

# The Christian Visitor

JANUARY 2021 ~ VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

## WORSHIP IN THE PARK

Our next worship service at Harry Griffen Park is scheduled for Sunday, January 24th at 10:30 am. (There will be no Bible study that day.) Our Ministerial Assistant Tesa Hauser will be preaching for us that day. This is the Sunday when we would normally be having a potluck to celebrate new members & friends, so we had wanted to encourage everyone to bring a sack lunch and have a picnic. Unfortunately, with the covid numbers as bad as they are right now, we will have to save the picnic part for a later date.

We do hope you'll join us for worship! Bring a chair or blanket and something to use for communion. And since it's January, be sure to watch the weather and dress appropriately. We will plan to meet at the Park unless it is rainy, in which case we'll retreat to Zoom.

## Interfaith Shelter Update

We had been planning to host our annual rotation for the Interfaith Shelter Network January 16-30, thanks to the dedication of Amy Cliffe and Daniel Cliffe, who made an extra effort to be in the area to assist his mom.

However, the Shelter Network made the decision in late December to suspend all church-hosted rotations, in favor of keeping all the guests in individual hotel rooms. This is safer for the guests and keeps our church folks safer as well.

There are still ways to support the Shelter. As you can imagine, the expenses of this pandemic-safe model are high. We will be sending as big a donation to ISN to help with costs as we can manage. You are invited to give funds to augment that gift by January 20th. (Memo on a check: ISN, or use the "local outreach" designation on tithely.) There are also more "hearts-on" ways to help, such as making check-in phone calls to Shelter guests or delivering meals or breakfast bags. Check with Pastor Rebecca to learn more.

## TIME TO REFLECT

We know better by now than to declare anything definitive about this pandemic and its likely duration. But no one can deny that a new year is arriving! And with vaccines beginning to arrive, we can at least trust that the end is coming in the foreseeable future.

This is a good time to give ourselves a mental milestone by stopping to reflect on what we've learned during this hard time and how it has changed us. We will be offering you a series of questions and surveys in the Tuesday emails over the next few weeks, so you can share your thoughts and observations about living through a global pandemic. If you would like to suggest a question for us to reflect on, let Pastor Rebecca know.

## Bible Study in January

The new year is a wonderful time to join our merry band of Bible study participants! Our study for at least the first two months of 2021 will be the challenging, inspiring Gospel According to Luke. Tesa will be joining me in leadership of these discussions. All are warmly invited – 9:00-10:00 Sunday mornings on Zoom.  
~Michael

The login information is on page two of this newsletter, and it's also included with every Tuesday & Friday email.

## From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

As you read on page one, we will be taking some time over the next few weeks to reflect on what we've learned about ourselves and our church during these ten months of pandemic so far. I am interested to hear from you, especially because one of the things I've missed the most is the chance to have all those little conversations that happen on the edges of things, when we get to all be in the same space, being the church together.

Congregations have handled the pandemic in a thousand different ways, which has been a great opportunity to witness the incredible diversity God has given humanity. But it's also been a source of stress for some pastors, as church members declare their dissatisfaction with the way their church is handling things and take off for "First Church Down the Road". I have heard terrible stories about the way some of my colleagues have been treated by people who don't seem to understand that we're all doing the best we can.

All of this has made me so very grateful to be serving Vista La Mesa Christian Church. I was talking to a church member the other day about how we've made it through, and I mentioned that one of the points of grace for me has been how willing you all have been to let me set the expectations in alignment with what feels possible for me, as opposed to demanding that I do what I'm not capable of. I realized later that this sort of "loving you for who you are" grace isn't just extended to me; this is way everyone is treated at VLM, and that is a great gift.

What a blessing to be part of a community that loves us as we are! This pandemic has been hard on all of us, and it's a constant struggle to live up to our usual standards of competence, kindness, patience and generosity. The gentleness with which we treat one another is a gift of God. I know we are all worried about how our beloved congregation will come out on the other side of this. But the grace that we're experiencing is a sign that God is with us!

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.

## WE WANT TO ZEE YOU ON ZOOM!

Now that we're going to move worship to Zoom, it's even more important that everyone learn how to use it! If you would like assistance getting Zoom set up on your computer, please let Pastor Rebecca know, and she or Tesa will come to your house, with safety precautions, to help you get started.

You can use Zoom from a computer or from your telephone. From your phone, you will only be able to hear people. From your computer, you'll be able to see people (but you can choose not to have your video on).

There are multiple ways to connect to a Zoom gathering. Contact Pastor Rebecca for the one-click link, the Meeting ID and pass code, and/or the numbers to call in from your phone. The login information can also be found in our weekly emails.

For worship, we will be controlling the experience a little more than we do in meetings and other gatherings. Those who are not speaking will be muted, and the person speaking will be "spotlighted" so they are the focus on everyone's screen.

Pro Tip #1: Find "Gallery View" in the top right corner, and click it to see everyone at once, instead of just the person talking at the moment.

Pro Tip #2: It is easiest to hear if we all mute ourselves when not talking. Click on the microphone icon till there's a red line through it. Clicking again will unmute you. Sometimes the host mutes you if necessary, as well

*Thanks so much for your  
generous Christmas gifts to us!*

*love & blessings,  
the Staff of VLMCC*

*Francia Berry Stephanie Cadiero*

*Alicia M. Gervasi Scott Tiemann*

*Deborah Wilson Tesa Hauser*

*Rebecca Littlejohn*

## Novels Tea

Our Novels Tea group began as a prayer & fellowship group for younger, working women who like to read. During the pandemic, we have been meeting on Zoom. We could use a few more devoted readers (of fiction), even if you're not a younger working woman. If you think you might be interested in joining us, please contact Pastor Rebecca. We'd love to have you!

We will be meeting to discuss "Unsheltered" by Barbara Kingsolver on Sunday, January 31 at 1:30 pm.

## Welcome Saturday

We are so grateful that we have been able to continue our monthly ministry to our neighbors living without shelter. Your donations to this ministry make that possible, along with the faithful commitment of our volunteers, including some of our youth! In December, many of our guests were surprised and relieved to know that we were still open. The County considers this ministry an "essential service" so we will continue to operate as safely as possible. Thanks for your support!

**If you would be interested in serving as a Lay Reader for Zoom worship, please let Pastor Rebecca know so we can add you to the list. Thanks!**

## *Happy Birthday!*

- Jan. 4 - Patty Severns
- Jan. 5 - Ray Adsit
- Jan. 13 - Julia Tiffany
- Jan. 15 - Himston Flores
- Jan. 16 - Troy Gurling
- Jan. 20 - Sonny Cusumano
- Jan. 23 - Jackie Hahn
- Jan. 24 - Tracy Stockdall
- Jan. 27 - Mary Jane Fay

## *Happy Anniversary!*

- Jan. 6  
Ray & Victoria Adsit
- Jan. 20  
Mandy Dohring & Julie Germain
- George & Donna Moss
- Jan. 24  
Bob & Beckie Neely

## IN OUR PRAYERS...

Contact the Office for current prayer concerns.

## YOUTH NEWS

Youth Group will meet three times this month, on 1/3, 1/10, and 1/31, at 3:00 on Zoom. We were happy to have our friends from UCC join us for our Christmas Party, and we may have them with us again this month.

## Meetings & Gatherings

Women's Study – 1/1, 1/15, 1/29, at 1 pm  
 Youth Group – 1/3, 1/17, 1/31, at 3 pm  
 Senior Men's Coffee – Wednesdays at 8 am  
 Young Adult Zoom – 1/6 & 1/27, at 7 pm  
 Fellowship Committee – Thursday, Jan. 7, 5:30 pm  
 Elders & Deacons – Sunday, Jan. 10, 1 pm  
 Administrative Committee – Tuesday, Jan. 12, 4:30 pm  
 Worship Committee – Thursday, Jan. 14, 5:30 pm  
 General Board – Wednesday, Jan. 20, 6 pm  
 Outreach & CE Committees – Thursday, Jan. 21, 6:30 pm

## January 2021 Worship Participants

	Jan. 3	Jan. 10	Jan. 17	Jan. 24	Jan. 31
<b>Worship Leader</b>	Tim Cliffe	Mary Jane Fay	Michael Kinnamon	Julie Germain	Larry Knight
<b>Kids' Moment</b>	Julie Germain	Tesa Hauser	Rebecca Littlejohn	Mandy Dohring	Rebecca Littlejohn
<b>Lay Reader</b>	Mandy Dohring	Tracy Stockdall	Daphne Flores	N/A	Lisa Martin
<b>Offering Invitation</b>	Larry Knight	Rebecca Littlejohn	Tim Cliffe	Mary Jane Fay	Julie Germain
<b>Offering Elder</b>	Beckie Neely	Mike Martin	Brenda Rorie-Baety	Bob Neely	Ruth Tiffany
<b>Comm. Elder</b>	Walter Rorie-Baety	Katie Yoder	Karen Cliffe	Jerry Bailey	Cheryl Davis-Plotts

## The Board of VLMCC

VLM's Board will meet on **Wednesday, January 20th** at 6:00 pm, on Zoom. All members are welcome to attend these meetings.

Board Members – Your **reports are due Friday, January 8th**. We need your reports so we can organize the agenda for the meeting. When you turn in written reports, it makes the meetings much more efficient, so thank you for making the effort!

One annual January item of business is the appointment of the **Nominating Committee** for 2021, who will then begin work on calling lay leaders for the 2021-2022 ministry year.

### 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 Hours: M-T 9-12, W 10:30-1:30, F 9-1**

### CHURCH STAFF

Ministers: **The Members of VLM**

Pastor: **Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn**

Ministerial Assistant: **Tesa Hauser**

Church Secretary: **Alicia M. Gervasi**

Music Director: **Deborah Wilson**

Nursery: **Stephanie Cadiero & Francina Berry**

Custodian: **Scott Tiemann**

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