

Love Without Conditions

Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

Opening Prayer – Sherri 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. Diana Johnson, Pastor and Spiritual Director of Mystic Heart Spiritual Center, and I welcome you Home...Home to our Beloved Community...and Home to your own Mystic Heart. So glad you're here this morning to explore *Love Without Conditions*.

As you may know, Taizé... our form of Sunday worship... is a Meditation Service that weaves message, music, and silent contemplation into a deep and peaceful experience of Spirit. It is an opportunity for you to connect with your Deepest Wisdom...to allow Spirit to speak to you, *through* you, and to listen deeply for Guidance. So, as we prepare to move into the stillness, I invite you to let go of all that has come before this moment...gently allowing your eyes to close, and bringing your attention to your breath. Recognize each breath as a gift from God, Life moving through your body with no effort on your part. Let all thoughts, concerns and distractions fall away and out of focus. As you feel yourself soften, dropping into the deepest part of yourself, notice what is there...this is your Center. This is where we carry the Light we are born with...this is where we are awake. This is your *True Home*, from which all the Goodness of life is born. This is your True Self...the part of you that has never strayed, never been hurt...the Perfect, Whole, Complete You.

You are here in this moment because your highest Truth, your soul, is pulling you ever so gently into your own Light. You are following your Highest Wisdom, Beloved, as you move in the direction of what brings you more Love...as you listen for what your heart is asking of you.

Let go, Beloved. Place yourself gently into this current of Love. Know yourself not as your story, not as your past, not as the being you wish to become, but as a fluid and spacious Self. You may rest now in the Infinite Possibility of Spirit...it is time to come *Home*.

Home to the Truth of who you are...*Home* to the deep Peace, Comfort, and Joy of simply existing as the perfect creation of God that you were made to be...exactly as you are.

Feel and know the Freedom that comes with giving yourself permission to be you...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 remember Who and Whose you are...

Chant – *God Is, I Am* by Eddie Watkins, Jr.

Rev. Diana –

Grounded in the Truth of who we are, we bring our awareness to our *Connection...* in July we are acknowledging this Truth...*Life is the Practice...*and today's meditative journey invites us to *Love Without Conditions...*Love yourself, Love your Life, Love everyone and everything just as it is, and just as it isn't.

As one by one, we awaken to the Love that sustains us, we experience more and more of our inherent *Freedom*. As we prepare to go deeper, I invite you to take on the sense of *Freedom* that is your birthright. All beings are born to be free. In order to live as Free beings, we must accept and honor ourselves as Holy...you, my Beloved, are Holy. Your life is a Sacred Journey. As you come to know and embody these powerful words, you are changed from the inside out...your life is transformed...and life on earth is forever changed. You leave a lasting imprint...what will it be?

We take a moment to feel the Oneness of our global community...Sensing a web of consciousness that permeates and envelopes the planet, each of *us* a radiant point of Light in that web...all beings who in this moment, are drawn to the Presence of the One Infinite Intelligence...the very atmosphere in which we live, move, and have our being. As we envision all beings, all of creation, joining the web, we see that *Truly* there are no spaces between us...our web has become the fabric of Life, radiating with the most amazing Light.

Filled to overflowing with Light, we share a heartfelt intention for our time together...to feel and experience the Truth of who we are; to acknowledge our responsibility to one another as members of one human family, and as stewards of this beautiful planet; and to *Love Without Conditions*.

Feeling the shared intention that brought us here, there is a deep sense of communion with that which is beyond time and space, beyond definition and description...and we feel the impulse to grow and evolve. As we consciously acknowledge our connection with all of life, our collective Work here is empowered...our collective prayer and meditation leave a positive imprint on the world...on the cosmos. Collectively, we create a ripple of Compassion and Caring, of Peace and Joy, of Beauty and Grace, that directly imprints upon the Whole for all time...we give shape and form to the transformation that is occurring. Right here and right now, Wholeness is revealed.

SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell

Rev. Diana

There is a deeper place I can live from, that each of us can live from. We are feeling it right now. Human beings have a generosity of Spirit that is innate...we see this whenever a disaster strikes and people go out of their way to do heroic things, without a second thought. We are, indeed, generous and loving creatures.

The Master Teacher Yeshua, in the first century, gave us what is called the first Great Commandment. “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” This commandment was cited in the books of Matthew, Mark, and Luke of the Christian Bible. It was truly revolutionary in its time, as it is in our own.

Of course, Jesus was referring to a much older commandment given in the book of *Deuteronomy* by Moses in the *Old Testament*. And so, this idea of *Loving without Conditions* is not a new one. Notice, the sacred scriptures do not say to choose *how* we will love...it says with *all* your heart, *all* your soul, *all* your mind, and *all* your strength.

Take a moment in silence to consider...how would my relationship with my world be different if I took time every day to connect with the *heart of Love, the heart of Compassion*, in myself and in everyone I see...those I meet in person or see on television or in the newspapers? How would it feel to Love without Conditions?

My Divine Nature also wants me to love through *the expression of my soul*. This is the devotional aspect of Loving. What is my soul? Perhaps the blueprint for my entire Being, for that which is eternal in me...that which is expansive in me. Loving with all of my soul means loving eternally, unconditionally, expansively...not just *my* life, *this* body, *my* family and friends, *my* nation, *my* culture...and not just when things are going well.

Soul Love goes beyond personal preferences. In order to *choose* to love with all of my soul, I need to have my heart and mind both fully engaged and ready to make choices. I need to be ready, willing, and able to *choose* Love when I don't want to, when it is extraordinarily difficult to do so.

Once again, Jesus taught that we should: “love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” By perfect, he meant impartial as God is impartial... all-embracing, as God is all-embracing...recognize the Divinity in all beings. Who did you think you were supposed to love?

Musical Meditation – *Love Cover Me* by Gary Lynn Floyd

Rev. Diana

And where does loving God with all of my strength come in? When it is difficult to love, I need all systems working together...my strength, endurance, and effort must join my heart, soul, and mind if I am to create a loving attitude. When I have a loving attitude, I don't take things or people for granted...I am grateful. I take better care of

everything...my body, mind, relationships, home, and planet. As I see the Divine in all that surrounds me, it is easier to Love God, through Its Creation, with all my heart, soul, mind, and strength. As I witness the Divinity in all that I see, it takes no effort at all...in that moment, *I Am Loving Without Conditions*.

The Master Teacher also directed me to love my neighbor as myself. But who is my neighbor? Is it the guy who lives next door, or across the street? There is no such thing as distance in Spirit. There is no sense of place or space at all. These are terms designating separation, and there is no separation in God. God is Wholeness, Unity, Oneness.

An evolutionary perspective would say that *my neighbor* refers to all material form in which life manifests, whether it be my own body, the bodies of other persons, or of animals, trees, soil, or oceans. This commandment charges me to love all physical form...to actively care for and offer compassion, understanding and forgiveness to all form, whether it be my own body...or the guy who cut me off in traffic...or the homeless woman asking for money at the grocery store...or that family member who has said and done unkind things...or that political candidate whose words and actions seem so offensive to me.

These are all my neighbors...these are all your neighbors. Jesus was calling us to put down our criticisms and judgments, of ourselves and others, and to offer the best of ourselves in the world. Not just once in a while, not just when it's easy or convenient, but all the time.

It surely follows that each of us moves things along in the direction of Healing and Wholeness each time we choose Love. It is *always* a choice and a decision. I challenge you to keep this in mind as you move into your week. Driving in traffic? I choose Love. Standing in a long line at the grocery store? I choose Love. Tired and overwhelmed with all the things on your to-do list this week? I choose Love. Watching the evening news, or reading the newspaper? I choose Love. Frustrated with a loved one? I choose Love. There is a spark of the Divine in everything. It is all here to remind me...I choose Love. To consciously choose *Love Without Conditions* is our life's purpose and the goal of all spirituality. When we're conscious, we will always do the loving thing, the kind and compassionate thing,

SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell

Chris – Meditation

Let us take this moment to contemplate Love... What do we know about the Nature of Love? ... We know love as an emotion that we feel toward family and friends, but our intuition tells us that It is Something much more... We experience human love, but how does Spirit love? ... How can we experience Divine Love? ...

We often hear the phrase, "God is Love," and although we can grasp only a tiny fraction of what that truly means, it rings true in our Heart of Hearts... God – and

therefore Love – is Infinite, Omnipotent, and beyond conditions... Love is never-ending, all-powerful, and completely Unconditional...

The Apostle Paul taught us, “Love is patient, love is kind... It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud... It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs... Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth... It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres... Love never fails¹...”

We all long to experience these qualities, but how do we evoke Divine Love? We bring Unconditional Love into our world by being the Wellspring of that Love... By choosing to allow God to Love through us, without reservations, without fear, without conditions... By surrendering our limited idea of love, and becoming a conduit for the Great Outpouring of Love that is Spirit...

As we tap into our Inner Wisdom in the Silence, let us ask: “When and with whom have I placed conditions on my love? ... What fears seem to compel me to withhold love? ... What would my life look like if I Loved freely, wholly, and unconditionally?”...

Silence – 3:00

Divine Love is in this place, and in our hearts, and we are grateful... Grateful for this time together in Spirit... Grateful for the Agape² Love that guides our Beloved Community, as we support one another on our Spiritual Journey...

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 are grateful for Rev. Diana’s inspired message today, and we open our hearts and minds to embrace Spirit’s call for us to Love Without Conditions...

Rev. Diana – Invitation to Practice

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. And so we take a moment to center ourselves in the Awareness that we are God’s Love expressing. Breathe that into every aspect of your being. *I Am God’s Love expressing*. It has no other channel through which to flow...I Am a conduit for Divine Love. Let that Love flow through you, carried on the breath as it moves in and out of your body. The breath is an access point of your Eternal Nature.

I gently guide my mind into my deepest, most silent place...into my heart, and there stand in the presence of God. I enter willingly into true solitude...

It is here, in the depths of my heart and soul that I find my Divinity infusing my humanity...entwined as One. As I sit in the silence, I touch the place where Spiritual Understanding dwells...and I Am filled with a sense of deep communion.

It is in this place that I feel the Presence of the One Loving and Compassionate Source. It is here that I sense and know that I Am a perfect expression of the Divine...that I Am intentionally created so that God might experience Itself as me.

And so, I grant this opportunity to the One...to experience and express Its inherent Compassion. I allow my mind to gently call forward the image of someone in my life...someone for whom forgiveness seems difficult...someone that may have said or done things in my life that felt hurtful...I take a moment now to bring my full attention to this One.

I allow any feelings that have come with this image to soften...and as I bring my full attention to this person. What's it like to be you?

Just like me, this person is seeking happiness for his or her life. I breathe that in...

Just like me, this person is trying to avoid suffering in his or her life. Breathe...

Just like me, this person has known sadness, loneliness, and despair. Breathe...

Just like me, this person is seeking to fulfill his or her needs. Breathe...

Just like me, this person is learning about life.

With my heart wide open, and compassion flowing, I speak this prayer: I love you, I bless you, I release you from all judgment. I trust that like me, you are finding your way.

Thank you, Blessed One, for the many gifts of this day. Thank You for my growing willingness to *Love Without Conditions*. There is no Love but Yours, and that Love is boundless, flowing freely through all of creation. I know that it is by Your Grace that I Am lifted, that my mind is purified and my heart is opened. Recognizing our Oneness, I quietly receive and channel Your Love today. I surrender my need to control...to criticize...to be right by making others wrong. Instead I choose Love without Conditions...I allow it to guide my thoughts, words, and actions from this moment forward. In deepest gratitude and Absolute Faith, I speak my Word, acknowledging its Power. Here and now, I release it to the Loving and Lawful Presence that I call God, calling forth all that is Holy, all that is Whole, here and now. I let it be and it is done...And so it is...Amen!

Musical Meditation – *Mirror of Love* by Gary Lynn Floyd

Rev. Diana - Moving into Ceremony and Celebration

As we commit to *Loving Without Conditions*, let's take a moment, with eyes still closed, to see that Love flowing out from us to all of Creation, helping to create a ***Love-Soaked World***. Together, we envision it now...a world completely transformed

by all of the good we are doing, individually and collectively...a world that is peaceful, joyful, abundant, and free...where all beings live as True Family, caring for one another and our beautiful planet as the Sacred beings that we are...a world where everyone has access to plenty of nourishing food, a warm and comfortable home, medical care, education, 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 Real in your heart and mind. Infuse it with your Faith. Feel it...know it...and live it. There is no lack or limitation in God...there is no reason that we cannot have such a world. With humanity as Its hands, feet, voice, and heart, doing Its work in the world, 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.

We know that holding a shared Vision is a powerful form of prayer. We are building our Faith in the world we know can be. Please join me in affirming (let's say it together) ...*We're creating A Love-Soaked World...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.

Celebration is a vital part of our Mission and our Spiritual Practice. We know that life is meant to be Joyful, that we are meant to experience the Goodness of being alive. 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. I celebrate each and every person who contributes time, talent, or treasure to our Beloved Community.

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!

So, enjoy one of Gary Lynn Floyd's songs that should sound very familiar to you... Feel free to get up and move if you wish!

Offertory Video – *One Big Family* by Gary Lynn Floyd & Jami Lula

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Hyp0UEayEY>

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

Sherri, 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.

If you would like to meet with a Prayer Practitioner in person, our contact information is also listed in the bulletin and on our website. All of the Mystic Heart events and activities are also in your bulletin, so feel free to take it with you. You can also find all the information you need or want on our website, mysticheart.org.

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* by Lainey Bernstein, RScP & Gary Lynn Floyd

Close of Service

¹ 1 Corinthians 13:4 - 8 (NIV)

² The New Testament was written in Greek. The Greek language used four different words for different expressions of love: *eros* referred to sexual love, *philia* meant brotherly love or comradeship, and familial love was *storge*. The word translated as Love in the New Testament was *agape*, which is defined as *the steady intention of the will to another's highest good. It is an ongoing benevolence—willing (-volence) what's good or best (bene-) for another. Unconditional Love indeed.*