

# *The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing But the Truth*

*Sunday, August 20, 2023*



A Beloved Community  
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Rev. Diana Johnson, with Chris Johnson, RScP

## *Taizé*

### **Call to Awareness – 3 Bells**

#### **Chris J - Opening Prayer**

**Rev. Diana** – Welcome...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.

#### **Rev. Diana & Chris – Taizé Chants**

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

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

**Rev. Diana** – We take a moment to breathe together...as one living organism...breathing in and grounding ourselves in the Peace that dwells in this space...and exhaling, sending that Peace back out into the room, into the world...and now, together, honoring the connection with our global family...We envision a web of consciousness that surrounds and infuses the planet...each of us, a radiant Light, shining within the web, reflecting the pure radiance of our Divine Nature...every human, every other-than-human creature, every plant, a shining expression of the One Light...the rocks and minerals, water and wind, stars and planets...each one a perfect and intentional creation, emanating from One Source...from the One Light.

As we come together this morning, we set an intention...to leave a positive imprint on human evolution and on the world, for all time...an imprint of Love, Compassion, Kindness, Peace...leaving an imprint of Truth.

The flow of Taizé this morning reminds us that we are best served when we live our lives according to ***The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing But the Truth***...it points us in the direction of the eternal...timeless...unchanging.

In this day and age, it is sometimes difficult to discern truth from fiction. We are bombarded daily with information and misinformation...both presented as truth. How are we to tell the difference?

Is there a difference between my truth and your truth? Only when we're speaking of relative truth, rather than Absolute Truth. What is the difference? Relative truth refers to conditions and situations that are changeable...to facts, beliefs, opinions, perceptions, projections, experiences. Absolute Truth is that which is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow...for all beings...at all times...across all cultures...in other words, the One Source...the Essence, Substance, and Process of Life forever unfolding...according to Divine Order and Timing.

The Spiritual Journey calls us to live our lives in greater and greater alignment with Absolute Truth...God, Great Spirit, Divine Mystery. It doesn't matter which faith path is chosen, the goal is the same...coming to know ourselves as Divine Human and living accordingly.

In the words of Paramahansa Yogananda,

Religions are many; but in the course of realizing Truth, or God, all seekers – be they Hindu, Christian, Buddhist, Muslim, Jew, or follower of any path, or none – will discover that true religion, or the actual experience of God, is the same for all. God is one; there is only one Truth, though its aspects are myriad.<sup>1</sup>

And what are the aspects of God? We might also know them as Divine Qualities and Spiritual Principles. Love, Life, Light, Peace, Power, Joy, Beauty, Abundance, Freedom...

...inherent Qualities, given us at birth, forever available when we choose to experience and express them.

And Spiritual Principles...the Laws of Attention, Choice, Faith, Expectation,

Though the effects of these Principles in our lives vary according to what we feed into them, the way they work is consistent...infallible.

Unless I am speaking of, or attending to, these Qualities and Principles, I am not grounded in Absolute Truth. But with the endless distractions of human life, how do I remember Who I Am...How do I connect with my own Divinity? It's not as difficult as we make it...stop, breathe, and listen to the Silence.

## **Musical Meditation**

 ***Listen to the Silence***, by Eddie Watkins, Jr.

According to Spiritual Principle, what we attend to is what we will experience. What we are interested in makes itself known. Look for Truth within and all around and you will find it.

## **Chris – Guided Meditation**

Spiritual teachers and Prayer Practitioners are often asked, “How do I know what is true?... How can I tell if I'm hearing Divine Guidance or my own human thoughts?... How

do I distinguish between the *Still Small Voice* and the opinion of my ego?...” Our inner dialogue is often confusing and even contradictory...

Transcendentalist poet Walt Whitman advised us to “... no longer take things at second or third hand... you shall listen to all sides and filter them from yourself...”<sup>2</sup> He seems to indicate that we have an innate ability to filter out what is untrue... the capacity to discern between Absolute Truth and relative thoughts and conditions...

We have four filters that we can use to determine what is true... the intuition of our spirit... the logic and reason of our mind... the emotions of our heart... and the feelings in our body... Many of us start by figuring it out with the mind... some consult the emotions... and there are others who go straight to their gut feelings...

We can use all four of these filters together to purify our awareness of Truth... First, we engage our intuition by aligning *our* spirit with the Spirit of Truth... we ask for Divine Guidance... then we consult the other filters... is it reasonable?... How are my emotions reacting to this?... Do I feel resistance anywhere in my body?...

As we approach our three minutes of shared, silent contemplation, I invite you to recall an idea or teaching which you may question the truth of... engage your intuition... then ask your mind, “Is it true?...” and listen... Ask your heart... listen again... Ask your body... scan it for feelings... receive its wisdom... Finally, take all of these insights back to Spirit in prayer... Ask that Divine Wisdom reveal the Absolute Truth to you... Open, receptive, and expectant, simply ask, “Is it True?...” and *listen*...

### **Silence – 3:00**

Allowing the music to guide our attention back to this time and place, we give thanks for our deeper embodiment of Truth... With profound gratitude for this communion with Divine Spirit and with our Beloved Community, we simply say thank you, God, for everyone and for everything...

The quest for Absolute Truth is an infinite journey... there is always more of Spirit to be revealed... greater understanding of Reality to embody... And along the way, we have these touchstones... *This I know to be True*...

With hearts and minds wide open to receive Rev. Diana’s continued inspiration, we are encouraged, empowered, and eager to seek and express *the Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing But the Truth*...

### **Rev. Diana**

Are you living a True Story? Of course, at the relative level, all that you experience as your life is true. What is *your* story? Let’s take a moment to ask...what is it that I tell myself over and over again? About my past, my present, and my future? In order to have a lasting impact, our stories have to be told and retold.

Gangaji tells us that “All stories have a narrative. Your narrative is what you tell yourself through thoughts and images with accompanying emotions.” She asks, “What is your narrative?” Let’s take a moment of silence to listen...

### **Silence - 1 minute**

What did you find? The story is bound to be familiar...we all have one. It is natural for human beings, with our developed cognitive abilities, to generate and follow our own narratives. The only problem is that stories can limit us...by their nature, our narratives define us and create all kinds of perceived limitations. Following our stories directs our attention to that which is ever-changing, instead of to that which is constant, eternal, and infallible. It causes us to place our faith in the material, the physical, the impermanent. And when we do that, fear is a natural response.

We are told by the Saints and Sages of every tradition that it is our faith that will set us free...but only when our faith is grounded in the Eternal Source, in Life Herself. Our faith *either* binds us *or* frees us, depending on what we place our faith in...it is up to us which way it goes.

We are told that God is Love...and that we cannot be simultaneously grounded in both Love and Fear. When we have our minds and hearts centered in Love...in God...in that which is all-knowing, all-powerful, and everywhere present, there is nothing to fear. Because we know that the Qualities of Spirit are within us, always available...and that our lives are always Guided by an Intelligence that is far beyond our own...

...that everything is always unfolding by Divine Order, according to Spirit’s Timing...and that is ***The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing But the Truth.***

Let’s affirm that Truth as we close in prayer.

### **Closing Prayer**

In this sacred moment, I Am at Peace. I feel and know the Truth of Who and Whose I Am...a perfect and intentional expression of the One Life, here on purpose...necessary to the unfolding of the Creation. The Life of Spirit would be incomplete without my existence...my participation. And my life would be incomplete without my recognition that I am a Spiritual Being having a human experience.

Feeling and knowing that there is a Power, a Presence, an Intelligence, always on the field, I can relax...I lean into my deep faith, trusting the Great Mystery to unfold for the Good of All. As I walk through my days, I keep my Vision centered on Truth. I know that the conditions, situations, and experiences of my life always bear gifts...they are forever pointing me towards a higher version of myself, when I take the time to look, to ask, to listen...and then to act accordingly.

As I attend to what is mine in the physical, I am lifted and carried by Spirit’s ever-present Grace. And for this, I am grateful. Thank you, God, for this life, for this physical body that serves as a vehicle for your Presence, and a vessel through which your Love and

Compassion can be felt in the world. My life is showered with too many blessings to count, and I give thanks for each one.

I release this prayer, fully aware of its Power. Knowing all that unfolds from this moment forward is my prayer coming into form and experience, I turn it over to the Loving and Lawful Presence of the One...letting it be. And so it is! Amen!

Coming back into the awareness of our bodies...our senses...the atmosphere in the room, we open our eyes and allow our gaze to take in whatever is before you.

Feel free to look around and say good morning to everyone 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 and are there for you if you need anything.

### **Rev. Diana – Offering**

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](http://mysticheart.org). And we thank you in advance for your gifts.

**Offertory Music – *If the Race is Over***, by Daniel Nahmod

<https://youtu.be/pc7qwiWa09U>

**Rev. Diana – Blessing for the Offering**

**Rev. Diana & Chris – Closing Song**

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

## *Conscious Conversation*

**Chris J. – Opening Prayer**

**Rev. Diana** – Good morning and welcome, or welcome back...welcome to those joining online. If you're new with us here this morning... my name is Rev. Diana Johnson, and I am the Pastor and Spiritual Director of Mystic Heart Spiritual Center. We are an Independent Interfaith Community that teaches Universal Principles and Practical Spirituality. We welcome you home to our Gathering Place and to the Guidance and Wisdom of your own Mystic Heart.

**Rev. Diana & Chris – Opening Music**

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

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

 ***Woke Up This Morning***, Traditional Gospel

**Rev. Diana** – Calling Awareness to the Presence of Spirit in the body...join me in the embodiment of living in a **Love-Soaked World...**

...where all humans embody and live from Kindness, Compassion, Peace, Joy, Abundance and Generosity, Freedom and Justice as the Living Principles that guide our every thought, word, and action...where all humans honor and care for one another, for the earth that sustains us, and for every life form that shares this beautiful planet with us.

We are creating a world where all needs are met...where all beings are well-fed, and have the safety and comfort of home...

...where mental/physical health, education, and healthy relationships are ensured by social systems grounded in Wellness and Wholeness... where all beings Serve the greater community doing whatever feeds their souls and are well supported for their time and talent...and by their Service, each one finds a sense of belonging...

A world in which all beings are valued and respected for their uniqueness...where Authenticity and Integrity are the norm...where the Peace and Kindness we cultivate within shows up as a world free of hatred or violence.

With our growing Awareness, and by the Power of our collective intention, we are writing a new story...a story in which greed is a thing of the past, and there is abundance in having enough.

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*. We align our actions to support our vision, and a new world is being born.

We open our hearts, our minds, our doors, and our arms in Radical Welcome, erasing all lines of apparent separation. In keeping with our Vision, we create an open and loving community to which all are invited, and *in* which all have an equal voice. With deep faith in the Great Mystery that acts upon this prayer, we accept its Graceful unfolding into form and experience, and in Sweet Gratitude, we release it now to the Living, Loving, Lawful Presence.

And so it is...Amen...Sathu...Ashay...Aho!

Let's take a moment to look around to say good morning to your Spiritual

Family...some of the people who care about you...people you can count on when you need a hand.

If you were with us at Taizé this morning, you know that our topic this week is **The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing But the Truth**. We took a meditative journey through our personal narrative...

...what are the stories I tell myself about myself...about my life? What are the stories that I repeat over and over again...about my past, my present, my future?

**Anyone have a story to share? Maybe it's one you're working to outgrow, or have outgrown?**

We reflected on the ways our stories define and limit us. Even the really good stories keep us attached to outcomes.

**We tend to think that it is the less-than-empowering stories that limit us, but even really great life stories can be limiting. Can anyone think of a really good story that might limit you?**

(My narrative says that Mystic Heart is a growing, thriving community that takes this form that you see. But what if at some point it wasn't succeeding in this form...maybe it was pulling toward change form...become a teaching ministry or a gardening ministry, or a Church of the Wild? Could I feel like a failure as a Pastor, rather than going with it and allowing it to shift? In Truth, would I be a failure? Would the church be a failure?)

Point made...all kinds of narratives define us...all are limiting.

Again, going back to Taizé, we talked about Spiritual Truth...sometimes we call it Spiritual Law or Principle as being the Absolute Truth. And we reflected on more accurate language for relative truth...facts, opinions, beliefs, perceptions, experiences, projections.

Spiritual Law is forever at work, whether we know it or not, whether we like it or not.

**What are some of the Spiritual Principles or Truths that you recognize?**

(Law of Cause and Effect – choice, faith, expectation, reciprocity)

Okay, let's turn a bit of a corner. There is an article in this month's SOM Magazine that I'd like to share with you... It addresses one of New Thought's most misunderstood teachings. It's called *No, It's Usually Not Their Problem*.<sup>3</sup>

**Read Page 13 of August SOM**

**If we're attempting to see truth as something unchanging, what is a more accurate phrase than *my truth*?**

**Read Page 14.1-4**

**What is the difference between *liberty* and *license*?**

(liberty refers to acting from one's free nature and engaging in the God-given privilege of choosing; license refers to acting with abusive disregard for rules of personal conduct. It is my right to freely make a choice...and take the consequences...vs. I'll do whatever the hell I want to! ...often without regard for consequences.)

**Read Page 14-15.2**

**What do you think of this statement: If someone has a problem with you, the first place to look is within...?**

**Read page 15.3-16.5**

**What do you think? Is each of us responsible for making things right for everybody across the planet?**

**Read page 16.5 - end**

New Thought teachings sometimes get a bad rap...but like other spiritual teachings, it is usually due to our misunderstanding of their original intent.

No matter which path fits your life and your search for Truth, plumb the depths. Don't just take what somebody tells you as Truth. Try it on in your life...explore, experiment, study. And ask for Inner Guidance. When we are listening, Spirit will always speak ***The Truth, the Whole Truth, and Nothing But the Truth.***

**Closing Prayer** – We accept this as Absolute Truth...there is One Life...the Life of Spirit...forever expressing as all of Creation. And so, we know that each of us in an intricate, unique, and perfect expression of Divinity...here on purpose. There are no mistakes in God...all expressions are Beauty, Love and Light taken form. Each of us is imbued with all of the Qualities of Spirit, and at choice in every moment as to which ones we will call forth. Will my thoughts be peaceful or violent? Will my words build up or tear down? Will I point my finger in blame, or open my heart in compassion?

The Spiritual Journey is so simple...it is we who complicate it. It's all about love...not in the emotional sense, but in self-givingness as a way of life. We are told to love God, love ourselves, love our neighbors, love our enemies. Give of ourselves in whatever ways we are called to give. For every act of love, it is done unto us. And for every act of less-than-love, so it is done. That's it. There is nothing else.

We move into this week allowing it to be simple...even easy...to make the right choices...and in doing so, we serve ourselves well...we serve one another well...we serve Great Spirit well. We become extensions of the mighty Love of God, serving as the hands, feet, hearts, and voices of the Creator. Each of us becomes a beneficial presence on the planet, leaving a positive imprint for all times.

Thank you, Spirit, for the blessing and support of Spiritual Community. Thank you for the endless ways I am lifted and moved by your Presence.

Thank you for this life and all that it brings...and from this deep sense of gratitude, I release these Words, trusting in their creative Power...seeing them come into form and experience for each one listening. And so they do...And so it is. Amen!



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.

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

Each Sunday, we invite you to join in the celebration of the work we are doing in the world by sharing of your financial Good, should you choose to.

If you are at home, you can go to **mysticheart.org** to use our Donate Button or to find our mailing address.

We also have a Gracious Giving Program for those who would like to make a heartfelt monthly commitment of support so that we can more effectively plan for our growth. You can find more information on our website.

As we move into this time of giving, hold these words close to your heart and know how much we appreciate your gifts:


**As I awaken to the God within me and all around me, I see Abundance everywhere I look. I consciously step into that flow of Abundance by this act of giving. I offer this gift freely in the spirit of Love, blessing and sending it forth to heal and prosper. It is evidence of my deep faith. It does good work in the world and blesses all of Creation. I give from a consciousness of Abundance! And so it is! Amen!**

**This beautiful song offers one way to write our stories differently. Enjoy!**


**Offertory Video – *Look For the Good*, by Jason Mraz**


**Chris – Blessing for the Offering**


**Chris – Invitations**

 **The Mystic Heart Book Club** is back this week to finish *The Essential Path* by Neale Donald Walsch.

 **Metaphysical Bible Study** is back this week Thursday from 3 – 5 pm.

 **Monday, August 21<sup>st</sup>, 7:45 am**, we will meet here to caravan or carpool to the new Mormon Temple in Yuba City, followed by lunch at the Yuba City Sikh Temple. If you'd like to join us and have not yet rsvp's, you can let Rev. Diana know after the service.

 **Tuesday, August 24<sup>th</sup>, 12:30-2:30 pm, *Fast Track to Wellness* will be re-starting.** If you're looking for support on your journey to physical wellness, this group might be for you.

 **Saturday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 1:30-4:00 pm, *Cultivating Soil and Spirit*.** Rev. Diana will be offering the second in this series of workshops...starting seeds for your Fall Legumes and more.

**Looking Ahead...**

♥ **Common Threads of Truth, Tuesday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, 6:00-8:00 pm** – Amarjit Singh of the Sikh Tradition, and leader of the Anderson Sikh Centre, will be presenting.

♥ **Rev. Diana will be teaching *The Universe is Calling* on Tuesday evenings from 6-9 pm beginning September 5<sup>th</sup>.**

♥ **Chris will be teaching *Living the Four Agreements* on Wednesdays from 2-5 pm beginning September 6<sup>th</sup>.**

♥ **Please join Mystic Heart on Friday, September 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 pm for a joyous time of drumming and spiritual togetherness.**

♥ **Join Rev. Diana for *Mandala Meditation: a Journey into God*, . Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup> from 1:30-4:00 pm.**

**There is more information about all of our events and activities in your Bulletin and on our website.**

**Prayer Requests, Practitioner available after service, Information Cards if new people**

**Rev. Diana & Chris – Closing Song**

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

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<sup>1</sup> Paramhansa Yogananda, *Self-Realization Fellowship Lessons: Introduction*

<sup>2</sup> Walt Whitman, *Song of Myself*

<sup>3</sup> Jesse Jennings, *No, It's Usually Not Their Problem*, from Science of Mind Magazine, Vol.96, no. 8