

White Stones Service January 9, 2022

Welcome to our time of message and meditation and our invitation to listen to the whispers of our hearts. Will you say with me the affirmation here:

My heart is open to receive Divine guidance, wisdom and blessing...and I am transformed at my depth.

The story of Unity Albany calling in their new minister, and their new minister calling in her new community is more than a great story. As I shared in my talk on my “audition” Sunday in October, last year-- *on January 9th*--from the depths of my heart and soul, I called out to God, the universe, Spirit for guidance, for wisdom, discernment...and in trust, I called in my Beloved Community.

Little did I know that night, that this Beloved Community, Unity of Albany, was also calling out to God in trust, and for better or worse, in sickness and in health, here we are! We are a sign of the power of listening to the whispers of intuition, longing, wisdom-- the whispers that are the voice of God-within.

This time of going inward is a sacred time to listen to where God is calling each of us, individually, a time to listen and set our hearts in the direction of the unfolding path, to hear a word or phrase or name arise that will be a grounding reminder in this coming year of our renewal in Spirit.

And yet, I invite you, whether you have been part of this community for many years, many weeks, or mere moments, to hold the vision of our shared path as well. Each week we say the beautiful, profound words of our vision and mission statements.

VISION STATEMENT *A world transformed through the spiritual awakening of all.*
OUR MISSION *We awaken to and embrace the Divine essence of all beings through prayer and service in our community and in the world.*

What makes these words come alive is the way we then live into their truth: individually AND in community. So let us enter this deep time of listening, and invite in the message our own hearts need to hear. But let's listen as well for where we are called *together*...

How will we meet the moments of our communal life, and deepen our walking together, of awakening together in prayer and service to a world hungry for the gifts of the Spirit?

Before we begin our meditation, I'd like to share with you the words of Jan Richardson that were my prayer that January night a year ago, and that I shared with you in October, *Blessing that Makes a Way for You*. Let's listen in trust that the Blessing we most need is making a way for us...

Blessing That Makes a Way for You

What I know is	but through you,	with clarity.
that this blessing will begin	and in you,	May you walk it
as soon as you set out.	that it finds its road	with wisdom.
	as you find yours.	May you travel it
That this blessing		with joy.
will meet you	I can hardly fathom	
in every step.	how it is	May you come to it
	that this blessing	not as one buffeted
That it is gladly	is already waiting for you,	by chance,
bound to you	even as you fashion it,	but as one
and cannot do	step by faltering step.	who has chosen.
without you.		Uncertain perhaps;
	But there it is,	unready perhaps;
That you are	in all its wending mystery.	but this path.
part of the path		This one.
this blessing makes:	So may you meet it	With abandon.
that it creates a way	with courage.	<i>This.</i>
not only for you,	May you enter it	

Guided meditation for 1-9-22

As we come into our time of guided meditation, feel free to close your eyes if that's comfortable, or simply let your gaze soften.

Sense the places where the back of your body rests wherever you are sitting and let your body surrender into that support...

Step into the arms of the Beloved, and begin the journey inside to hear the Beloved's voice whispering... "Set aside your worry. Set aside your fear..." Hear the voice of Love whispering, "Receive...open your hands and heart and receive...surrender your heart to me"

Feel your body supported, and notice the rhythm of your own breath, your breath that is the very breath of God... notice too...with compassion... any areas of your body where tension is held, and invite those areas to surrender and soften...

Sense the soles of your feet resting on the floor, imagine your feet rooted to the earth... sense your legs and hips...and feel all the places where your body is touching your chair... and feel yourself rooted and grounded...

Sense the length of both arms, inviting shoulders to soften..Notice where your hands are resting, at your side or on your legs, and I invite you to open your palms, ready to receive... .

Breathing in....and out...I invite you to listen to the sound of your breath...and feel your breath moving in the belly, in your chest...through the nostrils...

simply listening to your natural rhythm of breath flowing in... and breath flowing out...your breath as the breath of God flowing in and through you...

Breathing in...I am listening...Breathing out...I am listening...I hear the sounds around me... and I listen

Breathing in, we arrive at all this joy, just as it is... breathing out...we arrive at all this sorrow, just as it is...

Breathing in, we arrive at all this promise, just as it is... breathing out...we arrive at all this pain, just as it is...

Breathing in we arrive at all this life, just as it is... breathing out...we arrive at all this being, just as it is...

Breathing in we come into the fullness of Spirit ... breathing out...we come into the fullness of Love...

Breathe in...and hear the voice of peace...
Breathe out...and hear the voice of peace...
Breathe in...and hear the voice of wisdom...
Breathe out...and hear the voice of wisdom...

As I breathe in...I receive...all that I need...
As I breathe out...I offer all that I am...

As I breathe in...I receive...all that I need...
As I breathe out...I offer... all that I am...

In this stillness, simply listen

I listen to the voice of God and I am still
I listen to the wisdom of God and I am still
I listen to the love of God and I am still

Hear the voice of Blessing that arises to meet you...

See the path unfolding before you... and trust ...

That you are
part of the path
this blessing makes:
that it creates a way
not only for you,
but through you,
and in you,
that it finds its road
as you find yours.

This blessing is whispering to your heart... a witness to your sacred purpose

This blessing is whispering to your heart... a witness to all you are meant to be

This blessing is whispering to your heart... a witness to your holy purpose

Breathe in...and hear the voice of peace... and be transformed
Breathe out...and hear the voice of peace... and be transformed
Breathe in...and hear the voice of wisdom... and be transformed
Breathe out...and hear the voice of wisdom... and be transformed

We breathe in together and awaken to Spirit alive in each of us, and in this Beloved Community... we breathe out...and embrace the Divine light and love alive in each of us and in this Beloved Community...

Listen to the voice of God and be transformed
Listen to the grace of God and be transformed
Listen to the wisdom of God and be transformed
Listen to the love of God and be transformed

So may you meet [this path]
with courage.
May you enter it
with clarity.
May you walk it
with wisdom.
May you travel it
with joy.

May you come to it
not as one buffeted
by chance,
but as one
who has chosen.
Uncertain perhaps;
unready perhaps;
but this path.
This one.
With abandon.
This.

May it be so. Amen.