

KTF 2025 March 20

Dear Ones,

Happy spring! In Bible study yesterday morning, Sandy and I learned that despite what we learned in school, the actual equinox is not simply the day when there are an equal number of daylight and darkness hours. The scientific definition of equinox, as Patty read to us, it is when the center of the sun is directly overhead at noon at the equator. Sometimes (as is the case this year), there are already more daylight minutes than darkness here in Norway, ME.

It was a good reminder that we are never too old to learn new things. Words can hold layers of meaning. I've known this as a linguist and Bible scholar. It was fascinating to watch the same process of discovery happen among us about something scientific. Sometimes things are more complicated than we think. Definitions can be much more nuanced. Very little is simply black and white; we live our lives in the shades of grey.

On Sunday I was reminded of a book by Henri Nouwen which I read years and years ago, called *With Open Hands*. There is probably a copy of it in the library, if you would like to borrow it. I believe this quotation is from that book (but it might be from something else!)

In the end, a life of prayer is a life with open hands—a life where we need not be ashamed of our weaknesses but realize that it is more perfect for us to be led by the Other than to try to hold everything in our own hands.

Lent is a good time to practice relaxing our grip, holding things more lightly, to see what God might make of them if we don't cling to them so tightly. What is God asking you to release into God's care? Do you trust God enough to open your hands and release it?

In the meantime....*keep the faith*,
Nancy+

THIS SUNDAY'S READINGS

Exodus 3:1-15 * Psalm 63:1-8 * 1 Corinthians 10:1-13 * Luke 13:1-9

CREATION CARE TIPS

Strengthen the voice of the prophets who call humanity to faithful care for the planet, that they would not be silenced, but heeded as your messengers. Prayers of the People, 3-16-15, adapted from Sundays and Seasons, 2025

Let's take a trip down memory lane. Or, if you're too young to remember the 60's and early 70s, perhaps engaging in a bit of time travel will help you join us. We'll start in Kingston, NY, on the dirty Hudson River, with a folk singer who was both saddened and angered by its condition. The river from Troy to the south of Albany is one great septic tank that has been rendered nearly useless for water supply, for swimming, or to support the rich life that once abounded there." – Governor Nelson Rockefeller, 1965

Pete Seeger decided to begin the cleanup with an educational campaign mounted from the sloop Clearwater. It has been a long project, full of court cases, set-backs, and hard work. Why? GE dumped toxic wastes into the Hudson for years, and in 2009 was required to dredge the river to remove polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs. PCBs affect skin, the immune, nervous and reproductive systems of humans and other animals, and cause cancer. Six hundred twenty barges full of contaminated sediment were removed from the riverbottom, to remove the PCBs in the muck. Today, because of Seeger's efforts, the river's water is much cleaner than it was 50+ years ago.

Do you think a sailboat is a strange way to make people notice the need for cleaner water? Well, it's not as strange as a folk-rock song that rose to number one on the top 100 pop chart calling attention to clean water. John Denver wrote a song called "Rocky Mountain High," and ignoring the implications of that third word, we'll focus on his lyrics. Now he walks in quiet solitude the forests and the streams, Seeking grace in every step he takes. His sight has turned inside himself to try and understand The serenity of a clear blue mountain lake.

Hmm, the serenity of a clear blue mountain lake. Do you know of any places like that around here? Thank God and Pete Seeger, John Denver, and Edmund Muskie for those beautiful places.

Yes, Edmund Muskie – Governor of Maine, US Senator from Maine, Hubert Humphrey's running mate in 1968, Jimmy Carter's Secretary of State – that Edmund Muskie was the sponsor of the Clean Water Act of 1972. According to Wikipedia, The Clean Water Act was one of the United States' first and most influential modern environmental laws. One of the notable clean-up success stories of the Clean Water Act is the Androscoggin River. Let's celebrate fifty years of improved water quality, brought to us by caring individuals who started things rolling. Maybe like them, you'll start something great!

Happy spring! – Patty Watts, Christ Church Earth Keeper

Hurt not the earth—neither the sea—nor the trees. Revelation 7:3

CALENDAR

SUN:	9:30 AM	Sunday School
	10:00 AM	Silent confession and absolution
	10:15 AM	Eucharist/In-person and online
WED:	9:00 AM	Eucharist/Bible Study
THU:	9:00 AM	Christ Church Book Group/Zoom
	7:15 PM	Zoom Compline
FRI:	12 Noon	Lenten Lunch at 1 st Congregational, So Paris

ANNOUNCEMENTS

March 23: Refugee Sunday The Episcopal Church and the Diocese of Maine designated March 9th as the day to observe Refugee Sunday, but we already had a lot going on, so we are observing it TODAY March 23. In the meantime, you can check out episcopalmigrationministries.org for more info.

Community Lenten Lunch Every Friday at noon during Lent. 1st Congregational hosts us; different churches prepare the soup. One of our local pastors offers a short reflection. (We have date—speak to Patty Watts if you would like to help)

Silent Prayer and Confession During Lent, join Sandy in the chapel at 10 AM for ten minutes of silent prayer, concluding with the absolution.

Giving Thanks during Lent Christ Church friends, though Lent is intended to be a penitential season, there is no time or season in life when it is not appropriate to keep ourselves aware of all that can make us grateful. Including intentional giving into a United Thank Offering box as part of your Lenten discipline is an easy and helpful way to keep us mindful of the people, places and experiences for which can and should thank the Lord. It is always his grace that produces these blessings. So, if you haven't already done so, pick up a UTO box on the table outside Nancy's office and start a daily practice of *giving thanks unto the Lord!*