Good afternoon, everyone.

I’m Sophie, Linda’s daughter—though to so many of us, she was simply “Mama Lin.”

Thank you for coming to celebrate her life, because if there was anything my mom believed in, it was the celebration part—the music on, the doors open, the table full, and room for one more.

Mama Lin was born in Austin on November 10, 1963, and she left us on June 2, 2025, at 61—far too soon, and yet somehow having lived three lives’ worth of love, laughter, and flour-dusted joy.

She started with a little stall at a farmers’ market—just a card table, a cash box, and the best cinnamon rolls you ever tasted—and she built it into a neighborhood bakery that felt like a second living room. She mentored young bakers, the way only she could: with sleeves rolled up, laughter booming, and the steady confidence of “you’ve got this—now try again.” She taught them technique, sure, but mostly she taught them to trust their hands and their hearts.

She found her spirituality in service and in breaking bread. She would say that feeding people was a kind of prayer—gratitude in every loaf, hope in every crust. That was her church: a warm oven, an open door, a long table, and people from every walk of life passing the basket and looking out for one another.

For 20 years, Mama Lin and Robert built a life full of easy partnership and inside jokes, Sunday vinyl and Tuesday taste-tests. She was the proud mother of two daughters—me and my sister, Maya—and the world’s most enthusiastic aunt to an army of nieces and nephews. Family was her favorite ingredient.

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If you knew her, you knew the spark: a can-do spirit that never waited for permission, a fearless creativity that turned leftovers into magic, a generosity that seemed bottomless, and that contagious laugh that made you laugh even before you knew what was funny.

My favorite memory? The 5 a.m. kitchen dances. Picture this: the mixer is whirring, the sun's just a rumor behind the windows, Motown on the record player. We're frosting cupcakes, singing loud, inventing harmonies that would make the Temptations raise an eyebrow, and somewhere between the flour clouds and the off-key high notes, we'd look at each other and just know—this is what joy looks like. Every time she dipped a finger into the frosting, she'd grin: "Love is the secret ingredient." And if a batch failed, she'd shrug and say, "We rise together—like good dough." Then she'd crank the music and start again.

She loved sourdough experiments that took days, vinyl records with stories in the scratches, Saturday farmers' markets where she knew every farmer by name, and a backyard herb garden that somehow always needed "just one more basil plant." She donated weekly to shelters because it never made sense to her that anyone should be hungry. And she hosted free baking classes for teens, because she believed in handing the whisk to the next pair of hands.

People will miss her warm hugs—always dusted with a little flour. They'll miss her spontaneous dance parties in grocery aisles and kitchens and parking lots. They'll miss the way she made everyone feel at home—how she remembered your favorite pastry, your big interview, the song that got you through a hard week.

Maya and I will miss the road trips—the ones where we'd go "just to the next town for peaches" and end up three hours away, singing to Motown, windows down, a trunk full of fruit, and a plan to bake something outrageous when we got back. We'll miss the way she taught us to say yes to adventure and yes to people.

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If you were mentored by her, you know she didn’t just teach you to proof dough—she taught you to proof yourself. To wait the right amount of time. To trust that warmth and patience can transform what looks ordinary into something alive.

Robert, thank you for being her partner in every sense—the steady hand, the loyal taste-tester, the keeper of the record sleeves. To our big extended family—her nieces and nephews who never left the bakery without an extra cookie—thank you for filling her life with delightful chaos and the kind of laughter that echoes.

Today, as we celebrate her life, I can almost hear her at the counter, tapping the beat, reminding us that the table is still set. That love is still the secret ingredient. That in this room are all the starters she’s left behind—bubbling with promise, ready to become something new.

So here’s what she’d ask of us: keep the door open. Share what you have. Take the long way home when the peaches are ripe. Turn up the Motown and sing the harmony badly and loud. And when life knocks the air out of you, remember: we rise together—like good dough.

We love you, Mama Lin. Thank you for the laughter, the lessons, and the thousand small miracles of a life spent feeding people. Your hands are still in our recipes, your music still in our mornings, your generosity still in our bones.

We’ll keep the oven warm. We’ll keep dancing at 5 a.m. And we’ll make sure everyone has a place at the table.

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