

Living in the Light, Living AS the Light...

Sunday, June 26, 2022

(Zoom Reunion)



A Beloved Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Rev. Diana Johnson, with Chris Johnson, RScP

Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

Chris – Opening Prayer

Rev. Diana – Introduction

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 home to your own Mystic Heart. It is so good to have you here with us this morning for our Zoom Reunion. As you may know, our Community has experienced its first ever cases of Covid with the Omicron spike this past week. We are blessed that as the virus mutates, it is becoming much less severe, and all community members are recovering well.

To aid in the healing, let's begin this morning's service with a musical meditation and chant.

Music – *We Shall Be Known*, MaMuse

Chant – *God Is, I Am*, by Eddie Watkins, Jr.

Rev. Diana

In this state of deep Peace, we take a moment to acknowledge our connection with our Global Community...envisioning a web of Consciousness that encompasses the earth, knowing that every being is a point of God's Radiant Light in that web...

every human being, every creature, every plant, rock, and grain of sand...all of the soil and water, the wind and clouds...every star in our galaxy, and every galaxy in the cosmos...teeming with Life and Intelligence, radiating the Light of Spirit. I know you can see it...you can feel it in your body. When we are in this state of awareness, we cannot help but know our Oneness...one Light, one Life, one Love.

We offer the benefit of our prayer, meditation, and visioning this morning to the Whole, to God in all of their expressions...in deep faith that through our Unity, every being is lifted. We acknowledge our responsibility to one another as human family, and as caretakers of the earth; and we explore the idea of *Living in the Light, Living AS the Light*. In setting this Powerful intention, we lift ourselves to new heights in Awareness. (Pause) As you feel ready, gently open your eyes, and remain present...allowing yourself to drink in whatever is here for you today.

Rev. Diana

In the book of Matthew of the Christian Bible, Jesus tells us:

“You are indeed the light of the world; a city that is built upon a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lamp holder, so it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light thus shine before men, so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”

When Jesus spoke of light in his analogies, he was speaking of a particular kind of Light. He used the word ‘phos,’ meaning the light of the sun rather than the light of the moon.

The light that Jesus spoke of cannot be kindled...it is not reflecting light...it is the very emanation of light. It is self-existent. It is eternal.

Let your Light shine... We hear it so often it almost becomes a cliché. But we forget that for light to shine, something has to burn.

Even the sun is burning...a candle is burning...a light bulb filament is burning. And for something to burn, there needs to be two things...fuel and a spark.

So if you’re going to let your light shine, what is your fuel going to be?

What is your spark going to be?

In her book *The Sacred Yes*, Rev. Deborah is in prayer, listening for Guidance. This is what she hears: “Just take all of that stuff you have and let it burn. People whose lights shine the brightest are the ones who burn the most.”

What is the fuel that God is talking about? Our stories...the ones that have been following us all of our lives, helping to determine who we think we are...the stories of lack, limitation, and unworthiness...the stories of how he, she or they done me wrong...

Let go of the story...lay it on the altar...surrender it, give it up...write a new one...put down the baggage...don’t let it smother you like the basket in Jesus’ story is smothering the light.

Our stories are part of our human experiences, our relative truths. And there can definitely be a benefit to our stories...if you are someone who has had a lot of challenges in your life...if you have been through some pretty dark nights of the soul and lived to tell about it...you have what it takes to shine. You have fuel.

You have gifts to share with the world...you have had experiences that give you the ability to understand what people are going through...

You have understanding and compassion...

And you just might be able to help guide someone else through troubled times.

But in order to be of true service, each of us must first surrender to the light. We must take not only the so-called bad things, but the so-called good things as well, and

surrender them to the light. For example, in order to be of true service as a Minister, I must ask the Highest Wisdom that dwells within me to shine the Light of Truth on **everything** in my life.

Might there be things revealed about me, about my personality, my beliefs, and opinions, about the way I move through the world that are unpleasant to look at? Of course. That's the Work...burning away all that doesn't serve the Whole in the highest way possible in the purifying fires of prayer, meditation, devotion, study, and sacred service. This is the Work of a Prayer Practitioner. This is the Work of a Minister. But it is also the Work of *anyone who wants to live a more awakened life*... a more peaceful, contented, joy-filled life...a life that makes a positive impact on the world.

Musical Meditation – *Nothing Less Than Everything*, by Steven Walters

Rev. Diana

We all go through times in life when other people say things or behave in ways that feel hurtful to us. We can choose to dwell on these things if we choose but carrying that baggage will ultimately weigh us down and sap our energy.

Instead we can choose to let go of what doesn't serve us and concentrate on the present moment. Until we can find a level of peace and happiness in the present circumstances of our lives, we will never be content, because 'now' is all we will ever have.

The more of your stuff that you let go of and allow to be consumed in the eternal fire...the more you shine that light on every part of your life, the more clarity you have...

And with clarity comes the ability to make good choices...And with good choices comes Joy and Fulfillment and Harmony...Do you see where I am going with this?

Now this stuff...this baggage...that I am suggesting you let go of, it all exists as part of every human life...it is part of what makes up our relative truth or experience. Each of us has the fuel required to let our Light shine. But it takes more than fuel for something to burn...it also takes a spark.

This is where Absolute Truth comes in...On the level of Spiritual Truth, there is nothing to burn. No fuel. *Only* spark. *Divine* Spark.

There is nothing you can do to make your flame of spiritual Truth more powerful.

You cannot increase the heat of its fire. It is not kindled by your human hands. It simply exists within you...your job is to recognize it and allow it to empower your human experience.

Please hear what I am saying...this has nothing to do with your personality, nothing to do with what you think about yourself. It has everything to do with how you walk in the world...the humility and poise that comes from allowing the Divine Spark to empower

your human experience. That Light will burn steady and bright, creating space for others to discover their own Light.

In the words of Christian D. Larson, “Promise yourself to think well of yourself and to proclaim this fact to the world, not in loud words but great deeds.”

Okay, you have the fuel, you have the spark. Now the Work begins...it doesn't have to be hard work, just consistent, dedicated work. And what is this Work?

Examine your beliefs...your qualities and traits...your habits and patterns.

Be completely honest with ourselves...take responsibility...accept what you find.

Keep the aspects of yourself that are currently serving you. Throw the rest into the flame of Truth and watch as they burn, lighting your way to your next-yet-to-be...

And all the while, having faith that deep within you is the Light of the Divine...a Light that can never go out.

Chris – Meditation

The Ancient Hebrew Tanakh – the Old Testament of the Christian Bible – often uses the metaphor of a sacrificial fire... gifts to God being burned on the Holy Altar, and their essence wafting up to heaven with the smoke... The animals being sacrificed represented the release of our lower, animalistic, or materialistic nature...

The sacrificial offerings symbolize our false beliefs... our negative self-image... our disempowering stories about ourselves... all those ideas and emotions we entertain that obscure our True Divine Nature... This is not a holy barbecue, but a trash heap... It is not the *smell* that “pleases God,” but that we are purifying ourselves of all that is not Divine...

The word sacrifice simply means to make sacred... The metaphor reminds us that we are already holy... divine... avatars of Spirit... the Light of the World... And that we have allowed our Divine Light to be dimmed by circumstance... As we peel off the layers of guilt... shame... fear... self-doubt... and add them to the Holy Fire, our inner light joins with its Source, and we shine brightly...

Rabbi Yeshua of Nazareth referred to this as “gathering the grain and burning the chaff...” we keep what is working in our lives, and throw the rest into the fire... Or better yet, throw it *all* into the fire... That which truly serves you is indestructible... it is eternal... it cannot be destroyed... It is already part of the Sacred Flame...

Take a moment to think of the stories you tell yourself about yourself... Which ones are serving you? ... Which are not? ... Are there some that *seem* to serve you, but are limiting your Divine Expression? ... Which stories are True? ... Which are not? ... Which stories are you not sure about? ... As we enter the Sacred Silence, I invite you to bundle up all those stories, and throw them on the altar... remembering that Truth is indestructible... Let the Holy Fire burn... and then see what remains...

Silence – 3:00

Allowing the music to guide our awareness gently back to this place and time, our hearts are filled with gratitude... Grateful for the courage to release that which no longer serves us... for the Holy Fire that consumes it... and for the Divine Light it sheds... Thank you God for everyone and everything...

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...

Returning to Rev. Diana's lesson with open hearts and minds, we bask in the warmth of the Sacred Flame... in the glow of the Holy Light... Expressing our True Divine Nature by Living in the Light, Living AS the Light ...

Rev. Diana

Once you have let go of all that is not serving you, letting it burn as fuel for the next leg of your journey, there is a way to prevent any more junk from building up. In his book *The Untethered Soul*, Michael Singer calls it *The Path of Unconditional Happiness*.

I'd like to share a few quotes from the book:

"To begin with you have to realize that you really only have one choice in this life: Do you want to be happy, or do you not want to be happy? It's really that simple. Once you make that choice, your path through life becomes totally clear... If you keep it that simple, you will see that it really is under your control. It's just that you have a deep-seated set of preferences that gets in the way."

Your mind may be reeling right now...spinning with all the reasons that this is not true, not possible...I know my mind did the same when I first read this. But after giving it some time and deep self-honesty, I know he's right. In every moment, no matter the circumstance, I can choose to stand in my Spiritual Authority and choose happiness.

Where choosing a Spiritual Path is concerned, he says "Unconditional happiness is the highest technique there is. You don't have to learn Sanskrit or read any scriptures. You don't have to renounce the world. You just have to really mean it when you say that you choose to be happy. And you have to mean it regardless of what happens. This is truly a spiritual path, and it is as direct and sure a path to Awakening as could possibly exist."

And I'd like to add that this path is not for sissies, because things are going to happen. And your habitual mind is going to want to get involved in the melodrama of whatever is happening...is going to want to blame, pout, rationalize, judge, condemn, or wallow. But your decision to choose happiness will have to take the upper hand.

I am not suggesting, nor does Michael Singer, that we don't feel pain sometimes. It's a natural part of life and serves a purpose...only that we make a practice of feeling it and

allowing it to move through us without creating a story around it or making a problem out of it. Pain and Joy or happiness co-exist in the world, and they can co-exist within each of us. It is the nature of being a Spiritual Being having a human experience.

The Dalai Lama has said that pain is inevitable, but suffering is optional. And his life has given him many painful circumstances. He has simply chosen not to create additional stories or drama around his pain.

Make the choice to be happy, no matter what happens. Can you do it? Of course you can. You can accomplish anything you set your heart and mind on...

And now together, we anchor our knowing in prayer...

I settle into my deeper Knowing...I feel God's Presence in this place. It shows Itself as each one listening...as the words, the music, the wisdom...as the prayer and meditation.

Here is what I know...that each of us has been touched deeply today...that a seed of willingness has been planted in the hearts and minds of each one listening...

That each one remembers that happiness is a choice, no matter the circumstance...and in the midst of pain, we need not suffer...

There is a blessing within each and every challenge...I hold to this Truth, even when I am not yet ready to have that blessing revealed...

I know that as one by one, each of us chooses happiness, we are doing our part to create a **Love-Soaked World**. Together, we envision a world completely transformed by all of the Joyful, Creative and Wholehearted Action we are expressing, individually and collectively...a world that is peaceful, joyful, abundant, and free...where all practice loving kindness and care for our planet with respect and intention.

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 hatred or violence.

We feel and know a world without greed, where there is abundance in 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 willingly and gratefully. With humanity serving as the vessels through which God's blessings flow, **there is no reason we cannot have such a world**. And so, we know that it is taking form as we speak our Powerful Word.

As we place our faith in the infallible givingness of our Source, and offer our heartfelt Vision, the world is changed...right now...in this instant...and I give thanks.

We are living in the Light of Spirit, and as we live IN the Light, we commit to Living AS the Light.

I am profoundly grateful for all who are here today in community, and for the Sacred Service and other gifts that each one offers.

Knowing the Power of my prayer, I release my Word to the Loving and Powerful Presence that I call God, with absolute faith in Its immediate action. I let it go...I call it done...and so it is. Amen!

Musical Meditation – *What Kind of World*, by Daniel Nahmod

Rev. Diana – Affirmation 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. You can find more information on our website.

As we move into this time of giving, feel the Power 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 Music Video – *Let Your Light Shine*, by Keb Mo & Virtual Choir


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTCNPZEsLF0>

Chris – Gratitude Prayer


Invitations

 **Tuesdays, 3-5 pm – This week is the last meeting for Michael Bordeaux’s Book Club, *The Untethered Soul*.** He will begin a new book TBA on August 9th.

 **Wednesdays from 2:00 – 4:30 pm. *The Wizard of Us*** with Prayer Practitioner Lucinda Alton has been moved to Zoom only. Please contact Lucinda for more information.

 **Thursdays, 3-5 pm – *Metaphysical Bible*** led by Prayer Practitioner Chris Johnson is on hiatus until September 8th.

Mark your calendars now...

 **Wednesdays, August 3 – September 7, 3:00-5:00 pm. *The Power of Myth: A Video Discussion Gathering*** with Prayer Practitioner Chris Johnson. Suggested donation \$50 for six sessions or \$10/week. No one turned away. Drop-ins welcome!

 **Fall Church Family Campout at Sue-Meg State Park. September 24th – 27th, 2022.** Children's program with Traci included.

 **2nd Annual Spring Retreat at Coram Ranch in Shasta Lake. April 20-23, 2023.** Children's program with Traci included.

Prayer Invitation

Closing Songs:

 ***Soul's Blessing***, written by Chris Johnson

 ***Love Be with You***, written by Lainey Bernstein & Gary Lynn Floyd

Close of Service