

Grief and Joy

This week is huge in two major world religions. For Christians, it's Holy Week, the eight days encompassing Jesus' triumphal entrance into Jerusalem, his crucifixion, and his resurrection. For Jews, it's Passover, the eight days commemorating the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt.

Both holidays are mixtures of grief and joy, remembering the sadness of slavery and suffering, but also rejoicing in the promise of a new beginning, new life. Even though that life is uncertain, even scary. Retelling those stories each year keeps them central to the identity of the faithful.

So it's fitting that at this moment we all are sitting in grief and joy also. Grief that I will be leaving you at the end of June, and joy that there can be a new beginning. Even though the new beginnings for both of us are uncertain.

Joe, his mom, and I will be moving to Michigan, where he will be serving the UU Congregation of Flint. We don't yet know where we will be living, or what comes next for my vocation, but this will put us nearer to her sisters, a huge source of care and support for all of us. We're leaving a house I've put so much care into, but I can look forward to the next project.

You all will have the opportunity to be in relationship with a new minister, one who may be better suited than I to pick up the work that we have begun together. In the time I have served you, you've created an amazing summer program for children, better articulated your mission, and brought reflection circles to life. Perhaps most importantly, you've named the challenges that you face while committing to actually address them in a healthy and productive way. The next person, whoever that may be, could be just the right person to help you through that work.

During this week of grief and joy, I hope we can all take the time to truly experience both, without rushing through either. May the lessons of these sacred days infuse our thoughts and actions.

And remember: we still have three months together!