

Sometimes my eyes burn.

It seems for months there has been a chronicle of loss: anguish of lost relationships, memorials for those lost through age, disease, injury, accident, violence, suddenness or just "why?"

And our eyes burn - again.

The loss of relationships goes on, perhaps there is resolution, perhaps not.

The permanent losses cause us to ponder, reflect - Regret? Gratitude for what was? But - why now - couldn't it have been a little longer?

Sometimes my eyes burn when I remember the life well lived and the absence.

I am often astonished at the well of compassion from my Community of Christ, such a community of goodness toward those whose eyes burn.

My Community of Christ celebrated a "Quiet Christmas" specifically to remember the losses, to say we join you in your sadness whether it is public or your pain is private. There were candles, blue stones for remembered loved ones, Larry's words of "comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God" but he also said, "like the Israelites, sometimes there is no comfort" and our eyes burn.

There is a dignity in the embrace of compassionate, loving people... dignity that sometimes is lost in the dying process and our eyes burn for one another.

Jesus said "I go to prepare a place for you."

There will be more journeys.

I know...your eyes burn too.

Respectfully, Winkie Stephens