

The Christian Visitor

MARCH 2022 ~ VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

LENT 2022

“TEMPTATIONS IN THE WILDERNESS”

Lent begins on March 2nd, when we will hold our Ash Wednesday service at 6 pm (in the Sanctuary and on Zoom). This service will be designed and led by Tesa Hauser. It will introduce this year's Lenten theme “Temptations in the Wilderness.” Throughout the next five weeks, our sermon series will focus on things the “wilderness” of the pandemic has made it harder to resist. You will also see the theme reflected in our worship space.

Copies of “Gifts of the Spiritual Wilderness,” a daily devotional by J. Dana Trent are now available in the Narthex. We will also be exploring this wilderness theme more actively by having several church hikes. The first hike will be led on Saturday, March 5th by Tim Cliffe, who will take us up the Mesa Trailhead on the eastern slope of Cowles Mountain. We will meet at the Starbucks at 9325 Mission Gorge Road, at 9 am. Other dates and destinations will be announced soon.

We hope you will join us on this important journey toward Easter!

Week of Compassion

Week of Compassion is our denominational disaster relief & humanitarian development fund, which we usually celebrate in February. The theme this year is “Love Remains,” based on I Corinthians 13:13.

Because we had a lot going on last month, our Outreach Committee made the decision to do it a little later this year. We will be emphasizing WoC on March 13 & 20, with special moments in worship and by receiving the special offering. Special offering envelopes will be in the bulletins those Sundays, and you can always give online through tithe.ly by looking for DMF – Week of Compassion in the drop-down menu. Coin boxes are available now in the Narthex.

Our goal this year is to raise at least \$500 for this special offering, but we'd love to beat last year's record of \$1,268.71!

Proceeding with Caution

As the Omicron surge recedes, we are taking note that our covid numbers are still relatively high. Though the state indoor masking mandate has expired, public health departments are still strongly recommending that everyone wear a face covering indoors. As always, those who are unvaccinated must wear masks inside.

Our choir will be returning to worship this month, after their hiatus. And the communion hymn will return as well. Thank you for your cooperation as we try to keep each other as safe as possible!

“So Long, Farewell” Party

Our dear Beckie & Bob Neely are moving to Missouri near their kids at the end of the month, and we want to send them off in style!

We will be holding a “So Long, Farewell” Party after worship on Sunday, March 20th. You are encouraged to bring a card for them that day. Watch your email for other ways to be part of the celebrations. If you'd like to assist with the party, please be in touch with Jennefer Lehton.

From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

I don't know if it will surprise you to learn that I haven't done much hiking in my life, but it's true. I love the idea of nature, and I truly do appreciate a scenic vista, the higher up the better. But the actual walking to get there seems to be a barrier to me. So I'm a little surprised myself that it occurred to me that we should plan some church hikes as part of our "wilderness" Lent theme this year.

The reason "wilderness" seems like such a potent metaphor for the pandemic is the implication that we're out where there aren't clear signs to show us where to go next. Lurking beneath the word "wilderness" is the word "lost." The pandemic has brought all of us moments when we didn't know where to turn or what was around the next bend. It has taken things away from us that we considered crucial to our survival – things we might consider hallmarks of civilization. So yes, wilderness is an apt metaphor for this strange and hard point in history.

But these hikes we're taking will remind us of something very important. We're not going to get dropped off in the middle of nowhere and expected to find our own way home or risk being hopelessly lost. We will have experienced hikers to guide us. We will be traveling in places where others have gone before. This will all help us remember that God is always with us, so we can never be truly lost, even when the way ahead isn't clear.

grace & peace,
Pastor Rebecca

Pastor's Schedule

Pastor Rebecca has a Faith Coalition of La Mesa meeting on 3/1 and a District 8 Clergy Gathering on 3/15. She hopes to attend ordination services on 3/12 (virtually) and 3/19 (in person). Pastor Rebecca will be taking vacation this month from the 21st through the 31st.

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.

Update on Tesa's Journey

On Wednesday, February 23rd, our Ministerial Assistant Tesa Hauser had her final interview with the PSW Regional Committee on Ministry and was approved for Ordination into Christian Ministry.

Congratulations, Tesa! We are so proud of you!

Some of you may be wondering what's next for Tesa. We are currently working to set a date for her ordination service, most likely in June. It will be a grand party, with many guests!

Tesa is hoping to continue in her part-time ministry situation with us, for the time being, maintaining her "day job" as well. We will be making decisions this spring about the appropriate adjustments to make to her position to reflect her status as a professional, ordained clergy person with standing. In the meantime, she'll be continuing to gain ministry experience by doing things like handling pastoral care and leading the 3/27 worship service while Pastor Rebecca is on vacation.

Bible Study

We'd love to have you join us for our spring "Gospel Comparisons" Bible Study! We meet in Bailey Hall and on Zoom every Sunday at 9 am, through April 10. We're looking at how certain stories of Jesus show up in various ways in the different gospels. Here's the schedule:

3/6 – Tesa on Feeding the 5000
3/13 – Julie on Two Sides of the Lake
3/20 – Rebecca on Jesus' Temptations
3/27 – Marianna on Jesus' Job Description
4/3 – Tesa on the Anointing of Jesus
4/10 – Marianna on the 7 Last Words

Easter is April 17th!

It is true that the world is not back to “normal” yet, if that was ever a thing. But the Resurrection is still going to be proclaimed on Easter morning, and we will be celebrating!

Our current plan is to hold a potluck after worship, with tables and canopies set up in the garden, the patio and the lower parking lot. We hope you will plan to join us and celebrate the Risen Christ, alive in our midst!

CHOIR PARTY

The Choir is invited to a party at the Cliffes’ house on Thursday, March 10 at 6:00 pm, to say good-bye to Beckie & Bob and make-up for the Christmas parties we’ve missed over the past three years. Please check with Karen about what to bring.

Thanks to your contributions, we are sending over \$3,400 to Interfaith Shelter to help provide shelter!

Novels Tea

Novels Tea will meet on Zoom at 3 pm on Sunday, March 6th, to discuss “The Vanishing Half” by Britt Bennett. We will choose our next book after our discussion.

Welcome Saturday

If you haven’t been present for a Welcome Saturday recently, you ought to stop by this month. It is such a joy to see how much this monthly gathering means to our guests. It’s more than the hot coffee or the egg casserole or the chance to take a warm shower. They know that we know that they are beloved children of God.

As prices have risen, our Welcome Saturday fund has been entirely depleted. Through your donations, we are working to build it back up, but it’s going slowly. Please consider supporting this life-giving, re-humanizing ministry, so that we can continue to offer the gracious hospitality that earned us the nickname “Bacon, Bacon” from our neighbors living without shelter. We are also in need of sturdy, casual clothes and shoes, for men and women. Thank you so much!

Our Lunch Gatherings will be on hiatus for a while, hoping to resume in the fall.

In OUR PRAYERS...

JOYS & THANKSGIVINGS ~ For prayer concerns please call the office at 619-463-9909.

Happy Birthday!

Mar. 1 - Micah Cliffe

Mar. 3 - Brenda Rorie-Baety,
Ruth Tiffany

Mar. 4 - Julie Germain

Mar. 5 - Susan Peterson

Mar. 14 - Andy Cliffe

Mar. 23 - Nona Nowlin

Mar. 26 - Daniel Cliffe

Mar. 31- Amanda Dohring

Happy Anniversary!

Mar. 6 - Sara & Troy Gurling

YOUTH NEWS

We are in the process of planning a Partnership Youth Group outing for Sunday, March 13th, in the afternoon. If plans fall through, we will hold a game day at our church. Watch for more information.

It's time to start thinking about church camp! See the schedule below to find out what week your camp will be held at Loch Leven.

Church Camp 2022 at Loch Leven

June 15-17 - Wee Camp (age 3-kinder)

June 19-24 - Chi Rho (grades 6-8)

July 10-15 - Junior Camp (grades 4-5)

July 12-15 - Mini Camp (grades 1-3)

July 24-29 - CYF 1 (grades 9-10)

July 24-29 - CYF 2 (grades 11-12)

Registration coming soon!

(Grade based on upcoming year)

News for/from the Board

The General Board will meet on Wednesday, March 16th at 6:00 pm on Zoom. Board members, please turn in your reports by Friday, March 4th. The Administrative Committee will meet on Tuesday, March 8th at 6:00 pm on Zoom to prepare the agenda for the Board meeting.

Since the January meeting, the Board has approved the use of Memorial Endowment funds to re-seal the upper parking lot and repair the large section of cracked concrete by the main entrance to the lower parking lot. That work will be scheduled soon.

The 2022 Nominating Committee will begin its work on Saturday, March 5th at 1 pm on Zoom. Members include Cheryl Davis-Plotts (chair), Larry Knight, Jennefer Lehton, Beckie Neely, and Walter Rorie-Baety.

Staff Reviews

All of our staff will be going through annual reviews this month. Please be in prayer for them and those who will be having these conversations with them. If you have feedback, please speak with Personnel Chair Mary Jane Fay about the best way to share it.

Spring Forward!

Don't forget to turn your clocks ahead one hour before going to bed on March 12, 2022.

The Elders & Deacons will not meet this month.

Rummage Sale

We will be holding a Rummage Sale on Saturday, May 7th, to raise money for our Camp Fund. We would love to receive your donations for the sale, including clothes, household items, toys & games, appliances, and furniture. However, we won't have room to store the sale items until after Easter (4/17), so please collect your piles at home and plan to bring them in after that. If you need us to come pick stuff up at your house, just let us know. If you can help with the sale, please let Pastor Rebecca know.

Save the Date!
Founders Day at
Chapman University
Saturday, April 30

Rev. Dr. William Barber II
will be the featured speaker!
You won't want to miss this
chance to hear from him!

March 2022 Worship Participants

	March 6	March 13	March 20	March 27
Worship Leader	Beckie Neely	Bob Neely	Brenda Rorie-Baety	Walter Rorie-Baety
Lay Reader	Karen Cliffe	Tracy Stockdall	Lace Watkins	Jennefer Lehton
Offering Invitation	Rebecca Littlejohn	Walter Rorie-Baety	Rebecca Littlejohn	Mary Jane Fay
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 Cln-up	Daphne Flores & Team 1	Daphne Flores & Team 1	Daphne Flores & Team 1	Daphne Flores & Team 1
CWW	Nursery available	Nursery available	Nursery available	Nursery available
Greeters	Jerry & Norma Bailey	John Lehton Ray Adsit	Jennefer Lehton Larry Knight	Ray Adsit Bob Neely
Counters	1 Lyn Van Winkle 2 Jerry Bailey	1 Lace Watkins 2 Jenny Angione	1 John Lehton 2 Donna Morey	1 Walter Rorie-Baety 2 Mary Alynn Fallon
Flowers	Beckie Neely	Lyn Van Winkle	Open	Amanda Dohring

Coffee Hour Hosts: Flock 4 (Tracy Stockdall, Ray Adsit, Mary Alynn Fallon)

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 Coord.: **Alicia M. Gervasi**

Music Director: **Deborah Wilson**

Nursery: **Stephanie Cadiero**

Custodian: **Scott Tiemann**

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Church website: www.vlmcc.org