



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CELEBRATION UNITY OF TUSTIN DECEMBER 7, 2025

According to tradition, the Virgin of Guadalupe appeared to indigenous Juan Diego four times on Tepeyac Hill. The last of these miraculous encounters took place on December 12, 1531. The event happened very early in the morning when the native of Cuautitlán went out in search of help for his sick uncle. The Patroness of Mexico met the humble man next to the 'Pocito' where she told him that his uncle was now healed. And the Miracle continues.

Join Unity of Tustin's second annual bilingual sacred Our Lady of Guadalupe Celebration on December 7, 2025 from 1-3 pm. Starting at the large water feature at Site 8, a procession will take you to her sacred Site 5, and include bilingual reading, singing, hearing the entire miracle of Our Lady, and light snack. Love Donations for the Meditation Gardens of Orange County will be lovingly accepted at the event. Be part of her miracle!

Sacred Poem of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Dulce madre no me dejes tu vista de mi nuca apartes, ven conmigo a todas partes y sola nunca me dejes. Mi alma y mi corazón te agradecen por siempre protegerme como una verdadera madre.

Author unknown

By Dr. Irene Lara



WE CHEER IN THE NEW YEAR WITH A BURNING BOWL



The burning bowl ritual is a spiritual practice for turning something over to a Higher Power. It is a physical act, which comforts us because we are in physical form. We write a wish, a prayer, a disappointment or other heartache on paper. As we meditate on the story with our mind, we watch the flames consume it and its essence rise up in smoke. The visual image anchors the experience of release in our memory. The comforting reminder of the Power and Presence of the love of our Creator invites us to experience peace. The Burning Bowl ceremony is performed at Unity, usually led by our Prayer Chaplain Fire Marshalls, Mare Stephens and Donna Evans, at special times of the year, like after World Day of Prayer, or Blue Christmas, or when our Prayer Tree becomes filled with prayers. Our next sacred ritual will be on New Year's Eve, Wednesday December 31, 2025 at 6 pm. Bring your heart filled with prayers to the sanctuary.

By Mare Stevens, our Burning Bowl Igniter

WHY I STARTED BLUE CHRISTMAS: A SERVICE OF HOPE AND REMEMBRANCE

Nearly ten years ago, a few years after my father passed away, I found myself struggling during the holiday season. Christmas is meant to be a time of joy and celebration, yet I carried a quiet sadness that my dad was no longer here with us. I didn't know where to place those feelings. Was there space for grief alongside the joy of Christmas?

It was in that wrestling that I realized something important: the holidays can magnify loss. When the world sparkles with celebration, the absence of someone we love can feel even more profound. Rather than ignoring that pain or grieving alone, I felt called to create a sacred space where we could bring both our sorrow and our hope.

With that on my heart, I approached our lead minister at the time, Rev. Carolyn Mathlin, and shared the vision for a Service of Hope and Remembrance — a gathering where anyone who had experienced loss could come during the holidays to remember, to honor, and to heal. A place where we could safely grieve together, knowing we are not alone. A place where we could bring our grief into the light. To my surprise Rev. Carolyn said yes there is a service we could do, it's called Blue Christmas.

For me, this is at the very heart of Christmas. Jesus came to be the Light in our darkness. The Blue Christmas service invites us to acknowledge our pain and allow God to transform it with His comfort, presence, and hope.



It is a gentle reminder that we were never meant to grieve alone — God designed us to walk through both joy and sorrow in community.

Each year, this service becomes a tender time to honor the loved ones we miss, to tend to the journey of our own hearts, and to place our burdens at the altar — trusting that God will lighten them. People often leave feeling lighter, a little more held, and more hopeful.

I invite you to join us for this special evening. Whether you are grieving a loved one, walking through a season of change, or simply holding space for others, may this service remind you that there is always a light in the darkness — and that light is Christ.

Blue Christmas is also for those who are not in the company of family, an opportunity to be present with them spiritually.

By Lisa Huett

NEWSLETTER HOLIDAY BAKING RECIPES FROM LIFE RECIPES BY PATRICIA CLINE HIGGINS



JOANN'S CHRISTMAS PECAN CUPS

First Presbyterian Yakima friend

Cream together: 3 oz. cream cheese; 1 stick butter; and 1 cup flour. Press pastry into small muffin tins. Combine $\frac{3}{4}$ cups brown sugar; 1 Tsp. soft butter; 1 egg. 1 tsp. vanilla and a dash of salt. Put into bottom of pastry. Add sugar mixture. Fill with remaining $\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped peca. Bake at 325 for 25 minutes.



BETTY STONE'S PUMPKIN CAKE

Perfect for the holidays. Stores days. Better than pumpkin pie!

Mix together in order: 4 eggs slightly beaten; 1 large can pumpkin; 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar; 1 tsp. salt; 1 tsp. vanilla; 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. ginger; $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. nutmeg; some allspice; 1 Tsp. cinnamon and 1 large can evaporated milk. Pour into 9 x 13 greased loaf cake pan. Sprinkle on top 1 box yellow (lemon) cake mix and 1+ cups nuts (walnut or pecan). Dribble 1+ cups melted butter to cover all of cake mix. Bake for 1 hour at 350 degrees. Serve with whipped cream. Note: nuts can be chopped and whole. Add extra melted butter if needed to cover cake mix.



BROTHER DICK AND ANNE'S ALMOND TOFFEE

Melt 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ cubes butter in a large skillet at high heat and stir in 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups white sugar until mixture foams vigorously. Reduce heat to low and stir for 5 minutes. Add 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups finely chopped unbleached almonds and cook on increased heat for 3 minutes. Reduce heat and stir 7 minutes. (If mixture darkens too quickly, remove from heat but stir full 7 minutes) Should be at nearly hardball candy stage. Pour into a small cookie sheet and let cool for 1 minute. Put on top pieces of 8 oz. Hersey chocolate bar (plain with no nuts) and spread with knife. Sprinkle with 1 cup toasted chopped almonds and let cool.



LISTENING WITHIN TO GO WITH THE FLOW

OUR REV. BLAIR TABOR, By Patti Higgins

Our Rev. Blair pays attention to his spiritual guidance by sensing within his stomach region, for that warm, peaceful feeling of contentment that directs his life. Born in Minnesota, and briefly at the Salton Sea, for the most recent five years Rev. Blair streams up to us from his home in San Diego in his RV, usually on the second Sunday of the month.

That Inner Guide led guitar-picking Blair to major in music at UCSD, where he quickly harmonized with his darling Meredith. At their wedding, the young graduates were drawn to the abundant job opportunities in Houston. There our Presbyterian and Congregationalist Spiritual Inquirer resonated with Unity, and the call of ministry.

Rev. Blair soon orchestrated a large church, 250 at its largest, Unity of San Diego (near San Diego State) with his creative song writing and joyful acronyms for 30 years. Strong on "we space", Blair's church partnered with its Head Start tenants, along with the Feeding America nonprofit, on food drives.

As leader of our Unity Region, Rev Blair sailed into his current role as Executive Administrative Director of the Unity Church of Alhambra Foundation. This foundation funds such positive causes as Unity's Spiritual Education and Enrichment SEE classes, camp for our Unity kids, and scholarships to the annual POSI (empower Music) Festivals at Unity Village for our visiting musicians where he and our Carol Roman won awards!



Blair believes in ensuring the longevity of organizations by mentoring: "You watch me do. We do together. I watch you do. You do. We train our replacements," he urges Tustin's founding aging membership. He welcomes guests into consciously joining our spiritual family at an informal orientation after service, most recently on November 9. As Unity members, we commit to spiritual practices, service, and giving of our abundance. Members received Prayer Chaplain calls and can become a Prayer Chaplain. After six months, new "community members" can receive voting rights, and can take on such leadership roles as Board membership.



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Speaking of voting, Blair was optimistic that the electronic voting on 11/5/25 by 400 Unity ministers and 300 churches will heal a decades long legal and administrative schism. Yes! The re-Union won with a 91% approval! Unity's leaders voted to reunite the branches of our two headquarter branches co-located in Lee Summit, Missouri – the Unity Worldwide Ministries (UWM) and Unity Worldwide Headquarters (UWH) with its 1200 acres and hundred-year-old large buildings, and strong publishing expertise. This positive election outcome should streamline and increase efficiency.

When not adventuring in their RV, Blair and creative seamstress Meredith, answer the call at their granddaughters' soccer meets and softball games in San Diego. Lucky them, they enjoy the loving presence of their twin sons and daughter living nearby. Our community has adventured going with their flow to Israel, Italy and Unity Village. When not substitute teaching elementary school in Santee, they envision their next retreat, cruising the Rhine River in October 2026. Sounds fun! Join them

SENIORS FOR SENIORS - CHRISTMAS LUNCH PARTY 12/4 NOON - CHRISTMAS SWEATER CONTEST

From Bev Cambell



AUTUMN REFLECTIONS: DIANE KASTNER'S FALL SPIRIT GROUP INSPIRES HEARTS THROUGH "THE LOVE PRINCIPLES"

As the crisp beauty of autumn unfolded, a circle of kindred spirits gathered under the guidance of Diane Kastner for a transformative six-week journey through *The Love Principles* by Arleen Lorrance. The Fall Spirit Group became more than a study circle—it blossomed into a living practice of spiritual connection, gratitude, and divine love.

Each week, participants came together to pray, meditate, and reflect, creating a sacred rhythm that blended contemplation and joyful discovery. With soft, inspiring music opening each session, the group set an atmosphere of reverence and peace—a space where hearts could open and souls could listen. Guided by Diane's gentle leadership, the group delved into Lorrance's six profound principles, exploring how each could be embodied in daily life.

The first and perhaps most challenging teaching, "Have no expectations," invited participants to release control and meet each moment as it is. Discussions illuminated how freeing it can be to love without conditions—to allow grace to unfold without the need to manage outcomes. Many shared personal insights about surrendering expectations in relationships, work, and spiritual growth, discovering the serenity that comes with genuine acceptance.

As the weeks continued, the group explored the remaining principles, each one building on the foundation of unconditional love. Through open sharing, laughter, and quiet meditation, members found fresh understanding of compassion, forgiveness, and self-awareness. Diane delicately wove each lesson with reflection questions, affirmations, and moments of silence, allowing everyone to integrate the teachings inwardly. Guided meditations became a highlight—centering the mind and awakening the heart to divine presence. Some sessions closed with uplifting music that left participants visibly glowing, while others ended in tender stillness, filled with a sense of unity and gratitude.

Beyond study, the Fall Spirit Group became a sanctuary for authentic community. Each meeting felt like stepping into sacred time—where wisdom from *The Love Principles* merged with the personal stories and experiences of those present.

By the end of the six weeks, friendships had deepened, hearts had opened, and the timeless message of love as a spiritual practice had taken root. As autumn's colors soon will fade into winter, the warmth of this shared journey will remain—a reminder that love, when lived consciously, transforms everything it touches.

In Diane's words, the group was 'A divine exploration of love in action.' The Fall Spirit Group not only studied *The Love Principles*—they embodied them. And as participants now carry these teachings into their homes, families, church community and communities at large, the ripple of love continues to expand outward, one heart at a time.

PICS FROM → THE SPIRIT GROUP ROCKS 2025



UNITED IN LIGHT
2025 December 11 and 12 at 5 PM
 By Santa's Elf Maestro Connie Carter

It's hard to believe that this year will be the fourth annual staging of this beautiful garden event! It all started when a few UOT members, including Harvey Beery and Connie Carter, attended the Sherman Gardens illuminated gardens event. We looked at each other and said, "Their garden is three acres... our garden is three acres. Why can't we do something similar?"

The vision was to throw a lovely party for our UOT friends, and to invite the larger surrounding community to join us. We experimented and learned each year. This year, we will deliver event flyers to our adjacent neighborhoods. We will hand out these flyers at the annual City of Tustin Tree Lighting Ceremony, which takes place the Friday before our event, so they can attend both! What has evolved is a family-oriented, old-fashioned Christmas/holiday celebration. There will be thousands of lights, wreaths, a dozen decorated trees.

You'll enjoy a Christmas carol singalong, a beverage booth serving free hot chocolate, hot spiced cider and decaf, and a Bakery Booth set up and managed by our Youth. We'll have Labyrinth events, a "Hero's Journey" garden tour led by Mary Jeanne Hawes, and a visit with Santa in the enchanted Gazebo. Best of all, you will spend the evening with your family and friends in the beautiful holiday garden of your own spiritual home. In addition to coming to the event, you can participate in its creation by helping decorate, and by contributing something delicious to our Bakery Booth. Contact Connie Carter for details!



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2. Click on the heading "About"
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