

Planting Seeds of Prayerfulness...

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. Diana Johnson, Pastor and Spiritual Director of Mystic Heart Spiritual Center, and I welcome you Home to our Beloved Community...to this field of Unconditional Love...and welcome Home to your own Mystic Heart.

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

I invite you now to settle into a weaving of music, message, and silent contemplation...the Taizé Meditation Experience. Let's prepare ourselves by stilling the body...relaxing into your chair and gently allowing your eyes to close...take a couple of long, deep conscious breaths, letting go of all that has come before this moment. As your body relaxes, allow the breath to become slow and quiet.

It is in this stillness that you find your Center, your connection to the Divine...letting go and surrendering to the Grace and Beauty of this moment, you become aware of the here and now. Take a moment to acknowledge the many blessings that fill and surround your life...and feel the deep sense of gratitude that comes with counting our blessings.

No matter what conditions have been, there is a Divine Being within you, living AS you, that has never been hurt. In Truth, there is nothing missing, nothing needed to make you Whole. There is nothing broken...nothing that needs fixing to make you Complete. You are Beautiful, Perfect, and intentionally made...in the image and likeness of the Creator. You are a perfect expression of the same Intelligence that created the Universes. And so, in recognition and gratitude, we chant.

We sing our prayer...in Community we share in the vibration of song so that we are transformed by the singing...*Oyaheya...Praise the Spirit*.

Chant – Oyaheya (Praise the Spirit) by Ricky Byars

Rev. Diana

We raise our vibration and expand our awareness by our chanting. Can you feel it? This shift of consciousness ripples out... With focused attention, let's take a moment to increase the Power and Influence of our intention as we sense our Oneness with the global Community, acknowledging our interconnectedness... knowing that each of us is of the Essence and Substance of God, and that each life is unfolding according to Divine Order.

With the mind's eye, we envision a web of consciousness that extends in every direction so that it covers the earth...like Indra's web from the Hindu tradition...each of us serves as a Radiant point of Light...each connected to all the others. As we feel our connection with all other humans, we consciously expand our Vision to include all creatures...each one a point of Spirit's Light...and then expanding further to include every plant, every rock, every drop of water...the soil, the clouds, the stars, the galaxies, all shining with Divine Light...and we know that there are no spaces between us...our web is one continuous field of Consciousness...eternal, beyond time and space...expanding forever on, beyond our galaxy, into the cosmos...the Light of Spirit is everywhere present.

Filled with Presence and Light, we share a heartfelt intention for our time together...to feel our connection with all that is; to acknowledge our responsibility to one another as members of one human family, and as stewards of this amazing planet; and to live from prayerfulness more and more of the time.

Our conscious connection lends power to our Work here...Our collective prayer and meditation leave a positive imprint on the world...on the Whole of Creation. Together, we create a huge ripple of Peace, Joy, and Open-Heartedness. We invoke Grace and our lives and our planet are transformed. Right here and now, in the silence, Wholeness is being revealed.

SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell

Rev. Diana

We are *Planting Seeds of Prayerfulness*...like *authenticity* and *humility*, *prayerfulness* can be misunderstood. Saying prayers, or praying, and being prayerful are two different things. All are ways of connecting with God, or becoming more aware of the Connection that is always there. Saying prayers has to do with following a pattern of words. We might pray for someone who is sick or in need of help. We might say prayers to mark special moments in life, like the baptism of a child, the blessing of a marriage, or the release of a loved one at the time of transition. We might say prayers that were learned in childhood, like the Lord's Prayer, to remind us of Spirit's Loving Presence.

Many of the prayers we say have been passed down to us for generations:

...the Sacred Scriptures speak of people and circumstances twenty centuries before us, or more. These ancient prayers of all cultures carry the wisdom of the past to enlighten the people of the present. They mark the eternal and unchanging nature of the human spirit, but they do not guarantee that by saying them, we will become prayerful people.¹

Prayer might be defined as the human's communication with the Divine. We may speak to God of our challenges...our joys...our desires. We may use affirmative

prayer to acknowledge and align with spiritual Truth. We may listen for the still, small Voice of Spirit...to our Inner Wisdom...as It responds to our words.

The purpose of prayer is to bring us deeper into the center of the intersection between the material and the mystical.

Prayerfulness, on the other hand, is the ability to stand at that intersection, firmly grounded, and living from it. It “is the capacity to walk in touch with God through everything in life. It is the internal awareness that God is with me – now, here, in this, always. It is an awareness of the continuing presence of God.”²

And it is my ability to carry that awareness and that Presence into everything I do...into every thought, word, and action...every intention and motivation. Prayerfulness is a Practice...it is *the* Practice...it is why we are here.

Musical Meditation– *When I Pray* by Daniel Nahmod

Rev. Diana

Prayerfulness sees God everywhere...in everything and everyone.

Prayerfulness talks to God everywhere...in everything and everyone.

Prayerfulness trusts and releases the uncertainties of the moment to the all-knowing, ever-present Intelligence of God.

Prayerfulness has no need to control.

Prayerfulness is both gift and Grace...a natural disposition *and* a quality of soul to be developed.

Prayerfulness is developed by keeping my awareness focused on my faith that God Is...and that God Is always present and at work in, through and AS me...in, through and AS my life...in, through and AS whomever or whatever is before me.

The Islamic Scripture, The Qur’an, says it this way: “And indeed We have created man, and We know whatever thoughts his inner self develops, and We are closer to him than (his) jugular vein.”³ Prayerfulness is living from the awareness that my every breath is the breath of Spirit.

And from the Benedictine tradition, Sister Joan Chittister tells us that

...God is available, a silence in the midst of the chaos, a voice in the midst of confusion, a promise at the center of the tumult...If I ask, and I listen, and I reach out and I fill my heart with the words of the one that is the Word, then I will be answered. Somehow the path will become clear.⁴

Or maybe as I ask and listen, I reach inward to where the Infinite Wisdom is always available. The Peace is always available. Every answer to every question is always available.

Prayerfulness is the capacity and the willingness to live intensely involved in the world and completely immersed in Spirit...at the same time. There is no separation between the material and the spiritual...they are two aspects of one Divine Life.

SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell

Chris –Meditation

In this holy moment of communion and contemplation, we stand at the intersection of the mystical and the mundane... the Divine and the human... the physical and the transcendent... Through prayer and meditation, we have brought ourSelves into the very Presence of God... Now, how do we *stay* here? ...

In prayer, we experience the Divine Presence to the degree that we surrender our human self... When we align our thoughts and feelings with the life-affirming Nature of God, Spirit is revealed to us... We experience the Divine as “closer than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet...⁵”

When we reach this crossroads and surrender to our deep faith, something wonderful happens... That within us that is the spark of the Divine – eternal and never tainted, begins to vibrate with its Source... We have the experience of truly being the image and likeness and human expression of God...

Spirit is everywhere present at all times... ever available to us... ever responsive and eager to accept our invitation... but God never intrudes... It is up to us to make the first move... And as we turn to Spirit, the Divine Presence fills us immediately...

As we enter into the Silence, let us inquire: “When or where am I *not* welcoming Spirit into my life? ... What things could I do to remind myself to re-connect with Spirit during my day? ... How might living in a continual state of Divine Presence change my daily experience?” ...

Silence – 3:00

As the music gently brings us back out of the Sacred Silence, we give thanks... We are grateful for the Divine Presence that is always with us and within us... And for this time of communion with Spirit and with our Beloved Community... 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.

As Rev. Diana continues her message this morning, we receive her wisdom reverently, as it touches the Divine within us, knowing that within our soul we are Planting Seeds of Prayerfulness...

Rev. Diana – Invitation to Practice

Archbishop Oscar Romero puts before us a basic question: How can anyone know...how can we know...if we are people of prayer or only people who pray? The answer he gives us is a clear one. We know by the way we treat others...especially the least of those among us...those who have nothing to give us in return for our kindness, for our Service, for our prayer.

The Master Yeshua said the same in the book of Matthew: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."⁶ And I do not believe that he was referring to *me* the *human*, but rather *Me*, the *Divine*.

Returning to the words of Sister Joan:

Prayer is meant to so change our self-centeredness into community that having prayed in the Our Father, 'Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done,' we spend our lives doing something to bring it. Prayer opens us to ourselves. It exposes our weaknesses. It enlarges our vision of the purpose of life. It dings into us the Word of God. It unmask our own needs. It calls us to become the rest of ourselves.⁷

As we move into the coming week, might we ask ourselves three questions:

1. Where in my life do I tend to forget that God is present? Where and when do I let worry take hold, or cynicism, or other negative thinking patterns?
2. What might I do...what am I willing to do...to remind myself that God is present in all of it?
3. And what Practice will I choose to help me move into a state of Faith-filled surrender?

We close in prayer this morning, stepping into Prayerfulness in a bigger way than ever before...trusting, feeling, and knowing that God is truly all that is...One Presence, One Power, One Process, One Life...no matter what conditions might tempt me to believe. And this One is forever with me and within me, living Its life AS mine... and at the same time, the very atmosphere in which I live, move, and have my being. I am completely surrounded and filled to overflowing with the Presence of Spirit and my life is an expression of Its Grace.

From this moment on, I commit to a life of Prayerfulness...where I think, speak, and act as Spirit in form...where I remember that everything and everyone in my world is also an expression of the Divine. I practice the Presence of God as I bring myself back to this Truth again and again, moving through my days with a heightened awareness, a focused intention, and an expanded consciousness.

In this Holy Moment, I open myself to Spirit's Divine Guidance, revealing each and every opportunity that I have step outside of myself, to awaken to the needs of others, and to serve. As I stand in my Authenticity, offering my unique gifts to the Whole, I

AM making a difference...I AM giving Spirit a more complete expression of what it means to be human. By practicing True Humility, my gifts are expressed Peacefully and Powerfully. And by living Prayerfully, I am helping to create a *Love-Soaked World*.

Rev. Diana - Moving into Ceremony and Celebration

Together, we envision a world that has been completely transformed by our individual and collective intention and action, and by our commitment to living prayerfully...a world that is peaceful, abundant, beautiful, and free...where all beings live as True Family, practicing loving kindness with each other and treating our beautiful Mother Earth with care and respect...seeing one another and our planet as the Sacred beings that we are. We envision a world where all needs are met...where all beings have plenty of nourishing food, the safety of 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 its inherent Goodness and Light...where the Peace we cultivate and feel within shows up in the world as Radical Love and Compassion, Integrity, Forgiveness, Kindness, and Generosity.

We know that our individual lives are enriched by prayer. Our shared Practice is creating *The More Beautiful World Our Hearts Know is Possible*.⁸ We know that holding a shared Vision is a powerful tool for transformation. 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. Carry it with you every moment of every day.

There is no lack or limitation in God...there is no reason that we cannot have such a world. Serving as the hands, feet, voice, and heart of God, doing Its work in the world, all things are possible.

Isn't it Good that my faith is strong...that as a Community we walk in such deep faith? And so, grounded in our deep Faith, and in Absolute Joy and Profound Gratitude, I release this prayer to the One Power and Intelligence that I call God, sensing and knowing Its immediate Action, bringing these words into form right here and now, as together we say...and so it is. Amen!

Musical Meditation – *We Are the Ones* by Karen Drucker (4)

Rev. Diana


Please repeat after me as together we affirm...

 ***There is Power in our Prayer...***

 ***There is Power in our Vision...***

 ***Together, we are making a difference...***

 ***We are doing it here...We are doing it now...***

 ***Together, We are practicing the possible through prayer. And so it is!
Amen!***

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 by celebrating an amazingly generous man and his band of angels, and the Work they are doing in the world...we're shining a light on some of the Goodness that is happening in the world.

Video from KarmaTube – AI's Angels

<https://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=7409>

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!

Offertory Video – Shake by Mercy Me


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJFA5Bitv7w>

Lucinda & Rev, Diana – Gratitude Prayer




Lucinda, Prayer Practitioner: This Week's Invitations

 **Tuesdays, 3-5 pm** – an on-going book club facilitated by Michael Bordeaux, with Rev. Diana filling in for *Rooted* by Lyanda Lynn Haupt . (Drop-ins always welcome.)

 **Thursdays, 3-5 pm** – *Metaphysical Bible* (on-going, drop-ins always welcome)

 **Change in the date...Friday, September 24th, 6:30 – pm – Mystic Flix Movie Night: Join us for *Inside Out*. All are welcome, families with children, too! Bring a friend**

Looking Ahead...

-  **Mystic Morning Brew: Creating Your Wheel of Life** with Prayer Practitioner, Lucinda Alton - Saturday, October 2, 10am – noon
-  **Wednesdays, 2–5 pm starting October 6 – *Prayer and Meditation: Part 1 of the Six Pillars of a Spiritual Life***. Rev. Diana will talk briefly about the class.
-  **Praying in Color: Your Spiritual Bank Account (Prayer Box Collage)** With Ellie Thompson – Saturday, October 9, 10am - noon

***Our Fall Retreat has been transformed...and moved back one more week. This date will not change!** We will be gathering in even greater numbers, cooler temperatures, and cleaner air for our **First Annual Spring Retreat, May 12-14 at the beautiful Coram Ranch.**

If you'd like prayer support, we 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* by Lainey Bernstein, RScP & Gary Lynn Floyd

Close of Service

¹ Sister Joan Chittister, *The Breath of the Soul*

² Sister Joan Chittister, *The Breath of the Soul*

³ *Qur'an 50:16*

⁴ Sister Joan Chittister, *The Breath of the Soul*

⁵ Alfred, Lord Tennyson, *The Higher Pantheism*

⁶ *Matthew 25:40, 45, NIV*

⁷ Sister Joan Chittister, *The Breath of the Soul*

⁸ Book Title by Charles Eisenstein