

Humanity Practicing Humanity

Sunday, September 29, 2024

Sherri Dotter, RScP, with Lucinda Alton, RScP
and musician Dalton Fitzgerald



An Independent Interfaith Community
Practicing the Possible Through Prayer

Taizé

Sherri – We follow the sound of the bell inward... **3 Bells**

Lucinda - Opening Prayer

Sherri – Good morning. If you're new with us here this morning, my name is Sherri Dotter, and I am a credentialed Professional Prayer Practitioner for 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. We begin our Taizé with Musical Prayer.

Dalton – Taizé Chants

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

 **Shivaya**, written by Karl Anthony

Sherri – I move into the stillness (Pause) ...allowing the breath to rise and fall...allowing it to slow and become silent...feeling the Presence of the One...and using the Power of Inner Vision to connect with our Global Community.

Together, we sense and tune into the web of consciousness that surrounds and infuses the planet...each of us a radiant point of Light in that web...trusting that all beings carry and express the Divine Spark...every human being, without exception...every animal, plant, and microbe...every rock and grain of sand, every drop of water, radiating the One Perfect Light...each and every part of Creation, a thread in the tapestry that is Creation...all necessary, all Divine, all a part of the one Light, the one Life.

As we acknowledge our connection with all of life, we are empowered...our Work on behalf of the Whole is empowered.

Our collective prayer and meditation leave an imprint of Peace, Compassion, and Grace, on the world...we are contributing to a Great Transformation.

This month, we are considering what it means to **Celebrate Divinity**, while **Practicing Humanity**. And this morning, we center our contemplation on **Humanity Practicing Humanity**.

The first word "Humanity" is defined as "all human beings collectively: the human race; humankind." The second word "Practicing," the way in which I was intending to use it,

is defined as “the act of doing something regularly or repeatedly to improve your skill at doing it.” The third word is again “Humanity.” It is interesting that in addition to “all beings” it also is defined and refers to the “kind feelings humans have for each other” or simply “human nature, kindness, compassion or benevolence.” Pulling all that together, our contemplation centers on all human beings doing something regularly and repeatedly to improve our skill of evoking feelings of kindness, compassion, or benevolence for each other (and I would like to add all beings, animals, plants...all of creation...and this includes ourselves).

Let that sink in...Human beings doing something regularly and repeatedly to improve our skill of evoking feelings of kindness, compassion, or benevolence for one another. Humanity practicing humanity. Could this be the single most important thing we do in our lives? Could this be the single most important thing that everyone on the planet does?

What can we do on an individual level to promote kindness and compassion? Eckhart Tolle talks about our self-talk. Buddhists also call it monkey-mind. It is the constant stream of thought that just chatters away as it names and considers its preferences and opinions on literally everything that comes into its awareness. It also labels everything and everyone as good or bad, a friend or foe. I am sure that it served an essential purpose in our evolution as the predator was hunting us, or in those very rare circumstances when we do find ourselves in danger, but how often does that really happen and is it really serving us in our everyday lives right now? And might we also recognize that it is often an outright disservice to our current spiritual evolution?...especially when we let it run its mouth without us discerning the truth or oftentimes falsehood of what is being said?

So how do we turn our Monkey-Mind into Mindfulness?

Eckhart Tolle reminds us to create space. He begins to....
prove....his....point....by...making...space....between....his...words....as...he....talks.
This is what meditation and mindfulness does...creates space.

Lucinda – Guided Meditation

Sherri – Contemplation

In Buddhism from Within, Reverend MacPhillamy reminds us that we don't have to believe what the voice is saying. We can simply ignore the voice. When something is said on T.V. and it does not align with our values, we simply change the channel, press mute or walk away. We can do that to our own self-talk.

If our self-talk is on a rant because we are triggered, we can increase our self-awareness initially by noticing we are triggered. Secondly we can refrain from or cease reacting. Finally, we can create space during our Spiritual Practice for some self-inquiring.

Let's do that now...

Think about the last time that you were triggered. (Pause)

Now think about how you were feeling. (Pause)

What was it in you that felt offended, hurt, sad, anger?...perhaps a need in you that wasn't being met?...perhaps a need to be loved, recognized, heard, seen, valued, appreciated? (Pause)

Is there something you were expecting to give or contribute or receive from the person or situation? (Pause)

Is that really where you need to recognize your good?...Isn't your good everywhere? (Pause)

And, do you really need it? Isn't it already there inside of you? (Pause)

Ultimately, can you just be with this person or in this situation and simply be?...not having to give or get anything?

Now go back to the situation and reimagine if we had no reactivity to the trigger. Like Reverend Diana noted, it only takes 90 seconds for the emotion to move through. Imagine the time spent with the person or the situation as being peaceful and enjoyable with a feeling of contentedness. We were at choice.

In every moment of our lives, we have many roads to choose from. But as we make those choices that are more life-affirming, we string those moments together into a peaceful, contented existence that has purpose and meaning. We get out of our own way and realize that Love Always Finds a Way.

Dalton – Musical Meditation

 **Love, Serve, and Remember**, written by John Astin

Sherri – When we realize that Love Always Finds A Way, we relax, surrender, and allow the good to move through and AS our lives. We start asking the bigger questions like “what is mine to do?,” “how can I serve?” or “how can I be a beneficial presence on the planet?.” We are more and more capable of spreading kindness, compassion, and benevolence...of creating a Love-Soaked world.

We gently return our awareness to our bodies, connecting once again with our senses...noticing the sounds in the room...allowing the eyes to gently open and taking 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.

Sherri – 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. We thank you in advance for your gifts. We acknowledge and give thanks for the infinite abundance of Spirit.

Dalton – Offertory Music

 **Love Cover Me**, written by Gary Lynn Floyd

Sherri – Blessing for the Offering

Dalton – Taizé Closing Song

 **A Soul's Blessing**, written by Gary Lynn Floyd

Conscious Conversation

Opening Prayer – Lucinda

Sherri – Good morning... and welcome, or welcome back...and welcome to those joining online. If you're new with us here this morning... my name is Sherri Dotter, and I am a credentialed Professional Prayer Practitioner for 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.

Dalton – Opening Music

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

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

 **I'm a Believer**, written by Neil Diamond

So let's take a creative journey...calling upon the full power of both mind and heart...engaging the body...and joining with one another in the imaginal realm, in service to the creation of a **Love-Soaked World**.

See and feel with me now, a world in which all beings live from their Highest Potential...from Kindness, Generosity, Peace, Compassion, Joy, and Beauty.

In this world of our creation, all people honor, respect, 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 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 and appreciate the abundance that surrounds us... greed is a thing of the past, generosity is the norm, 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 recognize the sacred in everyone and everything...we walk in reverence, humility, and gratitude for all that we have been given.

We are creating a new world moment by moment, aligning our actions with our Vision, living these changes first in our own lives, with our families, friends, and neighbors. 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, and with the deepest humility and gratitude, we release our Word to the Creative Power and Intelligence that I call God... to the One that gets it done...

And so it is!... Amen!

Our theme this month is ***Celebrating Divinity, Practicing Humanity*** and the topic of Conversation today is going to center around ***Humanity Practicing Humanity***.

The first word in this title "Humanity" is defined as "all human beings collectively: the human race; humankind." The second word in this title is "Practicing" and the way in which I was intending to use it is defined as "the act of doing something regularly or repeatedly to improve your skill at doing it." The third word is again "Humanity." It is interesting that in addition to "all beings" it also is defined and refers to the "kind feelings humans have for each other" or simply "human nature, kindness, compassion or benevolence." Pulling all that together, our talk today is about all human beings doing something regularly and repeatedly to improve our skill of evoking feelings of kindness, compassion, or benevolence for each other (and I would like to add all beings, animals, plants...all of creation...and this includes ourselves).

Let that sink in...Human beings doing something regularly and repeatedly to improve our skill of evoking feelings of kindness, compassion, or benevolence for one another. Humanity practicing humanity. Could this be the single most important thing we do in our lives?

This morning during Taizé, I shared a contemplation into self-inquiry. We reflected on the inner-life or microcosm of Humanity Practicing Humanity, or the individual practicing kindness, compassion, and benevolence. During our Conscious Conversation today, we are going to reflect on the outer life, the Universal or Macrocosm. So looking at Humanity

Practicing Humanity from the Universal, could this be the single most important thing that everyone on the planet does? As we (humanity) have more and more people practicing Humanity or kindness, could there come a tipping point where humanity finds itself in and operating as a Love-Soaked world?

I look at a Love-Soaked world as an inevitable eventuality. There is a Divine Urge in each one of us, in all of Creation, to evolve. Humans want to know when...they can be impatient. But Spirit has no time, no limitation. It could be the next generation, or it could be 20 generations. Does it really matter to God? Of course, not. But it matters to us. We want to make a difference. What if we used the imaginal realm and brought to mind past intelligent, advanced civilizations? Were they wanting to make a difference for the future generations? I believe they were. They wrote on walls (and actually practiced all kinds of traditions and rituals) in order to leave a message and teach the knowledge and wisdom from their time here. I think we want to do the same. We want future generations to have it better, to know better, than we do. We want to leave a legacy.

Now suppose we could time travel 20 generations in the future to our Love-Soaked world. It would be such a gift because we would realize that all our efforts were the foundation of the progress of Humanity...that we were instrumental in creating the paradigm shift...that we helped form the human consciousness that eventually realized absolute Oneness. Imagine what our civilization looks like....

So, let's bring ourselves back to the present moment and have a conversation...

Until we can travel in time, how might we, as individuals, foster our realization of Oneness? Spiritual Practice, interacting with like-minded people, volunteering, communing with nature

How can Humanity practice Humanity? What could we practice on a Global Scale? Not looking for anything in particular...maybe world peace, sharing of resources, destroying weapon of mass destruction

What practices can an individual do to foster or promote feelings of kindness, compassion, and benevolence? Spiritual Practice.

Let's go ahead and name some Types of Spiritual Practice...

Prayer, Meditation, Contemplation, Reading Scripture or Affirmative Writings, Connecting with Nature, Yoga, Breathwork, Gratitude, Chanting, Journaling, Listening to Affirmative Music, Practicing Mindfulness, Ritual, Writing about Affirmative topics, Spiritual Enrichment and Study, Listening to Spiritual Talks

Who would like to share a Spiritual Practice that they do regularly?

For you, what is the most important thing about Spiritual Practice?

How has Spiritual Practice changed your life?

Have there been any insights this morning...any a-ha's that want to be shared?

Is there anything else that needs to be spoken into the room?

During Taizé, we engaged in Spiritual Practice for the sake of the individual and during this time together focused on Spiritual Practice for the sake of all humanity. In the book *Zen is Eternal Life*, it says with some minor editing that “gradually as (your Spiritual Practice) deepens, you will discover that it is a joy to be alive and that all people, irrespective of color, race, sex, or religion, always have been, and always will be, one. When this moment comes, right and wrong, male, and female, like and dislike cease to exist and (you find yourself) bathed in a joy that seems to fill the universe. From this point there is neither self nor other and one (practices) for (practice’s) sake.”

Reverend Diana spoke these words a couple times this month, and I feel they are worth repeating. Let’s allow the eyes to gently close as we listen.

It is ours to make the Journey of coming to know the world as a Spiritual one, to know ourselves as individual extensions of the Divine, and to practice living as though this were True...to treat others with Love and Compassion; to put our faith in Wholeness; to become Peaceful within ourselves so that we might bring a greater Peace to the world; to know our own Power and use it with care and humility; to see the Beauty in ourselves, in others, and in the world; to do the things that make us Joyful, and to seek to bring Joy to others; to trust in our inherent Freedom; and to take time to feel and know the Grace that is forever moving through our lives. This is our Work. Did you write it down? You don’t need to write it down. It is already written on your hearts...you and I both know deep down what ours is to do. And being here this morning is taking a huge step in that direction. Let’s close in prayer.

Closing Prayer...

There is One Life, One Source of all that is. Called by many names, It is beyond labels...It simply Is.

I Am, each one of us, is here by Divine Appointment...for a purpose. I need not know how or why Spirit chose to experience Itself...Themselves...as me. I need only be a human being engaging in my Spiritual Practice regularly and repeatedly....to improve my skill of evoking feelings of kindness, compassion, and benevolence for others. An individualized expression of Humanity practicing Humanity.

I Am here to experience all of life, whole-heartedly. (Pause) I Am here to feel the full range of human emotions...to welcome them as my teachers...to learn from them and allow them to Guide me. (Pause) I Am here to Serve all of Life, fully and completely, in whatever ways I Am Called, to the greatest of my abilities and capacities...to be so fully used up at the end of this Journey that I can lie down peacefully, knowing I gave Spirit the ride of Its Life. (Pause) I Am here to feel and know what it is to be grateful for this magnificent gift of Life, and to express my thanks in countless ways. (Pause)

And in all of it, I Am here to be the most authentic me I can, so that Spirit might know fulfillment by means of my life. Through my experiencing and Serving, I Am co-creating Life, becoming part of its unfolding, and evolving.

Thank you, Spirit, for the dawning of an ever-greater Awareness, in myself and in the world...for a deeper connection with my Divine Nature and for seeing the Sacred in everything and everyone. Thank you for this beautiful day and these amazing people...my chosen family. And thank you for the many, many gifts that shower down upon me and through my life every day.

I allow the Powerful Presence of God to work through me...I invite Its Guidance and Wisdom to lead me, and Its Radiance to light my way.

In my Awakening, I Am grateful for every little thing...for those circumstances that look like the good stuff of life, and those that challenge me to grow in strength, compassion, resilience, integrity, and love.

Together, we release this prayer, trusting that it has already done its work. A prayer spoken, with feeling and a deep sense of faith, is a prayer answered. And so, I let it be...and so it is. Amen.

We gently return our awareness to our bodies, connecting once again with our senses...noticing the sounds in the room...allowing the eyes to gently open and taking in whatever is before you.

Sherri – 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.

As we receive your gifts today, celebrate the many flavors of humanity as we reach for Higher Ground.

Dalton – Offertory Music

 ***I Love Myself the Way I Am***, written by Jai Michael Josefs

Lucinda - Bless the Offering

Lucinda- Brief Invitations

The Mystic Heart Book Club meets on Tuesdays from 3-5 pm. We are reading *Conversations With God, Book 2* by Neale Donald Walsch.

Fast Track to Wellness meets on Thursdays, from 12:00-2:00 pm. If you'd like support in your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual body's journey, you might want to check it out.

Metaphysical Bible meets on Thursdays from 3:00 – 5:00 pm to continue our exploration of the Book of Revelation.

Mark Your Calendars...

The Mystic OAKS group invites you to join them for a return trip to Dakaro Vineyards, this time for wine tasting and Pizza! Saturday, October 12th, 12:00 – 4:30 pm. Wine tasting is free, purchase of a bottle of wine is appreciated. Cost of pizza will be shared among participants. Contact Chris Netto for more information.

Inviting Cultures Beyond Borders, Saturday October 19th, 10 am – 2 pm

Join us for a real Celebration of Humanity at the Sikh Center in Anderson. Mystic Heart will have a booth and be in charge of recycling. This is always an enriching experience celebrating diversity and Unity. There is free food flowing all day long, speakers from a variety of traditions, and Sikh Martial Arts demonstrations, just to name a few. Please contact Rev. Diana to sign up to help out. You won't be sorry you spent the day in Celebration of Humanity!

Mystic Heart Fall Book & Bake Sale, October 25 – 26

You are invited to bring your gently used books, as well as music CD's record albums, and DVD's to Mystic Heart during regular gathering times. **Also, Calling All Bakers...**we will be setting up a table filled with your individual cookies, cupcakes, muffins, rice-crispy treats...whatever strikes your fancy. Contact Rev. Diana if you can help.

Namaste Café! Friday, December 6th, 6:30 – 9:00 pm at the Mystic Heart Gathering Place. Join Mystic Heart for its first Open-Mic Night. Anything (positive) goes at this evening of sharing our time, talent, creativity, and love. And it will be held in our new space! Appetizers, desserts, and beverages will be provided. Suggested donation: \$10 - \$20 per person. **Mark your calendars...tell your friends. More info to come.**

There is more information available in the September Bulletin and on our website.

Information Cards if new people

Prayer Requests: I am available after service for prayer, or fill out a prayer card and I 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

Dalton – Closing Song

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



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