

The Christian Visitor

VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH ~ MAY 2020

Thank You, Tesa!

Sunday, May 3rd will be Tesa Hauser's official last day as our Ministerial Intern. We are so grateful for all the gifts Tesa has offered through the past 8 months and for trusting our congregation to witness her journey into ministry. It has been a joy and a privilege to watch her growth as a pastor and leader. She has led worship, preached, taught Bible study, facilitated our Lenten Faith Story series, worked with our youth, offered pastoral care and much more!

Blessedly, Tesa is not leaving VLM, since she & Matt are members here. But her role will be shifting back to that of a "regular" member for a little while. The Board will be considering a proposal this month to use some of our Memorial Endowment funds to subsidize a part-time Ministerial Assistant position for Tesa, which we anticipate she would serve in while she continues her ordination discernment process with the Regional Committee on the Ministry. She has approximately two more years before she can be approved for ordination. If the position is approved, she would begin serving in the new capacity in July.

ENGAGING WITH ONLINE WORSHIP

Are you getting our Sunday worship kits in your email? We hope that everyone has found a way to engage in worship with these new tools. If you have email and aren't receiving our emails, please let Pastor Rebecca know, so we can get you connected. If you don't have email and would like a hard copy of the kit, please contact Pastor Rebecca. If you haven't already, we encourage you to try worshipping with a buddy. Get each other on the phone, put your buddy on speaker phone, and then go through the service together, taking turns reading each part!

HOW TO ZOOM

We are having to learn lots of new ways of doing things these days, and while it's exhausting, it's also incredible to see so many of you mastering the new technologies we're using to sustain our ministries. If you haven't ventured onto Zoom yet, here are some tips.

The main Zoom information can be found at zoom.us. You can download the app from there through the "Resources" tab, or just click "Join a Meeting" and it will prompt you to download the app. Just follow the instructions as they come up. You can also get Zoom for your phone or tablet through the App Store.

VLM has its own "meeting room" on Zoom, where most of our online gatherings are held. Or you can "Join a Meeting" and type in the Meeting ID, and then the password. You can also use Zoom (with audio only) from a regular phone, and then putting in the Meeting ID (password not needed over the phone). Contact Pastor Rebecca if you need the one-click link for our main "meeting room", our Meeting ID and password, or the phone number to call in. Please do not post this information anywhere on the internet, so we can deter hackers.

When you've joined by video, make sure to also "connect your audio" (in the lower left corner) so we can hear you. You may also need to adjust the volume controls on your computer. If you can't get the audio to work, you can call in from your phone. Call or text Pastor Rebecca if you're having trouble.

From My View at the Table – Naming What We Know

Dear Church,

One reason things are so hard and exhausting right now is because of how much about our current circumstances is unknown. We don't fully understand what this disease does, we don't know how immunity works, and we have no idea what the timeline for safely moving toward next steps will be.

We are at the point where we've sort of figured out sheltering in place, and the novelty has definitely worn off. We're ready to plan the next phase, but we don't have much information about when the next phase might be possible. We feel stuck, trapped, and impatient. We don't usually move through life with this much uncertainty, and it's wearing on our minds, bodies, and souls.

So I thought I should share with you some of what we do know. We know for sure that "going back to church" will be a process. There will be many things we will need to prepare and coordinate, which means it may take us longer to "open up" than other organizations or businesses. We will need to make decisions about procedures and guidelines and ensure they are thoroughly communicated to everyone who uses the facility. We will need to do some cleaning and re-arranging within the building to meet new standards for sanitation and safety. Because of these requirements, we know that we won't be in the building before June.

We know that when we get back together, things will not be the same as they were before. For some time, we will need to maintain spatial distancing from one another, so hugs and handshakes will be replaced by waves and friendly smiles. Things involving food, from communion to coffee hour, will need to be slower to return and more carefully designed. Things that can easily happen online, like our committee meetings, may stay online longer, so that other events, like our 12-step groups, can have priority on using Bailey Hall. I hope you are joining with me in prayer for the sobriety of all those who used to gather for support in our building.

We know that once we start holding services in the sanctuary again, we will do everything we can to respect each person's needs and comfort levels with risk. We will continue to make the service available through an emailed kit, though it may arrive later in the day. We will encourage people to participate only in the ways they are comfortable, for example, letting you bring your own communion elements if you desire. We will need everyone to pay attention and heed the new guidelines we design to be safe as we worship together, even though we are anxious to return to the way things used to be.

Most importantly, we know that God is still God. We know that Christ is still Risen. We know that the Holy Spirit will continue binding our hearts together in Christian love. Hallelujah and Amen!

grace & peace, *Pastor Rebecca*

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.

Position Update

The search process for our new church secretary (now called the Administrative & Communications Coordinator) has slowed down because of stay-home orders. Interviews are being held online this week, with hopes that the new person might start in June, under limited circumstances. Ellen is staying on for minimal duties until the new person can take over.

Modified Welcome Saturday in May

We are planning to hold a modified Welcome Saturday in May, with a minimum of volunteers. We will be handing out bags of pre-prepared and packaged food, along with hygiene kits and socks & underwear. All the shopping will be done by one or two people.

The best way to support this effort is to make a donation to the Welcome Saturday fund, so that we can afford all the supplies. We will likely hold Welcome Saturday this way until it is safe to gradually add back in other elements. If you have any questions, contact Karen Cliffe, Julie Germain, or Pastor Rebecca.

If you would like to help provide occasional meals for our two VLM nurses and their families, contact Beckie Neely.

Easter Potluck Recipe - Pineapple Casserole

We were sad not to be able to gather together for our traditional Easter Potluck, but you can still have some of the flavors at home! Here's the recipe for Amy Cliffe's pineapple casserole.

Ingredients: 2 large cans of pineapple chunks, 6 Tbsp. pineapple juice (reserved from can), 1 cup sugar, 6 Tbsp. Flour, 2 cups grated cheddar cheese. For topping: 1 cup Ritz crackers crushed into crumbs, 1/2 cup butter, melted.

Drain pineapple chunks; reserve juice. Combine 6 Tbsp pineapple juice with flour and sugar. Add cheese and pineapple chunks. Mix well. Pour into 2 quart casserole dish. Top with crushed Ritz crackers mixed with melted butter. Bake at 350°, uncovered, for 25-30 minutes. *Thanks, Amy!*

In Our Prayers...

JOYS & CONCERNS ~ Contact the Pastor for current prayer requests.

Women's Lunch & Lunch Bunch will meet on Zoom at their regular days/times. Bring your own lunch!

Face Masks

San Diego County is now requiring masks in public. If you are having trouble obtaining a mask, please let Pastor Rebecca know. We have a few folks in the church who are making masks and can help you out!

Happy Birthday!

May 2 ~ Farrie Ann Nichols
May 6 ~ Brittany Cliffe
May 10 ~ George Moss
May 20 ~ Becky Carranza
May 24 ~ Helene Sisneros
May 28 ~ Lyn Van Winkle
May 29 ~ Aireen Bentley

Happy Anniversary!

May 16
Kevin & Patty Severns
May 20
Shayne & Rachel McKinney
May 21
Matt & Tesa Hauser
May 25
Andy & Amy Cliffe

Supporting VLMCC in our Current Reality

Normally about this time of the year, we would be wrapping up our annual stewardship campaign, having asked our members and friends to make a prayerful commitment to financial support for our congregation and share that with us on an Estimate of Giving card. Those estimates then help us shape our budget for the coming year, which is normally approved at our congregational meeting in June.

A stewardship campaign did not seem like a good fit for the present moment, however, so we have decided to step out in faith and try to prepare a budget proposal without that previous step. We hope that those who can support our church financially will continue to do so and perhaps even increase your giving as you can, to make up for those who may no longer be able to. If you would like to communicate your intentions, please email Financial Secretary Larry Knight or Pastor Rebecca. We are so grateful for all our donors! We encourage you to explore online giving, which is easy to do through tithely.com. Check it out at our website: www.vlmcc.org/ministries/stewardship. You can, of course, also mail checks to the church. Thank you for your donations, however you share them! You make our ministries possible!

Board Preview

Our Board will have its May meeting on Wednesday, May 20, on Zoom at 6:00 pm (in the main meeting room, see page 1). Board reports are due on Friday, May 8th. Please review your packets very carefully, as we will have a lot of important business to cover in this meeting.

The Nominating Committee is almost through with its work and will be reporting to the Board, in preparation for sending the slate of nominees to the congregation in June. We will be voting on a proposed budget for the 2020-2021 ministry year. We will be receiving a proposal to hire Tesa Hauser as a Ministerial Assistant, using funds from the Memorial Endowment Fund. (We will likely have an electronic vote on hiring the new Administrative & Communications Coordinator before the meeting on 5/20.) We will review our financial situation and decide what measures to take to ensure stability. We will discuss what standards and principles we will use in designing a process for re-opening our facility and how to know when to take which steps. We will also discuss possible procedures for virtual participation in our annual congregational meeting.

Admin Update: The Administrative Committee met in April, with Trustee Helene Sisneros and MEC Chair Jerry Bailey, and decided to install padlocks & a “No Trespassing” sign temporarily in the prayer garden, to address repeated problems we had been having with encampments in that area.

YOUTH NEWS

Our Youth Group has become a mostly VLM affair for the time being. We are having Zoom check-ins every couple of weeks or so, in order to stay in touch. (See calendar for dates.)

Watch for information about summer camps. It is highly likely that Loch Leven camps will happen in some kind of virtual form this summer. The Region has said a decision will be announced by May 1st.

May 2020 Worship Participants

	May 3	May 10	May 17	May 24	May 31
Worship Leader	Walter Rorie-Baety	Katie Yoder	Karen Cliffe	Jerry Bailey	Cheryl Davis-Plotts
Kids' Moment	Julie Germain	Rebecca Littlejohn	Rebecca Littlejohn	Deborah Wilson	Rebecca Littlejohn
Offering Invitation	Rebecca Littlejohn	Walter Rorie-Baety	Mandy Dohring	Tim Cliffe	Jerry Bailey
Offering Elder	Tim Cliffe	Mary Jane Fay	Michael Kinnamon	Julie Germain	Larry Knight
Comm. Elder	Beckie Neely	Mike Martin	Brenda Rorie-Baety	Bob Neely	Ruth Tiffany