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## Save the Date: Sunday, September 18 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Blessing of the Waves at Pier Plaza

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**What:** Blessing of the Waves is an event for anyone and everyone, all ages and all faiths. Come bless the waves with us as we focus for a moment on the importance of water and the environment in all our lives. Join Mayor Jim Katapodis and other community leaders as we celebrate life through music and reflection. A paddle-out (Mother Nature pending) will conclude the event with hundreds of surfers taking to the water.

**When:** **Sunday, September 18 at 8:30 a.m. at Pier Plaza**

**Who:** Many local and regional special guests will speak, reflect, and pray at the event. Those speaking will be honored with a Special Achievement Award including:

- **Lifetime Achievement Award** – Eight-time Olympic medalist and author **Shirley Babashoff**. In her extraordinary swimming career, Shirley Babashoff set 39 national records and 11 world records. Prior to the 1990s, she was the most successful U.S. female Olympian and, in her prime, was widely considered to be the greatest female swimmer in the world.
- **Wave of Inspiration Award – Surf Team at Huntington Beach High School** for capturing the National Surf Championship this past summer in New Zealand. It was the school's 18<sup>th</sup> championship, but the first one in 18 years.
- **Keynote Speaker – Rev. Anthony Bogar of Surf City United Methodist Church**. Originally from Cleveland, Ohio, Rev. Bogar has been the Pastor at Surf City United Methodist Church for four years. He is an adjunct professor with Wiley College, Marshall, TX, teaching Intro to Christian Ethics, World Religions, Survey to Religion and Philosophy.

Other guests and representatives include: Local HB surfing priest - Fr. Christian Mondor (who celebrated his 72<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of priesthood and recently turned 91 years young), Huntington Beach Jr. Lifeguards, Golden West College Swim Team, HB Marine Safety Division, Visit HB, City of Huntington Beach elected officials and staff, former Mayors of Huntington Beach, all pastors, clergy and rabbi's from the community, and a variety of celebrities will join us in this celebration including USA Eight-Time Olympic Swim Coach Mark Schubert and Surf City's own, Dean Torrance of Jan and Dean Fame. The Huntington Beach Lifeguard Band will play surf tunes during the event.

**Why:** Organized by the Huntington Beach Interfaith Council, this is a life celebration and all are invited to participate. The Blessing of the Waves was originally conceived as a Catholic led event through the Diocese of Orange prior to the Greater Huntington Beach Interfaith Council assuming responsibility in 2013.

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