



*"Pack nothing. Bring only your determination to serve and your willingness to be free.*

*Don't wait for the bread to rise. Take nourishment for the journey, but eat standing.  
Be ready to move at a moment's notice.*

*Do not hesitate to leave your old ways behind- fear, silence, submission.  
Only surrender to the need of the time- love justice and walk humbly with your God.*

*Begin quickly, before you have had time to sink back into old slavery.*

*Set out in the dark. I will send fire to warm and encourage you.  
I will be with you in the fire, and I will be with you in the cloud.*

*I will give you dreams in the desert to guide you safely to that place you have not yet seen.  
The stories you tell one another around the fires in the dark will make you strong and wise...*

*You have been preparing for this for hundreds of years.*

*Remain true to the mystery.  
Pass on the whole story.  
Do not go back.*

*I am with you now and I am waiting for you."*

*From "Passover Remembered" by Alla Bozarth-Campbell*

Friends,

We have been on quite a journey this year. On our way, we have encountered intense light and deep darkness – both holy, both sacred. We have felt the joy of new beginnings and the pain that comes when things end. We have served alongside one another, and discerned our way forward – we have worshiped, and we have nurtured faith, we have celebrated and we have known despair. Together, we have walked through all of these things. Together, we still have far to go. When the path feels long, or unfamiliar, or painful, we may take strength from the knowledge that God is with us, leading us forward, standing still beside us, holding us up, and calling us closer. This is the Journey of Faith.

As we move through the summer months, we will explore what it means to be on this journey as a community. We will discover what it meant for our ancient ancestors, and think about what it means for us today. What is the journey we must take – individually, or together – to become who God is calling us to be? What have been the significant journeys in our own lives that have brought us closer to God, or to one another? Through worship, fellowship, and education, I invite you to share with us in the coming months, your own stories of journey: The sacred, the challenging, the places where you have felt alone, and the times when you have known the love of God, maybe all at once. We are called to walk with one another. I hope that you will join us as we journey together.

*God's Blessings,*  
*Rev. Melanie Marsh Baum*

