

# Easter and Passover Greetings: A Heartfelt Message

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A blessed Passover, Great Lent and Easter to each and all celebrating!

For many of us, the holidays this year may remind us of what we have lost. Our gatherings around our seder, communion, and family tables may be fewer or slimmer than we wish and certainly not the same as “before:”

Before the Covid-19 pandemic hit and changed so much. Before the job loss. Before the social isolation. Before the chaos of work and life collided in our homes. Before George Floyd and Breonna’s Taylor’s lives were cut down. Before we got sick and our own family and friends died too soon.

There was a before. And now there is a now that is not quite an after, and our hearts ache, even as shoots of hope dare to grow.

I write this note from the tender places of my heart in prayer that across space and time it might meet you in the tender spaces of your heart. For it is in our meeting there, the great Jewish philosopher and mystic, Martin Buber, held that we come face to face, not only with one another in sacred connection, but also with God.

In Christian tradition, in the sacred story we will share at Christ Church on Easter morning,\* it is a woman of ill-repute but lavish love, Mary Magdalene who dares to go to

the site of death, persecution, and fear in her now that was 'not quite an after' and stand there, resolute, albeit as tears fall. And it is there, in the now that is not quite an after, in that space of both-and, both lamentation and celebration, where the One we proclaim Risen meets Mary face to face and calls her tenderly by name.

Lament, a daring and heartfelt cry, is a sacred act that brings us face to face with the steadfast love of God that meets us there in the tender, sometimes broken places of our hearts and offers life and help. With the psalmist we ask, "Where does my help come?" and with the psalmist, we are reminded, "My help comes from the Lord, my maker."

At our empty tombs, to our cries of lamentation, God answers us intimately and tenderly. Indeed, God's saving way that we celebrate this Passover, Lent, and Easter offers us a path through the wilderness of our now that is not quite an after, and it offers us Life, Liberation and Love that transcends all time and never ends, both in lamentation and celebration.

So this holiday season, at whatever table you sit, may you find sacred connection, liberation, and love there. And may I offer to one and all, in the days and months ahead, a toast, L'Chaim! ¡Salud! To Life!

\*All are warmly invited to join us for our outdoor Easter Service, Sunday April 4 at 9 a.m., 59 Church Street, Easton, Conn. Please bring your own masks, chairs, and/or blankets.