

## From the Pulpit

by Rev. Carole Martignacco

# Easter, seeds, miracles and mysteries

*"To be of the Earth is to know the restlessness of being a seed, the darkness of being planted, the struggle toward the light, the pain of growth into the light, the joy of bursting and bearing fruit, the love of being food for someone, the scattering of your seeds, the decay of the seasons, the mystery of death and the miracle of birth."*

– John Soos

In spring, around the vernal equinox, comes the great festival Easter, named for the goddess Eostre, giving us our word east – the place where the sun rises. Every year we are amazed, enchanted, jubilant all over again as new growth appears out of the dark earth. First the ice on rivers and lakes begins to crack and crocuses poke their heads out of the snow; then comes the parade of daffodils, tulips, hyacinths. Grass turns from brown to green, watered by melting snow and silver rain. Days lengthen, the sun rises earlier, warmth returns to the land. As if awakening from a deep sleep plants come alive again after long months of lying dormant in the dark soil, seemingly dead.

Primitive cultures observed and celebrated this annual renewal as a holy, sacred time. The first Easter, shrouded in mystery, goes back to the dawn of human consciousness, as our kind first observed the growing patterns of plants, then charted the seasons and phases of the moon.


The personification of this annual rebirth as god and goddess mythology goes back 50,000 years or more. Christians who celebrate spring with the resurrection story – the holy one

who was dead is alive again – are participating in one of the newer versions of an old, old story. But the oldest story is of the seed.

It was the seed that captured the imagination of early humans and enticed us toward new ways of living, leading to the first experiments in civilization, the settling of villages and towns and cities. Before that, we were dependent on foraging for food, and only gradually learned to cultivate crops, to irrigate land where there was no natural source of water. If you were one of those early humans, you would have lived a long time with seeds before the concept dawned that here, in this seemingly lifeless stone, was all that was needed for resurrection.

Consider the seed – a gift in an unlikely package. On the outside it appears dry, lifeless. Whether shrivelled and crusty or round and smooth, all its potential is hidden. Inside, the seed is a capsule full of

longing, a kernel of possibility, encoded with a complete blueprint for growth. Glorious colours await, graceful shapes of stem, branch and leaf, and all the energy required for blossoming.

We live in one Earth garden, life as usual the most amazing miracle. Seeds are not only scattered everywhere around us, but inside us. Out of our deepest longings, from whatever darkness we know, let us awaken now to our potential. Reaching toward light, let us grow and blossom with this miraculous season of renewal and rebirth. 

Carole Martignacco ministers to the UU Church of North Hatley and is author of *The Everything Seed: A Story of Beginnings*, Tricycle Press, 2006

## The Everything Seed

BY CAROLE MARTIGNACCO

Have you ever watched a seed grow?  
Have you ever noticed  
how it begins  
so small,  
so still,  
so quiet,  
like a gift waiting to be opened ...

and how slowly  
it wakes up,  
begins to unfold,  
growing  
into something  
larger ...  
and Larger ...  
and LARGER?

What once began  
in a blazing blossom of light  
continues every day.

New stars sprout open  
in the deep soil  
of space.

New plants and animals  
appear on the Earth.

Seeds of many kinds  
are scattered  
all over the earth ...

to help us remember.

And new people  
are born everyday  
with the spark  
of that first light  
still alive  
and burning  
deep inside ... waiting

like the Everything Seed  
to shine  
in ways  
that are yet  
to be known.

