

Take the Leap...

Sunday, March 27, 2022 Taizé



A Beloved Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Rev. Diana Johnson, with Lucinda Alton, RScP
and Chris Johnson, RScP

Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

Lucinda - Opening Prayer

Rev. Diana - Introduction...Good morning and welcome

Chant – *Love, Serve, and Remember*, written by John Astin

Rev. Diana

This morning's title...**Take the Leap**...what a perfect title for this morning's Taizé. I am once again being Called to **Take the Leap**. And I would bet that there is at least one place in your life where you are being Called to **Take the Leap**, as well. Our meditative journey this morning invites us to contemplate this short but powerful phrase, and to ask for Guidance in doing just that.

Let's begin by gently allowing the eyes to close if you are comfortable doing so... gathering ourselves together, all of the different parts of ourselves that are scattered into all the things we do in this world...the to-do lists...the thoughts of yesterday or tomorrow. Let's come home to ourself, body, mind, and spirit...let's come home to the breath of life itself.

Right here, right now, we call our awareness in...breathing deeply through the nose...pausing at the top, and then exhaling...and at the bottom, pausing again...establishing a peaceful rhythm, a healthy rhythm, an easy pace that allows the breath to flow according to a relaxed body's needs...and let each breath fill your body with life. Just as the breath brings life to the body, so does this time of pause, of rest, of Sabbath, give life to the Universe.

In every cycle of nature, there is at some point a pause...a resting in what is with no need for anything to be different. This is what many traditions call Sabbath. We allow our bodies to completely let go and our minds to quiet as we rest...we create our own Sabbath. St. Augustine once wrote, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in Thee."

And as we rest...as we create our own unique Sabbath, we are completely content...fully present...awake and aware of the gift of Life we are given, and grateful for the experience of being human.

As Sacred Human, we shine with the Light of Spirit. God is what we are made of...there is nothing else. As we feel and know the Light shining within and from us,

we begin to recognize that Light in others. Envision with me now, a web of consciousness...each one of us a bright Light...each one connected to all of the others. We sense and feel the Intelligence that infuses us, that infuses the web...and we begin to recognize that same Light shining in, through and as every living thing...every rock, and grain of sand...the soil, the water...we know that every cloud in the sky, every star in our galaxy, and every galaxy in the cosmos is teeming with the presence of one Life...is radiating Divine Light. Through our Vision, we experience our oneness with All That Is...

Grounded in this state of Connection, we acknowledge our responsibility to our human family, and to Mother Earth...the home that sustains us. And we commit to leaving a positive imprint on human evolution...and to being a beneficial presence on the planet.

SILENCE – Bell

Rev. Diana

Take the Leap... There comes a point in every life...probably many times...that we are required to take a leap of faith in order to move into our next-yet-to-be. I know this is true for me, and as I listen to those around me, I see that many are having this experience. I think it is natural to have our lives shifting and changing in response to the huge changes we are seeing in our world. But taking a leap of faith can be scary...it can make us uncomfortable. We are steeped in our illusion of control, and we don't want to let go. It seems so much easier to just stay with what we think we know. There are two main problems that I see with this way of living:

1. What we think we know may or may not be true. The Truth is that we never really know what tomorrow...or even the next moment...will bring. And...
2. Refusing to let go...to Take a Leap of Faith...keeps us chained to who and where we are now. There is no growth in refusing to Take the Leap...and there is no Freedom in allowing ourselves to be chained in place by fear.

It takes courage to take a Leap of Faith...and commitment. Why does that word make us so uncomfortable? Commitment...It seems to lock us into something we might later want out of. But I think we are confused...that it is just the opposite. When I truly commit to something, I no longer have to think about it. I simply do it, no matter what else is going on. There is no question about how I will proceed. It becomes who I am.

One of the most serious commitments we make in our society is marriage. If we have made a true commitment, we do not wake up in the morning wondering whether or not we will remain faithful to our partner...we just are. That's the way it is when we are committed. It is actually very freeing.

Deepak Chopra shares a similar perspective:

Commitment is the ultimate assertion of human freedom. It releases all the energy you possess and enables you to take quantum leaps in creativity. When you set a one-pointed intention and absolutely refuse to allow obstacles to dissipate the focused quality of your attention, you engage the infinite organizing power of the universe.”

I’ll repeat that, a little more slowly, so that we can really chew on it. “Commitment is the ultimate assertion of human freedom. (Pause) It releases all the energy you possess and enables you to take quantum leaps in creativity. (Pause) When you set a one-pointed intention and absolutely refuse to allow obstacles to dissipate the focused quality of your attention, you engage the infinite organizing power of the universe.”

SILENCE – Bell

Rev. Diana

As I opened one of my morning devotionals, *60 Days of Prayer*, I read this: “Time to Take a Leap of Faith.” There was a quote cited from the book of Joshua in which the priests sounded the trumpets seven times, letting Joshua know that it was time to take the city of Jericho.

There was no visible evidence that he would be successful, and yet the walls came tumbling down. While this story may or may not be factual, it points to a great Truth...that which we have faith in has the tendency to come into form and experience in our lives.

What is a *leap of faith*? It involves following a heart’s desire or soul’s calling with no visible evidence that you will reach your destination. It starts with an intuitive feeling that there is something you must do and a willingness to do it, even when it doesn’t make logical sense. And there is a knowing that you will be supported, although no idea of how. I like to think of faith as *the space between the leap and the landing*. And living in that space requires an expectancy that all *is* and *will be* well.

In his delightful book *The Laws of Spirit*, Dan Millman speaks of faith as

...our direct link to universal wisdom, reminding us that we know more than we have heard or read or studied – that we have only to look, listen, and trust the love and wisdom of the Universal Spirit working through us all. [He speaks of faith as] an attitude that whatever happens serves a higher good, despite appearances to the contrary.

In addition to the *Law of Faith*, he addresses its close cousin, the *Law of Expectation*. He reminds us that

Energy follows thought; we move toward, but not beyond, what we can imagine. What we assume, expect, or believe creates and colors our experience. By expanding our deepest beliefs about what is possible, we change our experience of life.

And so, faith and expectation go hand in hand.

I have taken many leaps of faith in my life...we all have. Moving out on my own at age 19 was one. Going to school to become a schoolteacher, a single mother of an infant with no apparent financial support, took a leap of faith. So did going back to school to become a Minister...an expensive proposition...again, with no visible means of paying the bill. And yet I knew that if I was supposed to do the Work, a way would appear. And in both cases, it did.

Take a moment to think about your life. What actions have you taken that demanded a leap of faith? How were you supported in your journey?

Silence – Bell

Chris – Meditation

We often hear the leap of faith referred to as a quantum leap... and it terrifies us... It sounds like an enormous change... an overwhelmingly massive transformation... We fear we won't know who we are any more... We fear our faith isn't strong enough to sustain and maintain us... And all too often we let our fear stop us...

But the truth is, a quantum leap is infinitesimally small... a sub-atomic measurement... The term refers to an electron spontaneously moving from one orbit around its nucleus to a different one ... changing its orientation to its center... its nucleus... This happens instantaneously... and energy is released...

The energy that is released by a quantum leap comes in the form of a photon... a particle of light... As the electron moves in, toward its nucleus, a photon is released from the atom... A very tiny movement inward generates light... Might a quantum leap of faith on our part, toward our center – Spirit within – generate light as well? ...

The courage to take a quantum leap of faith resides in the same place as Spirit – within our heart... As we focus our attention on our heart, communing with our inner God, we shift our orientation toward our center... our nucleus... When we re-align our consciousness ever-so-slightly closer to our Divine Self, we take the quantum leap...

And as we move into a closer orbit around the Spirit dwelling within, our faith grows... our perspective changes... and we bring more Light into the world... Our spiritual growth is a series of quantum leaps inward, ever inward toward our Divine Source... As we enter into the contemplative Silence, let us imagine ourselves changing

orbits... circling closer and closer to our Divine Center... Releasing the outer levels – the outer world, we approach the very Core of our Being... and we bathe the world in Radiant Light...

Silence – 3:00

Gratefully letting the music gently guide our awareness back to our body... this room... this time... we express gratitude for this time of Holy Communion together... for the Presence and Power of Spirit in our heart... for the courage to take the leap... Thank you God for everything and everyone...

I invite you to know with me now that Spirit is moving powerfully through each of us, and through our Beloved Community... Individually and collectively, we are a powerful spiritual influence on our world... As we evolve in consciousness, the benefits of our growth ripple out, blessing the entire world...

With our heart and mind open wide to receive even more insights from Rev. Diana's continuing message this morning, we allow her words to encourage and inspire us to Take the Leap...

Rev. Diana

It occurs to me that we are all being called to a greater level of faith as we move through this time of pandemic, ecological challenge, and global unrest. We are being called to live differently, and that definitely requires a Leap of Faith. We are not sure how the future will look, and yet every morning, we get up and face the day. Each of us is doing what we can to make positive changes in our own lives, which in turn, has a positive impact on the Whole.

And if you're like me, you're a little bit uncomfortable with not knowing how it's all going to turn out. But that's okay...it's actually healthy to stretch, to learn to live contentedly with uncertainty, because guess what? If we're really honest with ourselves, we don't have a clue what tomorrow will bring! Why not settle in and get comfy with the Truth? It is our expectation that all will be well, and our faith in a loving and supportive Universe that carries us joyfully to our Next-Yet-To-Be.

As I prepare to wrap up today's sharing, it occurs to me that I am once again in the space between the leap and the landing...I am leaping into greater authenticity as we change the format of our Sunday Gatherings starting next week. So relax and join me in the next leg of Mystic Heart's Journey...join me in ***Taking a Leap***.

In preparing for a more conversational style next week, I have one more question...how long has it been since you took a leap of faith? My morning reading suggested that it was time for me to take another one. How about you?

As we were encouraged last week, **We Start Right Where We Are**...letting go our perceived limitations and stepping into our Highest Potential. Working as the

hands, feet, hearts, and voices of God, by our Compassionate Service, we create “a world that works for all, with nothing and no one left out.” (Buckminster Fuller)

See this with me in your Mind’s Eye...Holding Community Vision is a powerful form of prayer.

Together, we envision a world where all beings are peaceful, loving, abundant, and free...where people everywhere practice loving kindness and care for one another and for our planet.

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, 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 within shows up as a world free of violence.

Together we feel and know a world without greed, where there is abundance and contentment in simply having *enough*...where every being, as a precious creation of God, is deserving of all the blessings life has to offer and receives those blessings openly and gratefully. With humanity serving as the vessels through which God’s blessings flow, ***there is no reason we cannot have such a world.*** With nothing and no one in its way, we know that our Vision is taking form as we speak our Powerful Word.

Musical Meditation – *God in Everyone*, Gary Lynn Floyd & Jami Lula

Rev. Diana

Please hold this affirmation silently as I speak it into form...

There is Power in our Prayer...

There is Power in our Vision...

In the name of Love, we are writing a new story...

We are creating a new world.

Let’s close together by joining our hearts in prayer.

God is...I Am...Here is what I know...And so it is! Amen!

Rev. Diana – Blessing for the Offering

Each Sunday, we invite you to join in the celebration of the work we are doing in the world by sharing of your financial Good, should you choose to. 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 speak this blessing, letting the words flow from your heart. And please feel our deep appreciation for 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 join in the Celebration as we pick up the tempo just a little bit...feel free to get up and dance.

Offertory Music Video: *Stand Together* by Faith Rivera & Harold Payne

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tnj7usFiwlg>

Lucinda & Rev, Diana Gratitude Prayer

Rev. Diana

Take the Leap... join me next week for our new format... **Conscious Conversations**. We will begin at 10:00 with an interactive service that invites conversation between Minister and those attending in person and offers a podcast-like experience for those attending online. There will be opening music/chanting, moving into our 'connecting with Global Community', then a question to be explored. The conversation will unfold organically. We will close with a Taizé meditation related to the question and complete our time with a Vision for a Love-soaked World with musical prayer to support the Vision. Offertory will bring more music, and the closing invitations will be brief. This form of Service is unique in Redding...*Evolution is happening at Mystic Heart.*


Lucinda – Invitations

 **Tuesdays, 3-5 pm – Michael Bordeaux's Book Club. *Made for Goodness* by Desmond and Mpho Tutu.**

 **Wednesdays, 2 – 5 pm – The Universe is Calling with Rev. Diana. Class started last week. *This is your last week to enroll.***


 **Thursdays, 12 - 2 pm Connections: Book Club and Meditation Circle**


 Please join Rev. Diana in the study of ***Heart Minded: How to Hold Yourself and Others in Love***. Drop-ins are welcome.

 **Thursdays, 3-5 pm – *Metaphysical Bible*** led by Prayer Practitioner Chris Johnson. Drop-ins are welcome.

Mark your calendars now...

Spring Tea Party and Easter Basket Raffle, April 9th, 1-3 pm.

 Is there someone in your life that would enjoy one of these beautiful Easter Baskets? Raffle tickets are on sale today. \$2 each or 6 for \$10. Contact Ellie for more information about the tea.

 ***Behold! I Make All Things New!*** Please invite friends and family to attend our special Easter Service on April 17th, followed by Brunch in Suite H.

 Remember...there are still a few spaces for our ***Be the Change...Spring Retreat at Coram Ranch in Shasta Lake*** – May 12-14th with culminating Retreat Experience on Sunday, May 15th here. Check the website or contact Rev. Diana for more information.

Lucinda – Invite Prayer Support

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