

Global Connection

September 24, 2023

Rev. Diana Johnson, with Sherri Dotter, RScP,
& Chris Johnson, RScP



A Beloved Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Taizé

Call to Awareness – 3 Bells

Sherri – 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). Even more, I welcome you home to the answers that lie within your own Mystic Heart.

Rev. Diana & Chris – Taizé 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 in...sensing a brief pause, and then letting it go...allowing the breath to carry us inward to the Wholeness that is always the Truth about us...feeling that Wholeness fill every cell, every atom, and all space in between...right here...right now...(Pause) sensing the Peace that is our native state...grounding even more deeply into the silence, and sensing an opening, of the heart, of the mind, of the Spirit within...preparing the soul for deep listening...for receiving the gift of this time together.

We take a moment to honor our connection with all that is. Together, we envision a web of consciousness...a Life Force...a Holy Presence... that surrounds and infuses the planet...each of us, a point of Light, reflecting our Radiance 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...alive...in relationship...forever connected by our co-existence at this time, in this place...forever one in Spirit.

As we share time in prayer and meditation, we are leaving an imprint of Peace on the world...a ripple of Love whose effect we will never know...but we trust that it is felt. Take a moment to feel 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 Kind, Generous, Harmonious expression...we walk as Love in action.

This morning we center our reflections and contemplations on what it means to have **Global Connection**.

We have been using the Prayer of St. Francis as the lens through which we contemplate the meaning of **Making Connections**. This prayer asks nothing of us that we cannot do, if only we are willing. We began our reflections on the prayer with these lines:

Lord, make me an instrument of your Peace... let me submit myself to a Deeper Wisdom, inviting God's Peace to flow through me as I draw upon the Guidance, Courage, and Power of Spirit...let me offer an open mind, a willing heart.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love... Walking in either hatred or love is a choice in every moment...In the face of hatred, may I sow a seed of love...because I know that if I plant and tend a seed of love, it will grow, and will soon become strong enough to stand on its own.

Where there is injury, let me sow pardon... May I sow seeds of healing and reconciliation, so that ultimately I can accept and forgive, and be freed from the pain and suffering of past hurts. May Wholeness be restored in me, in my life, in my spirit, by my sowing seeds of pardon.

Where there is doubt, faith... As I awaken spiritually, may I move beyond doubt to a steadfastness of purpose...a sense of prayerful watchfulness...a deep sense of compassion for other beings, a deep experience of the existence of God. May I embody and express these qualities in the world; and by my example, may others be changed.

Where there is despair, hope... Despair goes far beyond sadness to a place of hopelessness. May I serve as a peaceful presence, bearing witness to another's suffering...and may wounded hearts know by my presence that they are seen...may they, if only for a moment, sense the Light of Hope.

Where there is darkness, light... May I be an available presence to another, shining a Light into another's darkness, even when I am temporarily walking in my own...in deep faith that as I offer myself to another, darkness lifts and both of us step into the Light.

Where there is sadness, joy... May I remain present to what is before me, listening for what is mine...and *acting* on that call, And may I become a ray of sunlight breaking through the darkness...a moment of joy, peaking through the sadness...that another might once again feel connected to Life.

O, Divine Master... Creator of all that is...Great Spirit...Holy Mystery...May I know myself as part of something much bigger than myself...May I sense my connection to God, to myself, to my neighbor, and to all beings.

Grant that I may not seek so much to be consoled as to console... May I bear witness to another's sadness...reach out and touch another's grief, giving whatever my heart is able and shining a Light of consolation into the darkness.

To be understood as to understand... though united by a common humanity, we are separated by our individuality. None of us can know for certain what goes on in the mind and heart of another. When confusion, or even more, when criticism begins to seep into my heart and mind, may I reach across the chasm, looking for common ground. May I truly want to know, "What's it like to be you?"

To be loved as to love... True love

is active, generative. Its seed must be planted if it is to grow. It has no judgment; it is not conditional. It asks no recognition; it demands no response. Its reward is in its giving, but it has no thought of reward.. It reaches out to those around it, not because they are deserving or because they can offer something in return, but because they are part of God's creation, and all of creation is worthy of our love. The empty heart that seeks to receive love rather than give it is like a constricting container in which the roots of love cannot spread. It tries to define love and make it take the shape of its need.ⁱ

May I not be this empty heart, seeking to be loved...but rather, may my love be given freely, taking root where it will. May "its branches spread out to shelter those around it. And as its seeds fall, new love grows, and the cycle of love begins anew."

Chris – Guided Meditation

A day and a half ago, all Beings on Earth shared a common experience... For one twenty-four-hour period, everywhere on the globe, the length of the daylight hours and of the darkness were roughly the same... This biannual event – the equinox – can be a powerful symbol of our Global Connection...

When we think of the people, animals, and plants that live in other parts of the planet, we usually focus on how different it is there... how hard it is to feel connected to what happens there... The fact that twice every year, light and darkness come into nearly perfect balance everywhere can give us a tangible sense of our unity...

Oneness does not mean sameness... Individuality is not separation... Spirit, being infinite, must express through unlimited diversity... and yet remain undivided... When we look with our inner eye, our intuition allows us to see the Divine Essence that is at the center of each and every entity in Creation...

Chief Seattle taught

This we know. The earth does not belong to man; man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood which unites one family. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself...ⁱⁱ

Being connected to Spirit means that we are One with everyone and everything... We cannot say, "When I learn to love God, I'll work on loving humankind..." If you can't love who and what you see, how will you love that which is *not* visible?... In our three minutes of shared contemplation, I invite us to bring to mind a situation, or something or someone we find challenging to love... Open to your intuition, and let it reveal even a tiny bit of good... focus on that good, and follow it to the Divine Essence within...

Silence – 3:00

End of Meditation – 1:30

Centered in Unconditional Love, Peace, and Unity, we allow our attention to return to our surroundings... to the here and now... Grateful for this experience of Divine Oneness and for the love and support of our Beloved Community, we say, "Thank you, God, for everyone and for everything..."

Like it or not, we *are* all connected... We can only experience Unity when our Divine Essence recognizes itSelf within others... This is living in Namasté consciousness... with all Beings... with all things... and in all situations...

As Taizé continues, we allow Rev. Diana's message this morning to inspire us to live from our Unity... and to encourage and empower us to grow and strengthen our sense of *Global Connection*...

For it is in giving that we receive... "We must never underestimate (the) power of giving and what it can do for our hearts. When we give, we are opening the doors of possibility in a way that allows the light of love to shine through. And in that light, miracles can happen."ⁱⁱⁱ May I always give freely of myself...my time, my talent, my love...in deep faith that in my giving, I am taken care of...I need not know how.

It is in forgiving that we are forgiven... may I first acknowledge and make peace with my own shortcomings, so that I might extend the Grace of forgiveness to others. This is the greatest of all gifts...it is evidence of my willingness to see and reflect back the goodness and Light in a human heart, rather than its darkness.

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life... may I die to the part of myself that separates me from others – my individual desires, self-interests, and the attitudes and emotions that build walls around me. And may those parts that I share in common with others be forever alive and at the forefront – my human emotions, my capacity for service, and for caring for the earth and her beings.

Closing Prayer

May The Prayer of St. Francis have its way with me...working on me, *in* me...soaking into every fiber of my being. May it fill my heart, mind, and soul as I move into the coming weeks. May it remind me of my own goodness, and of the Light that shines in the world. May it guide my thoughts, words, and actions so that I become a more Peaceful

presence on the planet. And may it remind me that we have much more in common than we'd sometimes like to admit.

May this prayer guide me daily to ***Making Connections***...with my God, with myself, my neighbors, and my world.

...it is enough to know that in the great symphony of creation we played our part purely, humbly, and without discordance. When we pass, and our spirit ascends to pierce that one new hole in the midnight sky, we can be sure that the light of God will shine down a bit brighter on this earth. And that somewhere, sometime, one person, coming after us, will stand for a fleeting moment in the presence of that light and know, if only for that moment, that they, too, have been called to be an instrument of God's Peace.^{iv}

In deep gratitude for the Grace and infinite blessings of this and every day, I release this time together...I release this prayer...in deep faith that it serves the Whole of Life. I need not know how, only that it does...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 – Offertory

As we close our Taizé Meditation, we offer the opportunity for you to share 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.

Please enjoy another beautiful rendition of The Prayer of Saint Francis.

Offertory Video – *Prayer of St. Francis* by Tina Malia and James Twyman

<https://youtu.be/2FWyeCEYMmE>

Rev. Diana – Blessing for the Offering

Rev. Diana & Chris – Closing Song

A Soul's Blessing, written by Chris Johnson


Conscious Conversation

Sherri – 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. Welcome home to our Gathering Place, to our Spiritual Family, and to the answers that lie within your own Mystic Heart. I invite you to get on your feet and join the music.

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 co-creation of a *Love-Soaked World...*

...where all humans embody Compassion, Generosity, Love, Peace, and Justice...where all people everywhere 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 gracefully...easily...where all beings are well-fed, and have the safety and comfort of home...where mental/physical health, education, and healthy relationships are promoted and supported by social systems grounded in Wellness and Wholeness...

...a world where every being Serves the greater community doing whatever feeds their souls and are well supported for their time and talent...and by their Service, each one finds meaning...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 there is no greed, and abundance means having all that is required for physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual thriving.

We *do not* lower our Vision, no matter the appearances in the world, knowing with our whole hearts that such a world is *inevitable*. We align our actions to support our Vision, and a new world is being born.

Our hearts, minds, arms, and doors are open in Radical Welcome. All lines and feelings of separation have been erased. In keeping with the Vision, our community is open and loving...all people who seek belonging find it here.

With deep faith in the Great Mystery that I call God, we trust that our prayer is acted upon...we prepare for its Graceful unfolding in the world...we feel a deep sense of gratitude...we release it to the Holy Presence and give thanks that it is done...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 month is Making Connections, and our Conversation this week revolves around **Global Connection**. We've been using the Prayer of St. Francis as a 'how to' guide for making connections.

Time for a pop quiz. Are you ready? What is the first line of Francis's prayer? (Oh Lord, make me an instrument of Your Peace.)

10:45 Next line? (Where there is hatred, let me sow love.)

Then? (Where there is injury, let me sow pardon.)

Next? (Where there is doubt, faith.)

What's the next line? (Where there is despair, hope.)

And the next? (Where there is darkness, light)

Then? (Where there is sadness, joy.)

It's turning a corner now. What's next? (O, Divine Master)

What does that line mean to you? (for me, Holy Creator of all that is)

What does the rest of the prayer say? (Grant that I may not seek so much to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; For it is in giving that we receive, It is in forgiving that we are forgiven; And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life)

Is it my imagination, or is this prayer becoming more and more challenging?

What is standing out for you right now?

I'd like to once again read you a short section from Kent Nerburn's book

Read page 122.2-124 (orange tab)

What is going through your heart and mind right now?

Read page 124 (orange tab) – 125.4, 126.5 – 127.5, 129.1

So, what might the last line, *And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life*, pointing to?

Does this conversation change the way you understand that line?

Is there some specific way that our Conversations this month have changed you? Is there one particular part of the prayer that has sparked you to greater awareness? Or better yet, to action?

Join me as we close this Gathering in prayer.

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.

Offering – Rev. Diana

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 budget and plan for our growth. Those who engage in committed giving are helping to create stability to our community, and we are most grateful. You can find more information on our website...please consider pledging your support.

As we move into this time of giving, I Am so grateful for each one who takes part in the Mystic Heart Family...thankful in advance for all that is offered here today and every day...blessing these gifts, trusting in God's Grace to multiply them 70x7 so that they might serve the world in greater, more powerful ways. Thank you, Spirit, for these many gifts, given freely and in the Spirit of Love. And thank you, Beloveds, for standing with me in seeking Unity, Peace, and **Global Connection. And so it is! Amen!**


Offertory Music Video


 **Let's Stand Together** by Faith Rivera and Harold Payne

<https://youtu.be/Tnj7usFiwlg?list=RDgcQp0thYCyM>


Sherri – Blessing for the Offering

Sherri – Invitations

 **The Mystic Heart Book Club** is reading *Soul Boom* by Rainn Wilson. Tuesdays, 3-5 pm. Drop-ins are welcome.

 **Fast Track to Wellness, Thursdays 12:30-2:30 pm.** This is a support circle for physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health.

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

 **Common Threads of Truth, Thursday, September 28th, 6:00-8:00 pm.** Please join us in opening our doors to **April Jimenez-WinterSky** as she shares the spiritual tradition of **Shamanism** with our community. Feel free to invite friends and family. *All donations are gratefully accepted.*

Looking Ahead...

 **Friday, October 6th, Music is Medicine Circle** led by **April Jimenez- WinterSky** and hosted by Laurie and James Massengale.

♥ **Saturday, October 7th, another Mystic OAKS Adventure to the Abbey at New Clairvaux.** Check the website for details. Please RSVP to Chris Netto at nettowoman@gmail.com.

♥ **Sunday, October 8th, during and after our Sunday Gathering** – We will be celebrating all of you who have completed accredited classes in the past two years. Rev. Diana has certificates to present as we acknowledge your accomplishments. We'll have live music that day, as well...In2it +! Then, following the services, it's Octoberfest!!! Our Food and Fellowship will be Brats and Beer...and other good stuff. You won't want to miss it!

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**

Next month's theme will be *Ease on Down the Road*. I look forward to celebrating together in the month of October.

Rev. Diana & Chris – Closing Song

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



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ⁱ Kent Nerburn – *Make Me An Instrument of Your Peace*

ⁱⁱ Chief Seattle – *The Speech of Chief Seattle*

ⁱⁱⁱ Nerburn – *ibid.*

^{iv} Nerburn – *ibid.*