

President's Corner
Flash - November 17, 2016

This week I'm taking a bit of a break from the pursuit of learning more about our committees. It's been a rough week to say the least, and it seems relevant to address the aftershock of Election Day reverberating through our nation, our communities and the members of our congregation.

Many thanks to Rabbi Chava's rapid response in attending to our collective and individual emotional needs. Some 40 members and friends, new and old, accepted her invitation and gathered in the sanctuary after the Wednesday Night Supper to process our feelings in response to Donald Trump being elected to assume the presidency of our nation.

We assembled in somewhat of a circle but the numbers were too large to accommodate a single circle of chairs, so there were many who sat around the edges. Irrespective of our large size, all voices were heard as we began to process our feelings of fear and grief. We heard the many individual responses including shock to the point of disbelief, of amazement that we were so unaware of the depth and breadth of the discontent of half the population of this nation, of despair for the loss of all the social progress that has been made in recent and not so recent years, and of fear of what the future might hold.

And there were tears...lots of tears.

I was particularly touched by someone who recently moved to Traverse City but has previously experienced a UU congregation elsewhere. Seeking the unity, compassion and comfort she had known in that previous UU congregation, she came to us in her time of despair. She, along with others, spoke of the deeply painful divisions within her family that have been created by this political upheaval.

In the end, Rabbi Chava led us to consider the future and what we must do to face it. In summary, we agreed that although we cannot be passive, we must not act out of fear or hatred but act from compassion in seeking of understanding and peaceful ways to resume our paths toward social justice. The roadmap for how we as individuals and as a congregation can become involved is not yet apparent, but it will soon become so. In the interim, our bond as a community can and will serve to support each of us as we work to regain our individual and collective equanimity.

Thanks to Rabbi Chava for gathering this circle to allow our expressions of grief and for leading us with love and within our covenant toward our personal, congregational and national resolution of this traumatic event and its feared consequences.

Peace in your hearts,

Linda