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# StarTribune Editorial

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## Our perspective

### **Star flowers**

#### *The exquisite art of believing*

A magnolia in Minnesota is an improbability. A tree so fragile has no business living so far north. Yet the magnolias hereabouts have weathered another winter. Their loud white blossoms are laughing off last week's snows, rejoicing at their preposterous good fortune. They call out from the greening lawns the only truth they know: Beyond life's relentless ice and common gray, all ways waits a great moment.

Sometimes this seems not to be so. Even the mildest winter has its blasts, the simplest love its losses. The world breaks its promises as often as it keeps them. The business of living can seem a series of relinquishings — of hopes bursting forth and falling too soon to Earth. Losing seems life's commonplace, fulfillment its exception.

None of this bothers the magnolias. They revel in challenge and the natural order. Who said life was meant to be easy? Not Mother Nature, and never the magnolias. They've learned the lessons that come with taking root in inhospitable soil. They're well-practiced at bowing to harsh winds. They abide through bitterness and dark, waiting for better days.

In short, they have mastered the

fine art of believing.

If you don't believe, you can't bloom. The magnolias know this in every leaf and limb. So do the people gathered this week to recount the holy tales of springtime. Some are recalling the story of slaves led to freedom. Some are remembering a death that brought life. They're telling stories of faith, and of the blossoming it brings.

Both groups are celebrating a miracle — a moment when the improbable came vividly alive. Yet however lovely they are, miracles are invariably unsettling. Whether taken as legend or as fact, they pose a challenge. They show the marvels that can come of sacrifice, daring and belief. They ask that life be seized rather than squandered. They point to the path from darkness to deliverance.

This is the path the magnolias travel every year — simply by blooming where they're planted. They take the world's outrageous slings and arrows in stride — and transform them into starry miracles. They expect little from the land, and much of themselves. They believe in the coming of the sun, and call out a great white welcome.