

Honoring All That Has Been

Sunday, October 29, 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...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.

And so now, letting go of all that has come before this moment, we begin by taking a slow, deep, cleansing breath, allowing ourselves to fully arrive...in the here and now...gently closing your eyes and allowing yourself to relax...body, mind, and spirit...to be completely still. You have chosen this time to be here, in Communion...in Community...***Honoring All That Has Been***. There is nothing wrong in this Sacred Moment...nothing missing, nothing that needs changing...all is well. (Pause) Feel and know the Wholeness, the Completeness of this moment as you allow yourself to be carried by the meditative tone of Taizé...allow the music to take you deeper as you allow the Perfection of this moment to sing through you...

Rev. Diana & Chris - Taizé Chants

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

Pour Yourself in Me, written by Rickie Byars

Rev. Diana – We take a moment to honor our connection with all of Life. Together, we envision a web of consciousness...a Field of Intelligence...a Universal, Living Presence...that surrounds and infuses the planet...each of us, an intricate strand in the web...irreplaceable, absolutely necessary to the Whole...completely Perfect in all of our human imperfections. Each of us is a Light...shines our Light...into the world. This is true of every human, without exception...every other-than-human creature, every plant...the network of life that lives beneath the soil's surface, invisible to the naked eye...

...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...all Beings of Light, forever one in Spirit.

As we share time in prayer and meditation, we set a prayerful intention...we are leaving an imprint of Peace on the world...a ripple of Harmony that Comforts all who are in need...we consciously offer the benefit of our time together to the Well-being of the Whole. (Pause)

This morning we use our shared time to **Honor ALL That Has Been**. This is not always an easy task. In light of recent world events, we may be tempted to allow thoughts and feelings of separation to fill our hearts and minds...Jiddu Krishnamurti once wrote that "the ability to observe without evaluating is the highest form of intelligence." And yet, we hear the news, and we are overtaken by sadness...fear...and judgment.

Looking back into our own lives, we may have experienced painful circumstances that left us with lasting effects...even traumatized...and we are tempted to judge...to disconnect for our own protection...to disown those who hurt us...to allow our pain to drive us. As human beings, we do what we feel we must do in self-preservation, but as long as we are in judgment of another, for whatever reason, we are living from separation, and we will never know the Joy of true connection.

Excerpting from Wayne Muller's book *Learning to Pray*, living a prayerful life brings a requirement to forgive. Not to forget, not to place ourselves in harm's way again, but to forgive. We are told:

In the entirety of the Lord's Prayer, the only act specifically required of us *is the act of forgiveness*. The rest...are all petitions for clarity, nourishment, and safety. In the midst of these petitions we are called to perform only one singular act: *to forgive those who bring harm*.

Why? Because without this, genuine spiritual freedom is impossible.

How can we forgive those who have committed atrocities? Where do we begin? How can we possibly **Honor ALL That Has Come Before**?

Again from Wayne Muller:

The reasons to hate seem legion. In some circumstances the thirst for retribution...to extract an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth...seems right, balanced, and just. Indeed, prayer for forgiveness does not exclude justice. We are called to work tirelessly to insure that those who do cause violence, oppression, and abuse, are brought to justice, so we may cultivate a fertile, honest peace, to bring this peace of heaven to earth...the simple physics of retribution demonstrate that, in the long run, our natural urge to answer hurt for hurt inevitably perpetuates an endless cycle of violence and hatred in which we are trapped forever. How can we free our hearts to enter the household of heaven, even though we have been hurt, betrayed, or mistreated by the world?

How can we begin to forgive the atrocities that we face in our world? We consciously and actively practice Compassion. We allow the sadness and hurt we feel to move

through us. We begin to ask, *What is it that has hurt you so deeply that hurting others is your only form of relief? What is it like to be you, to live with that kind of pain?*

We enter into the practice of prayer, we pray to be made ready...to prepare our hearts to soften and open. Forgiveness requires a deep willingness to become more spacious. When we pray to be able to forgive, we are praying to be made larger, to become so ample and clearheaded that we can bear even this...while still feeling blessed by the deep and faithful company of God.

We pray our blessings into the world, into the heart and mind of Spirit – I bless all who have been harmed; I bless all who have brought harm; and I bless myself in the witnessing.

Chris – Guided Meditation

Each of us is a Divine Being, incarnated into human form... Our Soul's Journey has brought us into *this* world at *this* time to maximize our spiritual development... Everyone and everything in our lives is part of the curriculum... all grist for the mill... all perfectly designed to point us toward our Highest Good...

We teach that our thoughts, feelings, and deeply seated beliefs activate the Divine Creative Process... as Rabbi Yeshua said, "It is done unto you as you believe..."¹ Our outer world reflects our inner consciousness... "As above, so below... as within, so without..."² What you dwell upon, you become...

Our experiences in the world reveal to us the content of our heart and mind... In the far east, this is called Karma... in New Thought, Cause and Effect... or the Law of reciprocity... Its purpose is not to punish or reward us... but to serve as a tool for course correction... to inspire us to live in ever more life-affirming ways...

We find it easy to be grateful for enjoyable people and experiences... a loving grandad... our favorite aunt... a trip to Disneyland... We also learn from people and events that challenge us... often we learn even *more* from them... but we need to forgive them to completely learn their lesson for us... to fully receive the hidden gift...

I invite you now to think back over your life... and recall a specific event or person that challenged you... maybe even hurt you... but over time, you were able to see that it worked out for the best... Is there still resentment?... anger?... fear?... In our three-minute shared, silent meditation today, let us invoke forgiveness to clear any residual resentment away... to transmute negative feelings into a true appreciation for the gift you were given... so that you may fully receive your blessing...

Silence – 3:00

We give thanks for this time of blessed communion with Spirit and with our Beloved Community... Grateful for the courage and willingness to set ourselves free through the practice of forgiveness... free to appreciate each and every step of our Soul's Journey... Thank you, God, for everyone and for everything...

As we release ancient resentments, we step out of the role of victim... and we reclaim our Spiritual Authority... We choose to acknowledge that our soul needed each of our experiences in order to bring us to where we are today...

And in this free, open, expansive consciousness, we receive Rev. Diana's continued words of wisdom and inspiration with grateful hearts... as she encourages us to continue *Honoring ALL that Has Been...*

Rev. Diana – We are here today, ***Honoring ALL That Has Come Before***...in Sacred Communion with something much bigger, much greater, than any of us. We are here on this Sunday before All Hallows' Eve, All Saints Day, and All Souls' Day, or El Dia de los Muertos. Each of these holidays has its roots in ancient tradition. For the Celts, Samhain marked the end of summer; they believed that on this night, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred, and that the ghosts of the dead returned to earth.

All Saints Day, or the Feast of All Saints, is a celebration of all Roman Catholic Saints, whether known or unknown. And All Souls' Day was intended to honor all people of the Church who have departed this life.

Brother David Steindl-Rast suggests that a Communion of Saints can refer to a Communion of Holy People...not holy because they have attained a degree of spiritual development, but holy because they have dedicated their lives to Communion with God...that they recognize themselves as united in God. He suggests that this kind of Communion transcends time, linking all periods of history...that it offers limitless belonging in the Community of Life.

Or what if we defined a Community of Saints as the sharing of Holy Things? Life itself is holy, is it not? As are we...every one of us part of the Whole. Whether we are experiencing life on the planet at this time, or whether we are those who came before, we share this time together today, ***Honoring ALL That Has Come Before***. We honor our family members and friends who have departed...we honor our teachers...and those for whom we have been teachers. We honor all who have served humanity in any way...and all who call us to forgiveness. We honor all who have touched our lives in any way, and we give thanks.

Closing Prayer

In closing, we take a moment of silence, to honor each in our own way, all that has come before.

May I be happy...may I be peaceful...may I be safe...may I awaken to my True Nature...may I be free.

May my family and friends be happy...may my family and friends be peaceful...may my family and friends be safe...may they awaken to their True Nature...may they be free.

May all beings be happy...may all beings be peaceful...may all beings be safe...may all beings be awakened to their True Nature...may all beings be free.

And so it is...Amen.

Musical Meditation – *The Lord's Prayer*, by Cari Cole

Rev. Diana – 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.

Offering

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 join me in honoring all that is yet to be:

Offertory Video – *Chosen Family*, by One Voice Children's Choir

<https://youtu.be/R1o7bC0waNQ>

Rev. Diana – Blessing for the Offering

Rev. Diana & Chris – Closing Song

A Soul's Blessing, written by Chris Johnson

Conscious Conversation

Lucinda – 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

 ***How Can I Serve***, written by Ricki Byars Beckwith

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!

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 of Conversation this week is ***Honoring ALL That Has Come Before***. We have the altar set up to honor some of our Beloveds that have gone on to their next experience. We have this Unity Candle burning in their honor this morning. We shared a quote from Krishnamurti that said:

“The ability to observe without evaluating is the highest form of intelligence.” **What does this quote mean to you?** “The ability to observe without evaluating is the highest form of intelligence.”

How are we doing with recent news? Are we able to observe without evaluating? Do we have opinions...do we take sides...do we judge?

And yet, are told by the world’s great Spiritual Masters, “judge not, lest ye be judged.” In the words ascribed to Rabbi Yeshua, “...with the measure you use it will be measured unto you.” (Mathew 7:1-2)

When you hear this verse, how do you interpret it?

My interpretation is *Judge at your own risk*...I must take great care *how* I judge others. For me, it begs the question...*This thing that I am judging in another – where does it live in me?* The quote that follows the first one that I read is this: “Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?...You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.” (Mathew 7: 3-5)

In doing my work in preparation for this morning, I found this quote: “How we judge others says far more about us than how we are judged by others.”

What does this mean to you?

Now the big question...why all this talk about judgment on a day that we’re supposed to be focusing on Honoring ALL That Has Come Before?

(Can I truly honor something or someone that I am holding in judgment?)

What does it mean to honor?

(From the Latin, *to hold with reverence; glory earned*)

So we are to hold **All That Has Come Before**...*All that is happening now*...in our lives and in the world with a sense of honoring. Is that a life’s work?

What is called for before we can move into honoring?

(acceptance...this is what is; non-resistance...observing without evaluation; compassion...what has caused you so much pain that harming others is your only relief? What’s it like to be you?; and forgiveness...not approval of actions, not putting ourselves in harm’s way, but you, too are a spark of Divinity...I hold you without judgement, even as I work to create a world without violence, hatred, oppression, etc.)

I read something this week that helped me with the idea of forgiveness and honoring. I’d like to share it with you to bring it into the discussion. These are passages from Rupert Spira’s *The Heart of Prayer*. I invite you to take it in as a guided meditation or prayer. Feel free to make notes along the way...it’s a couple of pages long. Then we’ll open to discussion.

Read pp. 55 – 56

Read pp. 57 – 58

Read pp. 58– 59

How does any of this play into *Honoring ALL That Has Come Before*?

It is ALL Spirit experiencing Itself...there is nothing else. Can I see it as that? Can I accept and forgive those things that I judge as wrong or harmful? Can I look at the world and see Beauty and Blessing, even amidst the pain and suffering? I be the one who goes into the closet...into my inner sanctuary...to pray for my own understanding, acceptance, and forgiveness? And can I be the one who makes my own life a prayer...my every action flowing from the intention to serve, to comfort, to be a living example of Peace, Love, and Compassion? I believe this is why we are here...to first connect with our own Divinity, and then, with the majority of our time and life energy, to be in Sacred Service to God by serving one another. We are here to accept and love one another for who we are. We are to ***Honor ALL That Has Been*** in recognition that it has brought us to this moment...and in this and in every moment, we recall the words of Julian of Norwich... “All shall be well, and all shall be well. All manner of things shall be well.”

Closing Prayer

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 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.

We'd like to offer one last song as the basket is being passed...it's a song that reminds us that we have a responsibility for Honoring ALL That Has Been, but also to those who come after.

Offertory Music Video – *What About Us*, by One Voice Children's Choir

<https://youtu.be/yWrHHxksbLY>

Lucinda – Blessing for the Offering

Rev. Diana – Invitations



The normal weekly groups are meeting this week: The Mystic Heart Book Club with Michael Bordeaux on Tuesday, 3-5 pm and **Metaphysical Bible Study** with Chris Johnson, Thursday from 3 – 5 pm. Drop-ins are welcome.

♥ **12 Days of Kindness** is underway for 2023! Please bring socks, instant coffee packets, and toothbrushes for the month of October and November. We'll add new items when we reach 150 of each.

♥ **Saturday, November 4th, *Music is Medicine Circle*** and a housewarming for Amanda and River Hunter...circle led by April Jimenez- WinterSky, blessing ceremony by Rev. Diana, and hosted by Amanda.

Looking Ahead...

♥ **Sunday, November 19th, 7:00-8:30 pm, *Shasta Interfaith Thanksgiving Service*** at St. Joseph's...Rev. Diana will be presenting for the first time on behalf of Mystic Heart. Please consider joining us for this beautiful Interfaith Experience of Gratitude in the Season of Thanksgiving.

Save the Date!

♥ **Saturday, December 2nd, 11:00 am – 1:30/2:00 pm, Dr. Sharon Brisolaro** will be leading a poetry workshop. Snacks will be provided. Suggested Donation: \$20, all offerings gratefully accepted.

♥ **Saturday, December 9th, 1:30 - 4:00 pm, Ellie Thompson** will be leading a ***Holiday Whimsy Wreathmaking Play Shop***. 10 seats available. Snacks will be provided. Suggested Donation: \$20 – RSVP required to attend.

♥ **Saturday, December 16th, time TBA - April Jiménez WinterSky** will be leading a ***Medicine Wheel Workshop***. Snacks will be provided. Suggested Donation: \$20 – RSVP required to attend.

♥ **Wednesday, December 20th, 6:30 - 8:00 pm, Mystic Heart Holy Day Candle Lighting Service...**more information to come soon!

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

Prayer Requests, Lucinda 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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¹ Matthew 8:13

² Hermetic Teachings