

Sacred Disruption

Sunday, May 26, 2024

Chris Johnson, RScP, with Chris Netto, RScP
and Rev. Diana Johnson, IM, RScM



An Independent Interfaith Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Taizé

Chris J – Let us follow the sound of the bell into the Stillness Within...

3 Bells

Chris N – Opening Prayer

Chris J – Good morning and welcome. My name is Chris Johnson , and I am a Prayer Practitioner serving Mystic Heart Spiritual Center. We are an Independent Interfaith Community that teaches Universal Principles and Practical Spirituality. We open our hearts and our doors in welcome, trusting that you will be led to the Guidance and Wisdom of your own Mystic Heart.

Let us begin by joining our voices in musical prayer.

Rev. Diana & Chris J – 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

Chris J – Let us begin our Taizé this morning by centering ourselves in gratitude for the multitude of gifts we are given this day... I invite us to take a long, slow, deep breath in... imagine it filling your heart with love... and exhale that love into the world... Now slowly inhale the Divine Presence... and exhaling, release all mental busyness and cares... Abide in the Peace of the Presence of Spirit...

Remember with me now that all of Creation is the expression of Spirit... the body of God... Each of us is a unique fiber in the beautiful tapestry of Life... A strand of consciousness weaving in and out of one another to reveal the greater splendor of our Unity... This morning we connect in consciousness with each other... with our plant and animal siblings... with our Mother Earth, her waters, her minerals, her mountains, her weather... with our Grandfather Sky, his clouds, his stars, his planets, his galaxies... All expressions of The Infinite Nature of Spirit... each absolutely necessary to the whole...

As we acknowledge that we are all of One Essence, One Substance, One Source, we grow in compassion, empathy, and understanding. Firmly grounded in this awareness, we recognize that all that we offer into the world in thought, word, or action, affects the Whole.

With our hearts and minds consciously centered in Spirit, our collective prayer and meditation leave an imprint of Peace and Love on human evolution, and on the world, for all time. Take a moment to experience the Grace we are radiating...

This month we have contemplated what it means to create and live in **Beloved Community**. Today we explore what that community might look like in its active endeavors to create a **Love-Soaked World**... and how those activities might lead to **Sacred Disruption**...

So, what *is* Sacred Disruption? In *Creating the Beloved Community*, Rev. Jim Lockard writes:

...Calling upon deep spiritual principles which then are ingrained through spiritual practice can lead to “disruption.” The idea is to disrupt the level of thinking that is currently embodied and to create space for a new, higher, more spiritually attuned level of thinking and belief to emerge.¹

Sacred Disruption changes us from the inside out – we can never return to our old way of being. And living authentically from this newfound consciousness, we interact differently with other people, with non-human beings, with the environment, and with the rest of Creation.

We may find we can no longer give in to *business as usual* when that participation harms others. We can no longer support companies that exploit people, animals, or the Earth. We choose to stop being part of the *problem*, and work to become part of the *solution*. The first evidence of *Sacred Disruption* is that it disrupts *our way of life*. This *inner* change always alters our *outer* behavior.

We may even be called into spiritually motivated activism... In his book *The Mystic Heart*, Brother Wayne Teasdale outlines nine elements essential to a universal Interspirituality: one of these elements he calls *The Prophetic Voice*.

The Prophetic Voice refers to spiritual leadership in the area of social justice. Like the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures, the spiritually awakened have a responsibility to respond in beneficial ways whenever and wherever we see injustice. Consider the words of Jeremiah:

Thus saith the Lord; Execute ye judgment and righteousness, and deliver the spoiled out of the hand of the oppressor: and do no wrong, do no violence to the stranger, the fatherless, nor the widow, neither shed innocent blood in this place.²

Or this from Isaiah:

Learn to do good; seek justice, correct oppression; bring justice to the fatherless, and plead the widow's cause.³

And Micah:

He has shown you, O man, what is good; and what does Yahweh require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?⁴

Seven centuries later, Rabbi Yeshua of Nazareth picked up the thread:

In truth I tell you, in so far as you did [good] to one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did it to me. And in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me.⁵

And it wasn't just the Judeo-Christian tradition that valued justice. Four centuries before Yeshua's time, Lao Tzu wrote:

As it acts in the world, the Tao
is like the bending of a bow.
The top is bent downward;
the bottom is bent up.
It adjusts excess and deficiency
so that there is perfect balance.
It takes from what is too much
and gives to what isn't enough.⁶

And a millennium after Lao Tzu, the Prophet Muhammad would write in the Qur'an:

Have We not given them two eyes, a tongue, and two lips; and shown them the two ways 'of right and wrong'? If only they had attempted the challenging path 'of goodness instead'! And what will make you realize what 'attempting' the challenging path is? It is to free a slave, or to give food in times of famine to an orphaned relative or to a poor person in distress, and—above all—to be one of those who have faith and urge each other to perseverance and urge each other to compassion.⁷

The call to social justice is a Common Thread in all of the world's religions. But protesting the status quo will never change anything. It is not enough to stand *against* something. The Universe is not interested in what we *don't* want... we will only receive Divine Empowerment when we stand *in support of* the greater possibility of our highest vision of what *can be*.

Rev. Diana – Guided Meditation

Mother Theresa was once asked why she didn't take part in anti-war demonstrations. She said, "I will *never* do that, but as soon as you have a pro-peace rally, I'll be there." She understood the importance of consciously placing our energy, time, and attention on those things we wish to have or experience in our lives, and in the world.

It may seem like such a fine line. We may think that attending an anti-war demonstration is a stand for peace, a step toward peace. But is it really? Words are so

powerful. And the energy behind them is creative. Anti...against...implying opposition...resistance. War...implying conflict...violence. And demonstration...to show the existence of.

Now consider the words pro...in favor of, moving towards. Peace...freedom from disturbance, distress, or violence. And rally...to bring or come together. These two phrases bring different sensations to our bodies, and send different messages to the Universe. On the one hand, resistance, conflict...on the other, embracing peace.

Sometimes it seems easier to know what we *don't* want, than what we *do* want...what we are *against*, rather than what we are *for*. But the mystics across the ages warn us that Creator, Great Spirit, God only knows Yes...always says Yes. This is spiritual principle. What we put out comes back. What we give attention to expands in our experience.

In our three minutes of Sacred Silence this morning, I invite you to reflect... Are there places in your life that you are against something or someone? How could you reframe your view, so that the focus of your attention shifts to what you want more of?

Silence – 3:00

Holy One... Infinite Intelligence, thank you for your Sacred Presence in this place... for your Guidance, Inspiration, and Love... for your Holy People who are here in Beloved Community... for this reminder that our words are *creative*... our intentions and how we state them *matter*... May we never forget the Power of our intention...

May we remember Who and Whose we are, and what we stand for... and may we walk in that Truth, living from our highest capacities and motivations in every moment... may we embody Peace, Love and Compassion, and express them in our daily lives...

As Taizé continues, we are inspired by the message...we take it in, fully receiving... allowing ourselves to be transformed... willing to live our lives in *Sacred Disruption* to the status quo in the creation of a Love-Soaked World...

Chris – Thich Nhat Hahn, the great Buddhist sage of our time, reminds us that:

Mindfulness must be engaged. Once we see that something needs to be done, we must take action. Seeing and action go together. Otherwise, what is the point in seeing?

Rabbi Yeshua's parable of the Good Samaritan who helped a man mugged along the road to Jericho compels us to compassion in the face of suffering. But that compassion must lead to action. Twenty centuries later, the thread is picked up again – this time by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.:

We are called to play the Good Samaritan on life's roadside; but that will be only an initial act. One day the whole Jericho road must be transformed so that men and women will not be beaten and robbed as they make their journey through life. True

compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it understands that an edifice that produces beggars needs restructuring.⁸

As spiritually illumined human beings, we are called not only to call out injustice when we see it, but to do all that we can to alleviate the suffering it causes. We are called to feed our unsheltered siblings... but it doesn't stop there... As Dr. King said, we have to do more than address the immediate need... we must challenge the very systems that permit and promote racial, social, economic, and gender-based discrimination.

Unity minister Jim Rosemergy tells us that "Action without prayer and meditation leads to exhaustion. Prayer and meditation without action leads to self-absorption." Human beings are meant to swing between contemplation and action... from imagination to realization... from *being* into *doing*... But our doing must be inspired by the gifts received in our spiritual practices. This allows us, as Jim Lockard puts it, to "bring the best versions of ourselves" to our work in the world.

Closing Prayer For our prayer to close Taizé, I am excerpting Ernest Holmes' *Sermon By the Sea*, given at Asilomar in 1959:

Find me one person who is *for* something and *against* nothing, who is redeemed enough not to condemn others out of the burden of [their] soul, and I will find another savior, another Jesus, and an exalted human being.

Find me one person who no longer has any fear of the universe, or of God, or of [humanity], or of anything else, and you will have brought to me someone in whose presence we may sit, and fear shall vanish as clouds before the sunlight.

Find me someone who has redeemed [their] own soul, and [they] shall become my redeemer...

There is a Power transcendent beyond our needs, our little wants. Demonstrating a dime is good if one needs it, or healing oneself of a pain is certainly good if one has it, but beyond that, at the real feast at the tabernacle of the Almighty, in the temple of the living God, in the banquet hall of heaven, there is something beyond anything that you and I have touched.

Find one thousand people who know that, and use it, and the world will no longer be famished. How important it is that each one of us in [our own] simple way shall live from God to God, with God, in God, and to each other. That is why we are here, and we are taking back with us, I trust, a vision and an inspiration, something beyond a hope and a longing, that the living Spirit shall through us walk anew into its own creation and a new glory come with a new dawn.

I give thanks for that day when the sun will rise on a new Earth... a Love-Soaked World in which all beings and all of Creation is loved and respected as expressions of their Divine Creator. Heaven on Earth... World without end... Let it Be... Amen

I invite you to return your awareness to your body...to this time and place... When you feel ready, gently open your eyes, and allow 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.

Chris J – Love Offering

At the close of our Taizé Meditation, we offer the opportunity for you to share of your financial good in support of the work we do in the world, should you so choose. If you're joining us online, you can find a Donate Button on our homepage at mysticheart.org, or our mailing address, if you prefer to send a check. We thank you in advance for your gifts.

Earlier we cited a quote from the Hebrew Prophet Micah. Here is a musical version of that verse from Monroe Crossing:

Offertory Video

 **Micah 6:8**, by Monroe Crossing

Chris J – 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 – it might just be *prophetic!* If not, know that the blessings of your Beloved Community go with you on this beautiful Sunday.

Rev. Diana & Chris J – Taizé Closing Sing

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

Conscious Conversation

Chris N – Opening Prayer

Chris J – Good morning, Mystic Heart! Welcome, if you're just joining us, welcome back if you were here for Taizé, and welcome to those joining us online. For any who don't know me, I am Chris Johnson, Prayer Practitioner in service to Mystic Heart, and I am honored to be here with you this morning. an Independent Interfaith Community that teaches Universal Principles and Practical Spirituality. We open our doors, our hearts, and our arms in radical welcome, trusting that you will be led to the Guidance and Wisdom of your own Mystic Heart.

So, let's start by lifting our voices in some high-energy musical prayer.

Rev. Diana & Chris J – Opening Songs

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

 **One Big Family**, written by Robin Hackett & Gary Lynn Floyd

 **Wholly Holy Way**, written by Rickie Byars

Chris J – I invite you to join me now in the imaginal realm, as we engage our Divine Gift of creative spiritual power to envision and realize a **Love-Soaked World**...

... a world in which all inhabitants of this planet live from our Highest Potential... Kindness, Generosity, and Compassion...Peace...Cooperation.

In this new world, all people honor and care for one another, for all of the life forms that share this beautiful planet with us, and for Mother 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.

By aligning our every thought, word, and action with our vision, we are creating a world in which all people are well-fed... have the safety and comfort of home and a deep sense of purpose and belonging. A world in which health, education, and healthy relationships are supported by social systems grounded in Integrity, Compassion and Wholeness.

Valuing every being for its uniqueness... we practice living truly Authentic lives where vulnerability is celebrated... there is no need to defend or protect. The work we are doing within ourselves shows up as a world free of hatred and violence.

We recognize the abundance that surrounds us... greed is a thing of the past, as generosity flows 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 recognize the sacred in everyone and everything... and we walk in reverence and gratitude for all that we have been given.

We maintain this Vision day by day, moment by moment; we align our actions with our Vision, living these changes first in our own lives, with our families, friends, and neighbors... and one neighborhood, one community at a time, a new world is being born. In this process of profound change, this Beloved Community stands as an open and welcoming place for all who seek support, belonging, Family.

By the power of our deep faith and inspired action, this prayer is acted upon, answered even as it is spoken, for Spirit knows our heart's desire and intent. In full expectation of its Graceful unfolding...we release our prayer to the Creative Power and Intelligence that I call God... to the One that gets it done... Let It Be!... Amen!

I invite your awareness back to the here and now... to your 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.

This month we have contemplated what it means to create and live in **Beloved Community**. Today at Taizé, we explored what that community might look like in its active endeavors to create a **Love-Soaked World**... and how those activities might lead to **Sacred Disruption**...

So, let me do a brief recap, and then we'll jump into conversation. We read a quote from Rev. Jim Lockard, author of *Creating the Beloved Community*, which we used as a model when we started Mystic Heart. About *Sacred Disruption*, Rev. Jim wrote:


...Calling upon deep spiritual principles which then are ingrained through spiritual practice can lead to "disruption." The idea is to disrupt the level of thinking that is currently embodied and to create space for a new, higher, more spiritually attuned level of thinking and belief to emerge.

Then we looked at the concept of *The Prophetic Voice*, as presented by Brother Wayne Teasdale in his book, *The Mystic Heart: Discovering a Universal Spirituality in the World's Religions*. One of the nine essential elements of a universal Interspirituality, *The Prophetic Voice* refers to spiritual leadership in the area of social justice. Teasdale believes that the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures gave us a model to follow in responding to injustice in our world. We also looked at some of what Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism, and Islam all teach about our responsibility for social justice.


And finally we explored the importance of determining the nature of effective responses to injustice. That protesting the status quo never changes things. There is no power in standing *against* something. The Universe is not interested in what we *don't* want... We must stand in support of the greater possibility of our highest vision of what *can be*.

So, that ought to give us enough to keep us busy for a while!


How many of us have experienced *Divine Disruption* in our spiritual journey? If you're comfortable sharing, how did it show up for you? How did you respond?


 a feeling that suddenly everything I thought I knew was either not true or I had an inadequate understanding. Anybody here like to be shown they're wrong?

Ancient Wisdom tells us, "As within, so without." So what happens in our outer world of work and relationships when we experience that inner turbulence?


 we may feel *unmoored* for a while as we try to find our bearings and navigate this *terra incognita*. We may find we have to end jobs or relationships that no longer fit our vision.

Does *Sacred Disruption* call us to disrupt societal structures to bring attention to injustices?

 Think of Jesus chasing the money changers out of the Temple: he got their attention, but then they killed him.

 Does it help or hurt our cause to disrupt a City Council or Board of Supervisors meeting?

What about the *Prophetic Voice*? Is it helpful to call out governmental or societal programs that are systemically unfair? How do we do that and remain *for something and against nothing*?

 Brother Wayne would say that it is our *duty* to at least call it out. But not without proposing what we would like to see instead. This is when it is handy to have our vision of a *Love-Soaked World* fully fleshed out in our mind.

I want to reread a passage from Taizé:


Rabbi Yeshua's parable of the Good Samaritan who helped a man mugged along the road to Jericho compels us to compassion in the face of suffering. But that compassion must lead to action. Twenty centuries later, the thread is picked up again – this time by the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.:

We are called to play the Good Samaritan on life's roadside; but that will be only an initial act. One day the whole Jericho road must be transformed so that men and women will not be beaten and robbed as they make their journey through life. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar; it understands that an edifice that produces beggars needs restructuring.

How might we use our *Prophetic Voice* and inspired action to begin the restructuring of unfair but deeply entrenched social systems?

 Respectful presentations in local governmental meetings


 If possible, withdraw support from those systems


 Nonviolent demonstrations to raise awareness, making sure that we are *for* something and *against* nothing

I the 60's and 70's many of my generation wanted to tear down "the system." But, as author Lynne Twist tells us, "The job of people who are awake is to hospice the death of the old structures and systems that no longer serve us while we midwife ones that will serve us. Hospicing and midwifing are both acts of love." How might we do that locally, nationally, or globally?


 Ballot petitions, community meetings, awareness campaigns, etc.

Thich Nhat Hahn reminds us that, "Mindfulness must be engaged. Once we see that something needs to be done, we must take action. Seeing and action go together. Otherwise, what is the point in seeing?" To me this sounds like we are being challenged to step up. How does it make you feel? How might we accept this challenge?

 it feels daunting – what can *I* do? And if it is a deeply entrenched structure, it might be dangerous to buck the system

 No one of us can do *everything*, but each of us can do *something*.

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, is quoted as saying, “Do all the good you can, By all the means you can, In all the ways you can, In all the places you can, At all the times you can, To all the people you can, As long as ever you can.” What does this mean to you?

 I don't have to be Gandhi, Dr. King, or Mother Teresa, but we each have something to offer

Is there anything else seeking to be spoken into our Conversation this morning? What is your *Prophetic Voice* yearning to say?

Closing Prayer – I would like to close with the same prayer we used in Taizé. It is excerpted from Ernest Holmes' *Sermon By the Sea*, which he gave at the Asilomar Conference Grounds in 1959.

Find me one person who is *for* something and *against* nothing, who is redeemed enough not to condemn others out of the burden of [their] soul, and I will find another savior, another Jesus, and an exalted human being.

Find me one person who no longer has any fear of the universe, or of God, or of [humanity], or of anything else, and you will have brought to me someone in whose presence we may sit, and fear shall vanish as clouds before the sunlight.

Find me someone who has redeemed [their] own soul, and [they] shall become my redeemer...

There is a Power transcendent beyond our needs, our little wants. Demonstrating a dime is good if one needs it, or healing oneself of a pain is certainly good if one has it, but beyond that, at the real feast at the tabernacle of the Almighty, in the temple of the living God, in the banquet hall of heaven, there is something beyond anything that you and I have touched.

Find one thousand people who know that, and use it, and the world will no longer be famished. How important it is that each one of us in [our own] simple way shall live from God to God, with God, in God, and to each other. That is why we are here, and we are taking back with us, I trust, a vision and an inspiration, something beyond a hope and a longing, that the living Spirit shall through us walk anew into its own creation and a new glory come with a new dawn.

I give thanks for that day when the sun rises on a new Heaven and a new Earth... a Love-Soaked World in which all beings and all of Creation is loved and respected as expressions of their Divine Creator. I accept that whether or not I live to see its physical manifestation, holding the vision and working toward bringing the Realm of Heaven into the experience of all inhabitants of this beautiful planet is work that is mine to do. I am so grateful for all the others who help and support me in this work and on our shared journey.

And centered in that gratitude, I leave this prayer on Spirit's Holy Altar. It is in God's hands, and I know that I am Divinely Guided as to how I can help facilitate on this physical plane. I see everything from this moment forward as evidence of this prayer being answered. Heaven on Earth... World without end... Let it Be...

Amen

I invite you to return your awareness to this time and this place... to this Beautiful Gathering of your Beloved Community..

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 if you prefer to send a check.

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.

As we pass the basket, please enjoy this video of the Steve Miller Band, doing a rendition of *Fly Like an Eagle* that you may not have heard.


Offertory Video

 ***Fly like an Eagle***, by the Steve Miller Band

Chris N – Blessing for the Offering

Chris N – Invitations


 **The Mystic Heart Book Club is meeting on Tuesdays from 3-5 pm with Michael Bordeaux and me. We are reading *Conversations With God, Book 1*.**

 **Please consider joining us on Wednesday for our weekly work session on the new building.** Gather at 1:00pm in the new location to lend a hand. Wear your grubbies!

 **Fast Track to Wellness meets with Rev. Diana on Thursdays from noon – 2:00 pm.** This week features Dr. Sharon Brisolara for Mindfulness Practice.

 **Please consider joining us after the Wellness Circle this Thursday to begin pricing items for our Parking Lot Sale.**

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

 **Join us for Community Meditation each Thursday evening in May.** Our purpose is to create Connection, positive vibes, and a solid spiritual foundation in preparation to the move to our new location. Suggested donation is \$10 (or more), to support our Building Project.

Looking Ahead...

♥ Join Sherri and John Dotter on Friday, May 31st, for the next Mystic Heart Fun-Raiser. They are offering a casual five-course dinner and beer pairing in their home. The cost is \$35 per person. There is only one ticket left...two if a couple...get them today!

♥ We're gearing up for a Fundraising Parking Lot Sale to help fund our remodel and move this summer. Doreen announces.

♥ Please join April Jimenez-WinterSky, Saturday, ~~June 15th~~ (TBA) from 11am to 1:30pm for part 2 of the Dancing the Wheel Workshop. (Note - This date has changed.) Suggested donation: \$20 Snacks will be provided.

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

Information Cards if new people

Prayer Requests: Lucinda is available after service for prayer, or fill out a prayer card and she will get your request to our Prayer Team for daily prayer – We invite everyone to help us make a private space for prayer here in the Sanctuary by joining us next door for lunch

We invite you to sing along with our Closing Song, Love Be With You.

Rev. Diana & Chris J – Closing Song

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



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¹ Jim Lockard, *Creating the Beloved Community*

² Jeremiah 22:3

³ Isaiah 1:17

⁴ Micah 6:8

⁵ Matthew 25:31–46, excerpted

⁶ Lao Tzu, *The Tao te Ching*, #77

⁷ *The Holy Qur'an*, 90:8 – 17

⁸ Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., speaking April 4th, 1967, exactly one year before he was assassinated in Memphis.