

The Hands and Heart of God...

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 – Rev. Diana

Good morning. My name is Rev. Rev. Diana Johnson, Pastor and Spiritual Director of Mystic Heart Spiritual Center. Welcome Home to our Beloved Community, and Welcome Home to your own Mystic Heart. I am so grateful that you chose to join us for Taizé... I think you'll be glad you did.

For the next hour or so, I invite you to let go of all that has come before this moment...begin by taking a slow, deep, cleansing breath...and fully arriving in the here and now. Gently close your eyes and allow yourself to relax...body, mind, and spirit...allow yourself to be completely still. There is Beauty in stillness. Can you feel it? Nowhere to go, nothing to do...There is nothing missing, nothing that needs changing...all is well. (Pause) Feel and know the Wholeness, the Completeness, of this moment as you allow yourself to be carried by the meditative tone of Taizé...allow the music to take you deeper as you allow the Beauty and Wholeness of this moment to breathe through you...

Chant – *Love Breathes Through Me* by Narayan and Janet

Rev. Diana –

This year's theme is *Connection*... in June we are giving our attention to *Tending the Dream*. Today's meditative journey will serve to remind us that each of us are *The Hands and Heart of God*.

Each of us wants to know, when this particular parenthesis in eternity is done, that we left the world more beautiful than it was when we arrived...Beauty is a Quality of Spirit.

As we prepare to go deeper, call to mind the most Beautiful picture you can imagine...breathe in that Beauty, and then send it back out into the world on the outbreath. As we breathe together, we are creating an atmosphere of Absolute Beauty...both within and without...

As the breath settles into its own natural flow, gently allow your awareness to leave the breath and move within, to the Silence...to the Wholeness...to the Beauty within you...to the eternal nature of your being, where you feel and know your Oneness with the Peace, Power, and Intelligence back of all that is. We are attuning ourselves to a higher vibration, expanding our awareness, aligning our humanity with our Divinity... (Pause)

Beauty is the natural state of all beings everywhere...the Divine Spark shining in and through all that is, expressing and experiencing Its own Radiance as all of creation...constant, and yet ever-changing. It is *that* Beauty, *that* Perfection, that infuses the Evolutionary Process...the process of Creation unfolding. It is *that* Beauty that is expressing and experiencing Itself as you...as me...we recognize and honor the spark of Divine Beauty in everyone and everything. Author Franz Kafka once said that “Youth is happy because it has the capacity to see beauty. Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old.” As we come to know our inherent Beauty, and allow it to shine forth from us, life on earth is forever changed. We leave our lasting imprint...we make a difference.

We take a moment to sense our connection with all of Life...to feel the Oneness of our global community. Together, we envision a web of consciousness that is everywhere-present... knowing that each of us is a Radiant point of Light...(Pause) And now we recognize that all beings are part of that web...we see that in Truth there are no spaces between us...our web has become one continuous field of Awareness, one Radiant Light, ever-expanding, with each of us an individualized expression...and we sense that this Light extends out beyond our beautiful planet, into the cosmos...no beginning, no ending...

As we come together this morning, we share a heartfelt intention...to spend time experiencing our Oneness with one another, and with all of creation, feeling and knowing our connection with the Infinite Intelligence that Guides all that is to it next-yet-to-be. Each of us feels the impulse to grow and evolve, and chooses to do so consciously.

Acknowledging our connection with all of life lends Power to our prayer and meditation...collectively, we create a ripple of Peace and Love, of Beauty and Grace, that directly imprints upon the Whole...for all time...we give shape and form to the transformation that is occurring...Wholeness is being revealed by means of us.

SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell

Rev. Diana

Continuing with eyes closed, listening with the inner ear, I would like to share a bit of history and use it to guide us into deep contemplation. Dr. Ernest Holmes was a spiritual evolutionary who lived and taught in the early-to-mid 1900's. His teachings contributed to the development of the New Thought Movement and helped to pave the way for the Universal and Evolutionary Spirituality Movements that are emerging and gaining momentum today. He, among others, encouraged us to re-interpret the sacred scriptures of the world, and to delve more deeply into the mystical aspects of our lives and our world. And he encouraged us to question all we thought we knew.

From his book *Can We Talk to God?*, I offer you these thoughts:

I believe that God is Universal Spirit, and by Spirit I mean the Life Essence of all that is – that subtle and intelligent Power which permeates all things and which, in each individual, is conscious mind.

So from this standpoint, God is not an entity, but an Essence...the Life Essence, the Power, and the Intelligence at the heart of all that is.

I believe that humankind is the direct representative of this Divine Presence on this plane of existence...that the relationship between God and the individual is a direct one and that the avenue through which the spirit expresses Itself to us is through our minds. Our ability to think, to know and to act are direct channels through which the Universal Spirit flows.

In other words, shows Itself differently in each and every form...in human beings it expresses through the self-reflective quality and capacity of the conscious mind, through the intuitive and feeling senses, and through the capacity to take direct action inspired by our thoughts and sensations.

I believe that God is to each one what that person is to God. The Divine Nature must be Infinite, but we know only as much of this Nature as we can embody. And in no other way can God be known to us.

God, or Intelligence, requires the material plane to experience Itself as physical. It requires the human form to experience Its humanity. And it is through our bodies, our senses, our physical, mental, and emotional selves that we begin to discover our Divine Nature. God needs us to experience Its Wholeness...and we need It to experience ours.

...If we are Divine Beings, why is it that we are so limited and forlorn, so poor, miserable, and unhappy? The answer is that we are ignorant of our own Nature, and ignorance of the Law excuses no one from its effects.

In the nearly 100 years since these words were recorded, there has begun another great stirring, an awakening reminiscent of the period we call *the Enlightenment*. During that period of rapid evolution, humanity began to place its faith in Science, looking for its answers in what could be seen and measured. And we learned a great deal as Universal Intelligence expressed Itself through many a great mind...*and It saw that this was good*.

Now, in our next trip around the evolutionary spiral, we are finding that Science is but one avenue of discovery, one language to help us define and describe our experience...one way that Spirit is leading us back to the Sacred. For with every question that a scientist answers, many more questions are born...this is the Infinite Nature of Life...this is one way that Science points us back to God.

Each of us is participating in a paradigm shift like none we have known in our lifetimes. Whether we do so consciously or not...that is the only real question.

And so, we go within and listen for the still, small voice, reminding us of who and what we are...through the veil of all the world has to offer, we remember that we are here to Love...to give of our gifts, just as Spirit gives of Its gifts...we are here to serve the Whole during this amazing time of transformation.

Musical Meditation– *Love, Serve, and Remember* by John Astin

Rev. Diana

Fast forward nearly 100 years from the words of Dr. Ernest Holmes...we look now to the spiritual teaching of modern evolutionary teacher Craig Hamilton.

Craig invites us to awaken to our Interdependence...to realize that (paraphrased) there are no private moments...that we all impact each other and the whole in countless visible and invisible ways...that we are inextricably interwoven. Therefore, our life is not really our own to do with as we please. In all of our actions, we are beholden to one another and to the whole.

He invites us to awaken to what he calls the Evolutionary Imperative. We are each participants in an unfolding evolutionary process...the evolution of the whole depends on the choices we make to evolve our own consciousness beyond the habit patterns of the past...consciousness expresses itself through collective habits and only we can break the old habits and create new ones. All of the highest possibilities we can sense can become collective habits—if we choose to manifest them in our lives. So, we literally have the potential—and the obligation—to evolve the world and the human condition through our choices. Evolution depends on us.

He invites us to relate to Life from God's Point-of-View...to look at life from the vantage point of a "God" who cares what happens here. By "God" he is referring to the Creativity and Intelligence behind the cosmos—the impulse toward higher orders of the Good, the True and the Beautiful. If we understand that this "God" is an "impulse" rather than an "omnipotent being", we can see that it doesn't have any power to change the world without our willingness to align with It. So, in this sense, "God needs us more than we need God." Only we can create heaven on Earth.

SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell

Chris – Meditation

The book of Genesis tells us that we are made in the image and likeness of the Creator... Let us take a moment to contemplate what that means... If we are *like* the Creator, we must also have creative power... And if God creates by *imaging*, or imagining, then *our* imagination must be the seat of our creative power...

When we use techniques such as visualizations and affirmations, we are engaging our imagination consciously for specific purposes... We envision our desired

outcome, and imagine what it looks, sounds, and feels like... We make up a picture, and imagine ourselves in it... But do we always use our imagination consciously? ... And for constructive purposes? ...

The phrase *letting your imagination run away with you* indicates that we are not always in conscious control of our imagination... Our imagination *runs away* in many ways... When it envisions worst-case-scenarios, we call it worry... When it pictures things that we know we will never follow through on, we call it daydreaming... We even rehearse past conversations, imagining what we *should* have said...

The thing is, our imagination is always creative, whether we are using it consciously or not... And the images it creates combine with the images of others to co-create the world in which we live... Whether we *know* it or not – or *like* it or not – we are constantly contributing to the ongoing unfoldment of the human experience... The choices we make – or fail to make – help determine how our world evolves... As we move into the Silence, let us ask, “Am I using my imagination consciously and positively? ... How can I learn to stop my imagination from running away? ... How do I develop the habit of always imagining the highest and best for all? ...”

Silence – 3:00

With deep gratitude for this time of contemplation with Spirit and our Beloved Community, we remember that we are always creating something... praying without ceasing... and that our creations show up as our life...

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 this world.

We give thanks for Rev. Rev. Diana’s message this morning, as she reminds us that we are the Hands and the Heart of God on this earth...

Rev. Diana – Invitation to Practice

As I take this meditation into my week, I reflect on the words of this timeless tale from the Hindu tradition...

The monk and his student sat on the banks of the Ganges River. As the water flowed by, a large scorpion fell into the water and began to struggle and drown. Without hesitation, the monk reached in and pulled the scorpion from the water. As he placed it on the bank, it stung his hand. Several minutes later this same scorpion fell again into the river and commenced to drown. Again the monk reached in and again was stung. A third time the scorpion fell, and a third time was retrieved with the same results.

The student could no longer restrain himself. "Master," he asked, "why is it that you keep saving that beastly scorpion from drowning? Can't you see that it is just going to sting you?" "Yes, I know," laughed the monk. "It is the dharma of the scorpion to sting. But it is my dharma to save."

I believe that it is the Dharma of humanity is to Love. Being in Sacred Service to others is the eternal and inherent nature of reality...it is our reason for being.

In moving toward the fulfillment of my Divine Nature, I ask to be shown...(from Rev. David Ault) Have I placed anyone outside of my heart today? If you have, use your God-given power of imagination to draw them back in as you recognize the spark of Divinity that is always present...no matter how stinging their behavior. "Invite them back into the forgiving atmosphere of your heart." It is here that we let go of the illusion of separation. In freeing the 'other', we free ourselves...for we are One.

Closing in prayer, I gently guide my mind into the silence...and knowing this Truth for each one listening.

There is only one thing happening here and that is God, the One Life, forever and ever evolving by means of Its creation. I know that, as an intricate and irreplaceable part of that creation, I Am an expression of the Divine, made in the image and likeness of God. It cannot be otherwise.

Here and now, I breathe that in...I accept and know my creative capacity. I accept my responsibility, my ability to respond rather than react, in my life. I accept that all that I think, say, and do, play a part in creating a new story in my personal life, and for the human family. I understand that the Power of my imagination is mighty, and that I Am forever using this amazing gift...consciously or not. Here and now, I commit to play my part consciously...to do my spiritual work...to open my heart where it has become closed...to see through the veil of separation that threatens to blind me to the Truth.

I Am so grateful to know the Truth of who I Am. I Am grateful for my willingness to embody and live from that Truth. I Am grateful for my growth, and for the evolving faith that allows me to welcome and embrace the changes that are forever unfolding. And I give thanks that it can be Graceful and Easy when I let it. In this prayerful moment, I feel and know the Beauty of Life as It washes through me in all Its Glory. I bask in It and allow it to fill me to overflowing so that I might bless all who cross my path in this coming week.

Knowing the immense Power of my word, and knowing that it creates my experience of Life, I release this prayer to the Wisdom and Intelligence that I call God, knowing beyond all doubt that it is already active and moving my words into form, in more Powerful ways than I can imagine...in ways that serve the Whole of Creation. And so, I rest, knowing it is already done in the mind of God, and by Its Nature, must become our experience in the physical world...And so it is...Amen!

Musical Meditation – *Greater Good of All* by David Roth

Rev. Diana - Moving into Ceremony and Celebration

In a state of deep knowing that we are *The Hands and Heart of God*, let's take a moment, with eyes still closed, for our Joyful Practice of ***Envisioning a Love-Soaked World***, a world impacted and transformed by all of the good we are doing, individually and collectively...Visioning together...a world that is peaceful, joyful, abundant, and free...where the Earth is in perfect balance, respected and cared for by all beings everywhere...where everyone has plenty of nourishing food to eat, a warm and comfortable home, access to medical care, opportunities for education and creative contribution, and a sense of belonging...a world in which every being is valued for his or her inherent Goodness, Beauty, and Perfection... a world created by our willingness to practice Radical Love and Compassion, Integrity, Forgiveness, Kindness, and Generosity.

Let this Vision become crystal clear in your heart and mind. Feel it...know it...within you and all around you. Trust and Know that there is no lack or limitation in God...and with humanity as Its hands, feet, voice, and heart, all things are possible.

Now hold onto that Vision...and let it bring a smile to your face and Joy to your heart as you gently 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.

Holding a shared Vision is a powerful form of prayer. We are building our belief...we are building our Faith. Please join me in affirming ...*We are writing a new story...We are doing it here...We are doing it now...And so it is!*

Thank you for joining me in this Powerful Practice every week. Together, we are ***practicing the possible through prayer.***

We are so grateful to be a part of this Beloved Community. Mystic Heart is an Independent Spiritual Center that is self-governed by Community Agreements and is free to grow and change according to the needs and desires of its members and friends. If you'd like to know more about our philosophy, we have a full description printed in our monthly bulletin. Also, I am always happy to answer any questions you may have.

And if you joined us last Friday for *The State of the Heart Annual Gathering*, you know that we are serious about Celebration. If you didn't, stay tuned for the next opportunity for Joyful Community Celebration. Celebration is a vital part of our Mission and our Spiritual Practice. We understand that by celebrating the Good in our lives, we bring more of it into our experience. I celebrate you and your choice to be here this morning. It is only in community with others that we come to know who we are.

Rev. Diana – Blessing for the Offering

Each Sunday, 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!

I know that we saw this video a couple of months ago, but I just couldn't help myself...it makes me so happy! Feel free to get up and dance to...

Offertory Video – *Can't Stop the Feeling*, by Justin Timberlake

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ru0K8uYEZWw>

Lucinda opens the brief Gratitude Prayer, Rev. Diana closes.

Lucinda, Prayer Practitioner

If you are new with us today, please consider filling out an information card so that we can reach out. If you'd like prayer support, we also have prayer request cards and envelopes for your privacy. All of the Mystic Heart events and activities are listed in your bulletin, so feel free to take it with you. To continue the celebration, there is food and fellowship next door immediately following the service. So let's stand and sing our closing song.

Closing Song: *Love Be with You*, written by Lainey Bernstein, RScP, and Gary Lynn Floyd

Close of Service