

The Christian Visitor

DECEMBER 2021 ~ VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Christmas Concert 12/12

You won't want to miss our Christmas Concert, on Sunday, December 12th. Doors will open at 5:30 pm. There won't be a dinner this year, but there will be lots of other festivities! Here's how you can get involved:

Holiday Treats Sale!

We'd love to have your baked goods and candies. Please drop them off the day before between 9-2 or bring them Sunday morning. All proceeds will go to the Camp Fund.

Most Festive Outfit Contest!

Dress up and have a little fun! We'll take pictures at the beginning of the evening and then let people vote with loose change. Whoever raises the most money in coins wins the Grand Prize! There will also be prizes for Best Themed Outfit, Best Multi-Person Outfit, and Non-Christmas Holiday Outfit. Get your creativity cooking! Bring your spare change to vote with. (Or go get a roll of quarters!)

Angel Bingo & Carol Sing-Along!

During the concert's intermission, we'll be playing a few rounds of ANGEL bingo, complete with prizes! And of course, we'll have a carol sing-along!

Candlelight Christmas Eve

We hope you will join us to remember the Christmas story on Christmas Eve, Friday the 24th at 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary. The service will include communion and candle lighting. An offering for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund will be received, which helps to assist church members and neighbors with emergency needs.

Caroling Parties 12/18

It's two parties in a row this year! The first one starts at 2:00 pm on Saturday, December 18th, when we'll meet at the church and then set out with our song sheets. We will only be caroling outside this year, not inside anyone's home. If you would like for us to come to your house, please contact Pastor Rebecca.

We're planning to finish up around 5:00 pm, which is when the second party starts – in the church parking lot. We will have a few fire pits started up, along with pizza and some holiday hot drinks. Plan to bring chairs for everyone in your party, and a snack to share, if you'd like. We might even sing some more, if we still have any voice left.

Covid Christmas Catharsis Round 2: Prayer Stations

We will not be holding a Longest Night service this year, but there are still plenty of difficult emotions roiling in our hearts as we move into the holiday season, 20 months into a pandemic. We will be setting up some of the prayer stations we offered last year, so that you can take a few moments to release some of the burdens of your heart.

Each Sunday of Advent, these prayer stations will be set up in the Library. They will offer us a chance to name our fears and sorrows and give them over to the God, and to remember those we are missing this year, whether because of distance or death. We hope you will engage with them and be blessed!

From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

Advent has arrived! During this season – as in our lives at this point in history – time gets a little fuzzy. We are waiting for something that has already happened. Advent invites us to recall the events of 2000 years ago, but also to focus our hearts on the end of time.

We recently celebrated ten years together in ministry, which invited us to think about time as well. I want to thank all of you who helped plan the celebration. It has been a joy and an honor to serve alongside you all these years. And yet, when I think about it, it's hard to tell if it feels like a long while or just the blinking of an eye.

The pandemic has also knocked our sense of time askew. I have to count the months on my fingers to figure out how long life has been “different” because of covid. Expectations can shift how we experience time. Does the pandemic seem to last longer because we'd hoped it would be over by now?

The “already and not-yet” nature of Advent can help us relax into a fuzzier attitude about time. It reminds us that all of it is God's time. No matter how long our troubles seem to last, it is God who is eternal, and that eternal God is with us. We can afford to take a beat and breathe, to prepare our hearts to welcome Emmanuel who is coming into our midst! Have a blessed Advent and a Merry Christmas!

grace & peace,

Pastor Rebecca

Pastor's Schedule

Pastor Rebecca will be taking some time off after Christmas, but the schedule is TBD.

Christmas Special Offering

We will be receiving the Christmas Special Offering December 12-19, during worship and on tithely. These gifts help support the ministry of the Pacific Southwest Region of the Christian Church. Our Region has been working hard to support congregations throughout the pandemic, so your gifts will be much appreciated! Our goal is to raise \$500.

COVENANT SERIES

Coming to District 8 in January!

“Imagine God's Limitless Love!” That is the good word that is going around the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) these days! And we're going to imagine it together with friends for our partner congregations in District 8 after the holidays.

The “Covenant Series” is a five-session curriculum from the denomination designed to help us “explore the notion of covenant within our faith tradition and to deepen our commitment to living in covenant with each other.”

This class will be entirely on Zoom, so folks from all our churches can meet together. It will be held on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 pm, January 12th through February 9th.

This will be a great way to re-connect with folks from other Disciples churches in our area. Watch for registration information coming out this month.

Bible study will continue with our Advent Imagery in John sessions through 12/19 and then be on break until this series concludes, so that you can give your full attention to it.

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.

Elders Meeting @ 12:30 pm
Sunday, 12/5, Library & Zoom

Poinsettias!

Now is the time to order your poinsettias to help decorate the sanctuary for Christmas! The plants are \$9 each. You can order as many as you like. Each plant can be dedicated in memory or celebration of anything you choose. Look for the clipboard at church or contact Pastor Rebecca to place your order. Payment is requested at the time of ordering. You can take your flowers home after the Christmas Eve service or leave them to continue beautifying the sanctuary.

Gifts for El Nido

There are just a few gifts left to be claimed for the three families we adopted at Interfaith Shelter Network's El Nido Shelter for Christmas this year. Follow this link to claim one of the remaining gifts:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050548a4a62caa8-vmelnido1>

We are asking that you bring the gifts in by Dec. 15th. Please bring them wrapped with a gift tag that has the person's name and the family number (noted in the sign-up). If you can also put a sticky note saying which gift it is, that will be helpful as we make sure we've got everything. We are collecting the gifts in Classroom 4. Thanks for your generosity!

**Women's Lunch
at Norma
Bailey's home
Wednesday, 12/1
12:00 pm**

**Lunch Bunch
at Mystic Grill
in La Mesa
Wed., 12/15
12:00 pm
Ilene Kiser, host**

Christmas Card Tree

You are invited to bring in a Christmas card for your whole church family and place it on the Card Tree in the back of the sanctuary. We will share the greetings we receive each week in the Friday email, but if you're in the building, you'll want to check out the beautiful cards as they come in. Enjoy!

Staff Christmas Gift

Every year at Christmas, we like to collect funds to provide our staff with an expression of our gratitude for their ministries. Elders Chair Marianna Kirwan is coordinating the collection this year; she and a few other Elders can receive your gifts. If you give online, please designate your donation to the "Elders Fund/Staff Gift." This designation should also go on checks. (Cash is preferred.) Please have all donations to Marianna by 12/15. Thanks!

Happy Birthday!

- Dec. 1 - Geraldyn Berry
- Dec. 6 - Vivian McKinney
- Dec. 20 - Stephanie Cadiero
- Dec. 22- Ginny Hanna
- Dec. 24- Christine Lind
- Dec. 29 - Ryan Hanna
- Dec. 29 - Wavalea McKee
- Dec. 30 - Lois Lyford, Abe Sisneros, Christian Tiffany
- Dec. 31 - Laura McCreanor

Happy Anniversary!

DEC. 6

Walter & Brenda
Rorie-Baety

DEC. 28

Skip & Susan Peterson

IN OUR PRAYERS...

JOYS ~ For prayer concerns please contact our office at 619-463-9909.

YOUTH NEWS

We have lots of fun activities for youth to participate in this month! Check out the info about our Festive Outfit Contest, to be held at our Christmas Concert on 12/12. We'd also love to have your contributions to our Holiday Treats Sale that night!

Plan to join us for our Caroling Party on Saturday, December 18th. We'll meet in the parking lot at 2 pm to go caroling and then come back for a parking lot party, complete with fire pits and pizza!

We are planning a skating party at the Kroc Center in January.

News from the Board

The General Board met on November 17th for their regular meeting. After receiving the financial report, the Board approved the withdrawal of \$3000 from the Memorial Endowment Fund, to offset a year-to-date deficit of just under \$7000. The \$3000 is half of the amount authorized by the congregation in June for withdrawal by this point in the fiscal year. We are hoping that end-of-the-year giving may bring us back into the black without having to pull more just yet. We are grateful for all our many faithful and generous donors!

The Board also preliminarily approved the purchase of a new mixer for the sound system in the sanctuary, to be installed as soon as our installer can obtain it and get it in. Funds will come from the Bailey Fund. Preliminary approval was also given for a proposal to designate replacing the chairs in Bailey Hall as an "approved memorial project." If a suitable memorial gift is received, we will pursue this project, with a focus on finding sturdy, comfortable chairs that are easy to keep clean.

Flower Sponsors for 2022

The sign-ups for weekly flower sponsors are now open. The poster is on the bulletin board in Bailey Hall. You can also sign up online at this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e094ba5ac23abf58-vlmsunday> (We will do our best to keep the two sign-ups in sync!)

Please help us fill in the earliest dates first. The arrangements are \$40, payable to VLMCC. After worship, you're invited to move the flowers into a church vase and take them home. (Please return those vases once your bouquet is done.) The vases from the florist are returned to them each week. We can also deliver your flowers to someone who needs a little cheer, if you don't want them.

NOVELS TEA

Our Novels Tea group will meet on January 16th at 3:00 pm on Zoom to discuss "My Real Children" by Jo Walton, a story about a woman with dementia remembering two different versions of her life.

Welcome Saturday

Welcome Saturday is going well! Our guests are always so appreciative of the homey, welcoming atmosphere we maintain. This month, we'll be adding in a little Christmas cheer on top! If you are interested in volunteering, contact Outreach Chair Eliseo Sisneros or Pastor Rebecca.

We are in need of study, warm clothes, especially pants for men and women, including belts. If you have clothes to donate, contact Pastor Rebecca to arrange a convenient time to drop things off. Thanks!

Interfaith Shelter

We will be hosting Interfaith Shelter, Saturday to Saturday, starting January 22nd, and going through February 5th. This will be made possible because a mother-daughter team, Lynette and Stevie Shaw from Journey Church, have agreed to serve as our Shelter Coordinators. They will have primary responsibility for recruiting and coordinating volunteers and meals, but we will be able to help out as much as we can. All volunteers and all shelter guests will be required to be fully vaccinated. Remember that some of our other tenants will be using other parts of the building during these two weeks. Stay tuned for more info!

December 2021 Worship Participants

	December 5	December 12	December 19	December 26
Worship Leader	Beckie Neely	Bob Neely	Brenda Rorie-Baety	Walter Rorie-Baety
Lay Reader	Daphne Flores	Tracy Stockdall	Karen Cliffe	Deborah Wilson
Offering Invite	Tim Cliffe	Julie Germain	Rebecca Littlejohn	Tesa Hauser
Elders	Jerry Bailey Mandy Dohring	Karen Cliffe Mary Jane Fay	Tim Cliffe Julie Germain	Cheryl Davis-Plotts Marianna Kirwan
Deacons	Al Flores Daphne Flores Susan Peterson	Patrice Hill Dick Penny Eliseo Sisneros Lyn Van Winkle	Jennefer Lehton John Lehton Lace Watkins	Ray Adsit Mary Allyn Fallon Tracy Stockdall
Comm Set-up Comm Clean-up	Lyn Van Winkle & Team 2	Lyn Van Winkle & Team 2	Lyn Van Winkle & Team 2	Lyn Van Winkle & Team 2
CWW	Nursery available	Nursery available	Nursery available	Nursery available
Greeters	Jerry & Norma Bailey	Wavalea McKee John Lehton	Larry Knight Jennefer Lehton	Ray Adsit Bob Neely
Counters	#1 Lyn Van Winkle #2 Donna Morey	#1 Jerry Bailey #2 Jenny Angione	#1 John Lehton #2 Lace Watkins	#1 Walter Rorie-Baety #2 Mary Allyn Fallon

Coffee Hour Hosts: Flock 1 (Daphne Flores, Al Flores, Susan Peterson)

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: Mon/Tues/Thur/Fri 10-1

CHURCH STAFF

Ministers: **The Members of VLMCC**

Pastor: **Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn**

Ministerial Assistant: **Tesa Hauser**

Admin/Comm Coor.: **Alicia M. Gervasi**

Music Director: **Deborah Wilson**

Nursery: **Stephanie Cadiero**

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