

Ancestral Time, Cosmic Time

November 27, 2022

(First Sunday of Advent)

Rev. Diana Johnson, with Chris Johnson, RScP

Taizé



A Beloved Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Bell – Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

Chris – Opening Prayer

Rev. Diana – Good morning and welcome

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

Chant – *Silent Night, Holy Night*, written by Franz Gruber

Rev. Diana

Today is the first day of Advent on the liturgical calendar, the Christian Calendar of Feasting and Celebration. I wasn't raised with the observance of Advent, but in recent years I have found that reinterpreting this Ancient Tradition has deepened my experience of the holidays. They have become much more sacred...they have become Holy-Days.

The Season of Advent begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. It is a time of stillness, of quiet waiting for what is yet to come...for the physical light to return...and for what is to be born in us and in our lives.

Each Sunday of Advent, we will be lighting a candle to bringing our awareness to a particular quality of Spirit...a quality that we seek to embrace in our own lives. This week we light the first purple candle representing Hope, or Faith. I see these as two places along one continuum. Hope is a place to begin...a desire or expectation of Good. And Faith is that deeper trust, or even a knowing that all that is unfolding is ultimately Life-Affirming, no matter the appearance.

Let's begin our meditative journey this morning by closing our eyes and turning the gaze inward...settling into the breath...

Noticing any tension, and letting it go...breathing in, then pausing...breathing out, then pausing...and again...savoring the experience...remembering that it is Life Itself breathing you...grounded in this Powerful Presence, we enter into sacred ritual...we form and hold a powerful Vision.

Together, we envision a web of Consciousness, surrounding and infusing the planet...we see and feel ourselves as a point of radiant Light in that web... feeling the Light that you are radiating from deep within you...now expanding our awareness, and sensing that same Light shining in and from every human...no exceptions. Moving

beyond our human family, we acknowledge every creature as an expression of Light...every plant, every rock and grain of sand...the soil and the water...the clouds...the heavenly bodies...all glowing with One Light...expressions of One Life.

We know that there is no separation between us...we feel our inherent connectedness. As one human family, we acknowledge our personal responsibility and our role as caretakers...in Sacred Service to one another...to all life forms...and to the planet that sustains us all.

Grounded in our Oneness, we center our awareness in this month's theme, **Sacred Time**, and we explore the powerful ebb and flow of Spirit moving throughout **Ancestral Time, (and) Cosmic Time**.

This month has led us from our most intimate way of marking time...the cycles of the breath...into the experience of Chronos, or clock time. We have explored ways of moving out of our linear experience into Kairos, or the flowing sense of timelessness. We have practiced using our cycles of breath to bring us back to the present moment...and to help our dance with time become more elegant.

We have spiraled out from hours to days to weeks and months, attending to the natural rhythms to help ground us in the now...we mark time by noticing the phases of the moon...we are reminded that all of creation needs regular times of rest and renewal...and we consider what it means to build Sabbath...a time of ceasing...into our lives. We bring our awareness to how the months turn to seasons of the year, and to the seasons of our lives.

This morning, our contemplations move even further outward along the spiral...we bring our awareness to **Ancestral Time** and to **Cosmic Time**. We shift our attention from the limited experience of our one precious lifetime to those who have come before, and those who will follow in our footsteps...how we have been affected, and how we will affect future generations...and to the place where Cosmic Time brushes up against eternity.

Life in our Western world doesn't give us much time or encouragement for honoring the stories of our Ancestors. It doesn't value the past, marching ever-forward...no time for looking back. Manifest Destiny has been its Clarion Call. But our family stories live inside of us, just waiting for us to give them room in our lives so that we might better understand who we are today. This is true both individually and collectively.

We have scientific evidence through the work of epigenetics that family wounds are carried unconsciously from generation to generation. The stories and traumas of our grandmothers and grandfathers are our stories. We can help to heal the wounds of the past, and in the process heal ourselves, by telling those stories again – giving voice to the voiceless, unnamed secrets, and to the celebrations, insights, and wisdom gathered over time.

(Sacred Time, Christine Valters Paintner)

Silence – 1 minute – Bell

Mythologist and storyteller Michael Meade asks us to consider looking at fate and destiny through a new lens. What if fate is simply “the set of agreements your soul makes before you enter the world to live within a certain family system and a particular time and culture?” And what if our destiny...our soul’s deepest calling...actually emerges from our fate in terms of family life? Rather than running from our issues, we listen to them as “exactly the place where we may learn what we need to respond in fullness in the world?” What if the situations and circumstances that I have had to deal with in my own brand of family wounding is precisely what will break open my greatest gifts?

20th century psychologist Murray Bowen invites us to consider that patterns of relationship are transmitted from generation to generation. Once we become aware of the ways that our family system has operated, we are free to consciously change the pattern by choosing different ways of responding and behaving, so as to not continue past cycles of dysfunction. From my life experience I know that it is possible to break such cycles of abuse and neglect...to awaken to my own responsibility for, and power over, my life’s circumstances. Where in your life have you witnessed or taken part in the breaking of a negative ancestral pattern?

This is the time of year that many of us honor the Ancient Hebrew and Christian traditions that celebrate the birth of the Christ Child...or metaphorically, bringing forth, or acknowledging the existence of, the Christ Consciousness as it exists in potential in every one of us.

In following the stories given to us by the Jewish people, we find several quotations that speak to the carrying of ancestral patterns. In Exodus 34:7 we find God, the Father, “visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children and the children’s children, to the third and fourth generation.”

Is this a threat made by an angry God, or simply the way things work when people do nothing to break ancestral patterns of behavior?

And in Ezekiel 18:20, “The son shall not suffer for the iniquity of the father, nor the father suffer for the iniquity of the son. The righteousness of the righteous shall be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon himself.” Is this an inconsistency in sacred scripture, or one prophet’s way of saying that each of us has the capacity to put an end to ancestral dysfunction and lay a new path for those who come after? We are only doomed to repeat the past when we are not aware of its stories, or not willing to change their direction moving forward.

Chris – Guided Meditation

The Sacred Time called Advent consists of the four weeks preceding Christmas... a time of joyous anticipation... and a period of deep contemplation... The word advent comes from the Latin *adventus*, which means arrival... something coming into view... perhaps the birth of the Christ Consciousness in human form...

The Latin *adventus* also gave rise to the word *adventure*... which we associate with excitement, and possibly danger... How are these related?... Are we being called forth into an adventure?... some kind of Hero's Journey?... What risks might we be called to take in this Sacred Time?

Christmas is not just about celebrating the birth of a great soul hundreds of years ago... These stories invite us to contemplate our own Divinity... our level of commitment to our spiritual growth... how we continually give birth to our own Christ Consciousness... and giving birth *is* an adventure... a true Hero's Journey...

The Babe whose birth we celebrate at Christmas grew up to challenge the patterns of dysfunction in his society... Deeply grounded in his ancestral spiritual and familial lineage, he denounced the hypocrisy... he championed social justice... he condemned destructive practices... and he modeled a better way...

In this Holy Moment, let us look within... let us connect with our heredity... what we have inherited and what we will pass on to our descendants... Let us deeply examine the story we were born into... What chapters empower us?... What segments discourage us?... How shall we edit our story for the highest good of those who come after us?... What Christ Quality shall we give birth to this season?... As we share this silent and sacred time together, imagine your spiritual adventure unfolding...

Silence – 3:00

With gratitude for the music that gently guides our awareness back into the here and now, we give thanks for the vision of our hero's journey... and for the courage with which we engage it... We are so grateful for the inspiration and guidance of the Christ within us... Thank you God for everyone and for 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 continues her message this morning, we make ourselves fully available to receive the Wisdom of the Divine, knowing that it finds us in the Sacred Now – where Ancestral Time and Cosmic Time intersect...

Rev. Diana

Sacred time...organic time...is rhythmic, cyclical. It sees periods of destruction as making way for new growth and possibility.

“When religious traditions write about life after death being eternal, they don't mean that we will live as we do now, only with an endless number of days. Instead, we will be immersed in the Now. The purpose of most spiritual practices is to simply arrive, right Here, right Now. And for many of us, it will be the longest journey we ever take.”

This spiral or cyclical vision connects us to a grander order of things, one less concerned with the minute details of each day, with our moments fraught with anxiety or fear of being behind..." and more interested in our relationship with deep time, with geologic time, with cosmic time.

As we prepare to close in prayer, I offer this wisdom from Thomas Berry in his book *The Great Work: Our Way Into the Future*. He says:

"If such moments as dawn and dusk, birth and death, and the seasons of the year are such significant moments, how awesome, then, must be the present moment when we witness the dying of the Earth in its Cenozoic expression and the life renewal of the Earth in an emerging Ecozoic Era...We will recover our sense of wonder and our sense of the sacred only if we appreciate the universe beyond ourselves as a revelatory experience of that numinous presence whence all things come into being."

Hold this Truth close to your heart...know with me now that...

It is the one Presence, expressing and experiencing Itself as all of Life...It is expressing Itself as each and every one of us here and now. Opening to the beauty of this Advent Season, I open my heart and mind to the possibilities seeking to come forth *as my life*. I open to the qualities of Spirit that are forever awaiting my recognition and expression. I open to the Christ Consciousness that lives within me and awaits Its birth in my experience as I more often choose It as my Guiding Principle.

For this and so much more, I give thanks. All of Life is Gift...every breath, every moment, a blessing. With deep gratitude for all of it, I release this prayer, trusting in the Power of the Word to create a Graceful path forward for each of us. I let it be...I call it done. And so it is! Amen!

Musical Meditation: *Turn, Turn, Turn*, written by Pete Seeger (from Ecclesiastes 3)

10:12 Diana – Offertory

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 Song – *So Many Blessings*, written by Steven Walters

Rev. Diana – Blessing for the Offering

Closing Song – *A Soul's Blessing*, written by Chris Johnson

A Conscious Conversation

Bell – 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 – We Shall Be Known** by Karen Drucker

Rev. Diana

I invite you to remain standing and get your whole body involved in our Vision of a Love-Soaked World. Take a moment to feel the vibration of Life in your body...Infinite Intelligence moving through you...Love Energy filling you up...bringing your hands and arms to life, coming up through your feet and legs, moving toward your chest and filling your heart.

As we embody our Divine Connection, join me in Sacred Ritual...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 new world of our creation, every member of the human family serves as a *conscious* vessel through which God's blessings flow.

"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 not only possible, but *inevitable*, we choose to be a part of it. We take the necessary steps toward its creation. We call it forth from the realm of Infinite Possibility, knowing that it is taking form, right here and now as we *align our actions* to support and nurture its Graceful unfolding. We give thanks, we let it be. And so it is! Amen!

Are we ready for a **Conscious Conversation**?

This month we've been talking about Sacred Time. During Taizé this morning, we began by lighting the first candle of the Advent Season, the candle of Hope, or Faith. Let's see what we know...

What is Advent? What does it represent?

How long is it?

What does the word mean? ('to come')

What does it symbolize?

What are some of the gifts of the Advent Season for those who choose to observe it?

(The season of Advent invites us into a time of waiting for whatever will be born in our lives, and in us)

What are the qualities involved with waiting?

(Patience; the release of control or surrender; being present; compassion; gratitude; humility; and faith in something bigger than ourselves.)

So the celebration of Advent is a yearly cycle. We've been talking about cycles and rhythms all month. During Taizé, we were reminded of the cycles of breath; the daily, weekly, and monthly rhythms, which we can use to call us back to our True Nature. We remembered that the seasons of the year and the seasons of our lives can also serve as reminders to stay present.

During Taizé, we also did some exploring of Ancestral and Cosmic Time, in keeping with our month's theme. We were reminded that the Rabbi Jesus was one who challenged the patterns of dysfunction in his religious and political cultures. Chris reminded us that, "Deeply grounded in his ancestral spiritual and familial lineage, he denounced hypocrisy, championed social justice, condemned destructive practices, and modeled a better way...the way of Love and complete acceptance.

The contemplation of our own ancestral lines led us to ask, "What dysfunctional ancestral patterns have I helped to interrupt in my lifetime? Which ones are still calling for my attention? How will I leave the world a better place for those who follow?"

And finally, we spent some time considering Cosmic Time...the seemingly endless span of time that brushes with eternity. It is in the contemplation of Cosmic Time that the gift of humility is most obviously felt. Don't you think?

How do you feel, as a human being, when you think about the span of Cosmic Time?

What does the word *humility* mean?

(The root of the word is the same as *humus* and *human*...and means *of the earth*.)

The mystics of every age and tradition have taken this definition a bit further. They seem to agree that if I, as a human, am of the earth, then I have a purpose here...nothing in the cosmos is here without a purpose. And I will return to the earth when my purpose here is fulfilled. According to these masters of wisdom, there is one Spiritual Law, one Power, and one Intelligence at work here. We are each an intentional expression of It. Without that Power and Intelligence, we are nothing. You may or may not agree.

So Cosmic time moves at its own pace. We can do nothing to change the unfolding process of Life Itself. We find ourselves waiting...for the death of an old paradigm and the birth of a new one...for the crumbling of systems that no longer work and the creation of new ones that better serve life on the planet.

Author Holly Whitcomb, in her book *Seven Spiritual Gifts of Waiting*, emphasizes that waiting brings humility. She says, "Sometimes we wait because we can't do anything else. We recognize that we are powerless. That powerlessness can be a spiritual opening. In our vulnerability, we realize that forces and powers greater than ourselves have taken over. It is during those times of waiting that we learn humility."

Humility leads us to Grace. When I realize that there are always other things at work over which I have no control, I let go and allow the flow of Grace to move into my life. In the book of Philippians, it says that "I can do all things through the one that strengthens me."

In the Science of Mind and Spirit, Dr. Ernest Holmes says it this way: "To have the same mind that Jesus used, the mind of God, implies a power which is available to all and may be used by all...We have the mind of Christ in such degree as we trust implicitly in the universe and no longer do those things which contradict the fundamental goodness. From this mind proceeds the perfect law, which is a law of liberty. This mind is God working in and through us. God can work for us only by working through us."

When we use our minds to plant seeds of Love, we reap God's Grace in our lives. We are able to receive the natural Goodness that is ever available.

Whitcomb also says that humility leads us to love rather than achievement. What do you think she mean by this?

Waiting gives us a chance to slow down our *doing* for long enough to recognize *who we are*. It may allow time to re-evaluate, to re-prioritize our lives in ways that honor our souls.

It may offer us the precious gift of time...the gift of humble awareness that love is more lasting than achievement, and that our time may be better spent in activities driven by the sharing of our love.

Humility leads us to honor others. It changes our perspective in ways that take us outside our ourselves. Suddenly, it's not all about me. We recognize the suffering of

others; and the Love within, the God within, looks for ways to acknowledge, or truly see, the other. This builds our capacity for compassion.

Humility leads us to live without judgment. Let me ask you a question... **Have you ever gotten impatient while waiting and judged the person who is trying to help you as incompetent?** No one else? Just me?

Here's an invitation for the next time that happens...remember humility...Take a breath, take a fresh look around. Who is trying to help you...what's it like to be you? How can you respect what they have to offer? What is their perspective on this? What you receive from them is up to you. Wouldn't that be a different experience?

Okay, the last point...**Humility leads to honest assessment.**

Would you agree that as individuals, we each have unique perspectives? And would you agree that our perspectives are colored by our personal filters, experiences, and beliefs?

An interesting thing about honest assessment...most of us have no problem whatsoever naming our flaws, shortcomings, and failures. But many of us have more difficulty with living into our giftedness. The author says that "We often refuse to accept our belovedness, and occasionally, we throw back in God's face the uniqueness and amazing talents we have been given."

True humility grounds us in understanding who we really are, the whole truth of it, both positive and negative.

Humility means authentically assessing our gifts and our potential, as well as our failings and sins, or mistakes.

Join me in listening deeply to the words of Marianne Williamson...I know you have heard them before, but I was reminded of this powerful quote as I completed the reading of this book...they never fail to move me, to open me more deeply to the Truth of who I Am.

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Who are we not to be?

You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

And so I invite you to a Practice in the remaining weeks of Advent...as together we wait for the return of the sunlight and the revealing of the Light that shines within each one of us. Try this if you dare... I have placed these questions in your programs today, in case you are willing to accept this challenge.

Every night, as you prepare for sleep, ask yourself two questions: First, are there any actions I have committed today for which I need to make amends? And second, how have I used my God-given gifts today?

Allow your eyes to gently close if you are comfortable...let's close in celebration of the Light...

Closing Prayer

There is only One eternal Light, One Consciousness, One Intelligence, One Power... I call It God...I call it Life...It is the Power, Intelligence, and Process that brings Life into being. I Am an expression of that Light, and so are you. All that exists, at its very core, is Light. And so I know that the Light is bound by Law to return...according to physical laws, the sun reappears in God's perfect time. According to mental laws, the light of greater knowledge dawns on each one of us according to our readiness and willingness to receive it. And according to the great Law of Spirit, each one of us is evolving...awakening...in our own right and perfect timing.

For this I give thanks, honoring and celebrating the Light, releasing, accepting, embodying, and radiating the Light of the One...And so it is. Amen!

Musical Meditation – *Long Before*, written & performed by Danny Barca

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 Video – *Love Is Loose In The World*, written & performed by Peter Mayer
Chris - Blessing for the Offering.

April – Invitations

Returning this week:

♥ **Tuesdays, 3-5 pm – Michael Bordeaux’s Book Club** is celebrating with the classic movie, *Miracle on 34th Street*. Refreshments provided. Order your books ahead of time for the next book club book...***Lunch with Buddha***.

♥ **Thursdays, 12 – 2 pm, Fast Track to Wellness**, a book study and support circle for bringing the Body Temple into a healthier state of being. We are currently listening to and discussing *The Obesity Code* and *Life in the Fasting Lane*.

♥ **Thursdays, 3 – 5 pm, Metaphysical Bible Study** with Prayer Practitioner, Chris Johnson.

Mark your calendars for **North State Giving Tuesday, November 29th**. Mystic Heart is on the list this year to be able to receive donations...pass it on!

♥ **Saturday, December 10, 2022, from 10am to 2pm. Merry Christmas, Mother Earth!** Contact Amanda Hunter or Rev. Diana for more information.

♥ **Wednesday, December 14th, 6:30 – 7:30 pm.** Sound Healer Sherry Barret will be offering a Sound Wash Meditation Experience in Suite I.

♥ **Wednesday, December 21st, 6:30-8:00 *You Are the Light: Christmas Candle Lighting Service*.** Childcare available.

♥ **2nd Annual Spring Retreat at Coram Ranch in Shasta Lake, April 20-23, 2023.** A non-refundable deposit of \$100/adult is required to guarantee your space. 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

Closing Song

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



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