

Honoring Our Ancestors

Sunday, October 30, 2022

**Chris Johnson, RScP, with Rev. Diana Johnson
Musician, Dalton Fitzgerald**

Taizé



A Beloved Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Bell – Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

Rev. Diana - Opening Prayer

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

Chris – Good morning and welcome

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

Chris

Good morning, I am Chris Johnson, Prayer Practitioner here at Mystic Heart Spiritual Center, and I would like to welcome you home... Home to our Beloved Community, and home to your own Mystic Heart – where Divine Wisdom dwells within you.

If you are comfortable doing so, I invite you to gently close your eyes and take a few deep breaths... Allow all that has come before this moment to fall away and center your awareness in this moment. Here and now, we enter into the presence of one another, and into the Divine Presence...

Feel yourSelf aglow with Divine Light... Now take a moment to expand your awareness to those around you... each one a spark of Radiance in the Global Web of Consciousness... Now spiral out to include family and friends... neighbors... all in our city... our county... our state... the world... Connected by Spirit, we celebrate our Oneness with all of humanity... with all of creation... We see all the animals... plants... soil... water... air... planets, stars, and galaxies shining with the same Divine Light that we are... One Life, One Spirit expressing in infinite variety... Now let your consciousness spiral out even farther... beyond time... into the ancient past... and into the distant future...

I invite you now to remain grounded in the Truth of Who and Whose we are, as we join together in exploring this month's theme, ***Honoring the Sacred***, and the subject of our contemplation this morning, ***Honoring Our Ancestors***.

This week marks the celebration of ***El Día de los Muertos (The Day of the Dead)***, ***All Saints Day***, and ***All Souls Day***. All of these commemorate those who are no longer walking the Earth with us. It is a time of remembrance of the people who literally made us who we are, those who crafted the world we were born into, and whose legacy we have inherited. They are the giants upon whose shoulders we stand.

We are who we are largely because of those who came before us. We are each independent avatars of Spirit, but our relative experience has been shaped by our experiences, our genetics, and the teachers and teachings we have adopted. By looking back at our ancestors, we can behold where we came from, the direction our lives have taken, and use that to chart our way into our own future. We can see the evolutionary pattern and consciously work with it to co-create our lives in the most beneficial way possible. When we identify and honor our ancestors – both familial and spiritual – we hold them in their proper place: a place of gratitude.

The Ancient Wisdom of our ancestors is still alive within us in what Carl Jung called the *collective unconscious*, or what Ernest Holmes referred to as the human *race consciousness*. All the thoughts, ideas, and feelings ever experienced by humans are available to us by plumbing the depths of our shared *subconscious mind*. As we extend our awareness within with the intention to access this Ancient Wisdom, we find it inspiring us and revealing itself to us. This is the Divine Mind thinking through us and as us.

I invite you to open your inner ear to inspiration as I read this poem, written by Native American Elder Martha Kaelbli Erickson, better known as Momfeather:

Ancient Voices

Did you listen today? What did you hear?

The ancient ones call, and we feel them around us, but we do not listen. We no longer hear the voices in the wind as the leaves and branches tell us stories. The moon brings us messages and we do not see them. We are too busy with the world created by man. Take your children back to the times when the voices were heard, and the signs were given. Go back before the importance of Creation leaves us forever. The voices of the ancestors may have been silenced by the death call, but they are only a whisper away. Their music may have faded from our ears, but must we let the delicate sounds of our past go with them? Our children need the teachings that are leaving us forever. Sing the words in a lullaby, whisper to them so they hear, lead them and they will follow. Never let our traditions die. Respected and revered the old ones still walk with us. They hold our hand to help us see. They still lead us, and we must follow. We need not let the dreams they had for the future depart this life. This is why they honored us with their wisdom. When they leave us one by one, they take the book with them, leaving a patchwork of dreams on the web of life. What we do with the patches will help us to grow in wisdom. The Earth Mother is bountiful enough for all her children. Working together we can bring back the unique and powerful voice of our past. Grasp the insights and perceptions in the wind. The future of our children depends on our actions today. Do not let the voices of the ancestors or the echoes of their songs fade away.

Silence – 1 minute – Bell

We don't have to look all the way back to ancient times or mine the subconscious to benefit from the wisdom of our ancestors. Some of it survived in the words of the elders

we grew up around. Most of us have had a relative that we looked to for advice, inspiration or simply comfort – whose wisdom resonated as truth in our heart. For me, this was my Granddad. My mother’s father was my chosen role model and was admired by all of his grandchildren. As Dalton and Rev. Diana offer this musical tribute, I invite you to hold in mind your favorite elder – one that you knew personally – and the gifts they bestowed on you. As for me, Granddad, this one’s for you.

Meditation Music – *Grandpa*, written by Jamie O’Hara

SILENCE – one minute

Rev. Diana – Guided Meditation

Let us call to mind the image of a sponge and how it soaks up water upon contact. If there are dyes or other contaminants in the water, these are infused into the sponge as well. This is an analogy for how consciousness works. Consciousness is like a vast sea with nearly eight billion little sponges floating along, bumping into one another. Each of these sponges represents the human mind or consciousness, connected by the sea water that infuses each one. The water itself contains remnants of all that has ever contacted it, and by the process of osmosis, these remnants enter the sponges, as well.

As has been suggested this morning, human consciousness, and by association our individual consciousness, is shaped by our ancestors, by our parents, by our DNA, our culture, and our conditioning. The patterns of thought that make up and infuse the mental atmosphere have existed for millennia and are continuing to be formed by everything we think, say, and do as a human community. Someday in the distant future, we will *be* the ancestors for future generations. *Our* pictures will be on display. What will they represent to *our* grandchildren? This question draws our awareness to how important it is that we keep our attention focused on what we *want* to see more of in our lives and in the world. What imprint do *we* wish to leave on future generations? I take this contemplation into the silence. **Silence – 3 min.**

Bringing our attention back to this time and place, I acknowledge that wherever my awareness is focused, especially when infused with emotion, I am creating an imprint in the race mind. I am contributing to either peace or violence, love, or fear...whether I am aware of it or not. It is what it is...and it does what it does.

In this sacred moment, in this holy place, I commit to building the awareness, determination and consistency required to engage in the deep soul work of cleaning the lenses of my perception so that I might come to be known as a Peaceful, Positive, Compassionate and Loving influence... a Powerful and Beneficial force for good...an ancestor who was part of the solution. From this place of deep Presence and

Intentionality, we open once again to the inspiration offered by Chris this morning...in gratitude, our hearts and minds are open.

Chris

To conclude the Taizé segment of our gathering this morning, I would like to offer this poem, written in the Zulu tradition by Mazisi Kunene:

In Praise of the Ancestors

Even now the forefathers still live
They are not overcome by the power of the whirlwind.
The day that sealed their eyes that did not conquer them.
Even the tall boulder that stands over them
Casts only a humble shadow over their resting place
They are the great voice that carries the epics
The Ancestors have come to listen to our songs,
Overjoyed they shake their hands in ecstasy.
With us they celebrate their eternal life.
They climb the mountain with their children
To put the symbol of the ancient stone on its forehead.
We honor those who gave birth to us
With them we watch the spectacle of the moving mists.
They have opened their sacred book to sing with us
They are the mystery that envelopes our dream.
They are the power that shall unite us.
They are the strange truth of the earth.
They came from the womb of the universe
Restless they are, like a path of dreams,
Like a forest sheltering the neighboring race of animals.
Yes, the deep eye of the universe is in our chest
With it we stare at the centers of the sky.
We sing the anthems that celebrate their great eras.
For indeed life does not begin with us.

Please join me in Prayer

Chris – 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 – *Down in My Soul*, written by Jan Garrett, JD Martin, & Ester NicholSEN

Chris – Blessing for the Offering

We are working on our second acre of farmland to be regenerated by farmers with the support of Farmer's Footprint. All coffee and food donations today will help in sponsoring our second acre.

Closing Song – A Soul's Blessing


Conscious Conversation

Bell – Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

Opening Prayer – Rev. Diana

Chris – 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 – God is My Source** by Karen Drucker

Chris

I invite you to remain standing, if you like, and get your whole body involved in realizing – *making real* – our Vision of a Love-Soaked World. Feel the energy in your hands, your feet grounded to the floor, Divine Creative Consciousness coursing through your body.

Now envision with me our world in which Peace, Joy, Abundance, True Freedom, and Social Justice are the rule, not the exception. Where all of humanity practices Compassion, Generosity, and Dignity – where all of us realize that we are not only responsible for the well-being of our Brothers and Sisters, but for the welfare of Mother Earth HerSelf.

Centered in our awareness of ourselves as instruments of the One Creator, we focus on our deep desire to establish a world in which poverty, hunger, homelessness, violence, fear, and greed are things of the past... Where all have access to medical care, housing, education, comfort, and creative expression... A world where healthy relationships, dignified work, and a sense of belonging are universal...

As we live and act from our highest intentions, we create a world where all people, animals, plants, and the environment are valued as Sacred Creation... A world in which God's unlimited abundance is allowed to flow freely to all... Where all are recognized as deserving of all the blessings Life has to offer and are free to receive them gratefully.

Nothing can stop a Divine Idea whose time has come, so *there is no reason we cannot have such a world*. We hold this vision steadfastly, knowing – as Nehemiah did – that “We are doing a great work, so that we cannot come down.”¹

Do you feel it? Now we're ready for **Conscious Conversation**.

In our Taizé this morning we looked at the legacy into which we were born, and at our ancestors as “the giants upon whose shoulders we stand.” We talked about looking back before our own time to get a long-term view of the direction we were already going when we were born, and let it inform where we are headed. And we touched upon the concept of the Collective Unconscious – the shared memory of the Human Race – in which all of humanity’s thoughts and feelings are stored. We’ll get back to this idea in a while. But first, let’s explore:

Who are our ancestors?

Ancestors literally mean *those who came before*. We generally think of our ancestors within the context of our birth family... those whose DNA we inherited.

Do they have to be genetically connected to us?

The concept of Unity tells us we are all connected/related.

Who among us has not adopted a second family? Often separated from our birth family in adulthood, we tend to gravitate toward a group of people with whom we resonate, and who satisfy needs that our family once fulfilled. Chief among these is our need for belonging. We can likewise adopt ancestors whose attributes we admire and seek to emulate – authors and teachers from long ago, inspirational leaders, others who have affected us in some way,

Who are some “ancestors” whom you have adopted?

(For me, “Uncle Jesus,” “Uncle Waldo,” “Uncle Ernie,” “Aunty Mother Teresa,” my musical “Uncles” Ludwig, Johann, Wolfgang, & Paul McCartney)

Earlier I promised that we would look at the concept of Race Consciousness, the shared Collective Unconscious memories of the human race, sometimes referred to as the Akashic Records. “Our” subconscious mind appears to be our access to the portion of Divine Mind that we share. I like the metaphor of many wells drawing water from a single, shared aquifer. That “mental aquifer,” is a shared resource that we are constantly drawing from and contributing to. Being subconscious – that is, below the level of our conscious awareness – we are mostly unaware of it. But in meditation, I believe that we can “reach out” mentally and emotionally to those who have gone before us.

Rev. Cynthia Bourgeault refers to an Imaginal Realm – not imaginary, though we use our imagining faculties to get there – that is a liminal space between the physical and spiritual spheres. Communication here is not face-to-face, but spirit-to-spirit, mind-to-mind, heart-to-heart. She believes that this is where Jesus appeared to Mary Magdalene and the other Apostles. But that’s a whole ‘nother Sunday, if not a 10-week class!

With our belief in Race Memory, an open and receptive heart, and our desire to contact an “ancestor’s” memories, I think we can “hear” or feel their thoughts accurately. I believe that we have direct access to their wisdom.

Has anybody else experienced this phenomenon, either with a family ancestor or an adopted one?

What happened?

What did you *do* with this information? How did it help you?

How might this kind of wisdom help you?



An inventor might contact Edison or da Vinci



A physicist might contact Einstein or David Bohm



A Spiritual Teacher might reach out to Ernest Holmes,

We are now on the cusp of three major holidays that were developed to Honor our Ancestors. Tuesday, November 1st is **All Saints' Day**, Wednesday, November 2nd is **All Souls' Day**, and **El Día de los Muertos** – the Day of the Dead – begins on Monday and ends Wednesday the 3rd.

Hallowe'en, which is only a major holiday in the candy, costume, and movie industries, is actually a contraction of **All Hallows Eve**, the night before All Saints' Day.

All Saints Day, or **All Hallows Day**, commemorates the Christian martyrs put to death for refusing to renounce their faith, as well as those whom the Catholic Church has designated as saints.

All Souls' Day is celebrated in remembrance of the rest of those having made their transition beyond this world.

El Día de los Muertos is not just a Mexican version of Halloween. It began as an Aztec celebration of death as an integral part of the life cycle. It begins at midnight on November 1st, **el Día de los Angelitos** (Day of the little angels), when it is believed that the border between the spirit world and the physical world dissolves just enough to allow the spirits of deceased children to be reunited with their parents for 24 hours.

The following midnight, the morning of November 2nd, begins **el Día de los Difuntos** (deceased), when the barrier between the worlds closes to the *Angelitos*, and opens for the spirits of the deceased adults. On both days, altars called **ofrendas** (offerings) are set up with food, photos, favorite toys, and the like. The ofrendas for the adults may include tequila and other liquors.

At midnight on the morning of November 3rd, the portal between worlds closes for another year, and the private family celebrations give way to the public celebration that we know as **el Día do los Muertos**. People come together dressed up, with faces painted like skulls or *calaveras*, and parade in the streets. Cemetery visits are common, and fresh marigolds and gifts are left for *los muertos*. It is customary to tidy up the grave site and clean the headstone as well. This is truly a day of Honoring our Ancestors.

Closing Prayer

Please join me in prayer: In this moment of Honoring our Ancestors, we acknowledge the Ultimate Ancestor – the Creator and Source of all that is. Whether we call that One

God, Spirit, Divine Mind, or Dios, we recognize the Divine Presence in ourselves and all of creation. Knowing that we are one with God and one with everyone who has ever lived or ever will live, we bring ourSelves fully present to the Eternal Now.

Looking back through time with profound gratitude to our ancestors, and gazing into the distant future to those whose ancestors we will be, we enter into this Sacred Covenant: To give our very best to this life; To be wise stewards of the planet we will leave to our children's children's children; To continue our work to build a Love-Soaked World for them to be born into; And to make of ourSelves an eternal spiritual resource which they can tap into for strength, Love, Wisdom, and a sense of deep belonging.

As I release this prayer with gratitude for all that has been, and for all that will be, I simply say Thank you, God, for everything and for everyone. And we anchor this into our experience by saying together, And so it is. Amen.

Chris – 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** and use our Donate Link at the top right of any page, or to find our mailing address on the Home Page, if you prefer to mail a check.

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 – *River of Souls*, written by Dan Fogelberg


Rev. Diana – Blessing for the Offering


Rev. Diana – Invitations

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

 **Thursdays, 12-2 pm – Fast Track to Wellness: A Book Club & Support Circle**, with Rev. Diana. We'll begin our discussions with a reading of *The Obesity Code*, by Dr. Jason Fung, an overall update of current Nutrition Science. *It's not just about obesity.*

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

 **Sunday, November 20th, 6:30-8:00 pm – Please join us for the Shasta Interfaith Thanksgiving Service**, at the Church of Latter-Day Saints. We will be serving as ushers. Anyone interested in singing with the Interfaith Choir should contact Rev. Diana for more information.

 **2nd Annual Spring Retreat at Coram Ranch in Shasta Lake**, April 20-23, 2023. A non-refundable deposit of \$100/adult is required by November 1st 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.

Rev. Diana – Invitation to Prayer

We are working on our second acre of farmland to be regenerated by farmers with the support of Farmer's Footprint. All coffee and food donations today will help in sponsoring our second acre.

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

¹ Nehemiah 6:3