

The Christian Visitor

FEBRUARY 2021 ~ VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Formal February!

We are declaring this month “Formal February!” What does that mean? It means that even though we’re still not gathering in the sanctuary for worship, we invite you to make a special effort to dress up in your Sunday best for worship, whether we’re at the park or just gathering on Zoom. It’s just for fun, so of course it’s fine if you don’t want to, or if your shirt & tie are topping sweat pants.

We’ll be doing a selfie challenge each week on Facebook, so we hope you’ll join in the fun and show off your formal duds! On 2/14, you’re especially invited to wear RED for Valentine’s Day and on 2/21, you’re encouraged to wear purple for the First Sunday of Lent.

Lent & More Kits coming your way!

We are preparing a special kit for you, to help you engage with the upcoming season of Lent. We will have them available for pick-up at the Park on 2/7, and Pastor Rebecca & Tesa will be delivering the rest to your homes.

The kits will have a Lenten daily devotional booklet, a candle for you to use during Zoom worship during Lent, and a cross sticker for you to use on Ash Wednesday. We will be sending out a video devotion early on Ash Wednesday for you to worship with sometime that day.

The kits will also have 2020 donation receipts and a Week of Compassion coin box, plus a special greeting from the Fellowship Committee.

Church in the Park

We had to postpone our 1/31 service at Harry Griffen Park due to wet, cold weather, so we’re going to try again on Sunday, February 7th. We’d love to have you join us! Make sure to wear your mask and bring your own chair and something to use for communion. We want to be very careful not to spread the virus, so please make sure to keep distance from those not in your household!

It is our plan to have worship at our spot in the Park each first Sunday of the month for a while, including March 7th and April 4th, which is Easter!

We are working on a plan to make it possible to have Bible study on the days we hold worship in the Park, since we’ll be doing it more often in the coming months. Watch for info!

WEEK OF COMPASSION

The theme for our annual Week of Compassion Special Offering this year is “Let Love Flow”, inspired by Isaiah 49:10. It focuses on the life-changing power of clean water for people around the world. We will celebrate this the first two Sundays of Lent, February 21 & 28.

We will be distributing coin boxes for you to collect spare change, but we also hope you will give larger gifts by mailing in checks or online by selecting “DMF - Week of Compassion” from the drop-down menu on tithe.ly. We will collect the money from the coin boxes at the Park on March 7th. We have set a goal of raising at least \$500 for Week of Compassion during the Special Offering this year. Thanks for your support!

From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

Though it hasn't been a full year yet, it was during the season of Lent that we moved to worshiping remotely, and the season of Lent is almost upon us again. At various points in the past 11 months, we have imagined gathering again in August, then maybe for Christmas, then probably in March... only to now realize that safe gatherings will likely not return until most of us are vaccinated, which won't be for awhile yet. Meanwhile, case loads have gone down a little, but a new, more contagious variant is threatening to push them back up. It feels like last year's Lent never ended!

So for Lent this year, Tesa and I have chosen the theme, "ENDURE". The practices of Lent are exactly the practices that will get us through this difficult chapter – prayer, trust in God, sacrifice, hope. We will explore one concept each week, spelling out the word ENDURE, including Empathy, Needs met, Determination, Understanding, Resilience, and Excitement.

We will begin with Empathy and Needs met, combining our Lenten theme with our observance of Week of Compassion, because one of the most important lessons of this experience is that we cannot survive it alone. It's only when we come together to support each and every beloved child of God that we can thrive. When we "let love flow," as the WoC theme encourages, the isolation and confusion of the pandemic become easier to bear. I hope you will join us on this journey, as we dig in to ENDURE to Easter – and beyond, to the day we can gather for worship again!

grace & peace,
Pastor Rebecca

Pastor's Schedule

Pastor Rebecca will be trying to find some time to take a few days off in the next few weeks, but not over a Sunday.

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.

All-Church Coffee Hour

Join us on Zoom after worship on Sunday, February 21st at 12:30 pm for some conversation with your VLM friends! It's bring-your-own-donut-and-beverage, but we'll provide the fellowship!

In case you've never attended one of these before, here's how it works. We have discovered that breaking into smaller groups helps conversation happen more naturally. So we use the "break-out rooms" function and you're put in a group with 2-3 other people. We mix the groups up 2 or 3 times over the hour. We offer questions for you to discuss, or you can just talk about whatever you like. We'd love to have you join us!

Welcome Saturday

Thank you for your faithful support of our ministry to our neighbors living without shelter! We are bringing life-giving hope and love to people who really need it. We give thanks this month for a major donation of individual bottles of hand sanitizer from UniFirst Corporation, where Shayne McKinney works! There were so many we have shared with 3 other partners serving folks in need!

We have met our ketchup needs, but we can still use any empty metal coffee cans you have around, for disposing of bacon grease.

Epiphany Reflection Project

Throughout the season of Epiphany, we are taking the opportunity to reflect on how the coronavirus pandemic has affected us. While it's not over yet, we've lived through 11 months of it, so it's a good time to see what we've observed. Our reflection can serve as a sort of milestone, to help us realize how far we've come.

A question is shared each week in the Tuesday email and then often repeated on Friday. It's not too late to answer those questions! Watch for them in our weekly emails, and answer however many of them you like.

In Week 4, we invited you to participate in a six-questions survey, touching on some lighter aspects of the pandemic's impact on our lifestyles. Follow this link to take the survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/KNV7VXD>.

Big Thanks to everyone who helped us raise \$2,996.50 for Interfaith Shelter Network!

The Ministerial Assistant Support Committee will meet on Zoom on Sunday, February 7th at 1:30 pm. (Note later time!)

IN OUR PRAYERS...

CONTACT THE OFFICE FOR CURRENT PRAYER CONCERNS.

Happy Birthday!

Feb. 9 ~ Jason Sisneros, Sr.

Feb. 11 ~ Scott Tiemann

Feb. 13 ~ Sandy Hanna

Feb. 14 ~ RJ Lucchesi

Feb. 21 ~ Amy Cliffe

Feb. 22 ~ Jayden Sisneros

Feb. 23 ~ Tim Cliffe

Feb. 25 ~ Beckie Neely

YOUTH NEWS

In February and March, our Youth Group will meet on the 14th and the 28th at 3 pm on Zoom. We have the youth from University CC meeting with us now, which adds to the fun.

We are trying to figure out a way to hold a virtual “Camp Nite” fundraiser to replace our breakfast-for-dinner and talent show evening. Maybe you can make a video or bake some cinnamon rolls at home!

February 2021 Worship Participants

	Feb. 7	Feb. 14	Feb. 21	Feb. 28
Worship Leader	Beckie Neely	Mike Martin	Brenda Rorie-Baety	Bob Neely
Lay Reader	N/A	Cathy Mullican	Jennefer Lehton	Tim Tiffany
Offering Invitation	Tesa Hauser	Michael Kinnamon	Walter Rorie-Baety	Rebecca Littlejohn
Offering Elder	Walter Rorie-Baety	Katie Yoder	Karen Cliffe	Jerry Bailey
Comm. Elder	Tim Cliffe	Mary Jane Fay	Michael Kinnamon	Julie Germain

SUNDAY FLOWERS

We would love to have you sponsor our Sunday Flowers. When you do this, we publish a dedication – for a birthday, anniversary, remembering a loved one, or anything you like – in the bulletin and emails. Then the flowers are delivered to your house or to someone else’s home if you prefer. The cost is \$40. Sign up online for as many dates as you like.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/70a0b4cada72e1fe3-vlmsunday>

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

The Board met last month for their regular meeting. A recommendation from the Treasurer to pull the authorized \$3000 (remaining from November) from the Memorial Endowment Fund to offset our General Fund deficit was approved. Another \$5000 withdrawal is authorized in March and another in May, if needed.

The appointment of the Nominating Committee for 2021 was also approved. It includes Tim Tiffany (chair), Cathy Mullican, Bob Neely, Susan Peterson, and Brenda Rorie-Baety.

STEWARDSHIP NEWS

We are so grateful to all our donors who make our ministry possible! We rely on your financial support to keep our beloved congregation afloat.

We did not get the bump in giving we often receive at the end of December this year, so we ended the calendar year with a deficit. If you have the resources to help out, please do and know that your generosity is much appreciated! You can drop off or mail checks into the office or give online from www.vlmcc.org.

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-TH-F 10-1

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**

Church Tel. (619) 463-9909

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Pastor’s E-mail: pastor@vlmcc.com

Church website: www.vlmcc.org