

**Excerpt from Welcome and Announcements
Concerning Traditional Context for “Day of the Dead”**

If you are a visitor today, you may be a little puzzled at how our sanctuary looks. We bring a wide variety of celebratory traditions into our worship. Today, we call on the Mexican tradition known as Dia de los Muertos, the Day of the Dead.

Holidays celebrating the dead have been around since the time of the ancient Egyptians. They have been handed down from Roman culture and eventually were reflected in Christian traditions. Halloween – a time of visitation by the dead -- is part of this tradition.

A similar bequest comes from the cultures of the prehispanic peoples on this side of the globe.

In Mexico, the Spanish conquest resulted in a blending of these native and christian traditions. Today the festival of Dia de los Muertos, the Day of the Dead, is a community event celebrating the reunion of the living with the dead. Special foods and decorations are prepared. Pictures of the dead are brought out. Special songs and dramas are performed. The atmosphere is an emotional mixture of joy and sadness -- lively rather than morbid. If you are a guest or a visitor, we hope you will feel invited to join in this highly participatory service.