

Seeing, Feeling Seen

February 4, 2024

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



An Independent Interfaith Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Taizé


Rev. Diana – we follow the bell to the stillness within... 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 and I welcome you home to the Guidance and Wisdom of your own Mystic Heart. We begin our Taizé Meditation with musical prayer.

Rev. Diana & Chris – Taizé Chants

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

 **Nothing Can Separate Us**, written by Linda Webb-Khakaba

Rev. Diana – This month we are using the Practice of Grounding to sense our connection with all that is. I invite us to close your eyes or rest your gaze downward and relax, allowing the chair to take all of your weight, feet resting on the floor...notice how you feel today...how your body feels...what's happening in your mind...notice how your breath is flowing...and whatever the breath feels like, begin to slow it down...let it go silent...feel the belly rise, then pause at the top...and let a slow breath out. Again, inhale...pause...and release. Let your whole body relax. Let a wave of calm flow over and through you.

Take a moment now to feel where your body touches the chair...become aware of the sturdiness of the earth beneath you, and how it supports every aspect of you. From this grounded awareness, imagine roots, like the roots of a tree, flowing from you deep down into the ground beneath you...rooting down through the floor, into the earth beneath you, and spreading out far and wide. Allow these roots to connect all the way down into the center of the planet...feeling the energy that lives there, and drawing that energy up through the soles of your feet, travelling up through your legs and thighs, up into your heart space, continuing up the spine and out through the head...

...and now moving it back down, from the atmosphere above you, down through the head, the body, all the way back into the earth...allowing it to ground you...to connect you with the Sacred Mother.

This deep rooting connects you with the earth, and with everything that lives on Her, within Her, and beyond Her...with all humans, and all other creatures...with the plants...the rocks and grains of sand...and with every drop of water...with the heavenly bodies. All that exists, no matter how large or small is an intricate and irreplaceable part of the One Life, all dancing together in this cosmic mystery. Take a moment to breathe in that sense of connection...

As human expressions, we are given the powers of self-reflection and choice. In return for these precious gifts, we use them wisely, caring for our brothers and sisters, human and otherwise...caring for the Sacred Mother as she gives of her nourishment...doing no harm, and aiding in the transformation happening in our world.

We move into the contemplation of **The Sacred Feminine**...and on what it means to truly **See and Feel Seen**. Every one of us is a unique combination of masculine and feminine qualities and traits. These are not specific to gender, but energies that co-exist within each of us. **The Sacred Feminine** is expressed when we are feeling receptive, creative, and nurturing. It is given voice through our intuition and emotions. It shows up as the desire to care for another...in our yearning to experience Beauty...and to have our own Beauty recognized.

But it is also expressed as a Subtle Strength, a Poise that flows when Peace and Power are united...in an unwavering stability and consistence. These qualities are less often recognized as feminine.

The Sacred Feminine has much to offer, but she is often denied that privilege in our society. She longs to be seen as an intricate part of who we are...

...to be appreciated for her inherent Wisdom...for her soft, silent, but unwavering Strength. She longs to be *seen*.

Being seen is not about the gaze of another, but about the acknowledgement of our own existence...our own feminine qualities...our own Strength...our own Beauty. It is about embracing the beautiful mess that we are and finding the Light and the Power within. It is about expressing ourselves authentically, whatever that looks like.

We must first see ourselves for what we are...an intentional expression of the Divine...exactly as we are, and exactly as we are not. I invite you to turn within for a moment...offer yourself a loving gaze. What do you see when you look within yourself? (Pause) Can you acknowledge your strengths and vulnerabilities? (Pause) Can you embrace them with open arms for what they are, for how they are? (Pause) *This* is feeling and being seen...giving ourselves permission to show up wholly, truly, authentically. We give ourselves permission to be visible to those around us...to stand tall in who we are. This is a glorious act of Love.

Feeling and being seen is not only seeking external validation, but nurturing your authentic connection with *yourself*, and with your Creator. Your *True Self* is an individualized expression of the Divine...created in God's image and likeness...of Spirit's

Essence and Substance. That Essence and Substance, by Its very Nature, is both masculine and feminine. Your desire to create and nurture are beautiful expressions of the Sacred Feminine living Its Life through you.

Chris – Guided Meditation

Seeing and Feeling Seen – compassionately witnessing the joys and sorrows, the fear and courage, the triumphs, and defeats of others... and feeling that our own lives are being witnessed in return, is a basic human need... We require that connection... that Unity... that mutual support...

The urge to help alleviate the suffering we see, or to celebrate another's Joy is the action of the Sacred Feminine within us... our nurturing nature... It is the Divine Mother raising us above our need to *be seen*, so that we may fully witness another's suffering... or their Joy...

We begin the cycle of giving and receiving by giving to others that which we desire... if we would *be seen*, we must be a witness for others... In our three minutes of shared, Silent Meditation this morning, I invite us to inquire, "Who in my life needs a loving witness right now?..."

Silence – 3:00

With deep gratitude for this communion with our gentle, receptive Soul... with the Divine Mother... we allow our attention to return to this time... to this place... We are now ready to share our Love and Compassion with others... with Absolute Faith that we will be witnessed in return...

As Taizé continues, we allow the Sacred Feminine within us to open us wide in a greater receptivity than ever before... and we receive Rev. Diana's inspiring message in profound ways... expanding our awareness and encouraging us to continue to grow our capacity for *Seeing and Feeling Seen*...

Rev. Diana – Only when we are able to see ourselves for who we truly are, can we see others for who *they* are. Let's take a moment to offer gratitude to those who have made us feel seen along our journey. Remember the warmth of their spirit in the comfort of knowing you don't have to hide your True Self in their presence and vice versa. Connections like this are so valuable. Feeling seen is about creating a safe and nurturing space for ourselves and others...fostering those genuine connections where vulnerability is celebrated and welcomed... putting down the masks and not performing to be accepted.

It is in these moments of connection that we find the True Essence of being in Community and being in relationship with ourselves. Everything doesn't have to be pretty. We also need to see those parts of ourselves that may need some adjusting, that may not be the best of who we have been but are still changing and evolving into who we want to be.

As you move through your week, remember...feeling seen is an on-going Practice, a Practice of self-trust...of faith in something greater than yourself...it is a Practice of self-acceptance, vulnerability, and quiet Strength...it is the cultivation of self-awareness and compassion...a beautiful dance of self-discovery and connection. Truly seeing ourselves and others calls on the Sacred Feminine...invites Her forward...and bids her to shine.

Musical Meditation – *You're More Than Enough*, by Fearless Soul

<https://youtu.be/wXxArQbJ0YY>

Rev. Diana – Taizé Benediction

In the name of All That Is Creative, Receptive and Nurturing...in the name of the Peaceful Power of the Creator, we close together in prayer.

Mother/Father God...Loving Creator...You are all that is, all that ever was, and all that shall ever be. With humility and surrender, I rest in You now.

I trust and know that I Am of Your Essence and Substance...there is nothing else that I could be. I Am Divine Potential taken form.

Within me lies the soft, receptive, and life-giving qualities of Your Spirit. I welcome them into my life.

Your Guidance flows through me as Creativity...Intuition...Wisdom.

As I quiet my mind, bringing stillness to my body, Your Voice cuts through the confusion with amazing Clarity.

As I learn to trust the promptings of my body, and of my emotions, I find your Guidance clearer still.

I know that I Am seen, fully known, by your Infinite Presence.

I Am here on purpose...I see myself for who and Whose I Am.

I recognize the Christ in myself, and in every person who crosses my path.

And in the being seen, I extend the gift of sight to those around me.

I look deeply at each Beloved, asking by the Power of my Presence, "What is it like to be you?"

And I welcome the Sacred Feminine within as she steps forward, standing in Her Wisdom and Authority.

Thank You, Great Spirit, for the Graceful Blessings that fill my Life...and for the challenges that build my character, resilience, and faith...

I walk in reverence, awe, and a deep sense of gratitude for Your Power and Presence in my Life...and thankful for this time of Communion, I rest, knowing that my prayer is answered before it is spoken. And So It Is! Amen!

Rev. Diana – I invite you to Come back into the awareness of your body...notice the atmosphere in the room, and when you feel ready, gently opening your eyes and allowing your 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.

Rev. Diana – Love 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 in the world. 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 – *Oh, Mother God*, by Karen Drucker

[https://youtu.be/ Je14HVGbaM](https://youtu.be/Je14HVGbaM)

Rev. Diana – Blessing for the Offering

Please consider grabbing a cup of something warm next door and come back to join in the Conscious Conversation. We'll close the Taizé portion of our morning with **A Soul's Blessing**.

Rev. Diana & Chris – Taizé Closing Song

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

Conscious Conversation

Sherri – 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 Diana Johnson, and I am the Pastor here at Mystic Heart. We are an Independent Interfaith Community that teaches Universal Principles and Practical Spirituality. We come together each week to be reminded of the Wisdom and Guidance that live in our own Mystic Hearts. You are hereby invited and welcomed to this Spiritual Family, to our Spiritual Home, should you choose it for yourself.

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

 **One God**, written by Linda Webb-Khakaba

Rev. Diana – You can stay standing if you wish, or whatever brings the Presence of Spirit into the Body as we join in the creation of a **Love-Soaked World**.

Know with me now that we are creating a world where all humans embody and live from the Qualities of Spirit...Love, Kindness, Generosity, and Compassion...and from this

way of being, I can feel the presence of a deep sense of Joy, Contentment, and Sufficiency. Can you feel it?

In this new world, all people honor and care for one another, for all of the life forms that share this beautiful earth, and for the earth Herself. We remember that we are connected to all of Life...that we are dependent on the planet to sustain us, and on one another.

Being generous by our nature, and living a life true to our nature, we give of ourselves freely, offering the gifts we came here to give. With all needs met for every person, each one is free to share time and talent in ways that feed the soul.

By our every thought, word, and action, we are writing a new story in which all beings are well-fed...have the safety and comfort of home and a deep sense of belonging and purpose. We are so grateful that once and for all, health, education, and healthy relationships are supported by social systems grounded in Integrity, Compassion and Wholeness.

We welcome this new way of living, valuing every being for its uniqueness...we practice living Authentic lives...there is no need to defend or protect. With Love, Generosity and Kindness guiding every human heart, our world is free of hatred and violence. We recognize the abundance that surrounds us...giving and receiving flow freely in every direction and all beings gratefully receive all that is needed to live physically, mentally, emotionally, and spiritually fulfilling lives.

The planet and its beings thrive like never before as we learn to see the sacred in everyone and everything...we walk in reverence and gratitude for all that we have been given.

We maintain this Vision day by day, moment by moment; we are not swayed by appearances. Each of us works to align our actions with our Vision, living these changes first in our own lives, with our families, friends, and neighbors...and a new world is being born. In this process of profound change, this Community stands as an open and welcoming place for all who seek support, belonging, Family.

By the power of our deep faith, this prayer is acted upon, answered even before it is spoken, as Spirit knows our heart's desire and intent. In full expectation of its Graceful unfolding...we release it to the Creative Power and Intelligence that I call God...to the One that gets it done...And so it is...Amen! Sathu...Selah...Ashay...Aho!

Bringing awareness back to the body, to the room, to this beautiful life, and to the amazing beings who share this space with us this morning...look around to say good morning to your Spiritual Family.

Our theme this month is **Sacred Feminine**, and the topic of Conversation this morning is **Seeing, Feeling Seen**. If you were here for Taizé this morning, you will remember what was said...that every one of us is a unique combination of masculine and feminine qualities and traits. These are not specific to gender, but energies that co-exist within each of us...that **The Sacred Feminine** is expressed when we are feeling receptive,

creative, and nurturing. It is given voice through our intuition and emotions. It shows up as the desire to care for another...in our yearning to experience Beauty...and to have our own Beauty recognized.

But it is also expressed as a Subtle Strength, a Poise that flows when Peace and Power are united. It offers an unwavering stability and consistency...These qualities are less often recognized as feminine.

And then we spent time in contemplation of these ideas: first, that the Sacred Feminine in each of us longs to be seen; and second, that being seen is not about the gaze of another, but about the acknowledgement of our own existence...our own feminine qualities...our own Strength...our own Beauty. It is about embracing the beautiful mess that we are and finding the Light and the Power within. It is about expressing ourselves authentically, whatever that looks like. So, that's our springboard for today's Conversation.

Let's begin by asking what is coming up for you when you hear that being seen originates in our seeing ourselves?

Let's assume that at some point, even if it's only in moments, we are living authentically, seeing, and accepting ourselves. In those moments, we create the potential for others to see us.

Here's the question...what does it mean to you to feel seen by another? (when someone listens intently to my words; when I'm understood; when I'm appreciated for my unique perspective; when someone makes a sincere effort to put themselves in my shoes)

Is there a time that you felt unseen? (when I am judged for doing something, or not doing something, without an attempt at understanding the complexity of the role I'm filling)

Have you ever felt that you had to shrink to be received well? (in childhood; and in a previous experience just a few years ago)

Does it serve anything or anyone when we shrink? (not in the long run)

There is a quote by Marianne Williamson that I'm sure you've heard, but it is powerful and bears repeating:

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?" Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our

own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

I'd like to follow that with a short Practice, just as we did in Taizé this morning.

I invite you to close your eyes for just moment...turn within and offer yourself a loving gaze. What do you see when you look within yourself? (Pause) Can you acknowledge your strengths *and* vulnerabilities? (Pause) Can you embrace them with open arms for what they are, for how they are? (Pause) *This* is feeling and being seen...giving ourselves permission to show up wholly, truly, authentically. We give ourselves permission to be visible to those around us...to stand tall in who we are. This is a glorious act of Love.

Now expand your awareness outside of yourself. Think about the people who make you feel seen. These are the people who hold space for your thoughts, feelings, and dreams...without judgement. They see the beauty in your imperfections and love you I a way that is healthy and grounding. Who are these people in your life? (Pause) Maybe offer gratitude...(Pause)

Now ask yourself, "How am I offering this back?" (Pause) Feeling seen is a reciprocal exchange. Just as we wish to be seen by others, we must Practice seeing them in return. Having this type of connection with another takes cultivating empathy, and truly listening and accepting.

Feel free to bring your awareness back into the room, into your body, into the group.

Did you learn anything?

I invite you to Practice more often in the coming week. When we acknowledge our own worthiness and the depths of our experiences, we radiate a sense of authenticity that naturally draws others in...offers a healing energy...gives permission without saying a word. When we stand in who we are, we are showing up as a living example that others may find strength in.

I'd like to close our time together with the same prayer I shared in Taizé...because it was powerful when it came through and bears repeating.

In the name of All That Is Creative, Receptive and Nurturing...in the name of the Peaceful Power of the Creator, we join our hearts in prayer:

Mother/Father God...Loving Creator...You are all that is, all that ever was, and all that shall ever be. With humility and surrender, I rest in You now.

I trust and know that I Am of Your Essence and Substance...there is nothing else that I could be. I Am Divine Potential taken form.

Within me lies the soft, receptive, and life-giving qualities of Your Spirit. I welcome them into my life.

Your Guidance flows through me as Creativity...Intuition...Wisdom.

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As I learn to trust the promptings of my body, and of my emotions, I find your Guidance clearer still.

I know that I Am seen, fully known, by your Infinite Presence.

I Am here on purpose...I see myself for who and Whose I Am.

I recognize the Christ in myself, and in every person who crosses my path.

And in the being seen, I extend the gift of sight to those around me.

I look deeply at each Beloved, asking by the Power of my Presence, "What is it like to be you?"

And I welcome the Sacred Feminine within as she steps forward, standing in Her Wisdom and Authority.

Thank You, Great Spirit, for the Graceful Blessings that fill my Life...and for the challenges that build my character, resilience, and faith...

I walk in reverence, awe, and a deep sense of gratitude for Your Power and Presence in my Life...and thankful for this time of Communion, I rest, knowing that my prayer is answered before it is spoken. And So It Is! Amen!

Take a moment to allow your awareness to return to this space...welcome back.

Rev. Diana – Love Offering

I 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.


Tying in with our theme, please enjoy...


Offertory Music – *This is Me*, from *The Greatest Showman*

<https://youtu.be/CjxugyZCfuw>

Sherri – Blessing for the Offering

Sherri – Invitations

 Michael's Book Club meets on Tuesdays – book is *The Delight in Being Ordinary* by Roland Merullo.

 Fast Track to Wellness meets on Thursdays from 12:00 – 2:00 pm. This powerful and supportive group is growing...come check it out.

♥ Metaphysical Bible meets on Thursdays from 3-5 pm with Chris Johnson.

Looking Ahead...

♥ Rev. Diana will be offering a new course of study based on the book *Understanding World Religions*, beginning Wednesday February 28th from 10 am – 1 pm. More information can be found in your new bulletins...be sure to take one with you.

♥ And reservations are coming in for our Spring Retreat at The Gathering Place at Shasta Lake. We are collecting your \$100 non-refundable deposit to hold your space. We have 15-20 spots left, depending on sleeping arrangements. The reservations are first come, first served. The total cost per adult is \$275. We are looking at the possibility of making it a family retreat that includes children, depending on age. Contact Rev. Diana with your questions and to reserve your spot.

There is more information available in the February Bulletin... take one home with you. And check out our amazing website, compliments of Chris Johnson.

Information Cards if new people

Prayer Requests: I am available after service – We invite everyone to help us make a private space for prayer here in the Sanctuary by joining us next door for lunch

Rev. Diana – Closing Comments...

Rev. Diana & Chris – Closing Song

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



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