

The Gift of Spiritual Abundance

Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

Opening Prayer – Chris will set the intention to create a space for Communion

Chant – *Blessing to the World* by Karen Drucker

SILENCE – 1 Minute - Bell

Reading –Diana

Good morning. If you are new with us today, my name is Rev. Diana Johnson, Pastor and Spiritual Director of Mystic Heart Spiritual Center, *and I'm Chris Johnson, Prayer Practitioner*, and we want to welcome you home.

Our theme for the month of August is *Opening to Abundance*. And this morning, we are going to lead you on a meditative journey focused on *The Gift of Spiritual Abundance*, recognizing that each one of us is absolutely abundant... that is our inherent nature. But sometimes we forget. My invitation for you today is to find a place where you can be comfortable and settle into stillness, allowing whatever is happening right now to be what it is... relaxing into this experience, letting yourself be held... letting go of everything else for the next hour. See how still you can be as you allow yourself to be carried away by the meditative tone of Taizé...

Now let's take a couple of deep breaths, and with each breath, allow yourself to settle into the place of Peace, where we are all One... and feel into this moment together, into the gathering of this sacred community.

Visualize with me a global web of consciousness, each of us a point of Light, all connected across the planet, all beings who in this moment, might be sitting in meditation or prayer, might be attending sacred services... acknowledging the Presence of the Divine... consciously connected by our whole-hearted devotion... feeling the collective intention that brought us here... feeling the impulse to grow and evolve that's awakening in all of us.

In this holy moment, I acknowledge my Spiritual Abundance...the inherent fullness of my Life...the recognition that there is nothing missing...that I already have everything I need to be fulfilled.

“Cultivating Spiritual Abundance means building a habitual tendency to notice the bounty and goodness that it already here. This inner tendency opens our eyes to the boundless blessing of being alive.” (Jeff Carreira)

This doesn't mean denying the pain or difficulty that inevitably arises in our lives. It means fully accepting that these challenges cannot be avoided... and more than that, acknowledging that even though shadows appear from time to time, there is still so much

more Light than darkness. Even in the face of crisis, riding the roller coaster of being human, it is still a blessing to be alive in this beautiful world.

We all experience Spiritual Abundance from time to time... we recognize the blessing of a beautiful sunset, the surprise and wonder of a shooting star, the majesty of a forest, or the vastness of the ocean. At moments like these, we feel happy and full... “filled with the beauty, the mystery and magnitude of life... we find ourselves open, available, generous, and grateful.” (Jeff Carreira)

True Spiritual Abundance means experiencing this gratitude and openness of heart as our natural and ongoing state of being... and cultivating Spiritual Abundance means building a habitual tendency to notice the bounty and goodness that is already there...

SILENCE – 3 Minute - Bell

chris – Abundance and Gratitude by Jack Kornfield

The Indian sage Nisargadatta challenged his students, saying, “The problem with you is not that you have desires, but that you desire so little. Why not desire it all? Why not want complete fulfillment, joy, and freedom?” Nisargadatta did not mean boundless greed. He spoke from the state of consciousness that knows it is not separate from the world. Kabir, the Indian mystic poet, put it this way: “I laugh when I hear a fish in the sea is thirsty.”

We already contain that we most deeply desire. Life, love, inner freedom, connection to all. The more we can realize this, the more we can undertake all things with a sense of abundance. Our inner abundance radiates a sense of worth, value, and ease, of having something to give to the world and enjoying doing so. Without abundance, we can be in the midst of riches and feel like a hungry ghost. Wise parents and teachers bring out abundance in their children by helping them feel that each has much to give, and providing them the opportunity to do so. For each of us, whether raising a healthy child, building a conscious business, planting a garden, or serving our community, a heartfelt dedication is required. Wise dedication springs from our own sense of inner abundance.

The state of abundance is connected with a deep sense of gratitude. When we open to abundance, we can enjoy the fog lifting from the morning’s melting snow, and the steam rising from the hot bowl of tomato soup on our lunch table. We can appreciate the half smile of the tired waitress, the silver crescent of the moon at twilight, the unstoppable laughter of children in the schoolyard, and celebrate the fact that we are here, breathing and alive, on this marvelous earth. This fulfillment is far beyond the “prosperity consciousness” that is promulgated in books and workshops that urge us to visualize fancy cars, sprawling mansions, and burgeoning bank accounts. Unbridled outer seeking can actually reflect an inner limitation, a sense of insufficiency.

Our true nature is much greater than this. The abundant heart is already whole. We have all touched this at some time. The abundant heart embraces our world, holding all its joy and fear, gain and loss, nobility and selfishness, enveloped in a field of compassion and love.

Let's pause and take time to settle into a quiet and grateful appreciation. With a full heart, sense that you can care for this beautiful and troubled world while receiving its blessings and adding your gifts to the whole.

SILENCE – 3 Minute - Bell

Musical Meditation – *I Wouldn't Be Surprised* by Gary Lynn Floyd

SILENCE – 1 Minute - Bell

Diana –

Sometimes we get confused about what Abundance is... we think we need to have more or different things than we have... maybe a different place to live or a new relationship...we could take up a new hobby or get a new job. Maybe if we just had more time or money to travel... then life would feel abundant. Society tells us that whatever we have is not enough... it is somehow not quite right. We may have grown up believing that there was a particular kind of life we were meant to live, and it may feel like the life we are living is not that life. What we can sometimes miss is that Spiritual Abundance does not come from creating the life of your dreams. "It starts from the recognition that the life you're living is already the life of your dreams, as long as you look at it with new eyes." (Jeff Carreira)

Spiritual Abundance is cultivated by looking for the Good in our lives and being grateful for it... by counting the blessings that shower us every day. When we are happy and grateful for what we already have, we feel abundant... and the feeling of abundance attracts more abundance. And financial well-being is a part of this abundance, but it is so much more than that. Radiant health, nourishing food, fresh air, clean water, meaningful activities, peaceful and loving relationships... all of these things and more add to the abundance of life. As we build the habit of looking for what is working in our lives... for all that supports us, we become more and open-hearted... available, vulnerable, and generous of spirit.

Spiritual teacher Jeff Carreira says this: "It is in our nature as humans to want to give...the nature of Life is generous and full, and in our heart of hearts, we want to be an expression of that same generosity...life is about giving... the reason we are here is to spend ourselves completely. And I don't mean exhaust yourself... I mean giving everything you have of value so that you can leave this life feeling completely satisfied, knowing you held nothing back. The greatest realization is knowing that you took all the love in your heart, all the joy, all the blessings you've been given, and gave them back to the world. If you do that, then when it's time to leave this life behind, you'll go freely without regrets and with no reason to return."

SILENCE – 3 Minute - Bell

Chris - *Giving* by Kahlil Gibran

Then said a rich man, "Speak to us of Giving."

And he answered:

You give but little when you give of your possessions. It is when you give of yourself that you truly give.

For what are your possessions but things you keep and guard for fear you may need them tomorrow?

And tomorrow, what shall tomorrow bring to the over-prudent dog burying bones in the trackless sand as he follows the pilgrims to the holy city?

And what is fear of need but need itself? Is not dread of thirst when your well is full, thirst that is unquenchable?

There are those who give little of the much which they have - and they give it for recognition and their hidden desire makes their gifts unwholesome. And there are those who have little and give it all. These are the believers in life and the bounty of life, and their coffer is never empty.

There are those who give with joy, and that joy is their reward. And there are those who give with pain, and that pain is their baptism. And there are those who give and know not pain in giving, nor do they seek joy, nor give with mindfulness of virtue; They give as in yonder valley the myrtle breathes its fragrance into space. Though the hands of such as these God speaks, and from behind their eyes He smiles upon the earth.

It is well to give when asked, but it is better to give unasked, through understanding; And to the open-handed the search for one who shall receive is joy greater than giving.

And is there aught you would withhold? All you have shall some day be given; Therefore give now, that the season of giving may be yours and not your inheritors'.

You often say, "I would give, but only to the deserving." The trees in your orchard say not so, nor the flocks in your pasture. They give that they may live, for to withhold is to perish.

Surely he who is worthy to receive his days and his nights is worthy of all else from you. And he who has deserved to drink from the ocean of life deserves to fill his cup from your little stream.

And what desert greater shall there be than that which lies in the courage and the confidence, nay the charity, of receiving? And who are you that men should rend their bosom and unveil their pride, that you may see their worth naked and their pride unabashed?

See first that you yourself deserve to be a giver, and an instrument of giving. For in truth it is life that gives unto life - while you, who deem yourself a giver, are but a witness.

And you receivers - and you are all receivers - assume no weight of gratitude, lest you lay a yoke upon yourself and upon him who gives. Rather rise together with the giver on his

gifts as on wings; For to be over-mindful of your debt, is to doubt his generosity who has the free-hearted earth for mother, and God for father.

Musical Meditation – *Who’s Giving What to Whom* by Eddie Watkins, Jr.

SILENCE – 1 Minute - Bell

Diana Closing

I invite you now to go even deeper into the silence, into the stillness...into the Source of your being, where your most generous Givingness lives...where your deepest Faith resides.

To live a life of Spiritual Abundance, we need a profound degree of trust in life... in ourselves, in one another, and in the All-That-Is. We must have faith that our every need will be met... that it is already met, even before we ask... that there is an Infinite Intelligence and a Divine Order to all that is occurring... and a Wisdom that Guides us every step of the way. As we practice looking for what is working, and for the countless blessings that shower us every day, we begin to see that even with the challenges we face, Life is Good. We are able to trust, more and more in our own inherent Goodness and in the spark of Divinity at the heart of everything and everyone. We are grateful to be alive, and we give thanks.

Meister Eckhart once said that “If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life is thank you, it will be enough.”

Diana - Closing Prayer

(Diana)/Offertory – Blessing for the Offering

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!

(Video) *Thank You, God* – Eddie Watkins, Jr.

Closing Gratitude, Brief Invitation, and Benediction

Tuesday (*Tai Chi* with Chris Netto)

Thursday (*Metaphysical Bible*)

Friday (*Have a Little Faith* Book Club)

Sunday Taizé and Celebration Services, 10 am via Zoom or limited seating at the Gathering Place...check our website for more information, Zoom Links and passwords.

Saturday, August 15th, 10 am to 5 pm – Mystic Oaks (Outside Adventures for Kindred Spirits) is taking an adventure to McCloud Falls. Bring a snack, comfortable walking shoes, a water bottle, and a face covering. We will be having an early outdoor dinner around 4:00 in McCloud, conditions permitting.

Saturday, August 22nd from 9 am to noon, the Monthly Mystic Morning Brew with Prayer Practitioner, Lucinda Alton. Email her at kgfcinda@gmail.com

***Be the Change* Meditation Retreat, September 17-19 at Coram Ranch**

Options for in-person with physical distancing and safety protocol AND on Zoom unless otherwise indicated.