



BELONG TOGETHER

OFFICE OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION

Holy Week and Passover at EMU

April 4, 2023

Dear EMU Community,

Last month we invited you to support the members of our community who celebrated Holi, Hola Mohalla, and Ramadan. This month we invite you to learn and share with members of our community of the Christian and Jewish faiths. The Anabaptist Mennonites at EMU have much in common with Christian traditions; Holy Week is one of them.

The dates of Holy Week differ between Eastern and Western Christian traditions. In the Western Christianity tradition, Holy Week begins with Palm Sunday (April 2 this year) and includes Holy Thursday or Maundy Thursday (April 6), Good Friday (April 7), and Easter Sunday (April 9).

Palm Sunday is the day of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem as Savior and signifies the start of Holy Week. Holy Thursday or Maundy Thursday commemorates the Last Supper of Jesus with his disciples before his arrest and crucifixion. "Maundy" comes from a Latin word meaning "commandment." In church history, it was used to describe the night of Jesus' arrest and a "new" commandment: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another" (John

13:34). Good Friday is the day of the crucifixion of Jesus, and it is a holiday at EMU. This day is set aside for reflection and being thankful for the unconditional love of God. Easter Sunday commemorates the resurrection of Jesus Christ and his ascension into heaven. Some Christians of various faith traditions will observe religious services and periods of fasting or abstention from eating meat in preparation for Easter Sunday celebrations.

This month we also celebrate the Jewish holiday of [Passover](#) (in Hebrew, Pesach). Passover commemorates the exodus of the Jews from slavery in ancient Egypt; it's a celebration of freedom. This year, Passover begins on April 5 and ends on April 13. The Seder (order in Hebrew) is the traditional Passover meal where the Haggadah (exodus story) is retold in a set order. During Passover, certain food products are strictly avoided.

I invite our EMU community to be mindful of students, faculty, and staff members who will be fasting or otherwise engaging in their faith traditions during this time. We all experience this season in different ways—joy, peace, anxiety, confusion, and many other emotions. At EMU, part of Belonging Together means being present for each other. If you would like support during this time, please reach out to any of the following: [Trina Trotter Nussbaum](#), Associate Director - CIE, [Shannon Dycus](#), Dean of Students and Vice President of Student Affairs, [Celeste R. Thomas](#), Director, Multicultural Student Services, [Brian Martin Burkholder](#), University Chaplain, or [Jacqueline Font-Guzmán](#), Executive, Vice President for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Have a blessed Holy Week.

Jackie

Jacqueline N. Font-Guzmán, MHA, JD, PhD

She/Her/Ella

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