

CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

Living After Darkness

BY JER

It's a sacred time. Humanity has been celebrating many wonderfully rich holidays: Holi, Passover, Ostara, and Easter to name a few. Muslims will begin observing Ramadan on the evening of April 12th, and many Buddhist Americans will celebrate the birth of Buddha on April 8th. As an interfaith chaplain, I have the privilege of hearing students' excitement about celebrations grounded in their own faith traditions. Over Easter weekend, I had my own rituals.

Buddhism and Unitarian Universalism inform my spiritual mind these days, so I often find myself creating my own ways of observing sacred times. I colored eggs with my mother and also sat outside while listening to Alice Coltrane's "Journey to Satchidananda." With sunshine as my guest, I read poems by Joy Harjo and the late Irene McKinney. I also read a few chapters of the creative writing craft book, *Tell It Slant*, and followed the prompts related to memory. I gave myself permission to go back in time to last Easter, an April day clouded with uncertainty. I had sat on my porch and had wondered how humanity would move forward from the plague and from violence and hatred. Now, a year later, I sat in the same spot as I did last year. I drank from the solace of Alice's music, tunes occasionally interrupted by birdsong and breeze, and experienced a sacred sense of hope.

While I did not tune in to a virtual church, sing hymns, or read Scripture, I did reflect on resurrection. I thought of humanity moving through this plague, a pandemic not yet over. I thought about

CONT'D ON P. 2



This issue:

"Living After Darkness"
by Chaplain Bryant
PAGE 01

Dates to Remember
PAGE 02

Helpful Links
PAGE 02



April 7 is Yom HaShoah Holocaust Remembrance Day

This holiday commemorates the millions of Jews who suffered atrocities during World War II. Many observe this holiday by lighting a yellow candle in remembrance of those who were persecuted.

Living After Darkness (cont'd)

all of us who have survived and about how we will come through to the next chapter of being human. While many may wonder what this will be like, especially how we will go back to movie theatres, restaurants, and packed shopping malls, I ruminate on Unitarian Universalism's principles to guide me in the reclamation of living again in the opening world. I find inspiration in the 6th UU principle: The goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.

In these coming months, ones full of hope and renewal, we must advocate for access to vaccination for all peoples. We must together advocate for healthcare, a living wage, and affordable housing. If this pandemic has taught us anything, it is that we must take better care of one another. We must move in peace with compassion as our compass. We must demand that our most vulnerable be seen, be heard, and be guaranteed equality. And while I am not a Christian minister, it is not lost on me that Jesus would want the same. Resurrection, after all, is about living after darkness.

The Chaplain's Corner is a newsletter published by the Spiritual Life Center (SLC) at the University of Lynchburg. We share campus concerns and updates, spiritual life events and activities, and words for the journey.

If you have a joy or concern you'd like to share, reply to this message, email the SLC office - spirituallife@lynchburg.edu, or call 434.544.8348. We only share with your permission. Current and previous issues are on the SLC page of the University website - www.lynchburg.edu/spiritual-life.

For a list of regularly scheduled fellowship group meetings, go to the [Spiritual Life webpage](#) and click on "Spiritual Organizations on Campus."

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Dates to Remember

Vespers

9 p.m. Sundays:

April 18 May 2

(Use YouTube Link below)

Thursday, April 8

5:20 - 5:50 p.m.

Meditation on Peace for
Buddha's Birthday

Sponsored by U of L's
Buddhist Community

(Use YouTube Link below)

April 12 - May 11

Dates of Ramadan in the U.S.

Ramadan Mubarak!



Happy
Ramadan



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SERVICES**
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YouTube