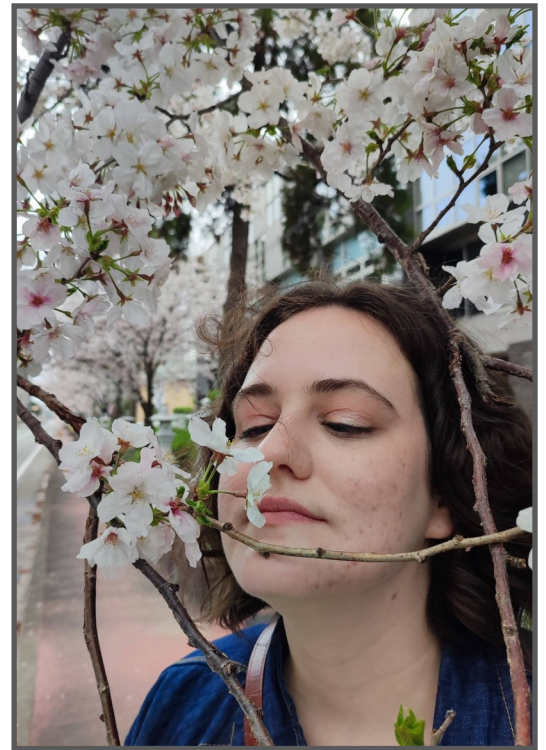


News from Nihon*

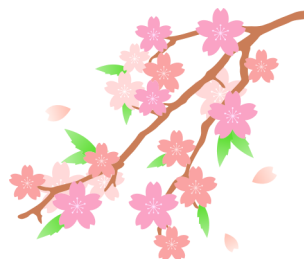
*Nihon or Nippon is the Japanese way of saying Japan.

Happy Easter! He is risen! I hope you all had a wonderful time observing Holy Week and celebrating the resurrection. I am currently in the middle of spring vacation between school years. Cherry blossoms are in full bloom and I continue to be amazed by their beauty.

Change is not my favorite, but it has come with the changing seasons and years. Some of my coworkers moved on to new schools or new job opportunities at the end of the school year. The pastor at Oe Church has taken a new call in Tokyo and Easter Sunday was his final Sunday. While I am curious about the new faces and relationships to come, parting has been bittersweet. I haven't done any major traveling this past month. Instead, I have been taking this time off to rest and recharge and reset. At the end of April and beginning of May, Japan has a series of national holidays that come together and create "Golden Week." I will be traveling during that time and so my newsletter will either be late or resume in June.



On a random rainy Sunday afternoon in March, I came upon a dance festival. There were many different dance troupes with a mix of ages and genders in bright, colorful costumes. They radiated joy, in spite of the weather for their outdoor performances. I thought they were beautiful and fascinating to watch, especially all the people who were supporting them by waving flags or lugging around various props.



My family's visit highlighted my amazing community for me. What I remember most looking back on our many adventures is how well we were supported.

So many wonderful friends stepped in to help me plan sightseeing, meals, introductions, and transportation. I was so overjoyed my family had the chance to meet so many of the wonderful people who have enriched my life greatly. I don't have a good photo of this event, but Oe Church even threw my family a welcome party after the Sunday service. I am also grateful for my brother's long arms and his ability to take group selfies. The pictures below represent people from all across my life in Japan. Glad to have them :) My ongoing prayer is that everyone might have such a community, that no one would feel alone or isolated.

