



A Beloved Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Growing Gracefully...

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.

In the past couple of months, we have been looking at the cycle of sowing and reaping...talking about consciously planting in our lives...Planting Seeds of Authenticity, Humility, Prayerfulness, Presence, Belonging and Forgiveness. And we know that once the seeds are planted, with care and nourishment, they will sprout and grow. This morning, we are fiving our attention to *Growing Gracefully*.

So let's settle into the Taizé Meditation Experience...prepare yourself by becoming very still...relaxing into your chair and gently allowing your eyes to close...taking a couple of deep breaths, and tracing the breath all the way down into the belly...and then letting it go...releasing all that has come before this moment...breathing in Peace, and breathing out Presence. Breathing in *Here*, and breathing out *Now*. Fully present...grounded in the Loving Presence of God...surrendered to the Peace of this moment. *Be still and know I Am God*.

I take a moment to acknowledge my physical body and the miraculous way it cares for itself...my intellect, and its capacity for reasoning, and making conscious choices...my emotions that allows me to feel, to love, to experience gratitude...my intuitive knowing that steers me in the direction of Good...and I give thanks for the privilege of walking the earth as a human being.

My humanity infused with Divinity...Perfectly and Intentionally made...nothing missing...nothing broken. I Am, and have always been, Perfect for this soul's journey.

Together we are *Dropping Down* into the Truth of who we are...

Chant – *Dropping Down*, written by Karen Drucker

Rev. Diana

Can you feel the energy in the room? There has been a shift...in each one of us...and to a small degree, on the planet as it ripples out...This act of devotion...this willingness to sit in the Presence of the One...to experience this sacred moment together...this gift of music and of joining voices together in song...this is our prayer. This is our holy expression of praise and thanksgiving...this is our connection to our deepest Wisdom... and our connection to one another.

Let's take a moment to acknowledge our Oneness with the global Community... knowing that each of us appears as an individual, and yet we are all of the same Essence and Substance...we are One.

Envision with me a web of consciousness that encompasses the earth...each of us a radiant point of Light...watching the Light grow brighter as we include all creatures in our web...each one shining with the Light of Spirit. And we know that it is not only the two-leggeds and four-leggeds, the swimmers and flyers, the creepers and crawlers who give expression to God's Radiant Light, but also the plants, the rocks, the soil, the water...all teeming with Life and Intelligence. We extend our vision into the heavens, and we realize that the clouds, the stars, and the galaxies are all radiating the same Divine Light...there is no separation. We are one continuous field of Intelligence...omnipresent...eternal...the Light of Spirit, alive as all of creation.

Recognizing the miracle of our Oneness, we share a heartfelt intention for our time together. We acknowledge God as the Source, Essence, Substance, and Process back of all that is; we accept our responsibility to one another as members of one human family, and as caretakers of the earth; and we open to Grace, allowing God's Goodness to rain down upon us.

As we join together in Prayer and Meditation, our Work here is empowered. We leave a positive imprint on the evolution of humanity. We create a ripple of Peace that leads to great transformation. In the silence, we feel the Power of our collective consciousness...and Wholeness is being revealed.

SILENCE – 2 Minutes – Bell

Rev. Diana

We are *Growing Gracefully*...what does it mean to be Graceful? We might think of a dancer moving across a dance floor...his motions are fluid, one movement flowing smoothly into the next.

In the realm of spirituality and religion, Grace takes on additional meaning. We may have grown up with the idea that Grace was a gift that God gives to some people, but not to others. We may have come to believe that God thinks some people are more deserving than others. We may think that the experience of Grace points to a miraculous occurrence. In the New Thought/Ancient Wisdom traditions, Grace is seen a bit differently.

Dr. Ernest Holmes, founder of the Science of Mind and Spirit says this:

Grace is the givingness of Spirit to Its Creation and is not a special law, but a specialized one. In other words, *Grace is*, but we need to recognize it. It is not something God imposes upon us but is the logical result of the correct acceptance

of life and of a correct relationship to the Spirit. We are saved by Grace to the extent that we believe in, accept, and seek to embody, the Law of Good...

In simpler language, God is forever giving of Itself. Grace is the way that God shows up as all of the Good in our lives. Grace means the Universe is *for* me, no matter what. Sometimes it is tempting to look around us and say, "What good? My life is pretty difficult right now. Where is the Grace in this situation or that one?" My job is to learn to recognize and receive the Grace that is already present.

Even in difficult moments, if we are willing and paying attention, we can choose to notice the simple things...that my lungs are taking in air, that I am able to walk on two legs, that my mind is sharp and strong, that I had breakfast this morning, or that I am alive at all, and able to experience this amazing life...the blue sky, the stars at night. *Grace is*, but we need to recognize and become receptive to it.

The idea that God bestows Grace on some but not all is a mistaken belief created by well-meaning people trying to make sense of their world...giving God human attributes like judgment because they had no other explanation.

As I place my faith in the Law of Good...that everything that happens is ultimately for the Good of all...that God uses everything for Good in the world, no matter what it looks like ...I become more receptive to the experience of Grace in my life.

The more I can remain in a state of receptive Peace...the more I can be open to the timeless, spaceless, stress-free nature of Grace...and the less I place limiting outlines on my outcomes, the more receptive I Am to Grace in my life. I have to let go and let Grace be what it is so that It can flow through my life.

Musical Meditation – Grace by Jonathon McReynolds

Rev. Diana

The first step in *Growing Gracefully* is surrendering to what is. This kind of letting go is not giving up, but rather giving way. It does not release me from having to take action, but I do so from a place of receptive calm. My body may be called to activity, but my mind is peaceful.

Divine Grace exists somewhere between effort and effortlessness...when you are allowing Grace to Guide your actions, you are impassioned, but not frantic...you are participating, but not consumed with control. You know what you want, but you are yielding, flexible, and willing to trust in "This or something better" to be given. Your faith is deep and strong, and so you can relax...let go...and wait...

We have heard..."If you love something, set it free. If it returns, it's yours. If it doesn't, it never was." Grace comes in the release, and in the return of what is truly mine to have and to experience.

Grace is the clarity of desire, the conscious placement of faith in the Goodness of Life, the letting go and letting God, the patient receptivity that invites blessing after blessing, and the open-hearted awareness that feels gratitude and expresses thanksgiving.

Chris – Meditation

In this holy moment, we invoke Divine Grace by opening our hearts to the inflow of Spirit... We court the Presence of Divine Wisdom, Beauty, and Peace... We do this by letting go of how we think things *should* be... by releasing any resistance to our experience of what *is* right now... By bringing ourselves fully present...

This letting go creates a vacuum which is immediately filled with and by God... It is as if we have cleared out the guest room in order to welcome a beloved visitor... By fully accepting – and loving – the present moment, our eyes are opened to the Grace that is here... now... all of the time...

We have heard it said that “Change is inevitable, growth is optional...” But change compels us to grow... Resistance to changing conditions in our lives brings suffering... for we will eventually have to change anyway, whether willingly or not... In order to grow gracefully, we must surrender our resistance...

It is only when we reach this place of deep vulnerability... this radical surrender to what *is*, that we can avail ourselves of the Divine Grace that is always available... ever present... As we let Spirit have Its way with us, we are filled with the strength and courage to do what is before us...

By allowing the Spirit Within to do the work, we are guided by Divine Intuition through whatever our growth demands... We are granted access to vast wellsprings of Love, Support, Wisdom, And Peace... By invoking Grace we Grow Gracefully... Let us inquire in the Silence, “Are there situations in my life that I am resisting? ... Am I being called to grow in areas that are uncomfortable? ... What if I *just let go*?”

Silence – 3:00

As the piano gracefully shepherds us back from the Sacred Silence, our hearts are filled with gratitude... Grateful for this time of communion with Spirit and our Beloved Community... And grateful for the Divine Gifts received in this contemplation...

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.

With open hearts and responsive minds we continue listening to Rev. Diana's inspiration, knowing that we are in the right place at the right time to commit ourselves to Growing Gracefully...











Rev. Diana – Invitation to Practice

We try to do so much...we allow ourselves to be pulled in so many directions. But honestly, there are very few people who truly feed us in deep friendship. There are only a very few activities that call to our hearts and feed our souls.

When we are not so full, our lives so overly packed with doing, we create the space for Grace. When we live our lives making conscious choices to do what matters...what truly touches our hearts...when we commit our time and attention to what feeds our souls, we open the pathway to Grace.

Joel Goldsmith says this of Grace: “The Grace of God was bestowed upon us in the beginning when we were created in His image and likeness...” but that we must be sufficiently empty to let the Grace flow through our lives.

Please affirm these words for yourself as I speak them into being...

-  As I walk in the world, may I be forever receptive to Grace...by God’s amazing Grace, may I sow the seeds of Beauty, of Joy, of Peace...may I sow the seeds of Compassion, Generosity, and Kindness.
-  May I live with the awareness that the Earth is my Mother; and may I sow in her the seeds of respect, mindfulness, and care, cultivating and sharing in her abundance.
-  May the soil in my field of consciousness be rich and fertile, free from the seeds of ignorance, resistance, criticism, limitation, and arrogance.
-  May I never sow seeds of fear, anger, judgment, or hatred...choosing instead the seeds of love, acceptance, patience and belonging.
-  May I walk forever with humility, knowing that the Power that enlivens this body is the only Power there is...and that the Spirit that breathes this body is my only inspiration.
-  May I always remember...there but for the Grace of God go I...and may my gratitude for all that I Am given, flow like a mighty river.
-  As I seek Guidance daily, may I have the wisdom to listen and to follow.
-  As I offer myself in silent communion with the One, to study, service, and celebration, may I come to experience and know the Peace that passeth understanding.
-  May my faith be eternally strong.
-  May my heart and mind be forever open to growth and change, and welcoming to all who cross my path.



May I make only positive impressions upon the flow of evolution, on the growth and development of humanity and on all of life, leaving behind me a trail of Grace that lives on and on...

What could we do, have, or be in the world if we knew beyond a shadow of a doubt that God's Grace and Love was there to change our darkness to Light, to turn our hearts from hatred to love, to strengthen our faith...to strengthen us in body, mind, and Spirit? It is, you know...It dwells within you here and now...

And this heartfelt prayer, as a full-body experience, opens each of us to the Grace of God.

In this Holy Moment, I accept and know that the full Power of God is moving through my life and through the lives of each one here. I accept and know that each one is a full and complete expression of the Divine, walking this planet with a purpose...to know who we truly came here to be, and to be that...to be the hands, the feet, and the hearts of God, expressing our Love, our Light, and our Beauty so that all may see...

Through our heartfelt prayer, we envision a world that is Peaceful, Joyful, Abundant, and Free...where all beings practice loving kindness with each other, and care for our planet as we would a cherished Home...acknowledging one another and the earth as Sacred, as Holy. We envision a world where all beings have all that is needed...plenty of nourishing food, the safety and comfort of home and family, the medical care and education that can lead to healthy relationships, right livelihood, creative contribution, and a sense of belonging...a world in which every being is valued for its inherent Goodness...where the Peace we cultivate and embody 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...

As we fall into Grace this morning, the world will never be the same. The entire planet is shifted, is lifted in consciousness...and for this knowing, I give thanks. I give thanks for each one who is here today, in community, in communion, in celebration of this beautiful life.

I give thanks for all who came together to make this time of celebration possible.

And I give thanks to the One Life that I call God...for all of the blessings of this day.

From this place of gratitude, I release this prayer, in deep faith that it is being moved into form by the ever-present Power...the ever-present Life...Creation Itself. And so I simply let it be...letting it be so now...And so it is! Amen!

Musical Meditation – *God Is*, by Faith Rivera

Rev. Diana - Moving into Ceremony and Celebration

Please repeat after me as together we affirm...*There is Power in our Prayer...I feel it...There is Power in our Vision...I know it...Together, we are changing the world...Right here...Right now... And so it is! Amen!*

So I guess we have some homework this week. If I want to experience more Grace in my life, I must first be clear about what I want. I must consciously place my faith in the Goodness of Life. I must surrender, becoming patiently receptive and awake to the blessings as they come. And I must maintain an open-hearted awareness that feels gratitude and expresses thanksgiving.

This week, I make the space for Grace. How about you? (I make the space for Grace). I commit to being present enough in the moment to ask myself if what I am doing calls to my heart or feeds a need that truly enriches my life.

Please join me in celebrating a most amazing man...Jorge Munoz...as he follows his soul's Calling.

Good News Video: The Angel of Queens

<https://www.karmatube.org/videos.php?id=1606>

Rev. Diana – Blessing for the Offering

We take the time each week to celebrate all the Good that is happening in the world...all the amazing people who bring the best of themselves to Life. Celebration is a vital part of our Mission and our Spiritual Practice.

We celebrate 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 and on our website. Also, I am always happy to answer any questions you may have.

And each Sunday, we invite you to share of your financial Good, should you choose to, to support the work we are doing in the world. If you are at home, 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

bleses all of Creation. I give from a consciousness of Abundance! And so it is! Amen!


Today's Celebration Music invites us to open our hearts...and dance if you want to.

Offertory Video – *Stand Together* by Faith Rivera & Harold Payne


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

Lucinda & Rev. Diana: Gratitude Prayer


Lucinda – This Week's Invitations

 **Tuesdays, 3-5 pm** – an on-going book club facilitated by Michael Bordeaux (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)

 **Saturday, October 23 – 1:00-6:00 pm** – Self-Guided Tour of the New Clairvaux Abbey and wine tasting. Cost is \$10/person for the tasting. Please rsvp with Rev. Diana. Plan to meet in the front lot of Mystic Heart at 1:00 for carpooling or caravanning.

Looking Ahead...

 **Mystic Morning Brew with Prayer Practitioner, Lucinda Alton, Saturday Nov. 6th from 10 am – 12 pm: *Celebrating Our Harvest*.** Contact Lucinda or the website for more information. Please RSVP.

 **Praying in Color with Ellie Thompson - Opening to Advent - Saturday, November 13 – 10 am – 12 pm.** Join Ellie in creating an **Advent Calendar Wreath**. Contact Ellie for more information. Suggested donation: \$20, no one turned away.

 **Reserve your space at the 1st Annual *Be the Change Spring Retreat* at the beautiful Coram Ranch...May 12-14, 2022.** You can reserve your spot with a \$50 non-refundable deposit. 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