

March 12, 2023 Sermon - Eostre (and Vulnerability)

- March
 - Dad's birthday and the gateway month
 - Gate swings back and forth between winter and spring.
 - Hanging in precarious balance between the season
 - Winter's last hurrah
 - Spring will win the battle
 - The Wheel of the Year never stops turning

- Names we give the season.
 - Mon, Mar 20, 2023 5:24 PM
 - Equinox - word has roots in Middle English, Old French, and/or Latin
 - all of them mean "equal night."
 - Gateway between Winter and Spring = gateway between day and night
 - About to hit a point of perfect balance.
 - You can balance eggs, but there's no science behind that :)
 - Time of transition?
 - Daylight in balance between darkness and light
 - The season in balance between Winter and Spring.
 - How our agrarian ancestors would have viewed the time around the vernal equinox
 - Not so different today
 - balance between winter and spring
 - cold winds and heavy snows giving way to longer days, crocuses and snowdrops

- Venerable Bede
 - 1300 years ago
 - Monk living among Anglo-Saxon tribes (area now England/Scotland border)
 - He recorded a celebratory month among the local people
 - started around the vernal equinox
 - Eostremonat, or Eostre's month.
 - Fell right after another month called Hrethmonat.
 - Purposeful slacker when it came to describing the stories of non-Christian deities
 - Recorded only that both Hrethe and Eostre were honored as goddesses
 - Sacrifices were offered to Hrethe and feasts were held in Eostre's

honor

- offering thanks to one goddess, encourage her to go away
- Thanks to the other, ask her to stay.

- Eostre

- to our ancestors, she was goddess of spring and renewal
- Name is derived from the Saxon Ēastre
 - refers to "the rising dawn"
 - shares its roots with the word "east."
 - Modern "Easter" is derived from the same term.
 - Everything ties back to the rising of Spring.

- Calendar says Mar 20 is the first day of Spring

- No switch gets flipped. Winter shuts down at 5:23 PM?
- Transitional time, a seasonal junction.
 - Key time where we can find ourselves vulnerable as the season shifts and changes around us.
- Ayurvedic medicine
 - At the end of the season that has aggravated an imbalance, the imbalance will be in its most liquid form and can be easily removed from body tissues.
 - Sanskrit word "rtusandhi" is the 2-week period between the change of two seasons.
 - Last week of winter, first week of Spring.

- Norse/Germanic lore - creation story

- Worlds of Ice and Fire
- Ginnungagap - gap between those worlds
 - some of the Ice melted as the sparks of the fire were carried forth
 - Life emerged.
- Analogy of this time of year
 - poised on the edge of Ice - the Winter season
 - ready to move forward into the realm of Fire - the summer season.
 - Spring is the threshold
 - We are ready to take that step but vulnerable to the immense forces on either side.

- Journey

- Expanding on earlier journey

- Touch the ice and the fire
- Each of us, within ourselves, will bridge the gap and find the potential for life - the season of Spring - deep within.
- Tree meditation - Fire below, Ice above, green pushed from the heart and fed to the spirit of Spring.

- Spring embodies vulnerability.
 - working in Soul Matters theme of vulnerability
 - Vulnerability of new life and growth.
 - Sprouts that push through the earth, the buds that form on the trees, the baby animals that are born - all of these things are vulnerable in their newness and their fragility.
 - Yet through this vulnerability they can grow and thrive.

- we can also embrace vulnerability in order to grow and renew ourselves
 - embrace our own vulnerabilities and allow ourselves to be open to new possibilities and experiences.
 - trust in our own strength and resilience to navigate the challenges that may come our way.
 - shed our masks and armor, and allow ourselves to be seen in our raw and authentic form.
 - Open ourselves up to a deeper connection with the universe and with one another, and to the transformative power of growth and change.

- May we have the courage to be vulnerable, and the strength to face the challenges that come with it. May we embrace the cycles of life and death, and know that it is through our vulnerabilities that we can find our greatest strength.

- May this spring equinox bring us renewed energy and inspiration, and may we continue to honor the cycles of nature and the transformative power of vulnerability.