

Gifts of the Mother

Sunday, May 14, 2023



A Beloved Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Rev. Diana Johnson, with Lucinda Alton, RScP, & Chris Johnson, RScP

Taizé

Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

Lucinda – Opening Prayer

Rev. Diana – Welcome, and Happy Mother’s Day...if you’re new with us here this morning, my name is Rev. Diana Johnson, and I am the Pastor and Spiritual Director of Mystical Heart Spiritual Center. We are an Interfaith Community that teaches Universal Principles and Practical Spirituality. I welcome you home to our Spiritual Community (should you choose it). I welcome you home to the Guidance and Wisdom of your own Mystic Heart.

And I thank you for joining us in celebrating the Divine Feminine in each of us, the Creative aspect of our humanness, and the gifts and beauty of our Beloved Mother Nature.

This morning we center our reflections and contemplations on ***The Gifts of the Mother***. We begin our meditative journey this morning by joining our voices, deepening our intimate Connection in Spirit.

Chants

 **Welcome Home to Your Mystic Heart**

 **Dropping Down**, written by Karen Drucker, Amy Bishop, & Gary Lynn Floyd

Rev. Diana – Dropping Down, taking a long, slow, deep breath...feeling the brief pause, and then letting it go...feeling the Presence of New Life entering your being with every breath in...and allowing anything that is not Life-enhancing to be released back into the atmosphere where it is transformed...breathing in Vibrant Energy, and then sending that Energy out into the world on the outbreath, creating an atmosphere of Love, Peace, and Wholeness, both within and without...

Taking another moment to follow the breath as it settles into its own natural flow, and then slowing it just a bit... and now allowing your awareness to move away from the breath, grounding even more deeply into the silence, into the eternal nature of your being, where you feel and know your Oneness with the Creative Intelligence of the Universe. Together, we are attuning ourselves to a higher vibration as we co-create this

experience with the Infinite...take a moment to feel the Energetic Vibration of Spirit in your body.

We take a moment to feel the Oneness of our global community...Sensing a web of consciousness that surrounds and infuses the planet, each of us a radiant point of Light in that web...and now extending our vision to all beings, acknowledging every human, every creature, every plant of every kind as a part of the web...every rock and grain of sand, every drop of water, infused with God's Radiant Light...extending still further into the cosmos, the wind, the clouds, the stars, the planets...one Light, one Life.

Acknowledging our connection with all of life, our collective Work here is empowered...Our collective prayer and meditation leave an imprint of Peace, of Love, of Grace, on the world, on the cosmos, for all time...transformation is under way...Wholeness is being revealed.

As we come together this morning, we share a heartfelt intention...to spend time, as Spiritual Family, in deep communion with that which is beyond time and space, beyond definition and description...from deep within, we feel the impulse to grow and evolve, choosing to do so consciously.

This month, we are focusing on the Spiritual Quality of Creativity. There is a Creative Process always at work...we recognize it in Nature...we know it as our lives unfolding...and we take part in the process of Creation, in our own lives and as part of a Global Community. As one by one, each of us acknowledges and learns to consciously create, our lives and the life of our planet is being transformed.

The Gifts of the Mother...the receptive, nurturing, and sustaining aspect of the Divine...the counterpart to the Holy Father, or the volitional, generative aspect.

In ancient Chinese Philosophy, we find the Yin Yang symbol. It represents the seemingly opposite forces or aspects of Life, of the All-That-Is. Rather than opposite, these forces are actually complementary, interconnected, and interdependent in the natural world. Each gives rise to the other, Spiritual Power flowing between them, as they interact. Each of them is present in every one of us. Today I am speaking of Yin...allow yourself to acknowledge and experience the Yin Energy in you...

In other traditions, there are other names for the receptive, creative energy of the Universe. A Christian might call It the Holy Spirit...ancient mystical traditions might call It Sophia or Lady Wisdom...the New Thought traditions might call It the Soul, or the Creative Medium. By whatever name we call It, we know It as the foundational Principles that govern the Universe...and so, they govern our lives.

What do we know about Spiritual Principles? They are predictable...we can depend on them. They are impartial...they work the same way for everyone, all the time. They respond by corresponding to whatever we give our attention to...whatever we send out is mirrored back...we create a cause, and according to Principle we get a corresponding effect. They are invisible, and so we tend to forget they are always working...whether we know it or not...whether we like it or not.

We might be familiar with these Principles as the Law of Expectation...what we are looking for is what we find...the Law of Being...what we are in the world, what we bring to the world, is what we experience...or the Law of Faith...what we have faith in is what we perceive and draw into our lives.

It is reassuring to know that there is a Power at work that we can tap into, that we can use to make our lives more Peaceful, more Abundant, more Beautiful. In fact, once we are conscious that this is so, Its Power seems to grow. This can be the good news or the bad news...As long as we remember that it is always working, and align our thoughts, words, and actions accordingly, our lives become more Graceful as time passes.

We can consciously call on the Divine Feminine to assist in our creation of a more Beautiful Life, and a more Beautiful World...call her name and she will answer.

Musical Meditation – *Mother Take Us There*, by Jonas Magram

Silence - 1 minute

Chris – Guided Meditation

We call the Divine Feminine by many names... Mother Nature... Shakti... Shekhinah... Sophia... Mother Earth... or simply the Goddess... Gentle, tender, compassionate, and kind, she is the nurturing aspect of Spirit... the Great Cosmic Mama that holds the universe in her lap ...

She is also the Womb of Creation... giving birth to all that exists in the phenomenal world... and then lovingly sustaining her creations... providing all that is needed that they may flourish and thrive... She receives our prayers, planting them deep within HerSelf, where they begin to develop and grow...

Hindus, Jews, and Christians all believe that human beings are born with attributes of the Divine... the Spirit dwells within us, as us... Whether we are male, female, or non-binary, the Divine Mother is present and active in each of us... She shows up as our creativity... our intuition... our compassion...

Each of us has a unique blend of masculine and feminine energies, qualities, and attributes ... and these characteristics influence how we interact with the world... We might visualize a spectrum with Yin on one end and Yang on the other... In meditation we may look within and find where we are currently balanced...

The very act of looking within in meditation is an expression of our Divine Feminine Nature... We open our hearts and minds to receive Inspiration... We engage our intuition... our undefended receptivity to whatever it is that our Soul is longing to discover... As we share these moments of Sacred Silence, I invite us to contemplate and connect with our creative, nurturing, compassionate nature... Let us listen deeply for the loving whispers of the Divine Mother...

Silence – 3:00

As the music gently guides our awareness back into this time and this place, we give thanks... We are grateful for this shared communion... for the support of Spiritual Community... for the insights and inspiration we have received... Thank you, God for everyone and everything...

Fully unified and identified with both our Yin and Yang qualities, we allow them to bring our thoughts, words, and actions into greater balance... and as we do so, that harmony is reflected in our life experiences... competition yields to cooperation... lack to abundance... greed to generosity... anger to peace...

As Rev. Diana continues her uplifting message, we expand our receptivity, our compassion, and our intuition... And we give thanks for these Gifts of the Divine Mother...

Rev. Diana

Why not give our full attention to a Creative Vision...to what we want to experience, to who we want to *be* moving forward? Real change begins in the invisible world...in our faith. We choose to consciously place our faith in the Love (or self-givingness) of the Infinite. We place our faith in the Law, or Divine Order and Process that is always at work. We place our faith in the purposeful nature of everything that happens, trusting that it moves us toward a Higher experience of ourselves...that it serves our soul in some way as it makes its evolutionary journey. The Infinite Intelligence of the Universe uses everything for Good. Nothing is wasted.

Taizé Closing Prayer

And so, right here in this Sacred Moment, I breathe in all that has been spoken. I allow it to change me, so that I might become more and more open and responsive to the Creative Life of Spirit moving through me. I realize that there is only One Thing going on here and that is God expressing and experiencing Itself as all of creation; how else *could* It express Itself? And so, It must be living Its life as mine. It beckons me to give It permission to live fully and completely...and so I do. I say Yes to all of the Good that Life has to offer. I open fully to welcoming and receiving the Joy, the Peace, the Beauty, and the Grace that so easily flows to me and through me as I let go of all that has come before and start anew. I Am made new by the renewing of my mind. I am so grateful for this realization, and for the chance to begin again, in every moment. I have absolute Faith that my Powerful Word is creative and moving into form and experience right here and now for each one listening; I release it fully and completely to the Loving, Lawful Presence, calling it done. And so it is. Amen...Sathu...Ashay...Aho!

Musical Meditation – *Oh Mother, God, by Karen Drucker*

Rev. Diana Coming back into this space, we open our eyes, our hearts, and our minds. Take a look at who is here celebrating with you this morning. This is your Spiritual Family...one of your support systems. These are some of the people who care about you, who are there for you if you need anything.

Offertory

As we close our Taizé Meditation, 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 Video–

 **Communal Wealth, from Farmer's Footprint** <https://youtu.be/uzkSqlb8VMk>

Rev. Diana – Blessing for the Offering

Taizé Closing Song

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

Conscious Conversation

Rev. Diana & Chris – Music

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

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

 **Song – We Let It Be (Love, Love, Peace, Joy, Grace, Love)**

Lucinda – Opening Prayer

Rev. Diana – Welcome, and Happy Mother's Day...if you're new with us here this morning... my name is Rev. Diana Johnson, and I am the Pastor and Spiritual Director of Mystical Heart Spiritual Center. We are an Interfaith Community that teaches Universal Principles and Practical Spirituality. We welcome you home to our Spiritual Community (should you choose it), and welcome home to the Guidance and Wisdom of your own Mystic Heart.

This morning we center our **Conscious Conversation** on **The Gifts of the Mother**. By this I mean the Divine Feminine in each of us, the Creative aspect of our humanness, and the gifts and beauty of our Beloved Mother Nature.

Before we jump into our Conversation this morning, we invite the felt Presence of Spirit into our bodies, however that works for you, and we join in the Sacred Practice of envisioning a **Love-Soaked World**.

...where all humans are embodying and living from Peace, Joy, Abundance, Generosity, Justice, and Freedom as the Living Principles that guide our lives...where all humans practice Loving Kindness and Compassion, honoring and caring for one another, and for our beautiful planet as our Sacred Home.

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...where mental/physical health, education, and healthy relationships are ensured by social systems grounded in

Wellness and Wholeness... where right livelihood, creative contribution, and a sense of belonging are accepted as Gifts of the Spirit and enjoyed by all...

A world in which all beings are valued and respected 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 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 person is a caring and conscious vessel through which Generosity flows. By the Power of our collective intention, we write a new story...we create a world that works for all beings. We know that our Good Work is bearing fruit.

We *do not* lower our Vision, no matter the appearances in the world, knowing with our whole hearts that such a world is not only possible, but *inevitable*. It is coming into being now...and we trust that this prayer is an integral part of its Graceful unfolding.

We open our hearts, our doors, and our arms in Radical Welcome, erasing all lines of apparent separation. We create an open and loving community to which all are invited, and *in* which all have an equal voice. Our Powerful Vision is moving into form and experience here and now, and so we simply let it go and let it be. And so it is...Amen...Sathu...Ashay...Aho!

Let's take a moment to look around and notice who is sharing this space with you this morning. This is one of your support systems, your Spiritual Family should you choose it.

If you were with us at Taizé this morning, you know that we have been looking at ***The Gifts of the Mother***. For those who weren't there, we talked about the Creative Process always at work...we recognize it in Nature...we know it as our lives unfolding...and we take part in the process of Creation, in our own lives and as part of a Global Community. We contemplated Yin and Yang, and how we all have and express both Feminine and Masculine qualities, and how they are not opposite energies, but rather complementary. And we reflected on the Spiritual Principles that are always at work in the Creative Process.

I'd like to riff off of those ideas by asking some additional questions and seeing where it takes us. Okay?

To set up the first question, I'd like to share some thoughts from Carolynn Myss's audio interviews entitled *Holy Language*.

Basically, she says that the invisible world is so well organized...it is not carelessly put together. Quite literally, everything we think, say, feel, and do leaves an imprint...sets a cause in motion.

We are all part of one living Consciousness...there truly is no separation between us. And if this is so, then what I am thinking is no longer private...it affects the world around me, every person who crosses my path, and beyond...“All life breathes together.”

What are your thoughts about that?

She also speaks of how some people are afraid that through technology, they are being watched...listened to. Her advice is to “never mind the government, it’s heaven you should worry about.” We are all part of one Mind...

Every word you say is a prayer, every choice you make makes a difference.

Do you believe this is true? How do you know? How does it make you feel?

Something else to consider...

Happiness is not created as a result of certain conditions existing...certain conditions are created as a result of Happiness.

Love is not created as a result of certain conditions existing...certain conditions are created as a result of Love.

Compassion is not created as a result of certain conditions existing...certain conditions are created as a result of Compassion.

Abundance is not created as a result of certain conditions existing...certain conditions are created as a result of Abundance.

Freedom is not created as a result of certain conditions existing...certain conditions are created as a result of Freedom.

Happiness, Love, Compassion, Abundance, and Freedom are all states of mind; one can choose which state of mind to adopt.

No matter what state or quality we choose, we find the same Truth. Beingness precedes experience and produces it.

Anyone want to share your thoughts?

Does this ring true for you?

Where do you find evidence that this is true?

What if we are not in a place where we are feeling happy, loving, compassionate, abundant, and free? What if we have good reasons? What if we’ve been hurt? Or what if we have old, calcified thought patterns wired into our brains that get in the way of our experiencing these things?

I’d like to offer a tool that may be new for you. It’s a specific kind of prayer to add to your toolbox. Before we jump into the Practice, let me give some context by sharing a couple of passages from Gregg Braden’s book *Secrets of the Lost Mode of Prayer*.

Read from pages 70-71

Read from pages 72-73

Then he asks, “How do we suspend our negative emotions while we access the powerful space between?” He invites us to consider the ancient practice of Blessing.

Read from pages 78-79

Human beings tend to push negative feelings away, to not deal with them, and they get lodged in the body. Over time, these ignored feelings create emotional blockages and physical illness. It is important that we find ways to allow our feelings to move through us without allowing them to overwhelm us. The Practice of Blessing is one way to create a powerful *space between*...a space where there is no positive and no negative, no right and no wrong...a space where something new can be created.

Like forgiveness, Blessing is not condoning something that happened or inviting it to happen again. It is simply acknowledging what happened without judgment. Here is how it works.

First, ask yourself, “Am I willing to let go of any need for retribution?” If the answer is yes, you can move to the next step. If no, there is a need for further reflection: “Why would you choose to hold onto a belief that keeps you locked into the hurt that is causing you to suffer?”

Once you feel a loosening...a willingness take hold, the rest is simple.

Say out loud, “ I bless the one who has been harmed.”

Then, “I bless the one who caused the harm.”

And finally, “I bless myself for the witnessing.”

While you are engaged in Blessing, a space is created for healing.

Let’s end by giving it a try. You can do this silently if you wish and save the vocalizing for when you are in the privacy of your own space. Just remember that the voicing does lend power to the process.

Call to mind someone, or a group of someones, who are suffering, or have suffered. It could be you or someone else, an organization, whatever is on your heart right now.

Begin by blessing the one that is suffering. Be specific. I bless...

Next, bless the one that caused the suffering. Again, be specific. I bless...

Finally, bless yourself in the witnessing...be specific.

Now, in the silence, do it again, as many times as you can in the next minute.

Silence – 1 minute

Closing Prayer From the Gnostic Gospel of Peace... “In the moment between the breathing in and the breathing out, is hidden all the mysteries...” (Pause)

And from the Gospel of Thomas... “If you bring forth that which you have within you, it will save you. If you do not, it will destroy you.” (Pause)

In this sacred moment, knowing that God is the one Source of all of life, the one Universal Living Presence, expressing and experiencing themselves as all of creation, I relax in the knowing that I Am That...I Am a perfect and intentional expression of the Divine.

I Am honored and privileged to offer this Blessing. To all who are suffering in the world, I bless you. To all who cause suffering, I bless you. And for the witnessing of suffering in our daily lives, I bless us all.

In this blessing, I stand in the gap between what has been and what is yet to come. I hold a safe and sacred space for possibilities to flourish, and for a more beautiful world to come into being. In deep faith that my prayer is powerful, that it makes a positive impact, and with profound gratitude that I Am part of the co-creation of our future, I release my Word into the receptive field that hears and responds to it with a resounding YES!

I let it be so, and so it is! Amen! Sathu! Ashay! Aho!

I invite you to bring your awareness back to your body, to your senses, to the atmosphere in the room. And when you are ready, open your eyes to re-enter the space. Welcome back.

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!

Offertory video – *Kiss the Ground Exclusive Clip/Mr. Azocado Gets Back to Earth* by Jason Mraz

<https://youtu.be/QoaahKYuUtc>

<https://youtu.be/vX0mEU2QQpQ>

Lucinda – Blessing for the Offering

Rev. Diana – Invitations

- ♥ **This Monday, May 15th – 6:00 – 7:30**, at the Redding Public Library Community Room, Shasta Interfaith is co-sponsoring an Interfaith Panel Discussion. There will be leaders from five faith traditions, talking about their religion and taking questions.
- ♥ **Michael Bordeaux and the Mystic Heart Book Club** is reading *Dinner with Buddha* this Tuesday from 3-5 pm. We listen and discuss, so no book is needed.
- ♥ **Kavalya Poirier is offering Functional Movement through Yoga** on Thursday, 11 am – 12:15 pm.
- ♥ **Fast Track to Wellness** with Rev. Diana meets on Thursdays from **12:30 – 2:30** pm. This is a physical health and wholeness support circle. Drop-ins are welcome.
- ♥ **Metaphysical Bible Study** with Chris Johnson meets on Thursdays from 3:00 – 5:00 pm. Drop-ins are welcome.
- ♥ **This Friday, 6:00-9:00 pm, Our Annual State of the Heart Gathering. Please RSVP for directions.**
- ♥ **Farmer's Market every Saturday, 7:30 – noon. Come and see us!** Also, sign-ups are available to take a turn working the booth or transporting food to the Good News Rescue Mission.

Mark Your Calendars Now...

- ♥ **Next Monday, May 22nd, from 7:00-8:30 pm** – Angela is facilitating The Skillful Ally, a discussion & learning Group at NorCal Outreach. See me for more details.
- ♥ **Saturday, June 3rd from 10 am – 4 pm**, Mystic Heart will be participating in the Pride Festival. Sign up to work a shift in our booth or help out as a volunteer in the food booth.

Looking Far Ahead...

- ♥ **Next year's retreat at Coram Ranch is booked. What you need to know for now... Dates: Thursday, April 25th – Sunday April 28th, 2024.** Next year's cost will be \$350 for adults; there is a lesser amount for children (more information will be sent out via email). Monthly payments can be set up if that is helpful.

Closing Song

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

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