

# Communion With God, By Whatever Name

September 3, 2023



A Beloved Community  
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Rev. Diana Johnson, with Intern Practitioner Chris Netto, and Chris Johnson, RScP

*Taizé*


## Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

### Chris N. – 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 – Chants

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

 **Let Love Be the Guide**, written by Dennis Bryan, Kalyani, Diana & Chris Johnson

### Rev. Diana –

We begin by taking a long, slow, deep breath...sensing a brief pause, and then letting it go...feeling the Presence of New Life entering your being...following the breath as it moves...creating an atmosphere of Peace and Wholeness, both within and without...And now allowing your awareness to move away from the breath, grounding even more deeply into the silence...into the awareness that you are One with the Creative Intelligence of the Universe...and acknowledging your Oneness with all that is.

Together, we honor our connection with all beings...we envision a web of consciousness that surrounds and infuses the planet...each of us, a radiant point of Light, shining within the web, reflecting the Light back to the many beings that share this space and time with us...every human, every other-than-human creature, every plant...the rocks and minerals, water and wind, stars and planets...each one a perfect and intentional creation...a shining expression of One Light, emanating from the One Source...

We are not only connected to one another, we are One Life. As two or more are gathered, our prayer and meditation leave an imprint of Peace, of Love, of Grace, on the world, on the cosmos, for all time. Take a moment to feel into the atmosphere we are creating...

As we come together, we set an intention...that each of us is a beneficial presence on the planet...that each leaves a positive imprint on human evolution...and that as a community, we use this time to move the world toward a more Loving, Compassionate, and Peaceful expression...together, we stand for Truth...we walk as Truth in action.

This morning we center our reflections and contemplations on ***Communion With God, By Whatever Name.***

Each of us relates to the Great Mystery of Life in our own way. Not all of us are comfortable with the word *God*. I invite you to take a moment now to settle on whatever name is comfortable for you...whatever word allows you to relax into deeper Communion.

How we understand or communicate with *That Which is Beyond All Knowing* is a very personal thing. There is no right or wrong way...there is only *our* way. And our way may shift and change throughout our lifetime.

Whatever our practices for connecting with Spirit may be, there are pathways of connection we share in common. All of us have physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual aspects to our being. And all of these facets must be considered as we approach the Divine.

Communion is one of those words that can set our triggers in motion...but this word, from the Latin, means *common ground*. In this sense, Communion with the Great Mystery can mean recognizing, accepting, and experiencing our own Divine Qualities...it can mean settling into an experience of Loving Presence or Pure Awareness.

As a Divine Being, having a human experience, “Your communion with God, your meeting with the creator within, begins with knowing your physical body, understanding your physical body, honoring your physical body, and using your physical body as a vehicle that is meant to serve you...” and your fellow beings. In order to know your body, you must listen to what it has to say.

“Health is an announcement of agreement between your body, mind, and spirit.” When the body is ailing, one aspect or another is out of balance. Perhaps your body needs rest, but your mind does not know how. Or maybe you are not attending to feeding your body well, or giving it enough exercise...or too much...and it is letting you know. Listen to the body...it will not lead you astray. It is a spiritual practice to care lovingly for the body...and it is the first step in being able to settle into Communion with God.

After taking better care of your body, the next step in meeting the Creator within involves controlling the emotions. It is important to realize that “Emotions are experiences that are chosen, not experiences to which you are subjected.” The outer circumstances of your life need not have a great impact on your internal experience. True masters experience Peace in the *face* of adversity...*not* because they have found a way to avoid it.

Just as nourishing and exercising the body are foundational to experiencing Communion, so is practicing meditation, breathwork, or anything that brings peace to the mind, allowing you to regulate the emotions.

Once the Body Temple and emotions are in alignment, it is time to invite the cooperation of the will. In order to experience **Communion with God, By Whatever Name**...in order to sense Pure Awareness...there must be a *willingness* to do so. The will, like the emotions, can be directed.

When left to its own devices, human will can become *will-full*...can want its own way...creating doubts and other distractions to keep us from our moments of peaceful surrender.

In order to invite and sense the Presence, there must be a suspending of all doubt...a moment of belief in possibility...faith in the miraculous.

**Communion** calls us to acknowledge and care for all aspects of our humanity...to honor this human experience as Sacred. Only then can we meet the Creator within.

### **Chris – Guided Meditation**

There are hundreds of names for the Divine Spirit that is the essence of all Creation... and yet whatever name we use is simply a symbol... it points beyond itself to Something too vast to be named... Something that surpasses human understanding... that transcends, yet includes, all gender, race, ethnic, and religious identities...

To develop a deeper communion with Spirit, it behooves us to choose a name that resonates within us at all levels... Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit... a name that makes sense to us... that satisfies our rational understanding of the Divine... one that evokes emotion... that opens our heart and inspires us to greater Love and Devotion...

We must choose a name that feels right in our gut... no sense of tightness or resistance from our body... And finally, our ideal name should be in harmony with our previous *experience* of the Divine Presence... evoking the memory of past mystical experiences, and creating an opening and expectation for God to show up that way for us again...

In discussing spiritual matters, we may use any of the Divine Nicknames that seem appropriate... But in our Communion – in our Prayer and Meditation – using a name that enriches our mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual sense of the Holy Presence allows us to participate more fully in the Mystical Experience...

In our shared three minutes of Silent Meditation today, I invite you to contemplate one or more of your favorite nicknames for God... How does it settle in your heart?... in your mind?... and in your body?... Does it help to evoke the Mystical sense of Oneness with Spirit?... with other people?... with all of Creation?... Silently repeat the name over and over, like a mantra... How does it feel?... If it empowers your Communion, keep going... if not, try another name... Invite the Holy Presence *now*...

## Silence – 3:00

Allowing our attention to drift gently back into this time and into this place, we let our personal name for Spirit echo within us, filling our Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit with Awareness of the Divine Presence... within us... all around us... permeating our Beloved Community... Thank you, God, for everyone and for everything...

As we continue to grow in Spiritual Understanding and experience, our favorite nicknames for the Divine may change... or the list may grow... What is important is that the names we use draw us into a deeper sense of Oneness... with Spirit... and with all of Creation...

As Rev. Diana continues her inspired talk this morning, we open our Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit to a deeper mystical experience as we enter into *Communion With God, By Whatever Name...*

## Rev. Diana

There are no words to describe Communion...although as humans, words are the tools we are given. There is no way to know what our personal experience of the Sacred will look like, will feel like. But I believe it is safe to say that, as we seek to be Guided by Higher Wisdom, each of us will have more than one such moment in our lives. In fact, it is these moments of deep connection...of greater awareness...of expanded consciousness...that give our lives meaning. It is in the experience of our Oneness with everything that we find clarity and wisdom...love and understanding...guidance and insight.

These moments of grace can change your life forever...and can lead you to serving others, so that they might be changed as well.

***Our Communion with God, By Whatever Name***, is not for us alone. In finding the Creator Within, we discover our own Wholeness...and in that Wholeness lies the answers to all of life's questions...who am I here to be? What is mine to do? How am I to serve?

In closing, I share the words of Neale Donald Walsch:

See yourself as the light that will truly light the world. Declare yourself to be so. Announce it to your heart, and then, *through* your heart, to everyone. Let your actions be your announcement. Fill your world with love...Know that you have come to the room to heal the room. You have come to the space to heal the space. There is no other reason for you to be here. You are on a journey to mastery, and now it is time to get on with it. Embrace the Holy Moment...Be *in* the world, do not ignore it. Spirituality does not have to mean finding a cave and hiding out forever. Be *in* your world, but not of it. Live *with* the illusion, not *within* it...that is not a way to create a better world, and it is not the way to experience the grandest part of you.

It is by living fully in the world, and looking for the Sacred, that you will begin to see the Divine in everything and everyone...and it is by accepting that Divinity that you will come into Communion with God.

### **Please join me in this closing prayer...**

The One Life is forever expressing Itself as all of creation. All are included...no exceptions. Each of us is being intentionally and perfectly expressed...shaped, formed...in every moment, as are all other beings...there are no mistakes in God. And all of it is miraculous...all of it.

The world is imperfectly perfect, all the time, offering our souls opportunities to grow. Each of us is on the path to becoming the best that we can be in this lifetime, no matter the appearance. I wouldn't be surprised if, when this journey is over, we go on to the next...forever connected to one another...forever one in Spirit. I wouldn't be surprised if mankind is one day guided to solutions for all of the world's problems...I wouldn't be surprised if Love, Compassion, Generosity, and Kindness became the norm...I wouldn't be surprised if we created Peace on Earth.

We receive this day as a powerful blessing. We offer the best of ourselves in every moment...and we give thanks...for all of it...for life is all and always Good.

I release my Word to a loving and lawful Presence...the All That Is...knowing that even before I do, it is already done. I relax...let it be...And so it is! Amen! Sathu...Ashay...Aho!

### **Musical Meditation**

 I Wouldn't Be Surprised, by Gary Lynn Floyd

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


Enjoy this video as a reminder to support your local farmers...and maybe plant a few seeds of your own.

### **Offertory Video**

 *It's All Connected, and it Matters:* <https://youtu.be/zseWILnmo3Q>

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

## Rev. Diana & Chris – Closing Song

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

## *Conscious Conversation*

### Chris N. – 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

 **Opening Up**, written by Rainbow Spirit, Oregon

**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 ***Communion With God, By Whatever Name***. We talked about how the body, emotions, and will all play a part in our ability to find Communion with whatever we call the Divine. We reflected on how each of us relates to the Great Mystery of Life in our own way.

It's pretty amazing that we have such a diverse group of people gathered in one place...a spiritual family with very different ideas and perspectives about God.

**How many of us are comfortable with the word God?**

**For those who are, have you always been comfortable with that name for the Divine?**

**Is everyone comfortable with *The Divine*?**

**What are some of the terms or names that you use to refer to *That Mysterious Something*?**

**Does your understanding of *That Mysterious Something* allow for an experience that could be compared with *Communion With God*? If so, can you share with us?**

Conversations like this help us to build bridges...to open our hearts and minds to new ideas, new ways of seeing and being in the world.

I commend your willingness to engage in these Conversations, even when they are uncomfortable...*especially* when they are uncomfortable. And to keep coming back 😊

We hosted Amarjit Singh this past week. He is the leader of the Anderson Sikh Center. He shared perspectives and practices, as well as music, from the Sikh Tradition.

He was very impressed by our Interfaith Status, and by our working to build bridges of understanding between faith paths. He loved the title of our series...Common Threads of Truth.



**So, from our Conversation this morning, what are the Common Threads that we (in this room) share?**

**And aren't these Common Threads much more important than our differences? (If we let them be...)**

What's really important is that each of us finds a way to connect with something bigger than ourselves...that we come into Service to something more than our personal wants...that we go out of our way to Love our Neighbor, even when it's uncomfortable or inconvenient...maybe *especially* when it's uncomfortable or inconvenient. Because it is by serving others that we are serving God, or a Greater Purpose. As we give more and more of ourselves to serving this Higher Calling, in whatever form it takes, we find that Grace fills our experience...we are Guided, given insight. Our blessings are multiplied.

I would like to close by sharing a reading with you, then inviting any final thoughts. I invite you to take it in as a meditation. The reading is from ***Communion With God*** by Neale Donald Walsch. The words offered here are from God's Perspective.

**Read Pages 207-212**

**Any thoughts to share as we wrap up?**

Remember, the purpose of these Conversations is not for us to all sit around and agree with one another...the purpose is not necessarily to make us comfortable...and it is not to provide answers.

The purpose is to expand our hearts and minds, to help us find compassion and understanding, and to encourage us to ask better questions.

**Closing Prayer**

Please join me in this knowing...that there is One Life, forever expressing Itself as all that is and ever shall be...as all that is known and may ever...or never...be known. It is not for me to know how or why this is so...only for me to keep my eyes open...to notice the little miracles happening all around me, all the time. It is only for me to question and wonder...and to finally settle into my own understanding, into my own way of engaging with the Mystery. And it is mine to allow that understanding and engagement to shift and change as my life unfolds, that I may never become rigid...that my soul may be forever free to grow and develop.

I give thanks for my growing awareness, for my feeling of deep connection with the Pure Awareness and Intelligence I call God...Spirit...Mystery.

I give thanks for the many ways in which my life is blessed. I am so grateful to have beings in my life who are willing to share the journey...who are willing to consider the questions.

It is from this place of deep gratitude that I release this prayer, trusting that it has done its work. My heart's desires and soul's intentions are received...felt...known...and



responded to in this Sacred Moment. And so I rest...I let it be what it will be, 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!**


### **Offertory Music Video**

 *One Love*, by Bob Marley (Fan created video): <https://youtu.be/QMbvpftTEUs>

### **Chris N. – Blessing for the Offering**

### **Chris N. – Brief Invitations**


 **The Mystic Heart Book Club** is beginning a new book this week: *Soul Boom* by Rainn Wilson. Tuesdays, 3-5 pm.


 **The Universe is Calling...**Rev. Diana is beginning a new class this Tuesday evening from 6-9 pm.

 **Living the Four Agreements...**Chris Johnson is beginning a new class this Wednesday from 2-5 pm.

 **Thursdays, 12:30-2:30 pm, *Fast Track to Wellness*.** We're focusing on the importance of building the immune system and other topics.


 **Metaphysical Bible Study** with Chris Johnson, Thursday from 3 – 5 pm.

 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 *Cultivating Soil and Soul*,** where we'll learn about transplanting seedlings, planting garlic and onion sets, and more. Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup> from 1:30-4:00 pm.

## Looking Ahead...

 **Core Council Meeting, Tuesday September 12<sup>th</sup>, 12:30-2:30 pm.**

 **Join Laurie Buckman** for an exploration of Nutritional and Medicinal Herbs. Saturday, September 16<sup>th</sup> from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm.

 **Join Rev. Diana for *Mandala Meditation: a Journey into God***, a prayerful time of creativity and sharing. Saturday, September 23<sup>rd</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 & Gary Lynn Floyd

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