



Divine Love Newsletter

Volume 12, No. 5

September 2026

FROM THE EDITORS

We are pleased to bring you another issue of the *Divine Love Newsletter*. May the teachings, reflections, creative offerings, and community updates in these pages deepen your relationship with the Father, strengthen your desire for His Divine Love, increase your appreciation of your spiritual brothers and sisters, and encourage you along the journey of soul transformation.

In this issue:

- **Living the Way** – Lisa Sims reflects on the earliest followers of Jesus, who were known simply as “the Way,” and considers what it means to live the Divine Love path in everyday life. She reminds us that through prayer, patience, forgiveness, humility, compassion, and acts of Love, spiritual transformation gradually takes place as we continually turn toward the Father and allow His Love to change us from within.
- **The Greatest Invitation** – Greg Boster presents an infographic exploring God’s constant invitation to every soul to draw closer and receive Divine Love. The message, also presented in an 11-minute video, emphasizes that this invitation is universal, never forced, and always available regardless of religion, age, background, or past mistakes. Prayer opens the soul to receive this freely offered gift through the Holy Spirit.
- **What the Divine Love Way Is NOT** – Jose Miguel Sanchez shares a detailed clarification of common misconceptions surrounding the James Padgett Messages and the Divine Love movement. He explains that the path is not an exclusive religion, traditional church, fear-based doctrine, ritual system, intellectual philosophy, moralistic code, pursuit of psychic phenomena, or movement of control. Rather, it is an invitation to develop a direct and personal relationship with God through the reception of His Divine Love.
- **Soul Awakening: An Appointment with God** – Colin Mackay explores the soul as our gateway to God and the importance of moving beyond an overreliance on the material mind. He describes how heartfelt prayer and the reception of Divine Love awaken new soul perceptions, gradually leading us into an increasingly intimate awareness and relationship with God.
- **Praying and Sharing Across the Miles** – Information is provided on Circles of Light, prayer gatherings, healing and learning opportunities, and other ways to connect with members of the Divine Love community around the world. Don’t miss the United Kingdom Soul Awakening Retreats September 11-19th.
- **Poetry Corner** – Karen Swanson shares “Living Waters of Your Love,” a heartfelt poem expressing the soul’s thirst for God’s Love, the challenges of the spiritual journey, and the sustaining power of faith.
- **Community News** – This section highlights a wealth of new offerings from throughout the Divine Love community, including books by Ron Henderson, Catherine Kent, Brian Holmes, and Judy Gebhart; online message archives and websites; new videos and music; and continuing creative spiritual ministries devoted to sharing Divine Love teachings.
- **Divine Love Resources** – Readers will find here information on free FCDT books for distribution, foreign-language translations, contemporary mediumship resources, the Divine Love Resource Guide, scanned Padgett Messages, daily inspirational excerpts, and other materials for study, outreach, and spiritual growth.

LIVING THE WAY (LISA SIMS AND CHATGPT)

The earliest followers of Jesus were not first known as Christians. They were known simply as "the Way." That name suggests that people noticed not merely what they believed, but how they lived.

Today, many think of religion as a collection of doctrines, traditions, or obligations. Yet Jesus invited men and women into something much more beautiful. He invited them into a way of life—a daily walk with the Father.

The Way begins with prayer. Not hurried words repeated from habit, but the quiet turning of the soul toward God. It is there, in the stillness, that we come to know the Father not merely as an idea, but as a living Reality. It is there that His Divine Love begins to transform us from within.

Yet the Way does not end when we rise from prayer. It follows us into the ordinary moments of life. Into our work, homes, conversations, disappointments – into every choice we make.

The person living the Way does not ask only, "What should I believe?" They ask, "How would the Father's Love have me live today?"

The answer is seldom dramatic. It is found in patience instead of irritation. Gentleness instead of harshness. Honesty instead of convenience. Forgiveness instead of resentment. Compassion instead of judgment. Humility instead of pride. These quiet victories are often unseen by the world, yet they are among the greatest triumphs of the soul.

Living the Way does not require withdrawing from the world. It means carrying the Father's presence into it. A kind word to a stranger. A listening ear for a friend. A helping hand offered without expecting recognition. The courage to speak truth with Love. The willingness to admit when we are wrong. These are not small things. They are the fruits of a soul becoming more alive in God.

There will be difficult days. Days when prayer feels dry. Days when life becomes heavy. Days when we wonder whether we are growing at all. Those are often the days when we most need to continue.

The apostles encouraged the early believers to be constant in prayer and not to grow weary. A living relationship with God is not built in a single moment of inspiration but through faithful turning toward Him again and again. Every sincere prayer opens the soul a little more. Every act of Love softens the heart a little further. Every choice for truth clears another window through which God's Light may shine.

Transformation rarely comes all at once. It comes quietly. Drop by drop. Prayer by prayer. Choice by choice. Until one day we look back and realize that the person we once were has slowly given way to someone gentler, freer, more peaceful, and more capable of Loving.

Perhaps this is why the first disciples were known simply as the Way. They were not merely following a teacher. They were learning to live as children of the Father.



ChatGPT

That invitation remains open today. Whoever sincerely seeks God may begin where all true journeys begin—with a simple prayer and an open soul. The Way is not reserved for the gifted, the learned, or the already perfect. It is for every soul willing to turn toward the Father and receive His Love.

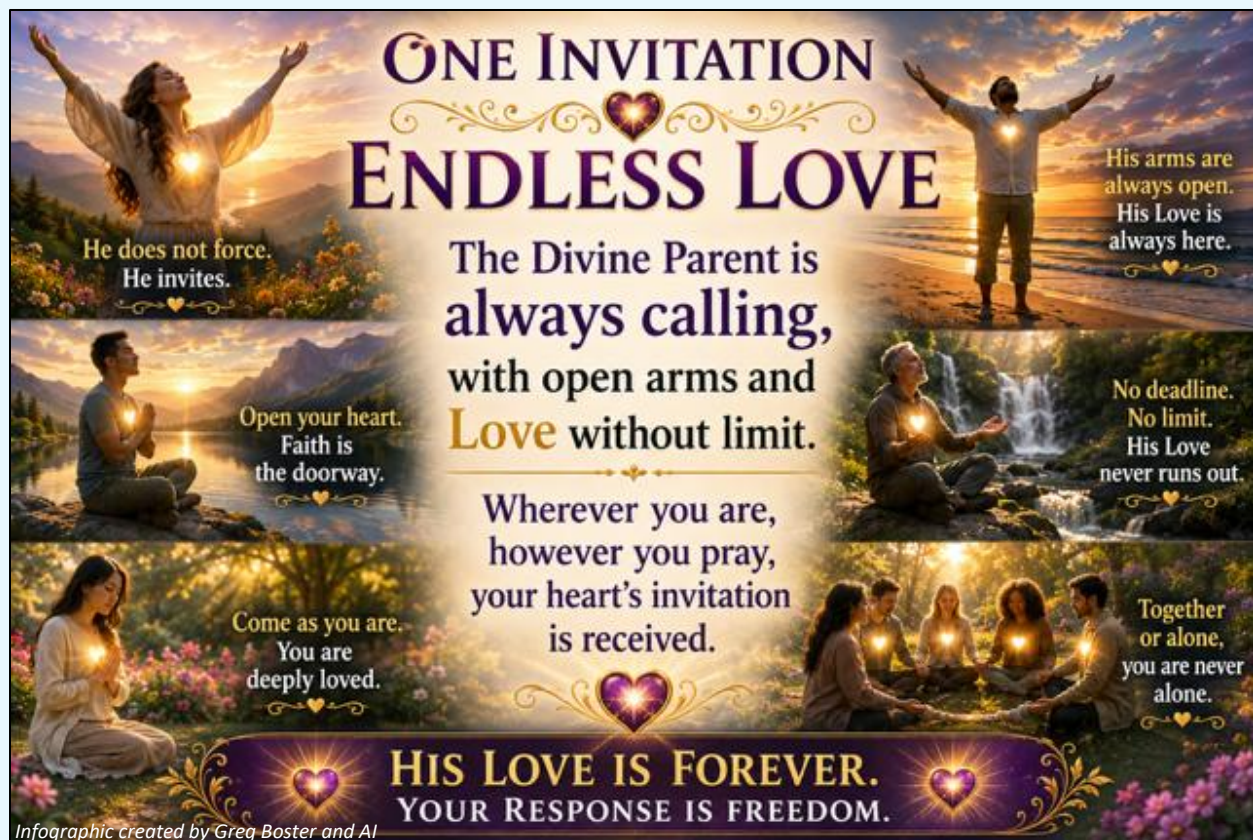
As that Love fills the soul, the Way ceases to be merely something we walk. By His grace, it becomes who we are.

Living the Way does not mean the road is always smooth. There are seasons when it seems washed away by sorrow, disappointment, illness, or uncertainty. Yet sincere prayer becomes a bridge. Though we may pause, though others may take a detour, the Father's Love continues to carry the soul toward its destination.

As Paul wrote: "We all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory..." (2 Corinthians 3:18). May that be our journey, day by day, prayer by prayer, as the Father's Love transforms us from glory to glory throughout this life and throughout eternity.

"Father, open my soul that I may receive and know the blessings of Your Love."

THE GREATEST INVITATION (GREG BOSTER AND AI)



Greg has created an [11-minute video](#) beautifully elaborating on this wonderful invitation. It presents God's constant, never-forced invitation to every soul to "come closer" and receive Divine Love, offered without limitation by race, religion, age, or past mistakes and extending beyond death. It teaches that even a moral, compassionate life can leave an inner emptiness that only God's Divine Love can fill, and that Love must be received freely rather than through threats, manipulation, or coercion. The invitation comes through creation and beauty, conscience, joy, suffering, sincere questions, and Jesus' invitational words, with the Holy Spirit described as the channel through which Divine Love flows into the soul. Prayer is portrayed as opening the heart—like a window to sunlight or tuning into a constant radio signal—to receive an infinite, always-available gift that transforms the soul.

WHAT THE DIVINE LOVE WAY IS NOT (JOSE MIGUEL SANCHEZ)

Important Clarifications About the James Padgett Messages and the Divine Love Movement

People who encounter the James Padgett Messages for the first time often try to understand them by comparing them with familiar religions, churches, spiritual movements, or esoteric traditions. However, many of these comparisons can lead to misunderstandings. For that reason, it is helpful to clarify not only what the messages teach, but also what they do not.

The Divine Love Path Is Not a Mandatory Religion

- It does not require anyone to leave their current religion or convert to a new religion.
- It does not seek to establish an exclusive religious denomination.
- It does not require formal church membership to receive Divine Love.
- It does not make membership a requirement for salvation.
- It does not divide people into members and non-members.
- It does not teach that only its followers can make spiritual progress.
- It does not require religious vows or oaths.
- It does not claim to be spiritually superior to other religions.
- It does not depend on belonging to any organization.

The Path Is Not a Traditional Church

- It does not need church buildings, cathedrals, or altars.
- It does not require liturgical ceremonies, sacramental rituals, or mandatory religious observances.
- It does not necessitate an ecclesiastical hierarchy or priests in order to approach God.
- It does not need human intermediaries to receive Divine Love.
- It does not depend on outward forms of worship.



Aubhav Sonker from Unsplash.com

It Is Not a Fear-Based Doctrine

- It does not promote fear of eternal punishment to motivate spiritual growth.
- It does not portray God as vengeful, or a harsh and unforgiving judge.
- It does not base one's relationship with God on guilt.
- It does not seek to control people through spiritual threats or use fear to obtain obedience.
- It does not teach arbitrary condemnation.
- It does not encourage shame as a means of spiritual growth.
- It does not teach that God withdraws His Love from His children if they sin.

It Is Not a System of Salvation Through Rituals

- It does not teach that God's Grace depends on rituals or external observances.

- It does not teach that religious ceremonies impart Divine Love or make one spiritual.
- It does not teach that baptism, by itself, saves.
- It does not teach that the sacraments or other religious practices transform the soul.
- It does not teach that formal religion or repeating formulas produces spiritual growth.
- It does not teach that salvation can be earned or purchased.

It Is Not a Path of Spiritual Superiority

- It does not teach that some people are more loved by God than others.
- It does not teach that its followers are a spiritual elite or the only enlightened people.
- It does not promote spiritual pride or encourage feelings of religious superiority.
- It does not teach that intellectual knowledge makes a person spiritually superior.
- It does not divide humanity into the chosen and the rejected.
- It does not justify contempt for other beliefs or promote sectarian exclusivism.
- It does not teach that possessing information is the same as possessing love.



ChatGPT

It Is Not a Pursuit of Psychic Phenomena

- It does not seek to develop psychic powers or make mediumship its primary objective.
- It does not seek spectacular supernatural phenomena or encourage spiritual sensationalism.
- It does not regard psychic experiences as proof of spiritual progress.
- It does not teach that psychic gifts are equivalent to soul development.
- It does not seek to impress people through extraordinary manifestations.
- It does not place mediums at the center of attention.
- It does not make spiritual phenomena an end in themselves.
- It does not replace prayer with curiosity about the spirit world.

It Is Not Merely an Intellectual Philosophy

- It does not seek the accumulation of knowledge for its own sake.
- It is not intended to merely satisfy curiosity about the afterlife.
- It is not limited to the study of spiritual concepts and is not a system of theoretical speculation.
- It does not consider intellectual understanding alone to be sufficient.
- It does not substitute ideas for genuine spiritual experience.
- It does not seek to persuade people by arguments alone.
- It is not an academic exercise or a set of doctrines to be memorized.
- It does not measure spiritual growth by the amount of information one has learned.

It Is Not a Moralistic System

- It does not teach that moral perfection produces Divine Love.
- It does not teach salvation by good works alone.
- It does not promote spiritual legalism or reduce spirituality to rules of conduct.
- It does not regard human virtue as the ultimate goal.
- It does not teach that human effort alone can transform the soul.
- It does not encourage moral self-righteousness that tends to promote judgment of others.
- It does not replace love with rules or confuse morality with divine transformation.

It Is Not a Movement of Control

- It does not seek to control the personal lives of its participants or dictate family decisions.
- It does not limit freedom of thought or demand blind obedience.
- It does not impose mandatory interpretations.
- It does not require loyalty to human leaders or discourage questioning and honest investigation.
- It does not seek to control individual conscience or seek to create emotional dependence.
- It does not require withdrawal from society.

What It Truly Seeks

- It does not seek followers; it seeks souls who desire to draw closer to God.
- It does not seek power; it seeks love.
- It does not seek control; it seeks to inspire.
- It does not seek uniformity; it seeks sincerity.
- It does not seek to convert people; it seeks to awaken souls.
- It does not seek to build institutions; it seeks to foster a personal relationship with God.
- It does not seek to impose truth; it seeks to share experience.
- It does not seek to replace individual conscience; it seeks to strengthen it.
- It does not seek human worship; it seeks love for the Heavenly Father.
- It does not seek to establish a new religion; it seeks to help people receive Divine Love and experience the genuine transformation of their souls.



Summary

If the entire message could be summarized in a single sentence, it would be this: The Divine Love Way is not primarily an organization, a doctrine, a philosophy, or a religion; it is an invitation to develop a personal and direct relationship with God through the reception of His Divine Love.

Reflection Question

Is there any preconceived idea about spirituality, religion, or God that I need to let go of in order to open myself more fully to the experience of Divine Love?

SOUL AWAKENING: AN APPOINTMENT WITH GOD (COLIN MACKAY)

Most people in the world are lost in everyday material existence. This isolation from God has been created in large part by mankind's long-standing desire to be independent from any source of external control. As a result, our actions are often not in harmony with God's laws, bringing unnecessary suffering to all life on the planet. Rectifying this situation is an urgent necessity if we are to avoid destroying ourselves and the planet.

The soul is our one and only gateway to God. God is soul and soul speaks only to soul¹. The power of the mind tends to drown out the gentle promptings that arise from the soul, making us doubt its existence. The Padgett Messages, written a century ago, provide great insight into what the soul is and how it can be developed. We are told that Divine Love, brought to us by God's Comforter, the Holy Spirit, in response to our heartfelt desires, transforms the soul to become 'as one' with God. During this process of transformation from the image of God to God's divine essence, the soul develops new awareness and perceptions, allowing us to experience God and divine reality. This is the path that God wants all of us to choose. It is not that God won't ensure the happiness of those who choose another path, for God cares for us all, but without Divine Love our existence will only be a shadow of what it could be.



Graphic created by Artto Aunap and ChatGPT

Growing in Divine Love allows us to establish a deeply personal relationship with God. As we progress on the path to divinity, we start to feel true joy, peace and fulfillment. God has a form, but not one we can see with human or spirit eyes. Metaphorically, we have been received into God's waiting room and may even have sensed God's presence to some extent, but we have not yet seen God through the eyes of the soul. However, the hour of this destined appointment with God approaches ever closer.

As Divine Love builds within us, new soul perceptions create the real possibility, and eventual certainty, of seeing the form of God, just as clearly as we see others around us. This is the second stage of development, where we go from the waiting room to being in the living presence of God. Words cannot express the profoundness of this experience, but it will be a truly momentous occasion for every soul. Beyond this significant milestone, Divine Love continues to power our soul growth, allowing us to engage in an ever more intimate relationship with God in which countless further layers of reality open up to us. The more we grow in Divine Love, the more 'in focus' and detailed our soul perception of God becomes.

However, unless we develop an entirely new soul awareness through receiving Divine Love, God and divine reality simply aren't accessible to our senses. This explains why scientists have never found God – all their explorations have been through the material mind, which is the wrong tool! God exists in a dimension that is open to us only when we have been reborn as

¹ Padgett Messages, message from Luke, 25 April 1918: 'Only soul can speak to soul and mind is only a helper.'

Padgett Messages, message from John, 22 October 1918: '... only soul can deal with soul...'

Dr Samuel's Revelations: 'On this rock I will build my Church': '... for God does not speak directly to mortals.'

a divine soul. This is a stark illustration of why we should avoid becoming overly enamored with the material mind. We also have the distressing example of the wanton destruction of the world around us caused by millions of unfettered minds that are not being kept in check by soul wisdom.



Sadly, it's not just scientists who put too much trust in the power of the mind. Many who desire a spiritual awakening lose themselves in endless intellectual analysis of their beliefs, as anyone who has dipped into the vast body of religious and spiritual literature can confirm. They too are lost souls in that they have not yet found God in the profound way that those on the Divine Love path will experience. While intellectual beliefs can be useful, no amount of mindful dissection will lead to soul awakening.

However, there are benefits to meditation, and detaching from the mind may result in a degree of self-realization. But only engaging with the soul in the pursuit of Divine Love leads to God realization. Prayer is the tool, faith is what

ensures success and Divine Love is the fuel for our inner transformation. Rather than just having a soul, we become the soul. All will eventually become their soul, which is our real identity, regardless of the path they choose, but with the addition of Divine Love, the soul reaches its full potential.

We should resist any desire our minds have to overelaborate and complicate the truth. The core truths are simple and need no window dressing. All of us on this path are responsible for preserving the integrity of the teachings for future generations. Truth is an inherent part of the Divine Love we receive and further revelations of spiritual truth can never be forced by use of our intellect in isolation. (There is indeed a place in our lives for the intellect - it's just not the place that mankind in its lack of wisdom chooses to give it!)

My sincere desire is that all who read these words will open their gateway to God widely and frequently. There is no limit to the amount of Divine Love we can receive. For your own good I urge you to rebel against what society wants you to be and secure for yourself an eternal future in God's Celestial Kingdom. Help others to make the same freewill choice. The need for us to awaken is now urgent, which is why I am being inspired to write so plainly.

But we can do God's will on earth and still make room for our personal dreams. So why not aim high and earnestly seek to meet with God 'face to face', knowing that having chosen to awaken in God's Love, your request will never be denied?



Aaron Burden from Unsplash

PRAYING AND SHARING ACROSS THE MILES

DLSF / FCDT Circles of Light, Prayer and Other Opportunities

Click <https://divinelovesanctuary.ca/events/> for information on DLSF-sponsored Circles of Light. To receive updates on upcoming programs and online prayer circles, sign up [here](#). For any questions, please contact the [Divine Love Sanctuary Foundation team](#).

Other activities, including additional online prayer groups, Divine Love healing or learning, as well as gift or leadership development can be found on the [LightBringers Calendar](#) administered by [Bill Frase](#).

POETRY CORNER (KAREN SWANSON)

Living Waters of Your Love

Image created by ChatGPT



Graphic created by Artto Aunap and ChatGPT

Drop by drop
You fill me
With the living waters
Of Your Love

A wellspring of desire
Engulfing me
Refreshing my soul
Thirsting for more

Streaming inside of me
A longing to serve
Only You
To be the best I can be

Feeling my way through
A tsunami of thoughts
Coping
With waves of emotions

But knowing
That the journey
Is not for the faint hearted
For I swim against the torrents
And the currents are strong

Yet
I walk in Faith
Step by step
Knowing that all is well
With my soul

COMMUNITY NEWS

- **Ron Henderson** published a book entitled [God IS Love: The Nature of the Divine](#). In this second volume of “The Augustine Teachings: Eternal Knowledge”, Ron draws on the contemporary teachings attributed to Augustine through Al Fike, together with Scripture and decades of personal spiritual experience. The book explores one of the most profound spiritual truths ever revealed: God does not merely love. God IS Love, and Divine Love is not simply an emotion or belief, but the very Essence of God, available to every soul who sincerely seeks it.
- **Catherine Kent** published a book entitled [Essential Wisdom—for Life and Afterlife](#) intended mainly for seekers of truth and life’s meaning. It is an invitation to encounter a God who never condemns, never abandons, and never stops calling every child home. Readers of all faiths and none will discover why growth is seldom a straight line, why consequences are not punishment, and how even painful seasons may contribute to the upward trajectory of the soul. Each of us are more than our mistakes, circumstances, or where we find ourselves today. We are eternal—deeply loved, continually growing, and capable of becoming more than we can imagine.
- **Brian Holmes** published a book called [Hell Is Not Forever](#). It is mainly aimed at atheists and agnostics who don't believe in God because of the Bible's perceived views on hell and salvation. Brian draws on spirit messages received by James Padgett from Jesus and other famous and not so famous characters such as Nero, Caligula, King Louis the 14th, Martin Luther, Luke, Judas, King Herod, Emanuel Swedenborg and more. His intention is to comfort people who, as a result of the churches’ teaching in this area, feel that they are doomed.
- **Judy Gebhart** published a book entitled [Follow the Light](#). It is a collection of testimonies and inspiring writings from early Padgett followers who met and corresponded with Dr. Leslie Stone. She also published a sequel to [Helen Are You Here](#), entitled [Roses Bloom in Heaven](#) which contains recently discovered unpublished messages from Helen Padgett. Her 20 books of Padgett messages organized by speaker can be found [here](#).
- **Jen Williams** has a [Divine Love Messages Archive website](#) with received messages organized in categories and by subjects.
- **Artto Aunap** is building a [website](#) on Qortal representing his life work. It contains Divine Love information in charts, graphics and videos, including a visualization of the New Birth process, whereby the substance of the Father's Soul (the Divine Love) flows into a human soul and gradually transforms it from its original substance/qualities into Divine Substance/Qualities.
- **Eva Peck** has a [YouTube channel](#) dedicated to her publishing ministry, [Pathway Publishing](#), a collection of books ranging from deep spiritual themes to everyday reflections on life's journey. The channel can be seen as a sanctuary dedicated to the exploration of truth, beauty, and the deeper realities of life, bringing to light spiritual wisdom, contemplative poetry, and the diverse realistic and abstract artwork of Eva’s father, Jindrich (Henry) Degen. Cinematic videos invite viewers to pause, reflect, and discover inner peace and divine grace.
- **Gregory Boster** has continued to add informative, inspirational videos that focus on the New Birth to his YouTube channel, [New Birthing - Transforming the Soul](#). He describes his over 250 videos and growing as “a sanctuary for spiritual seekers and disenchanted Christians who still love Jesus and God and are ready to go deeper into awakening the soul and to heal and grow.” Greg’s free e-book, *New Birthing – Transforming the Soul*, can be downloaded from [here](#). All his videos can also be accessed from his [website](#).
- **Lisa Sims** has continued to add Divine Love content to [Medium](#). All her articles are listed [here](#).
- **Denise Mitchell** released on her [YouTube channel](#) a new song entitled [“We Are God’s Children.”](#) She has also created a [website](#) “My Soul Alight” that has all her songs to date with music and original lyrics inspired by God’s Love.
- **Karen Swanson** published a song [“Living Waters of Your Love”](#) on her [YouTube channel](#). The lyrics are from a poem she had written in the past and are featured in our Poetry Corner. She also created a song, “Nature’s Divinity” which can be heard on [Suno](#).

DIVINE LOVE RETREATS IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

UNITED KINGDOM 2026

SOUL AWAKENING Retreats

A DIVINE LOVE RETREAT – JOURNEY WITH CELESTIAL ANGELS

SPECIAL GUESTS

Albert Fike, Jimbeau Walsh, Maureen Cardoso,
Matthew Delano, Cliff DeDora

RETREAT LOCATIONS

- Harrow Spiritualist Church, Harrow**
1 Vaughan Road,
Harrow HA1 4DP
Sept 11–13, 2026
- Wimbledon Spiritualist Church, London**
136 Hartfield Road,
Wimbledon SW1 3TG
Sept 14–15, 2026
- Acton Spiritualist Centre, London**
Woodhurst Road,
Acton, London W3 6SL
Sept 19, 2026

RETREAT HIGHLIGHTS

- Divine Love Mediumship
- Journey Through Spirit Spheres
- Guided Meditation
- Sacred Prayers with Celestial Angels
- Immerse in Divine Love, healing, spiritual growth, and soul awakening
- Attend the full retreat or join for a day

ACCESSIBLE PARTICIPATION

Suggested donation: £30 for the full retreat experience or £10 per day.
All sincere seekers are welcome.

Join a growing community dedicated to Divine Love, healing, and soul awakening.

Join Us in the Divine Love Journey

RETREAT FACILITATORS & SPECIAL GUESTS

- Rev. Albert Fike**
Co-Founder DLSF,
Divine Love Medium,
Teacher & Author
- Rev. Jimbeau Walsh**
jimbeauwalsh.com,
Divine Love Medium,
Musician & Author
- Maureen Cardoso**
livingwatershealing.ca,
Divine Love Medium,
Teacher & Healer
- Dr. Matthew Delano**
President DLSF,
Divine Love
Visionary & Teacher
- Cliff DeDora**
Divine Love
Medium

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DIVINE LOVE RESOURCES

For details on how to receive a free box of FCDT books for distribution; where to find foreign language translations of the Padgett messages; and a listing and accessing messages of all our contemporary mediums, go to the [FCDT website](#). This web page also has a comprehensive [Resource Guide](#) of Divine Love websites, forums, YouTube and audio ministries, book authors, Facebook groups, and more. Please email [Holly](#) directly for information on books for distribution.

To request a flash drive of all the scanned Padgett messages, please contact the [Foundation Church of the New Birth](#). The 64G flash drive contains both autographs (originally written messages), as well as manuscripts in Padgett's handwriting and sometimes in Dr. Stone's handwriting. Donations to help cover costs are welcomed.

[The Foundation Church of the New Birth](#) is emailing daily inspirational excerpts from the Padgett messages. If you'd like to receive these mailings, go to their [Contact / Sign Up](#) page, scroll down to "E-mail Subscription," fill in your email address, and click "Send." **Lisa Sims** has been compiling these quotes in Google documents under the title "How to Achieve Oneness with God by Prayer to Receive His Divine Love." The up-to-date documents can be accessed and downloaded from these links: [List 1](#); [List 2](#); [List 3](#); [List 4](#); [List 5](#); [List 6](#); [List 7](#); [List 8](#).

I am here, Jesus.

In my last writing I have shown how Hosea, through personal sorrow, learned that as man loved with a human love, so did the Father love with a Divine Love, and that this Love meant that God sought the return of His erring children, at this period of civilization, His chosen people Israel. It meant that while this return had been made by Israel itself, on free will, yet God would make an effort to teach or educate His children, so that Israel would love the Father. It meant that the lessons in the education might be accompanied by unpleasant experiences. This did not mean that God punishes His children for the evils they committed because punishment is the wages of sin; this cannot be further from the truth. For the Father does not punish, but the people whose nationality and religion were linked inextricably to knowledge of the Living God had to be reminded repeatedly during the centuries that they could not be permitted to become absorbed merely in the material things of life to the neglect of those spiritual things that meant cleanliness of the soul through the ethical and moral life.

The vicissitudes through which the people of Israel thus passed were not punishments of God, although we shall see that the prophets thought they were, but they were the effect produced by causes which were not wholly fortuitous nor developed solely as a result of a blind progression of events or forces. Historical events, I must tell you, are not only the results of a natural working of history - for men, and men's thoughts and deeds, for good or for evil, are the dominating forces in the march of history; the wars, exterminations and similar man-made disasters resulting from human sin, error and perversity overshadow by far the calamities produced by the evolving universe. The troubles encountered by the people of Israel are not, then, to be laid at the door of an angry and punishing God, although I wish to repeat that this was the consensus of opinion among the prophets, who thundered against the evils they saw in Israel.

These actually stemmed from the doings of Solomon and his advisors: his concept of religion as ritual and temple, rather than ethics, his concern for opulence and material pleasures befitting a pagan monarch, his imposition of burdensome taxes upon the people, his marriages to pagan women and consorting with concubines of pagan worship, and encouraging their abominable ceremonies in the Temple devoted to God, all for the purpose of promoting alliances with neighboring states of barbarian ideas and practices, as well for his pleasures, to the neglect of the Father and His Laws.

The chain of events thus led to the ascension of Rehoboam and his foolish acceptance of the counsel given him by his young courtiers, in that he harshly rejected the request of his northern subjects for an easement of their tax burdens, with the result that the Northern Kingdom, Israel, seceded from the rest of the land, and two kingdoms, Israel and Judah, came into existence. Each of these was much weaker politically as separate entities than they would have been as a unified Israel, and the trend to pagan practices in worship, the use of high places, like Dan, and Beth-el, and the consequent successive loss of moral and ethical fiber, and the dissociation from the high faith in the Living Jehovah, were all instrumental in bringing the Hebrews down to the level of the pagan nations and forfeited for them the strength which they needed to maintain themselves against the nations of their time. It was this moral and physical weakness, then, and not any punishment of the Father, which caused the downfall of the Hebrew nations - first Israel, and finally Judah. The prophets saw the moral evils of the people as the reasons for the buffeting and threats of disaster which faced the Hebrews and with intense love of their people and God, and with wonderful understanding that return to God's Laws would through faith clothe them with His Protection, they thundered powerfully against sin and evil. They supposed God to be a divine avenger of evil, which He could not tolerate, while they were also clearly aware that the policies and doings of the Hebrew Nations themselves were the causes of their own difficulties. ...

Jesus of the Bible and Master of the Celestial Heavens