

## **Behold, I Make All Things New!**

**10:00 Meditation:** Led by Chris

**10:10 Minister Welcome & Congregational Music:** Welcome to the Mystic Heart

Good morning, Mystic Heart. If you're new here this morning, I am Rev. Diana Johnson, Pastor and Spiritual Director for Mystic Heart Spiritual Center, and I want to welcome you Home. **Song**

Good morning, Mystic Heart.

Today is Easter Sunday. If you've been staying connected through daily messages, services, and classes, you have probably heard more about the Easter holiday, and about what the teachings of Jesus have to offer us in our time, and in our current situation, than you have ever experienced...or maybe even wanted to. I have to admit, I have been taken by the meaning of the Lenten Season leading up to Easter. This year's study and sharing has brought a level of depth to this Spring celebration that I have never known before. We have come a long way from bunnies and chocolate eggs. We have even learned that what may have seemed like a gruesome tale of death by crucifixion, is really a story about starting over, becoming new. I have learned a great deal about the power of fasting from negativity and feasting on what feeds my soul. I hope it has been informative and enjoyable for some of you to join in the conversation.

I reached out a couple of weeks ago, asking if anyone wished to commit to letting of something in their life, to releasing something that no longer serves them, as a way of participating in today's Ceremony. Thank you to those of you who sent your replies. And thank you for following me on the treasure hunt to find out what new experience you intend to create this Spring. You even shared with me what your favorite flower is. What was that about? I will be using all of what you offered as part of our Release and Renewal Ceremony this morning.

If you have not had the opportunity to contribute to the creation of this service through conversation, I invite you to take a moment now to think about what it is that no longer serves you...something you are willing to let go of.

Also, what new experience would you like to have? What are you prepared to create in your life that will uplift you and move you forward? Hold those two things in mind or jot them down. We'll come back to them in a few moments.

I would like to share with you a reading by James Dillet Freeman. It appeared in the Unity book of Fasting and Feasting 2020. The title is The One We All Might Be, and this is Part Two.

"There was one who showed us what we all might be...What height of fulfillment, what depth of compassion, what breadth of understanding might be ours – if we were all that we might be!

Ours to love with a love that excludes none but gives itself to all.

To have a sense of right values, placing spiritual things first, yet using spiritual powers to transform the physical world.

To be master of self and superior to circumstance.

To be humble of spirit, yet conscious of eternal worth.

To be at peace, yet to be a center of energy.

To be God-centered, a focus through which His power flows freely in joyous achievement.

To be unlimited in vision and to attain what we envision.

To experience the fullness of compassion, yet to live to the fullness of joy.

To be able to help all who turn to us, to bless the lives we touch, to turn sorrow into joy, hate into love, sickness into health, lack into fulfillment, death into life.

To be one with the essential harmony at the center of all things...

This is what we all might be."

Of course, the one that the poet speaks of is the Master Teacher Yeshua. I have spent a great deal of time offering interpretations for the story of Jesus and his experiences during Holy Week. We understand that the book we know as the Holy Bible was written in the East, and as an Eastern Scripture, was meant to offer us metaphors and lessons more than literal stories. And so, we look for the symbolism.

The story of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on a donkey on Palm Sunday has a lot to say about the strength and courage it took for Jesus to make such a bold statement, and on the Jewish holy day of Passover. He stood strong in who he was, knowing that his demise was almost certain.

The tale of Maundy Thursday has a message for us...that being in Service enriches us beyond measure. We explored the practice of Communion as a symbolic way to represent the absorption of Truth...the bread and wine as metaphor to show that we are best served by taking into our hearts and minds only that which feeds the soul, that which nourishes the spirit. If it is from that sustenance and Love that we Serve, then our Service is pure.

There is a message contained in the story of Good Friday, as well...that we must allow our erroneous human thinking to be crucified (crossed out). And whatever we experience in life, we must be willing to forgive. It is only through forgiveness that we move forward. The self-forgiveness is for our past thoughts, words, and actions that have not served us in the highest of ways. And it is through forgiveness of others that we cut the chain that binds us to them and to the hurt.

It is the lessons of Good Friday that we put to use as we prepare for our Release Ceremony. It takes active involvement to release something or someone from our lives. It takes forgiveness of self and others. And it takes the willingness to truly let it go...no more thinking about it, no

more talking about it, no more engaging with it in any form. I'm sure you are all familiar with one of the last things Jesus is attributed with speaking as he lay dying... "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing." In our process of letting go, this might be forgiving another person, or forgiving our own thoughts for leading us into unpleasant conditions.

And then, the final words Jesus speaks, at the close of his mission in this life, before he takes his last breath is this: "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." These words imply a supreme confidence in the universe and in the immortality of the soul. What does it mean to commend? In the archaic, it means to *entrust*. This story is teaching us that in order to be resurrected, to be able to realign ourselves...our thinking, speaking, and actions...at a higher level, we have to turn whatever it is over to something bigger than ourselves...call it Spirit, God, Infinite Intelligence, or the Force. It makes no difference...but we have to let it go, in complete faith that all is well. Unclench the grasp...put down the self-righteousness. It doesn't serve us. We have to let it go.

And so, I invite you into a musical contemplation. Call to mind whatever it is that you are letting go of today. Set your intention...see whatever it is being carried off by the hand of the Divine...

### **Song: Into Your Hands**

Now, as you come back into awareness, you can see our beautiful Prayer Tree. I have written your words of release onto pieces of paper and stored them for safe keeping. I am going to remove them from the tree and place them into this bowl. And when we have them all together, I am going to light a match. You will see your representations of those conditions disappear - Poof! And you will be free to move into Renewal.

Are you ready to let them go? (Light the match)

How does that feel? Smile...shake it off...I feel free...

Now, with that behind us, we can move into Resurrection, into Renewal. Unity Founder, Charles Fillmore said this: "The resurrection is the raising up of the whole man – spirit, soul, and body – into the Christ Consciousness of life and wholeness...every time we rise to the realization of eternal, indwelling life, making union with the Father-Mind, the resurrection of Jesus takes place within us. All thoughts of limitation and inevitable obedience to material law are left in the tomb of materiality."

What does this mean? Every time I take the time to connect with my innate Wisdom, I am realigned with my Spiritual Nature. Every opportunity I take to breathe in the Peace of the Divine and breathe out Love, I reveal more of my Christed Self in the world. Every time I remember the Truth of who I Am and why I'm here, and think, speak, and act accordingly, I transcend all that I have been before. I am resurrected to a new way of living. I move through the world as the Divine Human I was meant to be.

Again, Prayer is our foundation at Mystic Heart. We practice the Possible through Prayer. As we contemplate the story of Jesus rising from the tomb, we see the metaphor for moving past limitation and stepping into Freedom. This day of resurrection, this season of renewal, reminds us that anything is possible...anything is possible.

As you have been sending me your intentions and desired experiences, I have taken them into prayer each day. Since we are not able to be together in the usual way, I wanted to bring Color and Life into our Ceremony. As a means of supporting one another in realigning ourselves with a more Wholesome, more Joyful, more Peaceful, more fulfilling experience, I have created a Living Prayer to share with you now. I invite you to take a deep breath, settle into complete stillness as you watch our Prayer for Renewal. Allow yourself to feel all of the prayers that went into the creation of this Ceremony. And know you are loved...because you are.

### ***Prayer for Renewal*** Video

Let's close together in prayer...

### **Closing Prayer**

**Offertory – Feel free to get online and make an offering via PayPal or Visa on our website, or send a check via snail mail to the Mystic Heart Gathering Place. We are so grateful for your ongoing support. Please hold your hand to your heart as I speak our affirmation:**

As I awaken to the God within me and all around me, I see Abundance everywhere I look. I consciously step into that flow of Abundance by this act of giving. I bless this gift, sending it forth to heal and prosper. It is evidence of my deep faith. It does good work in the world and blesses all of Creation. I give from a consciousness of Abundance! And so it is! Amen!

### **A Love Song to God: *I'm Yours*** (Jason Mraz)

### **Blessing for the Offering**

### **Invitations**

### **Closing Song: *Love Be With You***