

# **Planting Seeds of Presence...**

## **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... and welcome Home to your own Mystic Heart.

This month we've been asking the question *What Will Your Harvest Bring?* And this morning, we're contemplating the notion of *Planting Seeds of Presence*.

I invite you now to settle into the Taizé Meditation Experience...preparing yourself by stilling the body...relaxing into your chair and gently allowing your eyes to close...taking a couple of long, deep conscious breaths, letting go of all that has come before this moment...breathing in Peace, and letting go of any physical or mental tension on the outbreath. As your body relaxes, allow the breath to become slow and quiet.

It is in the stillness that you find God...in the quiet center of your being that the voice of Wisdom is present and waiting to be heard. Surrendering to the Grace of this moment, you become fully present. Take a moment to acknowledge your body...your mental capacities...your emotional body...your intuitive knowing...and give thanks for your human experience...all of it.

Because it doesn't matter what the conditions have been, there has always been a Presence within you, living AS you. And that Presence that has never been hurt...never been broken...there has never been anything missing. You and your life are, and have always been, Perfect for your soul's journey. You are made in the image and likeness of the Creator. You are a perfect expression of the same Intelligence that created the Universes. And so, we praise that Intelligence, we praise the Spirit of all Life.

We sing our praises as 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**

Prayer is offered in many forms...singing, dancing, walking, serving. Our chanting has shifted the vibration, the consciousness in this room...in each one of us...and on the planet as it ripples out...Let's take a moment to expand the reach of our prayerful intention as we sense our Oneness with the global Community... knowing

that each of us is of the Essence and Substance of God...there is nothing else...and that each life is unfolding by Divine Expression.

Together we envision a web of consciousness that extends in every direction so that it covers the earth...each of us a radiant point of Light...each one 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...one continuous field of Consciousness... no beginning, no ending...expanding forever on, beyond our galaxy, into the cosmos...the Light of Spirit, alive as all of creation.

As Light in human form, we share a heartfelt intention for our time together. Even as we stand in our uniqueness, we acknowledge our connection with all that is; we acknowledge our responsibility to one another as members of one human family, and as stewards of the earth; and we commit to living with presence, AS Presence.

As we consciously connect with all that is, our collective prayer and meditation are empowered and leave a positive imprint on the world. Together, we create a ripple of Peace and Presence that leads to great transformation. Right here and now, we invoke Grace, and in the silence, Wholeness is being revealed.

## **SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell**

### **Rev. Diana**

We are *Planting Seeds of Presence*...what does this mean? I can say that my physical body is here in this space...that I am physically present. I can say that I am using my brain to focus, to pay attention to what is happening here...I am mentally present. I can say that I am attending to how I feel as I stand here paying attention...that I am emotionally present. And these are all steps, or levels, of being present that are necessary to the kind of Presence I am speaking of.

As we move into autumn...the season when last summer's seeds are maturing and falling to the soil where they will be nourished and prepared for sprouting again in the spring...I invite each of us to pay careful attention to the soil that covers and feeds our seeds.

In the physical sense, that looks like being fully present to my physical body, listening to what it needs and providing it. It may mean changing what I eat (or how much)...it may mean changing how much or what kind of physical activity I am getting. It might mean sleeping more...or less...not because this person or that study says that I should, but because my physical body is speaking to me directly and I am listening and responding.

Taking care of my mental health means first taking care of my physical needs. And then being fully present to what I am allowing into my mind. What do I read? What do I watch or listen to? Is it uplifting and positive? How much time do I spend simply being quiet, with no input at all?

My emotional health relies on my first taking care of my physical needs and making sure that I am mentally healthy. Then I can begin to look at my relationships. With whom do I spend my time? Does it feed and support me? Do I allow myself time to experience and express what I am feeling? Do I know when it is time to let go of a feeling with gratitude for the gift it had to offer? Am I willing to let my emotions be fluid...energy in motion...to accept them as the pointers they are, and to honor them by making appropriate changes to my life as I am guided?

There is a Presence...a Spiritual Presence...Divine Presence...I call this one God...that lives Its Life as all of Creation. And so I know that my physical, mental, and emotional states are expressions of this One Presence. To the extent that I attend to my body's needs and preferences, to the degree that I feed my mind with inspiring ideas and attend to my emotional body as a way shower, I am able to align myself with that Presence. I am able to experience and express Spirit's Presence.

I know I Am living AS Presence when I am Peaceful, Content, letting Life flow without resistance. I know I Am living AS Presence when my attention is focused on what is before me...not allowing my mind to move into worry or regret over events of the past or the present...not being attached to my expectations for tomorrow. I know I Am living AS Presence when I accept the Perfection or Divinity in whatever is before me, even when I might not understand it or like it. I know I Am living AS Presence when I can acknowledge that everything is holy now.

### **Musical Meditation– *Holy Now* by Peter Mayer**

**Rev. Diana**

When I live my life AS Presence, I am an open channel for Spirit to move through. I can be a truly beneficial Presence on the planet.

Sister Joan Chittister tells us that "Of all the attitudes we bring to prayer, presence is at once one of the simplest and one of the most difficult. Buddhists call it *taming a monkey mind*...We look for God to *come*. We do not expect to find God here...But where else would God be if not here? ...God, scripture says, is 'not in the whirlwind, not in the earthquake, not in the fire. God...is in the still small voice.'"

And so, Presence is experienced as I learn to listen...to be still and alone with my own thoughts and feelings...and to listen to the Inner Voice of Wisdom that is always present...always willing to Guide me. And Presence is experienced as I become willing to act on Spirit's Guidance, no longer sure that my human brain has all the answers...willing to try new things and follow new paths...opening myself to Spirit's Infinite Possibility.

## **SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell**

### **Chris – Meditation**

In this sacred moment, we are practicing the Presence in multiple ways... We have brought our attention and intention to bear on our physical being... on our mental being... on our emotional being... And now we focus on our spiritual being by bringing ourSelf into alignment with the Divine Presence...

The Infinite Beingness of Spirit is forever with us... We live, move, and have *our* beingness within it... It is the Life that lives through and as us... the Holy Breath that breathes us... the Wisdom that guides us... the Love that expresses through our interactions with our world... It is who and Whose we are...

We set our Sacred Intention for this meditation by turning our attention within... We listen with the inner ear for the Still Small Voice of God... We make our entire being receptive to inspiration... Our minds are open... our hearts are open... our body and soul are open and responsive to the Divine Influx...

We rely on our deep faith as we surrender completely to whatever it is that God desires to be awakened within us... to that which is seeking to come into expression by means of us... to that which is our highest good and our next yet-to-be...

As we enter this time of Sacred Silence, we listen for our own individual and unique answers... We ask questions that only the personal God that dwells within us as us can answer: "What can I do to center mySelf in the Divine Presence all the time? ... How might I bring that Holy Presence into action in my daily affairs? ... What situations in my life would benefit most from my practicing the Presence?"...

### **Silence – 3:00**

Allowing the music to gently draw us back from the Sacred Silence, we center our hearts in gratitude... Grateful for this exquisite experience of Divine Presence... Grateful for our own physical, mental, and emotional presence... Grateful for this time of Holy 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 we remain fully present and receptive to Rev. Diana's inspired words this morning, we allow them to touch the Divine Personality within us, Planting Seeds of Presence...

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

The Indigenous People of North America have much to teach us about Planting Seeds of Presence. I invite you to take these contemplations with you as Practice for your week.

Chief Dan George of the Tsleil-Waututh (slay-wah-tooth) tribe of Canada reminds us...

The beauty of the trees, the softness of the air, the fragrance of the grass, speaks to me.

The summit of the mountain, the thunder of the sky, the rhythm of the sea, speaks to me.

The strength of the fire, the taste of salmon, the trail of the sun, and the life that never goes away,

And my heart soars.

And this profound Cherokee proverb invites us to “Pay attention to the whispers so you won’t have to listen to the screams.”

And from Black Elk, Holy Man, Author and Educator of the Oglala Lakota:

Behold this day. It is yours to make.

Behold...pay attention.

Let every step you take upon the Earth be as a prayer.

One should pay attention to even the smallest crawling creature for these too may have a valuable lesson to teach us.

Perhaps you have noticed that even in the slightest breeze you can hear the voice of the cotton tree; this we understand is its prayer to the Great Spirit, for not only men, but all things and all beings pray to Him continually in different ways.

Peace will come to the hearts of men when they realize their oneness with the universe, it is everywhere.

And finally, from Robin Wall Kimmerer, mother, scientist, decorated professor, enrolled member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation, and author of Braiding Sweetgrass:

Paying attention is a form of reciprocity with the living world, receiving the gifts with open eyes and open heart.

We close in prayer this morning, inviting and living from the Infinite Presence... experiencing and knowing that God...the Great Spirit...is truly all that is...the only Presence, Power, and Process...the One Life, expressing Itself as all that is. This

Life is forever with me and within me, living Its life AS my life. And it surrounds me as people, places, sights, sounds, the very air that I breathe...all that my physical, mental, and emotional senses experience. I am so completely surrounded and filled to overflowing with the Presence of Spirit and I know it...I give thanks for it...right here and now. My life is an expression of God's Infinite Grace.

I bask in the Infinite Presence of Spirit...I bring my human form into alignment with Its Presence as I consciously bring my focus to what is before me in every moment. I move into this week renewed, refreshed, and ready to consciously attend to my physical, mental, and emotional needs in a way that brings Harmony into my experience. It is in this Harmony that I Am fully Present. I listen for Spirit's Guidance moment by moment...do these thoughts, words, or actions align with my Highest Good? Do they bring Peace into my experience? I willingly move in the direction of Peace...Harmony...Alignment...and I feel that this is Good.

As I stand in my Authenticity, listening for what is mine to do, I AM making a difference...By practicing True Humility, I express myself Peacefully and Powerfully. By living Prayerfully, I remain present to what is before me. And acting on Spirit's Guidance, I am helping to create a *Love-Soaked World*.

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

Together, we use our Presence and our Prayer to write a new story. We envision a world that is Peaceful, Joyful, Abundant, Beautiful and Free...where all beings practice loving kindness with each other and caring for our beautiful planet as we would a cherished Home...acknowledging one another and our planet as Sacred, as Holy. We envision a world where all beings have whatever is needed to make life comfortable...plenty of nourishing food, the safety of home, access to medical care, education, healthy relationships, 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. Take a moment to bask in the feeling of living in such a world...

We know that our individual lives are enriched by prayer. Our shared Vision is creative. 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. As we live *from* this Vision, our world is transformed...coming into being here and now.

And so, grounded in our deep Faith in the Power of Prayer, I release this prayer from a place of profound Gratitude for the many blessings of this and every day...the transformation that is already underway...and the Love and Support of Spiritual Community. I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that the One Power and Intelligence

that I call God has moved into action, as is Its Nature, to bring these words into form and experience. I watch in Wonder and Joyful Expectation, as together we say...and so it is. Amen!

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

**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 changing the world...***

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

***And so it is!***

***Amen!***

We are so grateful to be a part of this Beloved Community. A Community that practices Celebration as a vital part of our Mission and our Spiritual Practice. Today we begin by celebrating an amazing woman and her team of *Cuddlers*...we're shining a light on some of the Goodness that is happening in the world.

### **Video from KarmaTube – Cuddler to the Rescue**

<https://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=8369>

### **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!**

### **Check out this video by Pharrell Williams:**


For the next four minutes, be happy! And dance if you want to 😊


## Offertory Video – *Happy* by Pharrell Williams

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7dPqrmDWxs>

Rev. Diana & Lucinda

### Lucinda: 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.)

 A new book will be starting on October 12 – ***Secrets of the Lost Mode of Prayer*** by Gregg Braden. Michael Bordeaux returns as your host! Get your books ordered now!

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

### 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...Please mark the date on your calendars.** 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**. Contact Rev. Diana for more information

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***, written by Lainey Bernstein, RScP & Gary Lynn Floyd

**Close of Service**