



UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CHURCH OF ARLINGTON VIRGINIA

A Place to Connect, Grow and Serve

March 21, 2018

Balancing Out The Bittersweet

By Christin Green, Ministerial Intern

I am filled with bittersweet emotions as spring emerges. I have heard that bittersweet chocolate is better for you. All I can really do is try to adjust my taste for the bittersweet things in life. Or I've also heard that a spoonful (or few) of sugar can help restore the balance. Join me?

The bitter: I will be finishing my term as your intern minister on Sunday, May 27. I will be preaching that Sunday and have heard rumor of a farewell reception to follow the service. More information is forthcoming. That could be sweet, right? Let me share some of the other sweet things that balance out this bitter news.

The ultimate sweet: It has been an absolute honor and privilege to serve as your intern minister for this academic year! I am deeply grateful for the nourishment, encouragement, education, and rich opportunity provided by this congregation, staff and clergy. I have heard some of you worry that this wasn't what I signed up for. I signed up for a formative experience and have received some of the most precious gifts in return! I know now more than ever that this -- ministry -- is the work I want to do with my life.

More sweet: This summer, I will be transplanting temporarily in Los Angeles, California! I have been accepted into a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) internship program where I will act as a Chaplain intern at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center. I will be living with a dear friend only a few miles away from the hospital. The 12-week program is full-time (40 hours/week) and is a welcome requirement of my seminary education. The possibility of becoming a chaplain was part of what drew me to seminary in the first place. I am really looking forward to serving in this capacity.

Even more sweet: When I return from that internship in mid-August, I will only have about a week to regroup before school starts again at Wesley Theological Seminary in DC. Honestly, that's how I like it; keeps me on a roll! This fall will begin my final year of seminary; I plan to graduate in May 2019. Exciting times!

Sweet with a reminder of the bitter: Also in the fall, I have been invited to join the team at Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church in Bethesda, Maryland as the ministerial intern. While leaving

UUCA was not my original plan, both the UUA and Wesley Theological Seminary have policies in place that have been formed out of decades of wisdom gleaned from internship experiences. They advise that a student intern can best learn and grow in a settled congregation. As UUCA continues to transition and heal over the coming months, I invite you to consider the gift of a fresh start. Fresh starts often come out of times of significant learning! We are armed with our own learning, taking a step in new territory.

"There is a time for every season under heaven." As spring emerges, I invite you to look for the sweet in the midst of what first strikes you as bitter. Where is the growth? Where is the opportunity? Where is the lesson? Where is the sweetness? Can we spare a little sweetness to share with others? Thank you for all the sweet loving kindness you have showed me! It has helped me to balance out the bitter.

Connections newsletter column, March 21, 2018