

Dear Chavraya,

I hope that you are all well, finding some time for ease of stress, time simply to be. It is so painful to hear of the terrible violence at home, so hard for people to enjoy summer's ease as yet more Black lives cease to matter, as more Black lives are taken by police bullets, the horror in Baton Rouge and in Minneapolis, and now the horror of police officers cut down by bullets in Dallas. It is hard to be at ease as violence boils over. In this week of *Parashat Korach* the earth itself opens up to swallow human beings. Violence has become the yawning chasm on whose edge we stand. As Shabbos offers a time of pause, a time to step back to behold both beauty and horror, all that is in the world around us, so may all Americans take a breath and step back from the precipice. Joined in horror, may the very images we recoil from and yet must see bring us all to say enough. May working together to end the violence help us to imagine the beauty of what might be.

On Sunday, I will fly from Brussels to Munich, meeting the group of Boston area rabbis I am part of to begin our "Journey of Remembrance and Hope." Applied to one place in which hate and violence tore the ground asunder, so the words seem to speak to so many places and times. I am filled with nervous anticipation. During the past week, each of the twelve participants and the German Consul General who is traveling with us all chose one place along the journey in which to teach. I will speak following a meeting with German clergy, a pastor, a rabbi, and an imam reflecting on the role of religion in responding to the needs of Syrian refugees. As we each took our assignments, I felt a sense of meaning welling within myself that has helped me to feel a sense of calm and connection amidst the nervousness. I feel deep connection with all of you, deeply grateful for the blessing of community and friendship.

With prayers for healing and wholeness, for earth and people...,
Shabbat shalom,
Rabbi Victor