

Where Do We Go From Here?

Sunday, July 31, 2022

Conscious Conversation



A Beloved Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Rev. Diana Johnson, with Sherri Dotter, RScP & Chris Johnson, RScP

The following is the outline Rev. Diana prepared to guide the Conscious Conversation. You may view the video with subtitles here or on [our YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKHQkXXdy17s2Ubpe3b46sw) at <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCKHQkXXdy17s2Ubpe3b46sw>.

Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

Sherri – Opening Prayer

Opening Music

 **Welcome to the Mystic Heart**, written by Diana & Chris Johnson

 **One Big Family**, written by Robin Hackett & Gary Lynn Floyd

 **Chant – Prayers for Freedom**, written by Sarah Nutting of *Ma Muse*

Rev. Diana

Joining our voices through singing and chanting always feel s so good. It raises our vibration and brings a sense of Oneness into the space. We begin our time together by taking a moment to acknowledge our Oneness with Spirit, and with our Global Community...join me in using the mind's eye to envision a web of Consciousness that surrounds and infuses the earth...each of us, a brilliant point of Light in that web...and now acknowledging the Light that shines in every creature...every plant...every rock and grain of sand...the soil...the water, the heavenly bodies of all kinds...and finally the cosmos, radiating with Spirit's Light...take a moment to feel how the Light that *you* are is enmeshed with the Light that *I* AM...with the Light of all beings...with all of creation.

Sensing our oneness, we acknowledge our responsibility to one another as human family, and as caretakers of the earth.

Whether you choose to share your thoughts as we join in Conscious Conversation, or whether you choose to listen deeply...or maybe a little of each...let's jump into our topic for today: Where Do We Go From Here.

Rev Diana

Where do we go from here? Have you ever asked yourself that question? I faced this question last week as I looked at the topic I had chosen last month, and wondered, "What was I planning to talk about? Where do I go from here?"

Is there a particular area of life where you are asking yourself that question at this time? Anyone care to share?

In uncertain times, where do we find our answers? How do we find our direction?

I find that there are primarily two places that I go when I'm looking for answers...my brain, or intellect and my heart or intuition. Unfortunately, I usually go to the brain first...and down the rabbit trail I go. Anyone else have that experience?

And what does the brain do? Analyze, measure, research, gets the facts. It is looking for the black and white, guaranteed, one right and perfect direction. No risk...no mistakes.

What is the problem with this method? We can get caught up and end up going nowhere.

What might be a better way to approach our question? God first, heart first.

We talked about that last week...I have a phrase that I repeat often. Whenever a question arises and the answer is not apparent, I say to myself, "But first prayer." I take a moment to be still, to breathe, and to ask for Guidance...to ask my heart to share what it knows. And I listen.

After I have gone to my Deepest Wisdom, and listened for Truth, then and only then am I equipped to take this information to my intellect so that I can get its input. At this stage, I have to be very careful...**Why?**

What part of myself is the intellect most closely aligned with? Ego, personality

What is the ego's job? To keep me safe.

What emotions are likely to get involved? Fear. **Of what?** You name it.

I'm facing this question right now where Mystic Heart is concerned.

As a Senior Minister and Spiritual Director, it is my role to listen for a Vision, and to engage the support of others in the fulfillment of that Vision. The tricky part is that a true Vision is a Divine Idea that seeks to come through a particular person or group of people. It is NOT (in my case) what Rev. Diana's ego would like to see happen.

I'd like to put on my vulnerability share something with you...some of you may be aware of a part of the story. I'm going to tell it in the third person, as though Rev. Diana is a character in a story...because she is.

Over three years ago, just before we became a religious non-profit, Rev. Diana drove by a building that she thought would make a perfect church. She had never been inside the building, and it appeared to be occupied, but the outside appearance and the grounds were perfect! Of course, Mystic Heart was nowhere near ready for its own building, so our Beloved Community moved into Suite H next door.

As time went on, Rev. Diana just couldn't get that building out of her mind. She drove past it often, stopped the car, walked around, and tried to see inside, but never could. Secretly she prayed that this very building would become available.

Fast forward over three years...the building became available. Rev. Diana got excited and called the realtor to get an appointment to see the inside. Despite the monthly cost, and the fact that a lot of expensive work would need to be done to make it fit, she took Chris to see the building. Then she took the Leadership team and lead volunteers to see it. She was soooo excited!

I want to warn you...this is not a tale of how Mystic Heart Spiritual Center will be moving into that building in the coming year. It is a tale about being careful what we give our attention to because it will manifest in our experience.

Here is the lesson...anything we give our focused attention to, especially when we bring a lot of emotion to the process is likely to happen. There's nothing magic about it...quantum physics and ancient wisdom both indicate that outcomes are influenced by expectations.

Here's the trick...is the thing I am focused on bringing into experience *inspired of God* or something that my brain has built a case for? Is my prayer Divinely Guided or ego-driven? This is critical...because if it's Divinely Guided, the pieces will fall in place Gracefully and Easily. While there will always be some effort involved, there will be no struggle. If my prayer is ego-driven, I will have to manipulate things to *make it happen*.

I share this to dispel a myth...that if we pray for something specific, and we get what we pray for, it must be Divine Will. We are simply making use of Spiritual Law...focusing attention and emotion on a particular outcome and watching our desire come into form. It doesn't mean that we're going to like the outcome, or that it will be the most Graceful outcome. It just means that the Law works.

Have you ever wanted something, gotten it, and found out that it wasn't what you thought it would be? Would you like to share?

Be careful what you ask for, you just might get it.

Here's what I suggest...start by going to Spirit. Listen for what your heart knows is true. Then take this knowing into the intellect...look for what is showing itself to you. When we start with prayer and Guidance and go from there, the Way becomes clear.

Do we always like the answer we get? When have you gotten an answer you didn't like, but it turned out to be for the best?

Not liking the answer doesn't make it less Right or less True. We recognize and feel the rightness, even as the ego pouts at first about not getting its way.

So wrapping up the story...what did Rev. Diana come to realize? That she had done it *again*...forgotten to check in with Spirit...forgotten to ask what God's Highest Idea for

the community would be at this time. She made an assumption...you know about assumptions, right? She assumed that since she had been praying about this building for over three years and it became available, that it must be a God Thing. And it was...Spirit was testing to see how attached she would be to getting her way!

And she realized that whether or not her precious building would eventually become the Mystic Heart Gathering Place, now was not the time. And in her heart of hearts, she knows that the right and perfect place will make itself known...no struggle, no making it happen...in God's perfect time.

For the moment, she is grateful and happy to have a comfortable space to house our Community. She is grateful for the fellowship, the study, prayer and meditation, the sacred service and celebration that happen here. And so it is!

When I entered Ministerial School, my mentor told me four things that have continued to guide me as I set out on this path of Ministry.

First, he said that if building Sacred Community wasn't my first love and passion, that I should do something else!

Next, he said if there was anything else I *could* do with my life and still be happy and fulfilled, I should do that!

He said that my primary role as a Pastor would be to comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable.

And he said that leading a spiritual community would mean growing and evolving in public...was I up for the challenge? He was right. *And I Am.*

I am so grateful to all of you...for your patience and understanding as I grow and evolve...in public.

I'd like to have some more Conscious Conversation...Where do we go from here, as a Spiritual Community? What would you like to see happening? Is there anything that you are passionate about starting or taking part in as part of our Community?

Here is one thing I can share about the near future...

After trying a number of formats for our Sunday Gatherings, Spirit is Guiding me to make a change...in all honesty, it was the change I nearly made at the start of the summer when we adopted the Conscious Conversations. Why didn't I make it then? My brain got in the way again.

Here's what Sundays will look like starting on August 14th.

Taizé will be offered at 9:30. What is Taizé? A quiet time of devotion that weaves music, message, contemplative prayer, and silence into a meditation experience designed to open the heart and mind.

A shortened version of Conscious Conversations, complete with upbeat music, will begin at 10:30 and will conclude between 11:15 and 11:30.

Between the two, we will have a break so that those who want only Taizé may leave after that segment; those who want only the Conversations can arrive; and those who want both, can take a coffee and bathroom break and return for the second half.

The two services will be of one theme or topic, so they will complement one another. Offering the Sunday Gathering in two halves will also stretch the space we have in our Sanctuary for a little while longer.

We're making these changes based on the feedback we have gotten from our Community members. We're looking forward to the change and feel sure that we'll be meeting the need in an even more powerful way than before.

I invite you to join me for a moment of Affirmative Prayer...gently closing your eyes, taking a couple of slow, deep breaths...and knowing the Truth...that our Community is a living entity...adapting, changing, evolving...taking its every breath, speaking, and acting through its members and friends. I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that each of us is served by opening to change...surrendering to Divine Will and allowing ourselves to be moved. As we open to the new, we are allowing it to lift us into our next yet to be...

Chris – Meditation

A few weeks ago we explored Truth... what it is... how to discern it... And we found that we have an intuitive knowing about the Truth... Something within us resonates with it, and we just *know*... That same intuition can be our Inner Guidance system... It is the Wisdom of Divine Spirit informing us... guiding us... inspiring us...

But how do we discern whether it is our intuition speaking, our intellect, or our ego?... I think it's different for each of us... Our intuition is the still, small voice of God within... our Inner Teacher, as the word implies... It is part of the unique expression of Spirit that we are... We each develop our own way of recognizing this voice...

Like any other skill, Intuition evolves with practice... Through visioning, meditation, and prayer, we learn to listen with our heart... to open to a new way of knowing... an unfolding of Wisdom from within us... We learn to recognize that voice by conversing with it often... and by having the courage to follow its guidance...

When we live from our intuition, acting on its instructions, we move into a new dimension of faith... Trusting our Inner Wisdom over that of the world, we create a new story... we dance to our own music... we find our authentic voice and speak with authority... We become who we are meant to be... our unique individualization of God...

Think of a time when you followed your intuition... Remember the vulnerability you felt... the courage you had to find... What signs indicated that you were on the right track? ... Were you led to make course corrections along the way? ... How did it work out? ... Or

recall an instance when you had a deep inner impulse that you *didn't* follow... What prevented you ? ... How did *that* work out? ... Moving into the Sacred Silence, let us ask for Divine Guidance... What is the best use of this Divine Gift that is my Life? ...

Silence – 3:00

Allowing the music to gently usher our attention back into this time and place, we give thanks for this communion with Spirit within... Grateful for this growth in our ability to recognize the True Voice of our intuition, we continue to evolve into greater and greater faith... 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...

As Rev. Diana resumes her inspired and inspirational message, we listen with both our outer ear and our inner ear... knowing that our Inner Guidance System is strong and wise and leads us to the most empowering place that we can go from here...

Rev. Diana

And now together, we anchor our knowing in prayer...our Oneness with the Divine gives us the Spiritual Authority to speak our Word in full Faith that our prayer is already being answered.

I Am so grateful to know that God Is all that is...that Infinite Intelligence is always at work...that there is nothing else.

I Am so grateful to know that each of us is a perfect and intentional expression of the Divine, created in Spirit's image and likeness.

I Am so blessed to know that change is the only constant, and so I choose to flow easily with the changes in my life.

I Am grateful that Divine Guidance is always available, and I remember to ask. When anything in my life is feeling out of sorts...when I am concerned, confused, or conflicted...my immediate response is to go to God. *But first, prayer.*

I allow Humility and Grace to guide my life every step of the way, and I know that Goodness is always the outcome.

As each of us embodies our Divinity and lives from *That*, we are doing our part to create a **Love-Soaked World**. Together, we envision a world in which we are Called to a higher state of Awareness and Action, individually and collectively...a world where every being discovers and lives from their Authenticity and Spiritual Authority. "We envision a world where personal responsibility joins with social conscience" in every area of society

(Edward Viljoen); a world that is peaceful, joyful, abundant, and free...where all humans 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 justice and deep 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, right here and now, as we speak our Powerful Word.

As we consciously choose to place our faith in the Goodness of our Source, and offer our heartfelt Vision, the world has been changed and I give thanks.

I am so grateful for all who are here today in community, and for the many, many blessings of this and every day.

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

And if this next song moves your meditation to movement, feel free!

Musical Meditation – *The Power of Kindness*, written by Sarah Nutting & Karisha Longaker, performed by Ma Muse

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, hold these words close to your heart 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 offer this gift freely in the spirit of Love, blessing and 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!

From 1975, just because it makes me happy, enjoy the Three Dog Night singing *Shambala*.


Offertory Music Video – *Shambala*, written by Daniel Moore, performed by Three Dog Night: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnyh6i9NvmE>


Sherri – Blessing for the Offering.


Sherri – Invitations

 **Starting this week, August 3 – September 7 3:00-5:00 pm. *The Power of Myth: A Video Discussion Gathering*** with Prayer Practitioner Chris Johnson. Drop-ins welcome!

Mark your calendars now...

 **Tuesdays, 3-5 pm – Michael Bordeaux’s Book Club will be starting up again on Sept 13th.** He will begin a light-hearted, thought-provoking, and moving novel, *Breakfast With Buddha* by Roland Merullo.

 **Wednesday, September 14th – November 30th from 2:00 – 5:00 pm,** Rev. Diana will be offering *Divine Audacity*, the first of her Conscious Evolution Series. This class will be offered in-person and on Zoom and is appropriate for anyone wanting to grow!


 **Fall Church Family Campout at Sue-Meg State Park. September 24th – 27th, 2022. Children’s program with Traci included.** We need a deposit this week to hold your space, and payment in full by September 1st so that we can be certain we have enough folks to cover our costs.


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

As always, more details are in your bulletin and on our website.

Prayer Invitation

Closing Songs:

 ***A Soul’s Blessing***, written by Chris Johnson

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