

I Am Light

April 21, 2024

Lucinda Alton, RScP, with Sherri Dotter, RScP,
and musician Gary French



An Independent Interfaith Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Taizé

Lucinda – we follow the bell to the stillness within...3 Bells

Sherri – Opening Prayer

Lucinda – Welcome...if you're new with us here this morning, my name is Lucinda Alton, and I am a Prayer Practitioner and Ministerial student here at Mystic Heart Spiritual Center. We are an Independent Interfaith Community that teaches Universal Principles and Practical Spirituality. We open our doors in welcome, trusting that you will be led to the Guidance and Wisdom of your own Mystic Heart.

Gary – Taizé Chants

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

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

Lucinda – Take a moment and breathe in the beauty of the morning. Grounded in a deep sense of gratitude for the many gifts of this day, let's settle into a moment of stillness...taking a couple of slow, deep breaths...breathing in love...breathing out peace....breathing in joy...breathing out peace...feeling your body relaxing as you allow your awareness to move into the heart space...allowing yourself to rest there...feeling content in this moment as you allow a sense of peace to fill your being to overflowing...and allowing that peace to flow outward...as it connects us to everything and everyone...all humans, all creatures...the plant life, rocks and sand...every drop of water...the stars and planets...each and every one, radiating with the One Light...an intricate and irreplaceable part of the One Life. Take a moment to sense and feel our connection with all that is...to feel how each of us is Light.

Paramahansa Yogananda said: "I am a spark from the Infinite. I am not flesh and bones. I am light. In helping others to succeed I shall find my own prosperity. In the welfare of others I shall find my own well-being. I am infinite. I am spaceless, I am tireless; I am beyond body, thought, and utterance; beyond all matter and mind. I am endless bliss."

"I am a spark from the Infinite." We are each God experiencing life as human. Every one of us is Spirit in form, experiencing a unique life – human, animal, rock, plant – each is a unique life.

I am here to learn and to experience. Life as a human is sometimes pleasant, sometimes not so pleasant. We can get so caught up in life as a human that we forget who we are. We forget that as God in human form, we have the power to choose how we experience life.

Two of the most powerful words that we can use together are ‘I am.’ And yet, how often do we use these words without thought? How many times have we said something such as: I am so sick and tired, I am so clumsy, I’m always broke.

How do we stop thoughts like those from floating through our minds? Elizabeth Kübler-Ross suggests: “Learn to get in touch with the silence within yourself and know that everything in this life has a purpose. There are no mistakes, no coincidences. All events are blessings given to us to learn from.” When we think about it, the harmful I am statements come from a place within our subconscious. They are the products of thoughts and beliefs that we are not consciously aware of holding onto. So, learning to get in touch with the silence within ourselves is important. And in order to reach the silence within, we study, we meditate, and we pray. Taking a class can sometimes be intimidating. I don’t **have** time to do the homework. I’m too dumb. It is worth it to take the time in order to release the untrue self-defeating statements the waft up from our unconscious selves.

We study so that we can feel the truth of Paramahansa Yogananda’s words when he said, “The human mind is a spark of the almighty consciousness of God. I could show you that whatever your powerful mind believes very intensely would instantly come to pass.” It takes diligent study to get to a point where we accept this truth for ourselves. To get to a point where we feel it in our hearts.

Father Richard Rohr’s Center for Action and Contemplation contains the quote: “Lady Julian of Norwich uses the idea of “oneing” to describe divine union. In chapter 53 of *Revelations of Divine Love*, she writes, “This beloved soul was preciousy knitted to God in its making, by a knot so subtle and so mighty that it is oned in God. In this oneing, it is made endlessly holy. Furthermore, God wants us to know that all the souls which will be saved in heaven without end are knit in this knot, and oned in this oneing, and made holy in this holiness.”

So, oneing would be Jesus’s words that “I and the Father are One.” When we say that God flows in, through and as all things, or that everything happens within the Mind of God, we are describing the same concept. But, for most of us, there is a disconnect between saying it and actually believing it. Ernest Holmes spoke of this disconnect between *saying* that we are one with God and *knowing* it, as the source of our pain and discomfort.

And so, we take our spiritually based classes, and we do the work of coming to understand our own hidden beliefs and feelings to aid us in releasing the thoughts and beliefs that we have been allowing to sabotage us.

In addition to studying, we meditate, we pray. We open ourselves to the silence within.

And, we listen. We listen both to the verbal and nonverbal messages. And we listen to what we ourselves are saying. Listening to ourselves and asking, “Where did this come from” can be a powerful tool. And sometimes, maybe the question needs to be, “Is this mine?” Most importantly, we must be ready for the answer.

Please pay attention to the words – let them speak to you – as Gary sings India Arie’s I am light.

Gary – Musical Meditation

I Am Light, written by India Arie

Celebration is also a strong part of building a spiritual life. We live in a beautiful place. We are surrounded by family and friends who love us. When we set about releasing the thoughts and beliefs that have been holding us back, we are, in essence, getting lighter. And it is ok to enjoy ourselves. After all, as the Bible says: “*A cheerful heart is a good medicine.*”—*Proverbs 17:22*

Service is an important component of spirituality. I am rewarded internally every time I am in service. This does not mean that you must say yes every time someone asks something of you. Taking care of yourself by setting boundaries is important to avoiding burn out and resentment.

Sherri – Guided Meditation

Allow yourself to relax once more...Close your eyes if they are not already closed and you are comfortable doing so...Take a deep breath...and slowly release it...Take another deep breath in...and slowly release it...In your mind’s eye, you open the door and step out of the room...You find yourself in a room of mirrors...The first thing you feel is the love that permeates the room...Only love can exist in this room...There is no judgement...Each mirror is blank as you step up to it. You ask, “Who am I?” and wait as a picture begins to form...spend some time with the mirrors, noticing what they reveal to you.

Silence – 3:00

As the music begins again, you know that it is time to leave. You thank the mirrors for the knowledge they have given you...And you feel the love they send you in response...You return to the room knowing that you are loved and accepted by the most important person – yourself.

Lucinda – When we start exploring the question of “Who am I?,” we start on a journey. It is a hero’s journey, for there are several answers to that question. And then, there is the other side of that question: “Who am I *not*?”

This is one of those questions where there are no perfect answers and where each answer will be unique to the questioner.

As a final thought to consider...I am adding one more quote. “**No human being is ever going to love you more than you love yourself.**” — **Avis J. Williams**

For each of us, I believe that part of the answer is as Paramahansa Yogananda said: “I am a spark of the Divine...I am Light.”

Please join me in prayer and let my words speak for you.

With deep gratitude, thank you God for the light and the lightness that are becoming stronger in my life. Thank you for the light that each friend and family member shines in my life. As I move along my path, releasing bits of pieces of the hidden (by me) thoughts, beliefs and anything that has been holding me back, I am so grateful knowing that I am fully and deeply supported.

I am deeply grateful for Mystic Heart in my life, and for the growth of Mystic Heart. I am grateful for our beautiful new space.

I am grateful for each Light who joined us here this morning.

I am so very grateful for the peace that I can feel here this morning, and I am grateful knowing that peace is contagious. I know that each day, more people can feel it.

Speaking my words into Law and knowing that they are coming into fruition as I speak, I say thank you! Father, Mother, God. And so it is. Amen.

Lucinda – 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 you.

Lucinda – 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.

Gary – Offertory Music

 ***The Light of the World, written by Chris Johnson***

Lucinda – Blessing for the Offering

Feel free to grab a cup of something warm next door and meet us back at 10:30 for a Conscious Conversation. We'll bless you on your way with *A Soul's Blessing*.

Gary – Taizé Closing Song

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

Conscious Conversation

Sherri – Opening Prayer

Lucinda – Good morning and welcome, or welcome back...welcome to those joining online. If you're new with us here this morning... my name is Lucinda Alton, and I am a Prayer Practitioner and Ministerial student here at Mystic Heart Spiritual Center. We are an Independent Interfaith Community that teaches Universal Principles and Practical Spirituality. We open our doors in welcome, trusting that you will be led to the Guidance and Wisdom of your own Mystic Heart.

Gary – 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

I invite you to once again, move into the imaginal realm, bringing all of your senses and feeling into 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, Acceptance and Compassion...and from this way of being, I feel the presence of a deep sense of Joy, Contentment, and Sufficiency. It's palpable. It's exciting.

In this more conscious 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 true to our generous nature, we give of ourselves freely, offering the gifts that are uniquely ours. With all needs met for every person, each one is free to share time and talent in ways that feed the soul. And each time and talent given is received with deep appreciation by the receiver.

By our every thought, word, and action, we're creating a world in which all beings are well-fed...have the safety and comfort of the home or their choice and a deep sense of purpose. And belonging. We are so grateful that health, education, and healthy relationships are supported by social systems grounded in Integrity, Compassion and Wholeness.

Every being is fully valued for its uniqueness...we practice living Authentic lives where vulnerability is celebrated...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!

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 ***Divine Union***, and the topic of Conversation this morning is ***I am Light***. Briefly, at our earlier meeting, we explored the concept of "Who am I?" and briefly touched on "Who am I not." We also talked about the thoughts and beliefs that can reside in our unconscious and come out to sabotage us unexpectedly.

Gary sang the song I am Light by India Arie.

When I knew that I had a talk coming up, I started thinking about a topic. I listened to India Arie on the way in to Mystic Heart and suddenly had this brilliant idea that my topic should be I am Light. And I knew exactly what I wanted to say. Until I was looking for a final quote and found one by Paramhansa Yogananda that changed what I wanted to say.

Let's use the lyrics from the song as a springboard for our conversation this morning.

I am not the things my family did

What do you think she is speaking about here?

I am not the voices in my head

Can anyone identify with this one?

What are some of the voices that we hear?

I am not the pieces of the brokenness inside

Are we ever really broken?

But does it feel like we are sometimes?

I'm not the mistakes that I have made or any of the things that caused me pain

I'm probably the only person in the room to make mistakes... 😊

I am not the pieces of the dream I left behind

Have you ever had to leave a dream behind? Anyone want to share?

I am not the color of my eyes

I am not the skin on the outside

I am not my age, I am not my race,

These things influence how we see ourselves, but do they affect who we really are?

(What do you think she is saying with these phrases and are there any that you would add? Looking for something along the lines that we often take on internal baggage that we don't need.)

We sure carry a lot of unnecessary baggage, don't we?

(I want to share an article and practice written by Rick Hanson.)

**What's weighing you down? **

The Practice: Lighten up.

Why?

On the path of life, most of us are hauling way too much weight.

(What are some of the unnecessary things that you carry? Too many shoulds, worries, too much guilt or regret? Too many commitments?)

Remember a time when you lightened your load. Maybe a backpacking trip when every needless pound stayed home. Or after you finally left a bad relationship. Or just stop worrying about something. Or came clean with a friend about something that had been bothering you. **How did this feel? (Wait for someone else to answer)**

If no one speaks, "I can share that there have been a few times when I knew that something needed to be said. It was terrifying, but it did feel great afterwards.

Can anyone name the areas where baggage tends to collect...obligations, responsibilities, and tasks...stuff...relationships...

But this morning, let's just look at the mind-clutter we carry around. What are some of the cluttering thoughts, perceptions, perspectives, attitudes, or ideas I could put down?

How would I be better off?

How would it be to make this a daily Practice?

Take a look at your mind: what weighs it down? Guilt about long-ago misdeeds? Needless anxiety? High, perfectionistic standards? Grumbling anger? Grievances? Passivity, lethargy? Doubt? Taking yourself way too seriously? Whatever it is, for a brief period of time – half an hour, half a day – totally drop it. At the first whiff, drop it.

I'm pretty sure that I'm not the only one who has or could let go of some stuff? Cause that is kind of a necessity for me on my path.

Overall: if in doubt, throw it out.

I want to share one quote from this morning. "No human being is ever going to love you more than you love yourself." — Avis J. Williams

What does that quote say to you guys?

I'm going to bring this to a close now.

Please join me in prayer and let my words speak for you.

With deep gratitude, thank you God for the light and the lightness that are becoming stronger in my life. Thank you for the light that each friend and family member shines in my life. As I move along my path, releasing bits of pieces of the hidden (by me) thoughts, beliefs and anything that has been holding me back, I am so grateful knowing that I am fully and deeply supported.

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Speaking my words into Law and knowing that they are coming into fruition as I speak, I say thank you! Father, Mother, God. And so it is. Amen.

that my prayer is answered before it is spoken. I let it be. And So It Is! Amen!

 **Take a moment to allow your awareness to return to your body, to this space, to this beautiful gathering...welcome back.**

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.

We're going to share a couple of songs this morning, just because we're here and we can...

Gary – Offertory Music

 **Shambala, written by Daniel Joseph Moore**

Sherri – Blessing for the Offering

Invitations

- ♥ ***The Mystic Heart Book Club*** will start up again on May 7th, 3-5 pm, reading ***Conversations with God, Book 1.***
- ♥ ***Rev. Diana's World Religions*** class is meeting for Class 9, Wednesday from 2:00-5:00 pm.
- ♥ ***Fast Track to Wellness*** is returning this Thursday from noon – 2:00 with a Community Cooking day. Contact Rev. Diana if you plan to attend.
- ♥ ***Metaphysical Bible*** is returning this Thursday from 3:00 – 5:00 pm.
- ♥ ***Prayers in the Wind with Ellie Thompson, Saturday, May 4th. 10:00 am – 1:00 pm.*** This is a Prayerful Play Shop where each participant will create a unique set of Prayer Flags. Contact Ellie for more information, or to reserve your seat. Suggested Donation: \$20 – Snacks provided.

There is more information available in the March Bulletin...take one home with you. And check out our amazing website.

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

Gary – Closing Song

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



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