

The Christian Visitor

APRIL 2020 ~ VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

CHURCH FOR JUST SUCH A TIME AS THIS

From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

These are strange and challenging times to be alive. And they are strange and challenging times to be church too. As the news has shifted on a daily basis over the past few weeks, it's been hard to keep up. Now that it seems we've reached a bottom line – stay home unless absolutely necessary! – we're starting to develop a better sense of how we need to adapt, so that we can carry on our ministry in these new circumstances.

I am delighted with how so many of you have responded to our new ways of doing things! You are finding ways to interact with worship and to connect with one another that give me hope. Our size, our diversity of gifts, our empowered lay leaders, our flocks, our investment funds, and our strong commitment to including everyone make us well positioned to get through this crisis.

This is a steep learning curve for all of us, so I appreciate your patience with me as we figure out what works best. I have no doubt the information in this newsletter will be out of date quickly, so I encourage you to stay in touch with us through the various other media available. Since I won't be in the office much, the best ways to reach me are by emailing pastorbecky@yahoo.com or by calling or texting me at 619-905-7566.

grace & peace,

Pastor Rebecca

Christ Will Rise! (no matter where we are)

The Church has left the building, but worship of the Living God continues! Each Sunday, we are sending out a worship-at-home kit by email that includes the prayers and reflections of our various lay leaders, along with the sermon in video and manuscript form, and occasional other videos as feasible. We encourage everyone to choose a different “worship buddy” each week, and go through the service together over the phone.

Look for information about new virtual “coffee hours” on page 2.

HOLY WEEK

During Holy Week, we invite you to join us on Zoom (see page 2), for daily readings of the Passion Stories from each gospel. We will hold these Tuesday-Friday (April 7-10) at 1:30 & 6:30. Each person who participates will have the option to read or just listen. Tuesday will be Matthew, Wednesday, Mark, etc.

On Holy Thursday, a short video with a special communion service for you to worship along with will be sent out to everyone as well.

On Easter Sunday, we will celebrate the Risen Christ, even as the Body of Christ remains scattered. We will remember that the first disciples discovered the resurrection in small groups, hidden behind locked doors. We will learn new ways to experience the abundant life Christ offers!

JOIN US ON ZOOM!

After experimenting with using conference calls as a way of connecting for meetings, we have taken the plunge and gotten an account with Zoom, so that we can see each other's faces for our various gatherings. You may have heard of teachers using Zoom to connect with their students, and some churches are using it for worship. We will be using it for meetings and fellowship opportunities.

You can use Zoom with video from your computer, but you can also call into any "gathering" from your regular telephone. If you want to use video, go to zoom.us and click "join a meeting". It will prompt you to download the Zoom app onto your computer. It should help you check to make sure you have all the right settings on. You will need to allow Zoom to use your computer's camera and microphone, so we can see & hear you.

For most of our meetings, we will be using the same Meeting ID with no password, so please don't post it on social media and only share it with VLMers. (There have been reports of hackers disrupting open meetings like this.) The Meeting ID is available on request. Once you have the app downloaded, you can just go to zoom.us, click "join a meeting", and you should be sent directly into our "meeting room". If you want to join by telephone, call 720-707-2699 and then enter the Meeting ID and the # sign. If you want to use our Zoom meeting room for a small group gathering, please check with Pastor Rebecca first, to ensure your preferred time is available.

We invite you to join us for a **Zoom coffee hour** on Wednesday, April 1, at 11:00 am and/or 6:00 pm. This will just be an informal time to see each other's faces and catch up on how we're all adapting to these strange times. Once we've tried that out, we will make decisions about future "coffee hours" and let everyone know in our regular weekly emails. Check the April calendar for other meetings.

OUR MISSION

- To share the joy of God's love.
- To nurture one another to wholeness.
- To motivate each other to Christian witness.
- To effect healing in a hurting world.

Living Our Promises

As a congregation, we are doing everything we can to stay connected during this time. As members of the Body of Christ, we have taken on special responsibility for one another. If you have extra financial burdens during this time, please contact Pastor Rebecca. If you can donate a little extra to the Pastor's Discretionary Fund to help your neighbors, please do so.

We are counting on everyone to keep up your financial support of our congregation, as you are able. You can do that online at www.vlmcc.org/ministries/stewardship or by mailing your gifts to the church. (We are getting the mail more or less every other day.) We will be receiving much less rental income than we usually do, so we will likely be dipping into our reserve funds as well. We have committed to paying our staff for their regular hours, so as not to cause hardship for any of them. (Church employees are not eligible for unemployment insurance.)

We have postponed our annual stewardship campaign for at least a month, so we will be creating a budget based on our best analyses of giving thus far this year. We give thanks for your faithful generosity in the coming weeks and months!

Bible Study

Once we are able to resume our regular, face-to-face Bible studies, we will pick up where we left off in our study of Acts. In the meantime, we urge every member of the Vista La Mesa Christian Church community to spend at least ten minutes a day reading scripture.

If you have questions about anything you are reading, please feel free to send them by email to Michael and Tesa. We may not know the answer, but we can think with you about the passage. ~ Michael

Looking for good information? Text "cosd covid19" to 468-311 to receive regular updates from the County of San Diego.

**Zoom Coffee Hours
Wednesday, April 1st
11:00 am & 6:00 pm**

Difficult Decisions

We are so sorry to have to announce that we have made the wrenching decision to cancel Welcome Saturday in April. Though we had a fairly successful modified outreach in March, the gathering that day did not meet the new requirements for social distancing. We simply cannot pull together the resources and provide what we normally do for our neighbors living without shelter under the current circumstances. Please join us in praying that we will be able to offer at least a modified Welcome Saturday in May. We look forward to your support when we resume this vital ministry.

Because the Food Pantry at St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church is closed down at the moment, we encourage you to make donations to the San Diego Food Bank, which is serving an even larger population than normal at this time. Please let Pastor Rebecca know if you are having food shortage needs.

Thank You

The Bailey family would like to thank all of you who have sent condolences after our son's passing. We appreciate your kindness.

**No Group Lunches in
April. Hope to see
you soon!**

**Please remember that the
church building & office are
officially closed at this time.
Pastor Rebecca is checking
on things a few days a week.**

**Missing Church?
Join us on Facebook!
We need your "likes"
and comments!**

Happy Birthday!

Apr. 2 – Jessica Fallon, Tim
Tiffany

Apr. 4 – Hannah Berry,
Michaela Stockdall

Apr. 5 – Grace Van Winkle

Apr. 12 – Skip Peterson

Apr. 13 – Hannah Moss

Apr. 15 – Michael Kinnamon

Apr. 16 – John Neely

Apr. 22 – Embrilly Lopez, Sam
Rorie

Apr. 23 - Shayne McKinney

Apr. 27 – Larry Knight, Bill
Kwon, Todd Lesh

Apr. 28 – Sophia Carranza

Happy Anniversary!

Apr. 3 – Sonny & Maria
Cusumano

IN OUR PRAYERS...

Please check with the pastor for prayer concerns.

YOUTH NEWS

There will be no meeting in April, but watch for info about an online hang-out.

CHURCH CAMP

It's not too early to get Church Camp on the calendar! VLM has funds to make sure every kid can attend camp.

Wee (Adult/Child - 3 yo-K) – June 17-19

Mini (1-3) – July 14-17

Junior (4-5) – July 12-17

Chi Rho (6-8) – June 21-26

CYF I (9-10) & CYF II (11-12 & grads) – held concurrently July 26-31

More info at www.disciplespswr.org/camp.

April 2020 Worship Participants

	April 5	April 12	April 19	April 26
Worship Leader	Mike Martin	Brenda Rorie-Baety	Bob Neely	Ruth Tiffany
Kids' Moment	Rebecca Littlejohn	Julie Germain	Rebecca Littlejohn	Tesa Hauser
Offering Invite	Cheryl Davis-Plotts	Mary Jane Fay	Ruth Tiffany	Michael Kinnamon
Offering Elder	Katie Yoder	Karen Cliffe	Jerry Bailey	Cheryl Davis-Plotts
Comm. Elder	Mary Jane Fay	Michael Kinnamon	Julie Germain	Larry Knight

PLEASE KEEP THE WORK OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE IN YOUR PRAYERS AS THEY INVITE US TO LISTEN FOR GOD'S CALL!

News from the Board

The Board held its March meeting by email, to avoid gathering in one place. There have been a number of other electronic votes taken. The Nominating Committee for 2020 was appointed, including: Tim Tiffany (chair), Julie Germain, Matt Hauser, Bob Neely & Brenda Rorie-Baety. The Board also approved the motion from the Nominating Committee to appoint Tracy Stockdall as a Deacon to fulfill the remainder of the term (2019-2022) of Christine Lind, who had submitted her resignation.

Our secretary, Ellen O'Toole, has announced her impending retirement (so she can travel with her soon-to-retire husband), so the Board approved an updated job description for an Administrative & Communications Coordinator. The job was posted, and interviews with a few select candidates will be held in the next couple of weeks. Ellen is committed to staying till we have someone in the position. The Personnel Committee also reported that staff evaluations have been canceled for 2020, due to current circumstances. We are committed to paying our staff as if they are working their regular hours, during this difficult time, so we encourage everyone to continue supporting the church financially as you are able.

WHO AND WHERE WE ARE

We are a congregation of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). We are part of the Christian Church in the Pacific Southwest Region.

We are located at 4210 Massachusetts Ave. (at Boulevard Dr.), one block South of University Ave. in La Mesa, conveniently situated between Interstate 8 (exit at 70th St.) and the 94 Freeway (exit at Massachusetts), and very near the #852 bus line.

Sundays: Bible Study @ 9:00 – Worship @ 10:30
Secretary's Hrs: M, T 9-12; W 10-1; F 8-12

CHURCH STAFF

Ministers: **The Members of VLM**
 Pastor: **Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn**
 Ministerial Intern: **Tesa Hauser**
 Church Secretary: **Ellen O'Toole**
 Music Director: **Deborah Wilson**
 Nursery: **Stephanie Cadiero & Francia Berry**
 Custodian: **Scott Tiemann**
 Church Tel. (619) 463-9909
 Office E-mail: admin@vlmcc.com
 Pastor's E-mail: pastor@vlmcc.com
 Church website: www.vlmcc.org