



Being Wholehearted...

Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

Opening Prayer – Lucinda will set the intention to open heart and mind, welcoming whatever is to be awakened today.

Introduction –Diana

Good morning. My name is Rev. Diana Johnson, Pastor and Spiritual Director of Mystic Heart Spiritual Center. I begin today by welcoming you Home...Home to our Community, and Home to your own Mystic Heart.

I invite you now to get comfortable and settle into the stillness of Taizé, bringing your awareness into this time and place...letting go of everything that has come before this moment... relaxing into this experience, feeling yourself grounded in the here and now...letting yourself be held...

Still the body, allow the mind to settle, let yourself be completely at ease as you are carried by the meditative tone of Taizé...allowing the words and music to wash over you...remembering why we are here on earth to begin with...To Love, Serve, and Remember...

Chant – Love, Serve, and Remember by John Astin

Our theme for 2021 is *Connection*, and the point of focus for the month of February is *Be the Love*. This morning, we'll be taking a meditative journey into the experience of *Being Wholehearted*. By offering Taizé each week as our primary form of Sunday Devotion, we are honoring the Spiritual Practices of *Meditation* and *Prayer*. And by completing each meditative experience with Gratitude Practice and Joyful Expression, we are honoring the Spiritual Practice of *Celebration*.

Let's begin by taking a couple of slow, deep breaths, inhaling, and exhaling slowly...breathing in the healing white light of Spirit, holding the breath in for a moment, allowing the Light to fill every part of your being, and then letting it go, allowing the out breath to carry any tension or resistance with it as it leaves your body. Again, breathe in...as you hold it for just a moment, feel the Light growing brighter in your chest, expanding your capacity for wholehearted Love...and let it go. One more time...allowing the Light of Wholehearted Love to fill you...and let it go.

We allow the breath to settle into a natural, gentle flow...and then to slow down just a little bit more...carrying us inward, to a peaceful state, where Whole-hearted Devotion is the dominant tone, where there is only here and now...feeling into this

moment together...attuning ourselves to the high vibration we are co-creating with the Infinite.

As we slip fully into the flow of meditation, we acknowledge our connection with all of Life. The Consciousness that permeates and expresses as all that is, is finding a point of expression in you, and in all other beings. Take a moment to become aware that this consciousness isn't something that only you are experiencing. Sense with me a global web of consciousness, each of us a point of Light...all beings, all over the world who, in this moment, are sitting in meditation or prayer, or attending sacred services, ceremonies, or rituals...all of us in unison, acknowledging the Presence of the Divine...consciously connected by our common purpose...feeling the collective intention that brought us here...feeling the deep communion with that which is bigger than we are...each one of us experiencing the Consciousness that is present right now in everyone and everything...feeling the impulse to grow and evolve that's awakening within us...

By consciously connecting with all of life, our collective Work here is empowered... healing has begun...Wholeness is revealed.

To begin our path of contemplation this morning, I ask you to consider...what does it mean to be whole-hearted? (Pause) We sometimes think of being whole-hearted in our work...in a task we are completing...or whole-hearted in our study, our artistic creation, our meditation, our play.

Being whole-hearted in what we are doing calls forth a number of qualities... commitment, courage, dedication, enthusiasm, love. So is the opposite true – *experiencing* true commitment, courage, dedication, enthusiasm, and love, requires from us whole-hearted attention and effort.

In *The Book of Soul*, Mark Nepo offers his insight. “Just as a bird can't glide on the wind unless its wings are spread, being wholehearted is the only way to be lifted by the mystical web of life. This ever-present sweep of life-force is an endless resource that requires all of who we are to access.

We don't have to explore this very far to realize that being whole-hearted or half-hearted affects both the individual soul and the life of our community. And so, the work of being human is to be all-embracing, to bring our entire self to whatever we're given.” The work of being human is to bring our Love, Compassion, Cooperation, Forgiveness, and Acceptance first to ourselves, and then to whatever person, situation, or condition is before us.

He goes on to say that “the more we withhold, the more random life appears. This is not a matter of reward or punishment, but cause and effect...pulling back from life too soon will have us wake in what appears to be a disconnected world.” And so, my perception of the world as imperfect, broken, unjust, or chaotic has everything to do with my willingness to purify my filters, to polish my lenses...to look deeply from a

desire to really see...to give of myself more fully from a desire to be the change...to Love unconditionally. As I do my Work, my experience the world differently...the Perfection emerges.

SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell

Diana

New Thought and Ancient Wisdom traditions define *Love* as Spirit's Self-Givingness...as the All-That-Is emanating Itself into all of creation...as the Infinite Field of Possibility coming into form and experience. Rather than an emotion, *Love* is a willingness to give of oneself in every moment, in every situation, no matter what. Who or what we are called to give *to* changes from moment to moment.

According to these ancient teachings, when I give of myself...my time, my talent, my treasure...my compassion, empathy and understanding...to another, I am bringing Love into the world. And that Love illumines all that it touches.

In the Gospel of John, we are told that, “the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.” Another translation says that “the darkness did not overcome it.” The Light that we shine is *Love*. When I shine the Light of Love into any challenging situation, putting aside my small-minded, ego-centered self, and bringing my whole-hearted attention and intention to peaceful resolution, the darkness cannot, shall not win. This is Spiritual Law...the way things work...know it or not, like it or not.

And when we bring less than Loving motivations and intentions, Infinite Intelligence knows that, too...not in a human way of knowing, but by Its Nature of responding by corresponding. What we offer is what we get in return.

Musical Meditation:

***Give Yourself to Love* performed Diane Chodkowski, written by Kate Wolf**

Diana

Whole-hearted Love is saying a deep and resounding *Yes* to whatever is before me. Sometimes this *Yes* is easy, like when an amazing door of opportunity opens before me, inviting me into some new adventure or experience...one that I might only have dreamed of. And sometimes the *Yes* is more challenging, like when a grown child asks for my blessing and encouragement before moving to another state or country. Or when a loved one has done something that has led her into trouble and wants my support.

Sometimes the *Yes* that is called forth appears as a *No* to something else...*Yes*, I will leave this dead-end situation because *No*, it is not okay to play small anymore. *Yes*, I will live my life with integrity and respect for myself and others because *No*, I am not willing to live through *that* again. Love always says *Yes*.

Brother David Steindl-Rast tells us that “Love presupposes freedom.” The Yes that comes from whole-hearted Love means a Yes to freedom. I recall a saying from my childhood: “If you love something, set it free. If it returns, it is yours. If it doesn’t, it never was.” Loving myself means allowing myself the freedom to be me, as long as that freedom does not harm another. And loving another means granting the other the freedom to fully express. Only in our freedom can we live lives that express our Wholeness.

“The work of remaining whole-hearted depends on the honest acceptance of all our gifts and failings. Difficult as this may be, we can only access our compassion by being whole, which means not denying the difficult or stubborn parts of who we are. When spacious enough to be a home for our full humanity, two treasures open up. First, we’re allowed to experience the full miracle of life, and second, we’re allowed to experience the full miracle of Love.” (*The Book of Soul*, Mark Nepo)

SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell

Chris – Meditation

Please join me in taking a deep breath in... and exhale relaxing fully... Feel your body expand as you inhale again deeply... and release, letting go of any tightness or stress... One more time, take a Holy Breath, deeply filling your lungs... and as you exhale, I invite you to bring yourSelf fully present into this meditation... <pause>

Now let your attention rest in the middle of your chest... in your heart area... Feel the energy grow as your heart responds to your attention... Allow that energy to radiate out from your heart into your whole body... Sense it expanding upward... downward... outward to your arms and hands... Allow your entire body to be filled with the energy being radiated from your heart... <pause>

Still feeding your heart area with your attention, allow it to open gently... letting more Love in... letting more Love out... Your heart is a wellspring of God’s Unconditional Love... Let it bubble up within you... Let it flow forth from you... <pause>

Memorize this sensation... this feeling of fully opening your heart... this feeling of Infinite Love... You can bring it back at any time, just by remembering... “My heart is open... I am centered in Divine Love... I am Whole... I am safe...”

As we move into the Silence, memorize every detail of this Wholehearted Openness... **Silence – 5:00**

We are so very grateful for this Wholehearted experience of Divine Love and Peace... We give thanks that It is always fully available to us... All we have to do is open our hearts and let It fill us... With heartfelt gratitude for this time with Spirit and with Beloved Community, we know that we are truly blessed...

Thank you, God, for everything...

Please affirm with me that our thoughts, words, and actions align with our deepest spiritual intention, and that we are all inspired daily to give full expression to the gifts given us. The light of our souls shines brightly as we express powerful spiritual qualities in the world.

In this open-hearted place, we give thanks for the Wisdom of Spirit, as it inspires Rev. Diana's words this morning... We receive it gratefully and wholeheartedly...

Diana – Invitation to Practice

Continuing with the meditative tone of Taizé... we recall that we are giving our focused attention to one quality of Spirit each month. These qualities are all present and available, within us. Attending to these Qualities allows them to grow and expand in our experience, being revealed in every area of our lives, more and more of the time.

For the month of February, we ground ourselves in the God Quality of *Love*. Living our lives from *Love*, from self-givingness, no matter what is happening around us, offers us a most valuable gift...the gift of Whole-heartedness. When we allow Love to guide us, we are living in the image and likeness of the Divine Mother, of the Blessed Father.

Today, I invite you into a Practice that will lead you to greater Love. We know that whatever we give our attention to expands in our experience. I ask you to consider:

The Love of self, love of neighbors, and love of Source are the foundational stones of the world's religions. Spiraling out from the center of our being, our other loves are also steppingstones along the spiritual path: love of family, of partner, of friends, of community, of animals, of nature, of country, of things, of hobbies, of work. Love is not something that we just fall into, as the romantic songs suggest. Love is the spiritual practice of self-givingness.

Begin by recognizing that you can't love others until you truly love yourself — body, mind, and soul. Where are you called to grant yourself Grace? Where might you let yourself off the hook, loving and accepting yourself as you are?

As you move through a day, be aware of love's expressions emerging from you or coming toward you — attraction, attention, desire, trust, empathy, caring, harmony, contentment, communion. Practice extending the reach of these feelings. It is through whole-hearted loving that we experience the love of God.

Music –*Hold on to Love* by Karen Drucker

SILENCE – 2 Minutes - Bell

Diana - Moving into Celebration

Hold onto Love as you bring your awareness back to your body...to your senses...to the atmosphere in the room. As you feel ready, allow your eyes to gently open and

take in whatever is before you. Move your body a little bit if you'd like, to reconnect your awareness to our shared space.

In order to make our time together complete, we gradually step into gratitude. We give thanks for this prayerful experience, for this time in group meditation and contemplation. We are so deeply grateful to have Spiritual Family, a Spiritual Community, to share our lives with.

Author Mark Nepo tells us that, "This commitment to Wholeness works on the societal level as well. A wholehearted community is one that doesn't deny its flaws or shortcomings but works toward an honest acceptance of both its strengths and failed attempts in living up to its values. When a community is spacious enough to be a home for all its citizens, the frail and stubborn alike, a healthy society emerges...Wholehearted integrity is inclusive, a matter of welcome and congruence."

Mystic Heart's Beloved Community is committed to integrity and to opening our hearts, minds, and arms to all who are truly called to be here.

Our wide-scale Vision is:







Practicing the Possible Through Prayer.

We know that Peace is possible, Love is possible, and living from our principles is possible. This is our Work. The Mission we are fulfilling in the world is this:

Living from our Divinity, we empower our lives, and create authentic, loving Community through heartfelt Study, Service, Celebration, and Prayer.

The words *authentic, loving Community* are at the heart of our Mission. It's who we are, it's what we do. Building and maintaining Spiritual Community is necessary to the fulfilling of our Purpose:

We endeavor...

-  to live physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually empowered lives...
-  to bring our most authentic selves in service to others...
-  to honor and experience the Divinity of all beings...
-  to experience the miraculous nature of our world and everything in it...
-  to recognize and live from our Unity...
-  to practice Love in order to bring Peace to our world.

This Community is a living, breathing organism. It is an Independent Spiritual Center that welcomes all who are drawn...open to all faith paths, philosophical points of view, and ways of life that acknowledge and honor our Creator, and support and uplift the growth and evolution of the planet and its beings. As Spiritually Independent

beings, we hold Rabbi Jesus as one of the most evolved beings and Evolutionaries to date and hold his life as an example for our own; we stand on the shoulders of the New Thought Leaders and Transcendentalists before them; and we honor the Perennial and Indigenous Wisdom Teachings of the ages. We take the common threads that run through all Wisdom traditions and carry them forward into something that is free of dogma and is practical for the 21st century.

We are a relatively new and small but thriving community, excited to share what we have with others. Our classes and book studies offer tools for individuals who are seeking personal and spiritual growth. Our Sunday Taizé offers the opportunity to share in Prayer and Meditation...but also in **Celebration**. As a community, we celebrate by giving thanks for all of life's blessings. Together, we express our gratitude to God and to one another.

As you may know, celebration is a vital part of our Spiritual Practice. The sacred scriptures of the world tell us that celebration is a holy, creative act, an act of worship and devotion to the Source of our being. By celebrating, we feel and express the inherent Joy that is ever available. So, I thank you for joining us this morning for our time of devotion...of honoring the Divine, honoring Life, honoring ourselves and honoring one another...and sharing in the Joy of Life together.

Mystic Heart is the place that you can join others in moving through the entire cycle and flow of Spiritual Practices, grounding you in the Six Pillars of a Spiritual Life. In one short hour each week, we open in prayer, move into meditation, are given food for thought and tools for growth, serve the community by our willingness to be present for one another, and offer gratitude and thanksgiving by our joyful celebration and our act of giving. What a powerful way to spend a Sunday morning.

We want to share what we have with others, so please invite folks to check out our website. The power of invitation is one of the ways we grow our community.

Diana – Blessing for the Offering

And now, we offer you the opportunity to share your financial Good, in support of the Work we are doing in the world. You can go to **mysticheart.org** to use our Donate Button or to find our mailing address.

We also have a Gracious Giving Program for those who would like to make a heartfelt monthly commitment of support so that we can more effectively plan for our growth and our monthly spending. I would be happy to give you more information.

As we move into this time of giving, please feel the Truth of these words, and know how much we appreciate your gifts:











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!

We've been sitting here for too long...please feel free to get up and dance to the Mahatma of Motown, Eddie Watkins, Jr...*We Come Together in the Name of Love*.

Offertory Video – *We Come Together* by Eddie Watkins, Jr.

Closing Gratitude and Benediction

Lucinda as Prayer Practitioner: Brief Invitations

-  **Tuesdays:** *Tai Chi* with Chris Netto, Tuesdays at 10 am on Zoom. Contact Chris at standingfirmfitness.com for more information.
-  **Tuesdays,** 3:00-5:00 pm – *The Book of Joy*, a book club facilitated by Michael Bordeaux.
-  **Thursdays from 3-5 pm -** *Metaphysical Bible Study*, on-going.
-  **Fridays, 2:00-5:00, starting March 5th** – *The Celestine Prophecy: A Deeper Dive*, a class facilitated by Rev. Diana. More information to come.
-  **Saturdays:**
-  **February 13, 10 am-noon.** *Praying in Color: Self Love* with Ellie Thompson.
-  **February 28:** The Mystic OAKS* group is *considering* an adventure. Please let Rev. Diana know if you'd like to join us for some time with Community in Nature. Location TBA, weather permitting. (*OAKS = Outdoor Adventures for Kindred Spirits)
-  **March 6, 10 am – 1 pm –** *Mystic Morning Brew* with “Yours Truly” (Lucinda Alton, RScP)
-  **Sunday Taizé Meditation Experience, 10 am each week.**
-  **All activities and services are available via Zoom. Check our website, mysticheart.org, for more information and for all of our Zoom links.**

Closing Song: *Love Be with You* by Gary Lynn Floyd

Close of Service

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