

# *Honoring the Body Temple*

*Sunday, October 2, 2022*

*Taizé*



A Beloved Community  
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Rev. Diana Johnson, with Chris Johnson, RScP, and musician Gary French.

**Call to Awareness – 3 Bells**

**Chris – Opening Prayer**

**Chant**

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

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

**Chant – May You Find Peace in Your Body**, written by Charley Thweatt

**Rev. Diana**

We begin our meditative journey this morning by closing our eyes and settling into this space...letting go of all that has come before this moment and allowing ourselves to fully arrive...taking a deep breath in, and letting it go...letting ourselves be held...and in Sacred Ritual, we take a moment to sense our Oneness with all of life.

Envisioning a web of Consciousness surrounding and infusing the earth...seeing and feeling ourselves to be a point of radiant Light in that web...knowing every human as a spark of Divinity.

As we envision every creature, every plant, every rock, and grain of sand, shining with Spirit's Light...the soil...the water...the clouds and wind...the heavenly bodies...all aglow with God Energy, I sense and know that my Light is enmeshed with yours, and with all of Life.

Sensing our oneness, we acknowledge our role as caretakers...in Service to one another...to all life forms...and to the planet that sustains us all.

Grounded in our Oneness, we center our hearts in this month's theme, **Honoring the Sacred**, and give our attention this morning to **Honoring the Body Temple**.

Our physical bodies are part of the sacredness of all of life. They are miraculously made to perform a number of functions...breathing, eating, assimilating, reproducing, healing.

They are sensory receptors that allow us to perceive and navigate our world. They are channels of communication between us and the Divine. They are the temples, the houses, that carry around our consciousness.

For thousands of years, humans practiced more embodied forms of Spirituality. Rites and symbolic gestures involving the body offered a means of connection with the Great Mystery, with a Higher Power. Before there was the written word, stories were acted out and spoken...histories passed from generation to generation by oral tradition.

Still today, many religious traditions involve the body in acts of devotion...bowing, standing, kneeling, physical prostration, making the sign of the cross, reaching the hands to the heavens, and dancing are all forms of embodied worship.

Devotional practice is not necessarily about making particular motions; true worship is an attitude of the heart. But using the body to express our devotion can provide a sense of true embodiment, real communion. All too often, we allow our communication with Spirit to become reliant on mental activities...listening to the words of a message, studying sacred Scripture, reading a spiritual book, or discussing spiritual matters with others.

There is nothing wrong with any of these practices, but might we be missing something? When we engage our bodies in devotional practices, we are affirming that we are *embodied creatures*, and that not every part of our existence can be reasoned out or understood logically.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, King David invites a kind of embodied worship: “Let them praise his name with dancing and make music to him with timbrel and harp.” (Psalm 149:3)

And in the New Testament, the apostle Paul asks the people of Corinth: “Don’t you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God?” (1 Corinthians 6:19)

We must realize that the mind is not the only gateway to the soul. Our minds are neither more nor less necessary than our bodies in walking the sacred path of Communion with God. There is a reason we have been given both.

We don’t always have the capacity, or the desire, to form our prayer into words. Maybe in times of uncertainty, our prayer may look like taking a walk and feeling the stability and constancy of the ground under our feet and remembering the infallible nature of the Divine. In times of sadness, it might mean noticing the vibrant colors of Nature, and being reminded of the inherent Beauty of Creation. Maybe in times of great Joy and Celebration our prayer might look like singing and dancing. And maybe in times of quiet connection, prayer might simply take the form of mindful breathing.

## **Musical Meditation**

 **Breathe**, written by Karen Drucker

### **SILENCE – 1 minute**

“The physical and spiritual are not opposed to each other. They are not two competing worlds. There is not something apart from our life called ‘the spiritual journey’. The

journey is our life. When we sleepwalk through life, we are just along for the ride. When we mindfully participate in the journey, we are walking the spiritual path... Spirituality is a path of action that reconnects us with the vitality of the body. In this sense, spiritual practice is transformative. Spiritual Practice moves beyond belief and theory and into the realm of action where change takes place.” (Benjamin Riggs, *Finding God in the Body*)

### **Chris – Guided Meditation**

I invite you to relax your body, sit comfortably, and slowly bring your attention to your feet... Feel the sensation of your connection with the floor... Imagine energy coming up from the Earth, entering through your feet, and rising up into your ankles... your calves... your knees... and your thighs... Breathing deeply, focus on the sensations in your legs...

Now shift your attention to your hips... your lower back... your pelvis... Let the energy continue to rise up into your abdomen... Release any tension with each out-breath... Become aware of your stomach area... other internal organs... your mid- and upper back... heart... lungs... Feel the energy continue to rise up through your body temple...

Feel the sensations in your arms... Allow the energy to enter through your hands... and rise up into your forearms... your elbows... your upper arms... Let it join the energy in your torso as it rises to your shoulders and neck... Breathe away any tension you find... Slowly roll your head in a full circle, stretching the neck and shoulder muscles...

Now shift your attention to your face... Feel the Divine Energy relaxing the muscles of your face... ears... scalp... As you breathe slowly, notice the movement of air through your nose or mouth... Feel the sensations in your forehead... and up to the crown of your head... Your body is filled with Life... Light... Peace... Power... Joy...

Now expand your attention to include your entire body... Allow the energy to flow through you... in through the feet, and out through your head... Bring into your awareness everything from the top of your head to the soles of your feet... Feel the gentle rhythm of your breath as it moves through your lungs... Imagine your blood carrying oxygen and nutrients to each of your cells... As we enter the Sacred Silence, continue to relax, and breathe easily, maintaining conscious awareness of your entire body temple...

### **Silence – 3:00**

As the music gently guides us into the present moment, we take a deep, cleansing breath... gratefully embodying the Divine Energy of this meditation... In gratitude for this shared time of communion with Spirit and with our Spiritual Companions, we humbly accept these precious gifts... 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...

Allowing our hearts and minds to stay fully open and receptive to Rev. Diana's continuing message this morning, we welcome the Presence of the Divine, as we worship in and Honor our Body Temple.

### **Rev. Diana**

I would like to share with you the words of Dr. Ernest Holmes. I do not lean heavily on his writings in my speaking, but the principles upon which he built his philosophy are universal and spread throughout my teaching. I deem him to be one of the prominent Spiritual Teachers and evolutionaries of his time. His work is deeply grounded in the New Testament but reflects other world traditions and philosophies as well.

### **Read SOM Magazine, June 2022, pp. 79-80: *I Am the Christ Within You***

And my closing prayer today comes from his Science of Mind and Spirit text, pp. 549-550: ***I Am Complete in Thee***

Almighty God, Everlasting Good, Eternal Spirit, Maker of all things and Keeper of my Life, Thou art All.

Infinite Presence within, in Whom all live; Joy Supreme, flooding all with gladness, I adore Thee.

Eternal Peace, undisturbed and quiet, I feel Thy calm.

O Thou Who dost inhabit Eternity and dost dwell within all Creation, Who Dost live through all things and in all people, hear Thou my prayer.

I would enter Thy gates with joy and live at peace in Thy House.

I would find a resting place in Thee, and in Thy presence live.

Make me to do Thy will and from Thy wisdom teach me the ways of Truth.

Compel me to follow Thee and let me not pursue the paths of my own counsel.

O Eternal and Blessed Presence, illumine my mind and command my will that my Soul may be refreshed and that my life may be renewed.

As deep cries unto deep, so my thought cries unto Thee and Thou dost answer.

I am renewed and refreshed; my whole being responds to Thy love, and I am complete in Thee.

All my ways are guarded and guided, and I shall live with Thee eternally.

O Lover of my Soul and Keeper of my Spirit, none can separate us, for we are One.

So shall Thy Wisdom guide me, Thy Presence dwell within me, Thy Love keep me, and Thy life envelop me now and forevermore.

*I rest in Thee...*

### **Rev. Diana – Invitation for the Offering**

It is time for us to close our Taizé Meditation. As we do, we offer the opportunity for you to share of your financial good in support of the work we do should you choose to

do so. If you're joining us online, you can find a Donate Button and our mailing address at mysticheart.org. And we thank you in advance for your gifts.

## Offertory Music

 ***Down in My Soul***, written by Jan Garrett, JD Martin, & Ester Nicholson

**Rev. Diana Blessing for the Offering/Announce Coffee, start of next half – designed to add more dimensions and information, 2 halves of 1**

We have reached our first \$100 donation to Farmer's Footprint. Thanks to your generous lunch donations, we are sponsoring an acre of Regenerated Farmland. Shall we go for another?

## Closing Song

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

## *Conscious Conversation*

**Call to Awareness – 3 Bells**

**Chris – Opening Prayer**

**Rev. Diana – Welcome...if you're new with us here this morning...**

**Opening Music**

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

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

 ***Chant – One Small Step***, written by Karen Drucker

**Rev. Diana**

Go ahead and stay standing if you're able, or reach your arms and hands out to feel and embody your Connection with Spirit...feel your feet rooted to the earth, feel the energy moving up through your feet, flowing through your body...feel the Power of Creation moving through you as together, we hold our Vision of a ***Love-Soaked World***, where Peace, Joy, Abundance, Generosity, Justice and Freedom are the living principles that guide every life...where all humans practice loving kindness and Compassion, and care for our planet as the Sacred Home that she is.

We are creating 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 all beings are valued for their inherent Goodness and Light...where the Peace we cultivate within shows up as a world free of hatred or violence.

We are creating a world that knows no greed, where there is abundance in simply having *enough*...where every being deserves and receives all that is needed for a full, rich, and contented life.

In this more beautiful world, every member of the human family serves as a *conscious* vessel through which God's blessings flow...we disregard all appearances to the contrary. Like the prophet Nehemiah, "We are doing a good work and we cannot come down"... we *will not* lower our Vision. Knowing with our whole hearts that such a world is *inevitable*, we take the necessary steps toward its creation. **There is no reason we cannot have such a world**, and so we call it forth from the realm of Infinite Possibility, knowing that it is taking form, right here and now, as we hold, sense, and speak our Powerful Vision. We align our actions to support and nurture its Graceful unfolding. And we give thanks, letting it be. And so it is! Amen!

Hang on to that energy for just a moment...our prayer and Visioning cranks it up a notch or two. Can you feel it? Imagine how good that must be for your physical body. What if you spent time with that every day? Maybe you do...Let's have a **Conscious Conversation**.

This morning our topic has been **Honoring the Body Temple**. During Taizé, we spent time contemplating our physical bodies and the many ways they serve us as we move through the world. And surprise of all surprises, Spirit led me in a direction that I was not expecting and had not done any preparation for. Has that ever happened to you?

We talked about movement as a component of worship...how it has been part of the spiritual life since ancient times, and how in many traditions, it is an important part of devotional practice today.

But for our **Conversation** this morning, I want to move in a different direction. Here is my first question for you... **"When was the last time you had an intentional conversation with your precious Earth Suit" (Dennis Merritt Jones)...your physical body?**

**What did you talk about?**

**How did the conversation begin?**

Sometimes when I haven't checked in with my body for a while, IT starts the conversation with some kind of pain or discomfort.

**Have you ever had that experience? Would you like to share?**

**What part does pain play in our evolution?** (It is hardwired to maintain longevity, growth, balance, and peace. Pain is one of the ways the body lets us know what it needs.)

I love this quote from Dennis Merritt Jones. "(Your body) wants to remain your soul's home for a long time and is willing to go to extreme lengths to make it so, even if it makes you miserable."

**The question is, are you listening, or do you ignore it and try to muffle its voice?**

**Why do we do that? What are some of the rationalizations we use?**

(Just one more thing, then I'll stop; it doesn't hurt that much, I can push through; I might look weak; I can do it myself; if I don't do it, who will?)

**From your experiences with pain, what do you suppose it might teach us if we were to listen?**

**Humility** – being open to being served

**Compassion and empathy** – a deeper sense of caring for yourself and others who are in pain

**Appreciation** – of what is *right* with your body, and the many blessings

**Gratitude, patience, trust, and surrender** (let go and let God), **balance** between being and doing, **forgiveness**

**Did you know that grief can also settle into the body as pain?**

Whether our pain comes from physical or emotional causes...and sometimes we don't know where it began...it is trying to speak to us through its discomfort. In order to heal, we need to pause...get quiet...go within...ask simple questions of the body...and listen deeply. How are you feeling? What do you need? How can I help?

This deep listening works for small things, too...before they become painful. When I listen to my body's responses, I know which foods are nourishing for my body and which are not. I know what forms of physical activity are best for my body, and how much. But I have to really listen...and deep listening means responding appropriately to the messages I am receiving. This means being willing to make changes.

Not that again! Nothing is certain but change. Didn't we hear that last month, and the one before? The more comfortable we become with the flow of change, the more our lives reflect our Wholeness. One of my Insight Timer teachers, Rev. Skip Jennings, does a live session called Flow Fridays. He teaches FLOW as an acronym for Faithful, Loving, Open, Willing. I approach change with Faith in God and in the process, Love for myself and others (and for life itself), Openness to growth, and Willingness to do things differently.

Ernest Holmes spoke that "Awareness is curative." We can't change things in favor of healing unless we know what needs changing.

Again from Dennis Merritt Jones, "Our body exists in its own field of intelligence. It is profoundly wise, and on many levels, knows what it is doing. Not only does it know how to gain our attention, it will attempt to heal itself when given the opportunity."

**Video – *Your Body Temple is Listening***, Rev, Dr. Michael Bernard Beckwith

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXGd7EGCFTg>

Let's support one another in healing...in living lives of Wholeness.

Because I know that there is only one Infinite Presence, expressing Itself as its creation...each of us made in God's image and likeness. We have everything we need already within us. And so I take this opportunity to know for each one listening that Wholeness is the Truth of our being, and we set about the Good Work of allowing that Wholeness to be revealed. We give our attention to our Wholeness. We become interested only in Wholeness. In this moment, I commit to spending some time daily in deep conversation with this body that so graciously carries me through life. I ask...I listen...and I respond lovingly to meet its needs. And in turn, it does what it was created to do...return to perfect health, body, mind, and spirit.

With a deep sense of gratitude for this community, and for all the gifts of this and every day, I say thank you Holy One. You have certainly blessed us all! I release this prayer, in full faith that it has been answered. I let go and let God...And so it is! Amen!

### **Rev. Diana – Offertory**

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!**

**Offertory Music – *Listen to Your Heart***, written by Paul Kamm & Eleanore MacDonald

**Chris – Blessing for the offering.**

**Chris – Invitations**


 **Tuesdays, 3-5 pm – Michael Bordeaux's Book Club** is reading *Breakfast With Buddha* by Roland Merullo. Drop-ins welcome.


 **Thursdays, 3 – 5 pm, Metaphysical Bible Study** with Prayer Practitioner, Chris Johnson. Drop-ins welcome.

 **Co-Creation Gathering - Friday, October 7<sup>th</sup> 6:00 – 8:30 pm** Join the Leadership and Volunteers of Mystic Heart Spiritual Center for an evening filled



with luscious desserts, beverages, reflection, brainstorming and Conscious Conversation. Let's begin the process of Co-Creating 2023! All are welcome!

 **You Can't Take It With You - Shasta College Performing Arts Theater, Friday, October 21<sup>st</sup> at 7:00 pm It's gonna' be a blast! Tickets: \$15 are available today!** No-host dinner at 5:00. Contact Rev. Diana for more information.

 **2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Spring Retreat at Coram Ranch in Shasta Lake, April 20-23, 2023.** A non-refundable deposit of \$100/adult is required by November 1<sup>st</sup> to guarantee your space. Additional payments can be made as you're able. Payment in full is due by April 1, 2023.

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

**Chris – Invitation to Prayer, email signup cards**

**Also, if you didn't hear earlier,** we have reached our first \$100 donation to Farmer's Footprint. Thanks to your generous lunch donations, we are sponsoring an acre of Regenerated Farmland. Shall we go for another?

**Closing Song – *Love Be With You*,** written by Lainey Bernstein, RScP & Gary Lynn Floyd