



**The Bark | September 26, 2022**

## **The VPSL Column: Special Guest Edition**

Guest columnist: Hilary Martin Himan, *Chaplain & Director of Spiritual Life*

---

Dear Students,

L'Shana Tova!, or, Happy New Year! Last night at sundown our Jewish community began the High Holy Days with Rosh Hashanah—the Jewish New Year and one of the most sacred times of the year for Jews. This observance is followed by the holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur,—the Day of Atonement—which begins at sundown on October 4 and lasts until sundown on October 5. Yom Kippur is a solemn holiday, so an appropriate greeting is "Have an easy fast," *not* "Happy Yom Kippur!"

Twenty percent of our student body identifies as Jewish, so may these greetings be accessible. And for our Jewish students, know that after a conversation with your professors, you may observe these holidays [without penalty](#)!

My name is Hilary Martin Himan, and I'm the director of spiritual life and chaplain to all: religious, secular, and spiritual. As the guest columnist today, I want to encourage everyone in our community that however you identify in terms of your worldview, it is important to be religiously literate and respectful of others. Knowing when and how major religious holidays are celebrated is a major part of that literacy.

When I was in college, I was told by a classmate, "You can't be religious and intellectual at the same time." Such words are egregiously wrong and reflect anti-religious bias, which can result in harm.

So, the next time you want to dish the Christians, stereotype the Muslims, or roll your eyes at the Jews while praising the Buddhists and the pagans, take a step back. Remember to be curious about your classmates. Ask sincere questions. After all—Isn't that what this time at Lewis & Clark is all about?

I encourage all of you to check out the various [spiritual life groups](#) on campus—which include Hillel, Pio Christian Fellowship, a newly forming meditation group, the Muslim Student Association, and more—and to visit the [spiritual life website](#) to learn more about our programs, offerings, and spaces. Also reach out anytime if you want to have a cup of tea.

Best,  
Hilary Martin Himan  
Chaplain & Director of Spiritual Life

