of the Bible helps us to understand and interpret these scriptures. There are 150 Psalms so this should keep us busy. All the feelings and life experiences human beings have felt are contained in the Psalms. When reading these we can feel God understands us. Pretty amazing since they're written appropriately 1440 BC - 586 BC.

The main theme I feel is to praise God. If you are not a big fan of poetry (like me) there is so much beauty contained here, you will praise God.

Please join us Wednesday at noon anytime for one day or a month we will welcome you!

# On Easter

**Submitted by Hank Chary**

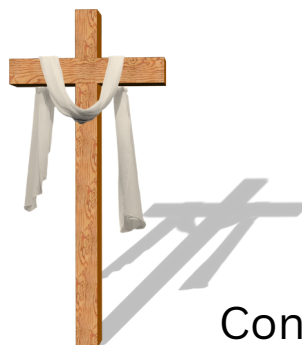
Easter is the grandest and oldest celebration in the Christian church. It is the 5th season on the Church year (calendar): Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Time after Pentecost. It is one of only three seasons of fixed duration (“a week of weeks” or 7 weeks) the others being Christmas (just 12 days) and Lent (40 days, not including Sundays). (Advent at 4 weeks length is 4 Sundays, not necessarily four full weeks.) The name “Easter” derives from the Anglo-Saxon goddess of Spring (Eostre or Ostara), but the Christian festival developed from the Jewish Passover.

Easter developed from the Jewish Passover because according to the Gospel accounts Jesus’ last days occurred at the time of Passover. The synoptic Gospels are clear that Jesus ate the Passover meal with his disciples on the night before he was crucified. The Gospel of John, however, places Jesus’s death on 14 Nisan, at the time the lambs were sacrificed in the Temple. Paul, writing before any of the Gospel accounts, referred in 1 Cor 5:7, to Christ as “our paschal lamb [who] has been sacrificed,” thus suggesting the earlier date for Easter.

Easter was originally celebrated on the day following the end of the Passover fast (14 Nisan). In the mid second century some gentile Christians started to celebrate on the Sunday after 14 Nisan with the preceding Friday observed as the day of Christ’s crucifixion. The dispute over the correct date to celebrate Easter continued until Emperor Constantine, at the Council of Nicaea in 325, declared the celebration of Easter to be on the Sunday following 14 Nisan rather than on the date itself, but there is not church-wide agreement on the date of Easter within Christianity.

In earliest Christianity it seems that the Easter/Passover observance was a combined celebration of the Exodus and the Resurrection. Clear testimony of the Christian observance of Passover appears only in the second century in Asia Minor where the Johannine chronology was followed. There was a celebration on 14-15 Nisan as a memorial of the Lord’s death and the climax of salvation history. There was an all-night vigil ending at dawn. It seems that these Christians waited until the Jewish Passover was over at midnight before starting the Eucharistic feast.

Not until the beginning of the 4th century was Easter celebrated as its own festival. The appropriate date for Easter has always been somewhat contentious. The Jewish lunar calendar differed from the Greco-Roman solar calendar. At the end of the first century when the Christians were cut off from the synagogue, they no longer had access to the rabbinic authorities to help determine the appropriate date of the Passover.



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In Asia Minor, the Montanists set the date of the Pascha on 6 April. Hippolytus accepted the date of 25 March as the date of the crucifixion as did Tertullian. The date 25 March was also the spring equinox in the Julian calendar. Jewish tradition held that the Passover and the creation of the world occurred on the same day. Further, Christian tradition held that Christ was conceived and died on the same day. Thus we see a mystical (and mythical) convergence on 25 March.

It wasn't until the Council of Nicaea in 325 that the date for Easter was settled. Henceforth, in the western church, Easter would be celebrated on the first Sunday after the first full moon after the vernal equinox. Still there remains a disagreement between the Greek and Roman churches over whether Easter should be celebrated only after the Jewish Passover. Since the Orthodox churches observe this distinction, there remains a fundamental calendrical difference between the Eastern and Western churches.

## Bible Study



We would like to offer additional opportunities for a Bible study. We need to know the preferred format that is easiest and most appealing for people. Please respond to the Bible Study survey and let us know, what day, time, and location works best.

## Prayer Requests

We occasionally get prayer requests through our website ([glcmanchester.org](http://glcmanchester.org)), the church office email ([office@glcmanchester.org](mailto:office@glcmanchester.org)), the church phone (603-623-3451), or from our Member Care Committee.

Requests can come from GLC congregation members, but membership is not required to receive prayers. If you would like to be added or would like to add someone to the Gethsemane prayer list, please reach out through one of the ways listed above or contact Thomas directly.

Please let Thomas know if you'd like to be part of a group that will pray intentionally for people on our prayer list and other issues.

## Altar Guild Help

We need others to join this group of fun people. There are now only 3 members on Altar Guild. It's not hard work to serve on this committee. We need willing people to serve about 1 week a month, if we get more people it will be less than that. The amount of time it takes about 1 hour.

All training is provided to you. The busiest time are Christmas and Easter seasons, but we all join together for these times. This committee needs people to provide the church with communion and various aspects of worship.

Please, please join us in serving God and our church.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>31</b> <b>EASTER</b>  <b>9:30am</b> <b>WORSHIP</b> <b>SERVICE</b>  <b>Brunch to follow</b>  <b>6:00pm AA</b>	<b>1</b> <b>5:00pm AA HHE</b> <b>7:00pm AA MNWS</b>  <b>7:30pm</b> <b>COMMUNICATIONS</b>	<b>2</b> <b>7:00pm AA</b> <b>WB2B</b>	<b>3</b> <b>12:00pm BIBLE</b> <b>STUDY</b> <b>5:00pm AA</b> <b>HHE</b>  <b>6:00pm Prayer</b> <b>Service for</b> <b>Peace</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> <b>12:00pm AA</b> <b>WNBB</b> <b>5:00pm AA</b> <b>HHE</b>	<b>6</b> <b>10:00am AA</b> <b>NO NAME</b>
<b>7</b> <b>9:30am WORSHIP</b> <b>SERVICE</b> <b>11:00am Christian Ed</b> <b>6:00pm AA</b>	<b>8</b> <b>12:00pm MARY</b> <b>MARTHA</b> <b>5:00pm AA HHE</b> <b>7:00pm AA MNWS</b>	<b>9</b> <b>7:00pm AA</b> <b>WB2B</b>	<b>10</b> <b>12:00pm BIBLE</b> <b>STUDY</b> <b>5:00pm AA HHE</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b> <b>12:00pm AA</b> <b>WNBB</b> <b>5:00pm AA</b> <b>HHE</b>	<b>13</b> <b>10:00am AA</b> <b>NO NAME</b>  <b>12:00 pm</b> <b>Ruth Higgins</b> <b>Celebration of</b> <b>Life Service</b>
<b>14</b> <b>9:30am WORSHIP</b> <b>SERVICE</b> <b>11:00am Christian Ed</b> <b>6:00pm AA</b>  <b>Thomas Vacation</b>	<b>15</b> <b>5:00pm AA HHE</b> <b>7:00pm AA MNWS</b>  <b>Thomas Vacation</b>	<b>16</b> <b>7:00pm AA</b> <b>WB2B</b> <b>7:00pm</b> <b>FINANCE</b>  <b>Thomas</b> <b>Vacation</b>	<b>17</b> <b>12:00pm BIBLE</b> <b>STUDY</b> <b>5:00pm AA HHE</b>  <b>Thomas</b> <b>Vacation</b>	<b>18</b> <b>7:00pm</b> <b>COUNCIL</b>  <b>Thomas</b> <b>Vacation</b>	<b>19</b> <b>12:00pm AA</b> <b>WNBB</b> <b>5:00pm AA</b> <b>HHE</b>  <b>Thomas</b> <b>Vacation</b>	<b>20</b> <b>10:00am AA</b> <b>NO NAME</b>  <b>Thomas</b> <b>Vacation</b>
<b>21</b>  <b>Community Meal</b> <b>9:30am WORSHIP</b> <b>SERVICE</b> <b>11:00am Christian Ed</b> <b>3:00pm COMMUNITY</b> <b>MEAL</b> <b>6:00pm AA</b> <b>Thomas Vacation</b>	<b>22</b> <b>5:00pm AA HHE</b> <b>6:30pm REACHOUT</b> <b>7:00pm AA MNWS</b>	<b>23</b> <b>7:00pm AA</b> <b>WB2B</b>	<b>24</b> <b>12:00pm BIBLE</b> <b>STUDY</b> <b>5:00pm AA HHE</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b> <b>12:00pm AA</b> <b>WNBB</b> <b>5:00pm AA</b> <b>HHE</b>	<b>27</b> <b>10:00am AA</b> <b>NO NAME</b>
<b>28</b> <b>9:30am WORSHIP</b> <b>SERVICE</b> <b>11:00am Christian Ed</b> <b>6:00pm AA</b>	<b>29</b> <b>5:00pm AA HHE</b> <b>7:00pm AA MNWS</b>	<b>30</b> <b>7:00pm AA</b> <b>WB2B</b>	<b>31</b> <b>12:00pm BIBLE</b> <b>STUDY</b> <b>5:00pm AA HHE</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b> <b>12:00pm AA</b> <b>WNBB</b> <b>5:00pm AA</b> <b>HHE</b>	<b>3</b> <b>10:00am AA</b> <b>NO NAME</b>



# FRUITS & ROOTS

## A MIDWEEK RETREAT FOR ADULTS

April 22-25, 2024  
Monday afternoon - Thursday lunch

Chaplain: Rev. Maren Tirabassi      Musician: Gary Benevides  
Coordinator: Deacon Judy Hakanson Smith



Spring Lutherhostel participants in April 2023: Trip to nearby Chocorua Lake.

Join us for the first Fruits & Roots midweek retreat where we will focus on one of the **FRUITS** of the Spirit, **JOY**, as we meet for theme sessions led by **Rev. Maren Tirabassi**, a pastor, poet, and mystery writer from Kittery, Maine.

We will also spend time looking at the **ROOTS** of our faith & the land around us.

**JOYFUL** music will open our retreat with a dynamic foot stomping concert by the **Funky Divas of Gospel** on Monday evening at 7pm in our new Oasis building.

Looking at our **ROOTS**, **Dr. Damien Costello** explores the practice of maple sugaring and how this practice connects us to the land, our ancestors, and all that surround us.

Join us for **Maple, New Hampshire's Medicine of Connection**,  
Wednesday evening at 7pm in the Oasis.



SCAN FOR MORE INFO

*In the tradition of our former Lutherhostel program, this new retreat provides delicious food, opportunities for connecting with your faith, meeting new and old friends, connecting with God's creation, afternoon trips, singing, and staying in Calumet's cozy accommodations with private baths.*

For pricing & reservations, please contact Alice at [alice@calumet.org](mailto:alice@calumet.org) or 603-539-4773 ext. 220

For questions about the program, please contact Judy Smith at [judy@calumet.org](mailto:judy@calumet.org)

Camp Calumet is the year-round camp and conference center, serving the New England Synod, ELCA



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**Director of Music: Gary MacDonald**

