

The Christian Visitor

APRIL 2021 - VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Easter Service at the Park

We hope you will join us at Harry Griffen Park for worship on Easter Sunday, April 4th at 10:30 am! It will be wonderful to be together to celebrate the Resurrection! As always, bring a chair and something to use for communion, and make sure to wear your mask the whole time. If you haven't attended park worship before, this is a great time to start. We'll be delighted to see you!

When you arrive, you will be greeted with a balloon to tie to your lawn chair, and a goodie bag from the Fellowship Team. After the service, we're hoping everyone can deliver at least one goodie bag to a VLMer who couldn't make it to the Park, but might live near you. We want them all to find their homes on Easter Day.

“ENTER THESE GATES THANKSGIVING!”

It's been a wild year, but God is bringing us through! We have been so blessed by all our faithful and generous donors this year. So for our Stewardship Campaign for the 2021-2022 ministry year, we will be focusing on thanksgiving, with Psalm 100 as our theme scripture.

Watch for a letter in your mailbox later this month. We will kick off the Campaign on April 25th in worship, and then celebrate our commitments and give thanks to God at Harry Griffen Park on May 2nd.

We hope you will choose to share an estimate of giving card, with your hopes for the coming year, to help us plan our budget. Thank you!

Holy Week Service

We will gather on Zoom on Thursday, April 1st, at 6:00 pm, to remember together the Last Supper and the events of the rest of that night and the next day. We would love for everyone to participate.

Our service, focused on “The Enduring Love of God”, will begin with communion, so consider whether you want to prepare something special to use as “bread & cup” for this Holy Week Lord's Supper. We will also be sharing in the ritual of Tenebrae, in which candles are extinguished as we read about the various “shadows” of Christ's Passion. We encourage you to have your purple Lenten candle or another candle handy, along with something to light it with. Zee you there!

FCLM Dialogues on Race

We are glad to be able to offer a course on race, racism, and how to be anti-racist, through our collaboration with the Faith Coalition of La Mesa. This 8-week class will be held on Wednesday evenings, from 6:00-7:15, starting April 14th. Each week, we will read a short chapter about an aspect of racism that uses stories to bring it to life. The meeting time, on Zoom, will use videos and small group discussion to delve deeper in. The course will be facilitated by Melissa James & Antoine Cummins, who have led the course once before. Your small group will have people from multiple different congregations in La Mesa and beyond. The only cost is \$10 for the book, which we will order together for all VLMers. Please mark “CE/book” on your payment. See Friday emails for the registration link.

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.” Those are the words that began my column one year ago. Now we are about to celebrate our second Easter worshipping somewhere other than our sanctuary. Those first few weeks felt like months because everything was shifting so rapidly and we were learning so much so quickly. Now, we have to make extra effort to remember what day it is, but hope is on the horizon.

Vaccination roll-out is speeding up, with eligibility for everyone just around the corner. We are beginning to discuss what it will be like to move back into our building. A year ago, I wrote, “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.” We have done our best to make sure everyone is as connected as they want to be throughout this strange and difficult year. As we move forward, we will endeavor to do so in ways that continue to allow everyone to engage with our ministries in ways that feel safe for them. As we move back into the sanctuary, some form of remote worship will still be an option, though we’re still figuring out what that will look like. We’ve come through a lot, and we’re still holding on. When we finally gather again, what a celebration it will be! Thanks be to God!

grace & peace,

Pastor Rebecca

The Pastor's Schedule

Pastor Rebecca will be out of town on vacation the week after Easter, April 5-9. She will be rushing back on Friday to help with Welcome Saturday. Rev. Marianna Kirwan will be preaching on Sunday, April 11th. There will be no Tuesday check-in email that week.

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. We Want to Zee You on Zoom!

Easter Special Offering

Every year at Easter, we join with the rest of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to receive a Special Offering to support the General Ministries of our denomination. This includes things like Global Ministries, Disciples Home Missions, the National Benevolent Association and much more. This year, we have set a goal of raising \$500 for the Easter Special Offering. We will receive this offering on April 4th & 11th. You can donate by mailing a check marked "Easter offering" or look for "DMF - Easter" on the drop-down designation menu on tithe.ly. Thank you for helping us support our wider church!

**All-Church Zoom
Coffee Hour
Sunday, April 18
12:30 pm
Hope to "zee" you there!!**

Novels Tea

Novels Tea will meet on 3/18 at 3 pm on Zoom, to discuss "The Luster of Lost Things" by Sophie Chen Keller. Read the book, grab your fancy snacks and join us for the conversation!

Welcome Saturday

We continue to serve our neighbors living without shelter each second Saturday of the month, thanks to your generous donations in support of this ministry!

We have a great volunteer team that even involves some youth and adults from other Disciples churches. Last month, we had some visitors from other churches come by to see how it works, as they make plans to expand their own ministries.

Food Drive

It worked! Last month, we revived our monthly Food Drive, and you came through! This month's Food Drive will be held April 18-21. As before, we're asking you to drop off your donations on the Sisneros' front porch on University Place. They will then deliver our VLM contribution to the food pantry at St. Martin of Tours Catholic Church. Thanks for your generosity!

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 contact the office at 619-463-9909 for prayer concerns.

YOUTH NEWS

We have been having a good time meeting with the youth from University Christian Church. This month, we'll meet on Zoom on the 11th & the 25th, at 3 pm. Hope to see you there!

We are beginning to gauge interest in some kind of day camp over the summer. The Regional Camp Ministry Committee is creating programming, which we can adapt. Let Pastor Rebecca know if you'd be interested, and when you're going to be (un)available. It would either be a couple consecutive Saturdays, or spread over a whole weekend. We would do it with other D8 churches.

April 2021 Worship Participants

	April 4	April 11	April 18	April 25
Worship Leader	Jerry Bailey	Cheryl Davis-Plotts	Tim Cliffe	Mary Jane Fay
Lay Reader	N/A	Daphne Flores	Lisa Martin	Cathy Mullican
Offering Invite	Rebecca Littlejohn	Mary Jane Fay	Michael Kinnamon	Larry Knight
Offering Elder	Julie Germain	Larry Knight	Beckie Neely	Michael Martin
Comm. Elder	Bob Neely	Ruth Tiffany	Walter Rorie-Baety	Katie Yoder

PLEASE KEEP THE WORK OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE IN YOUR PRAYERS!

News from the Board

Our General Board has been meeting on Zoom since last May. (Last March's meeting was held entirely by email.) At the March 2021 meeting, the Board had a brief discussion of issues that will need to be addressed as we discern when and how to resume gathering for worship and other activities. The Board decided that if any small groups want to resume gathering in person, that will be allowed, as long as they work with Pastor Rebecca to develop the County-required Safe Re-opening Plan. The discussion on when to open and what protocols will be required will continue.

The Board approved a proposal to upgrade our internet service, with new equipment and a higher speed plan. This should allow better streaming from the sanctuary and the library. The Board also approved a proposal from the Outreach and Worship Committees to move the American flag from the chancel (worship center) to the narthex (main entryway), to better reflect an appropriate relationship between our faith and our citizenship. This decision was thoroughly discussed by the Committees and the Elders & Deacons before being brought to the Board. Pastor Rebecca explored the various questions involved in a pastoral letter, which is available to anyone who is interested in learning more.

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 TH 10-1, FR 9-1

CHURCH STAFF

Ministers: **The Members of VLM**
 Pastor: **Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn**
 Ministerial Assistant: **Tesa Hauser**
 Admin & Comms Coord.: **Alicia M. Gervasi**
 Music Director: **Deborah Wilson**
 Nursery: **Stephanie Cadiero & Francia Berry**
 Custodian: **Scott Tiemann**
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