

September 7, 2018/27th of Elul, 5778

Dear chevreh,

In just a couple of evenings we will begin our journey into the Days of Awe. For some of us, this is difficult to imagine, being in the middle of a 90 degree heatwave. With those pesky fruit flies and mini-ants still bombarding our kitchen, it feels to me like it is mid-summer, not the end of Elul. We are accustomed to having at least a few days of chill in the air with some new red tips on the trees, as harbingers of the Days of Awe. However, aside from engaging with the liturgy and themes of the holidays in my preparation, last Saturday evening I heard the ancient melodies of this season during Selichot services and I felt in my kishkes where we are on our Jewish calendar.

Perhaps you have just returned from vacation over Labor Day weekend, or you've been scrambling to get your kids ready for school and the High Holidays really haven't yet entered your mind. Or maybe, you have lost a loved one without whom it's unfathomable to enter the holidays. Wherever we are, the gates are opening and we are invited to enter this time of teshuva, of returning and taking stock of our lives, relationships and connection to the Divine.

Shanah tovah u'metukah, a sweet, healthy and happy New Year! Wishing you a year of life, joy, peace and blessing.

I look forward to spending these Days of Awe together at our Little Shul by the River in community. For those not able to attend in person, wishing you well whether you are elsewhere or at home.

It's not too late to decide to come to the potluck this evening at 6:15 pm and Shabbat services at 7 pm. If you know that you can come, please email me so we can accurately set up. If you decide at the last minute, just show up!

Here is a poem pointing toward this season:

Praise What Comes by Jeanne Lohmann

Surprising as unplanned kisses, all you haven't deserved
of days and solitude, your body's immoderate good health
that lets you work in many kinds of weather. Praise
talk with just about anyone. And quiet intervals, books
that are your food and your hunger; nightfall and walks
before sleep. Praising these for practice, perhaps
you will come at last to praise grief and the wrongs
you never intended. At the end there may be no answers
and only a few very simple questions: did I love,
finish my task in the world? Learn at least one
of the many names of God? At the intersections,
the boundaries where one life began and another
ended, the jumping-off places between fear and
possibility, at the ragged edges of pain,
did I catch the smallest glimpse of the holy?

Shabbat shalom, a gutn Shabbes, Rabbi Diana