

# **Planting Seeds of Authenticity...**

## **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. If you are new to Mystic Heart, you have entered into a field of Unconditional Love, where we bless all faiths, ethnicities, relational orientations...all beings. You are welcome here.

This month we're asking the question *What Will Your Harvest Bring?* And this morning, we're going to contemplate *Planting Seeds of Authenticity*.

Our Sunday Service is of the Taizé tradition; it weaves music, message, and silent contemplation into a deep and Peaceful Communion with Spirit. Let's prepare ourselves for the experience by stilling the body, and allowing ourselves to be fully supported, relaxing into our chair, and gently closing the eyes...taking a couple of long, deep conscious breaths, letting go of all that has come before this moment. As the body relaxes, allow the breath to become slow and quiet.

It is in this calm that you find your Center...your place of deep Peace and Connection with God...where you can let go and surrender to the Grace and Beauty of Life. It is in your Center that you recognize the many blessings that surround you, and where you can feel a profound sense of gratitude for those gifts.

At your Center lies your *True Self*...the part of you that has never strayed, has never been hurt...where there is nothing missing, nothing broken...this is the Beautiful, Perfect, Whole, Complete, Real You. This is the God Self, made in the image and likeness of the Creator. And it is from this place of Wholeness that together we chant...we sing as prayer...so that we are transformed by the singing. Oyaheya...Praise the Spirit.

## **Chant – Oyaheya (Praise the Spirit) written by Rickie Byars**

### **Rev. Diana**

As we recognize the many blessings in our lives, we become more aware of the Spiritual Quality of *Abundance*. "And from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace." (this from the book of John, 1:16) Let us acknowledge this Potent Spiritual Quality existing throughout our Global Community, knowing that Spirit showers Its blessings on all equally...as we acknowledge our oneness with All That Is.

Together, we envision a web of consciousness that is everywhere-present, each of us a Radiant point of Light...connected to all others. As we sense the

interconnectedness of every human being, envisioning this Radiant Web, we extend our Vision to include all creatures everywhere...each one shimmering with its own unique Light...and then extending further to include every plant and tree, every rock and grain of sand, every drop of water...the soil, the stars, the clouds, all filled with the Light of Spirit...God expressing and experiencing Itself by means of Its Creation...and we see that there are no spaces between us...our web has become one continuous field of Consciousness...we sense that there is no beginning, no ending...we feel it extending out beyond our beautiful planet, into the cosmos...the Body of God...the Light of Spirit.

Filled to overflowing with Its 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 grow in awareness so that we might consciously *Plant the Seeds of Authenticity*.

As we join in consciousness with all of Creation, our Work here is empowered...

Our collective prayer and meditation leave a positive imprint on the world...on the Whole of Creation. Together, we consciously create a huge ripple of Compassion and Caring, of Peace and Joy, of Beauty and Grace, that directly imprints upon the Whole for all time...we invoke the Loving Presence and Intelligence that gives shape and form to the transformation that is occurring in our lives, and on our planet.

Right here and now, in the silence, Wholeness is being revealed.

## **SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell**

### **Rev. Diana**

*Planting seeds of authenticity*...what does that mean? What does it mean to express myself authentically? In our modern world, it can be misunderstood. There are those who feel that expressing authentically means doing or saying anything they are feeling, no matter the situation. I do not believe this is true authenticity.

The word *authentic* comes from the same root as author. It refers to something or someone that is genuine...someone who creates or invents something new...someone who is expressing the unique self that she was created to be, independent of the good opinion of others. Authenticity does not grant me license to be thoughtless or brash in what I am expressing, or to speak my mind no matter who may be harmed. In fact, my authenticity demands that I speak and act according to the Goodness, Love, and Compassion that is the Truth of my being.

My authenticity does grant me permission to stand in my Spiritual Authority, asking for Guidance as to who and what might be best for me, and accordingly, knowing that as we are all One, what is truly best for me, is also best for the Whole.

I believe that each of us was created in the image and likeness of God...we have God potential. But I know that I was created to be absolutely unique...a one-of-a-kind...and so were you. Interesting that we stand in our individuality, not realizing that the word *individual* means *indivisible*. So when I say that I am an authentic individual, what I'm really saying is that I am a unique expression of the One God, indivisible from all others, yet bringing my personal qualities and gifts into the world, in new ways every day in service to the Whole. Our Authenticity is how God is able to experience Its Infinite Nature and Possibility as Divine Human.

Although there are not many qualities that are more important to human beings than being unique, or what we think of as authentic, we are not very good at it. The way we tend to follow fads, to copy what our friends are doing, to follow the herd mentality, demonstrates that very often, we are not looking within for our unique gifts. We become distracted by the world around us and lose track of our True Nature, of our True Self, and of our True God.

We forget what it means to be truly authentic...giving expression to the gifts that we were given from birth, and forgetting why we were given these gifts in the first place.

“Our love for others is our grateful response to the love God first demonstrated to us.” (John 4:19) And we know that by Love, what we mean is self-givingness. We give of ourselves to others in response to the generosity of Spirit...God's giving of Itself to meet every need. As we give selflessly, a new cause is set in motion. Spirit receives the imprint of our generosity, and by Its Nature, responds in kind, showering blessing upon blessing into our lives.

One Eternal Cycle, forever in action...Spirit pouring Its gifts so that we might be empowered to share ours, and in turn we are prospered to share more. What a beautiful dance of Spirit as we come to accept that we are One With the Divine.

### **Musical Meditation– *One with the Divine* by Gary Lynn Floyd**

#### **Rev. Diana**

We lose sight of our human authenticity when we take our focus off of the one true God, the Universal Intelligence back of all life, the Infinitely Loving, giving Presence that permeates all of existence.

I would like to share a reading from Sister Joan Chittister, Benedictine nun, theologian, author, speaker, and at age 85, and activist. In her book *The Breath of the Soul*, she says, “False gods are very easy to come by in life. They seduce us with power and money and fame. They are the things I can't give up, the things I can't do without, the things that shout out my identity to the world so that the world can know how important I am.

We make gods out of positions we hold. If people don't know what we are, we make sure to tell them.

We make gods out of the social system we have cultivated, about who invites us where to do what.

We make gods out of the money and the baubles and the trinkets in our lives.

We learn even to make gods out of the very religious practices and spiritual disciplines that are meant to lead us beyond ourselves to God...

And in it all, we develop a totally inauthentic self. Not only do others not know who we really are behind all the bling and titles, but we don't know either. Not only have we fooled others about what we really think and who we really are, too often we fool ourselves as well. More than that, too often we stop thinking about anything of real value at all.

We stop questioning our own motives. We fail to stretch beyond the comfortable spiritual conversations of another time and age. We stop growing inwardly, satisfied with where we have come, however far from the real content of the spiritual life. We play at being spiritual and do not even know we are only playing.

Out of that masking of the self comes another kind of confusion. When we are not bringing an honest self to the search for God, we cannot possibly find the real God. We confuse the God of Life with the simpler version – the God of living. We want God to satisfy our present comforts, not as a guide to growth.

Prayer that emerges out of authenticity and honesty, however, takes us beyond all subterfuge, all hiding from God – even behind holy things. It requires us to unmask ourselves to ourselves so that God can come into our lives through our weaknesses...(through our true humility). We must learn to pray out of our weaknesses, (with humility) so that God('s Power) can become our Strength."

She offers a mantra for us to take into the silence: "Dear God, fill me with yourself so that I might be less full of myself."

## **SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell**

### **Chris – Meditation**

In this contemplative space, we set our intention to open our heart, free our mind, and prepare our soul to receive the Gifts of Spirit that are offered today... Just as the gardener prepares the fertile soil before planting her seeds, we now prepare our soul to receive the seeds we will plant today...

Just like the garden soil, our soul is receptive and creative... When we set our wholehearted intention and commit fully to it, we plant seeds in our soul... Our soul is powered by the same Divine Creativity that brought the entire universe into being... Our soul is compelled to create our life according to the nature of the "seeds" we "plant"...

In meditation we prepare our soul by aligning with the Spiritual Presence... by becoming receptive to Divine Inspiration... Unconditional Love... Absolute Truth... Guided by that Inspiration, we clarify and refine our desire into the highest intention for our life... Our commitment plants the seeds in the garden of our soul...

As we refine our seeds of Authenticity and ready them for planting, we take a moment to sincerely evaluate how open and vulnerable we allow ourselves to be... Being authentic feels risky... But ultimately, do we really have any other choice? As we move into the Silence let us consider : “How comfortable am I sharing my true thoughts and feelings with others? ... What is the hardest thing for me to reveal to other people? ... Do I still have thoughts of unworthiness or fears that I won’t be accepted for who I really am? ... Do I value being authentic more than being liked?”

### **Silence – 3:00**

As the music gently draws us out of the meditative Silence, we gratefully embrace our Authentic Self... We give thanks for this time of communion with Spirit and our Beloved Community... Centered in gratitude for the courage and strength to be truly authentic, we accept ourselves as whole and perfect, right here and now...

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.

Inspired by Rev. Diana’s message this morning, we go forth into our week knowing who we truly are... sharing our genuine Self... Planting our own Seeds of Authenticity

### **Rev. Diana – Invitation to Practice**

Author CS Lewis offers this simple prayer, naming it the prayer preceding all prayers: “May it be the real *I* who speaks. May it be the real *Thou* that I speak to.” I invite you to take it as your mantra this week: “May it be the real *I* who speaks. May it be the real *Thou* that I speak to.”

Let’s close our time together with Prayer and Envisioning a *Love-Soaked World*.

Let my words become your affirmation...

There is only One Source, One Presence, One Life...it is called by many names...God, Truth, Love, Unity...It is ever with me and within me, magnificent and expansive beyond all understanding, always ready to flow into my consciousness and my livingness. On this day, may I surrender from my smallness, my rigidness, my limiting certainties, and open to the Truth of who I AM.

Together, we find ourselves in a consciousness of Unity with all of the Qualities of God... Love, Life, Light, Peace, Power, Joy, Beauty, Freedom, Abundance, Infinite Possibilities.

Surrendering the struggling, the clinging, the need to control, I sense the Presence, ready to lead me to the highest and the best...to shine through and as me so that I might express myself authentically with Enthusiasm and Grace.

In this consciousness, I bless this day, and everyone present. I affirm for each of one of us absolute transformation and growth at the level of mind, body, emotions, and circumstance.

As we move into our greater good, may we feel profoundly grateful, for our lives and for one another. I AM grateful for each one listening today...for the Practitioners and Core Council members, volunteers and community members who give so much of their time, talent, and treasure so that Mystic Heart might continue to thrive and grow, serving the greater community in even more powerful ways. I AM grateful for our ability to reach out beyond our church walls through the modern miracle of technology. And I AM grateful for the many blessings of this and every day.

### **Rev. Diana - Moving into Ceremony and Celebration**

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, right livelihood, creative contribution, and a sense of belonging...a world in which every being is valued for his or her inherent Goodness, Beauty, and Light...a world created by our willingness to practice Radical Love and Compassion, Integrity, Forgiveness, Kindness, and Generosity.

We know that our individual lives are enriched by prayer. We know what kind of world we are creating by our shared Practice. We know that holding a shared Vision is powerful. We are building our Faith in the world we know can be. 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.

In the spirit of Thanksgiving, I release this prayer to the Loving and Lawful Presence that I call God, trusting completely that is already in motion, taking form even as we say...and so it is. Amen!

**Musical Meditation – *Harvest Chant*, written by T. Thorn Coyle, performed by Reclaiming**

## **Rev. Diana**

Please repeat after me as together we affirm... *There is Power in our Prayer... There is Power in our Vision... We're creating A Love-Soaked World... We are doing it here... We are doing it now...* Together, we are **practicing the possible through prayer. And so it is!**

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. Today we begin the celebration by sharing a short video that shines a light on some of the Goodness that is happening in the world.

## **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!**

Please enjoy this song about authenticity by Jason Mraz...let's see if you can sit still!

## **Offertory – You Do You, by Jason Mraz**

## **Sherri & Rev. Diana Gratitude Prayer**

## **Sherri, Prayer Practitioner**

If you are new with us today, please consider filling out an information card...they are in your bulletins... so that we can reach out. If you'd like prayer support, we also have prayer request cards and envelopes in the backs of your chairs.

If you would like to meet with a Prayer Practitioner in person, I am available for a quick prayer after the service. Or contact one of the Mystic Heart Practitioners for a full Session during the week. Our contact information is listed in the bulletin and on our website, as are all of the Mystic Heart events and activities.

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 & Gary Lynn Floyd**

**Close of Service**

### **Mystic Heart Taizé Unplugged!**

We arrived at the Gathering Place this morning to find that there was a power outage in our neighborhood. We were about to give up on trying to broadcast via Zoom but decided at the last minute to use our laptops, and hope the batteries held. Well they did – We hope you enjoy the service.