

The Christian Visitor

APRIL 2023 - VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Easter Sunday is April 9

We would love to have you join us for worship on April 9th, to celebrate Christ's Resurrection! Our service that day will be extra special for Easter, and your presence will make it even better. This is a great day to invite your friends and family!

We are planning a potluck after worship that day. Please sign up to let us know what you're bringing or at least to let us know that you're coming so we can set up enough seating. We're hoping everyone will bring a generous plenty, so there will be enough for all of us and any visitors!

April 2nd will be your last chance to sign up to sponsor a lily to decorate the sanctuary on Easter. The cost is \$10 per plant, and you are invited to dedicate your lily in memory/honor/celebration of loved ones or anything else that's important to you.

If you would like to help decorate the Sanctuary for Easter, please let Pastor Rebecca know. We will be doing that on Saturday afternoon, after Welcome Saturday.

75TH ANNIVERSARY FUND

Thank you for your contributions to our 75th Anniversary Fund! We are about halfway toward our goal of \$20,000. We continue to receive your donations with deep gratitude, so that we can celebrate this milestone fully and "share the joy" by supporting Interfaith Shelter. Approximately half of our monetary goal was aimed at financing two major capital projects, replacing the lighting in Bailey Hall and overhauling our website to keep up with current security protocols. The Board is weighing these projects and considering alternate funding options, as we keep an eye on how the 75th Fund continues to grow.

Holy Week Service

We will gather on Thursday, April 6 at 6 pm, in the Sanctuary and on Zoom, to mark the events of Holy Week. This is an important service, without which the joy of Easter morning has no context, so please plan to be present.

The theme of our service this year, in keeping with our Lenten theme, will be "Almost Torn." We will be exploring how the crucifixion brings God closer to us than our own breath. The service will begin with communion, recalling the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples before his betrayal.

Stewardship

Our 2023-2024 Stewardship Campaign, "Seeking God's Future of Hope," will kick off on Sunday, April 23rd in worship. Watch for a mailing with all the information you'll need to participate. This is an important moment in the life of our congregation, when we prayerfully consider our commitments to our shared ministries.

Please plan to be with us for Consecration Sunday on April 30th, when we will turn in our estimate-of-giving cards and ask God's blessings!

From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

Holy Week and Easter will soon be upon us. Stores have been full of chicks and bunnies and chocolate for weeks, making clear that capitalism has no use for Lent. But in the Church, we take care not to skip over the first part. You have heard me say that Easter doesn't make any sense if you missed the service on Thursday. What would it mean that Christ rose from the dead, if nobody witnessed his death?

There are many themes that the Church uses to represent Easter – beyond eggs and bunnies and even butterflies. Phrases like “New Life” and “Christ is risen indeed! Hallelujah!” roll off our tongues. But what about the word “solidarity?” Does that seem like an Easter theme?

I would argue that it is THE Easter theme. And we will be exploring it in our Holy Week service. Though we're chilled by the violence of Jesus' crucifixion, it often seems so dramatic that it's hard to connect with. That distance is why we often hold the “service of shadows” or “tenebrae” to mark the events of Good Friday. The shadows include dramatic moments like betrayal and violence, but they also include hardships that are more common in our lives, like mockery or fear.

The point of the Holy Thursday through Easter story is that God is with us through all the difficulties of being human, up to and including death. God is in solidarity with us, walking alongside us in whatever valley of drudgery or despair we may feel stuck in. The promise of Christmas is that God is with us – Emmanuel! But the Passion story and its surprise ending are the fulfillment of that promise – showing us instead of just telling us that God is with us, from the inside out, through our pain, our fear, our shame, our despair, our cynicism, and yes, even our experiences of death. Now that is good news worth sharing!

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.

Tesa's Take

We are three months into the year and celebrating our 75th anniversary! There has been celebration and time for conversations and moments of reflection on where we have been and where we are going. We have experienced loss and grief amid rejoicing and have supported and comforted one another during those moments. We continue to pray for one another and celebrate good news, new jobs, and new life. We've had a variety of guests join us by invitation or just having seen one of the signs that stand out on the corner. Our new tree is planted and will continue to grow and hopefully, one day thrive.

Our Lenten series has been a great reminder that we don't have to be perfect or ready to be loved by God and share that love with others. We have shown that over the years and even in the last three months. Even in our unpreparedness, God will use who we are and what we have to offer. That may look different since our talents and abilities vary, but each of us is a part of the whole body. May we open to the new ways God would like to use us and the movement of the Spirit in our lives and our congregation.

Vaya con Dios,

Pastor Tesa

Easter Special Offering

The Easter Special Offering supports our General Ministries. We will receive it only on Easter Sunday this year, due to other fundraising campaigns that are also going on at the moment. You can learn more about our general church ministries at www.disciples.org.

Happy 95th Birthday!

Grace Van Winkle will be turning 95 on April 5th, and we want to celebrate with her!

Please bring a card for Grace on Sunday, April 2nd. We will have cake during coffee hour after worship that day.

Memorial Service

We hope you will join us for a Memorial Service for Gene Blumenfeld on Saturday, April 1 at 1:00 pm, in the Sanctuary and on Zoom. Because of Gene's life-long passion for frogs, we invite you to wear green and bring a frog with you as your guest, if you like! A reception in Gene's honor will follow the service.

Book Dedication

A copy of "Red Lip Theology," signed by the author, Candice Marie Benbow, has been donated to our library, in memory of Lace Watkins.

Volunteers Needed

There are a number of jobs that help keep our church humming, and we could use a few more volunteers in each of these roles. **Greeters** welcome people to worship and help orient visitors. **Counters** take a turn helping to process the offering after worship. **Tech volunteers** work with our AV system or Zoom during worship. Training is available for all of these roles. Let Pastor Rebecca know if you are interested in learning more about any of these jobs.

Elder's Meeting

The Elders will have another Saturday meeting this month, on April 15th, from 10-12:30. Plan to bring a brunch food to share.

We'd love to have you in the room, but Zoom will be available for those who can't make it in person. We will be continuing our conversations about how to connect more deeply with others.

Novels Tea

Novels Tea will meet on Zoom at 3 pm on Sunday, April 16, to discuss "The Actual Star" by Monica Byrne.

**Lunch Bunch
Wednesday,
4/19, 12 pm
Location TBA
Lehtons, hosts**

IN OUR PRAYERS...

JOYS ~ Contact the Pastor for prayer updates.

CONCERNS ~

Happy Birthday!

- Apr. 2 – Jessica Fallon, Tim Tiffany
- Apr. 4 – Hannah Berry, Michaela Stockdall
- Apr. 5 – Grace Van Winkle
- Apr. 12 – Skip Peterson
- Apr. 15 – Tennyson McCreanor
- Apr. 16 – John Neely
- Apr. 21 – Jennings McCreanor
- Apr. 22 – Embrilly Lopez, Sam Rorie
- Apr. 27 – Larry Knight, Bill Kwon, Todd Lesh

A LOVE LETTER TO VLM

FROM HÉLÈNE SISNEROS

Dancing in the Parking Lot

Two kids were dancing
in the parking lot
of the church
where kind folks
gave them (the unsheltered)
a big breakfast of bacon & eggs
and showers with clean towels.
Two kids were dancing
in the parking lot,
twirling wide circles,
round & round,
because somehow they still remembered
that air is home,
& love,
even though you can't touch it,
is everywhere.

Sunday Flowers

Flower sponsors are needed for our regular Sunday arrangements, in May and beyond. The cost is \$40, payable to the church. You can dedicate the flowers however you like. Sign up in Bailey Hall or online at this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30e094ba5ac23abf58-vlmsunday1#/>

Church at the Park 5/7

Our next big Anniversary Celebration event will be on Sunday, May 7th. We will be holding worship in "our" little pine grove at Harry Griffen Park, followed by a picnic & some games.

The luncheon is BYOB, so pack your lunch into a cooler, and we'll have some drinks available. You'll also want to bring a chair or blanket for sitting, both for worship and lunch.

Come lend a hand!

All Church Work Day

Saturday, April 29, starting at 9 am

Board News

At their meeting in March, the General Board received reports from various Committees. The Stewardship & Finance Committee reported that we ended February in a solid financial position, thus there was no need for additional withdrawals from the Memorial Endowment Fund at this time. So far this year, we have pulled \$4000 of the total \$8,000 authorized for the 2022-2023 year.

Earlier in the month, the Board also approved a new tenant. The Real Orators Toast Masters group will be using Bailey Hall on Friday mornings between 7 & 9 am for their weekly meetings. They are using the small corner cabinet for storage.

Church Camp 2023 at Loch Leven

June 18-20 - Mini Camp (Grades 1-3)

June 18-23 - Chi Rho (Grades 6-8)

July 2-4 - Wee Camp (Ages 3-Kinder)

July 2-7 - Junior Camp (Grades 4-6)

July 16-21 - CYF (Grades 9-12)

Registration is OPEN!

Click this link for more information and registration:

<http://www.disciplespswr.org/camp>

**Last month, Pastor Rebecca asked us what
the most important thing we say about
God/Jesus at VLM is...**

We are loved and found worthy of the kingdom ~
"God loves you, Zoomers" Welcome Saturday ~
grace abounds ~ love and acceptance ~ Faith is an
important component of your life ~ food ~ He is
always with us, good or bad ~ God's love is
steadfast and open to all. We are both able to and
commissioned to share God's love because God
first loved us ~ God is Love & VLM is a visible
expression of God's Love ~ Welcomes All and
Loves Us All ~ God loves everyone and does not
discriminate ~ Use the gift of your humanity ~
God is love ~ Reflecting open hands to the
community ~ guidepost for living out our lives...

April 2023 Worship Participants

	April 2	April 9	April 16	April 23	April 30
Worship Leader	Michael Lewis	Renee Bridwell	Beckie Neely	Steve Bridwell	Brenda Rorie-Baety
Lay Reader	Daphne Flores	Jennefer Lehton	Cheryl Davis-Plotts	Brenda Rorie-Baety	Jerry Bailey
Offering Invitation	Tesa Hauser	Rebecca Littlejohn	Mary Jane Fay	Tesa Hauser	Rebecca Littlejohn
Elders	Karen Cliffe Tim Cliffe	Cheryl Davis-Plotts Mary Jane Fay	Michael Lewis Julie Germain	Mandy Dohring Larry Knight	Bob Neely Marianna Kirwan
Deacons	Hélène Sisneros Lyn Van Winkle	Jenny Angione Mary Alynn Fallon Susan Peterson	Patrice Hill Jennefer Lehton John Lehton	Al Flores Daphne Flores Tracy Stockdall	John Lehton Susan Peterson
Comm Prep & Clean up	Susan Peterson	Mary Alynn Fallon	Mary Alynn Fallon	Jenny Angione	Jenny Angione
Greeters	John Lehton Ray Adsit	Jerry & Norma Bailey	Jennefer Lehton Larry Knight	Ray Adsit	Mary Jane Fay Michael Lewis
AV Tech Zoom Tech	Julie Germain Tesa Hauser	Mary Alynn Fallon Karen Cliffe	Jenny Angione Karen Cliffe	Julie Germain Tesa Hauser	Mary Alynn Fallon Julie Germain
Counters	John Lehton Andy Cliffe	Steve Bridwell Jenny Angione	Mary Alynn Fallon Tracy Stockdall	Renee Bridwell Jerry Bailey	Lyn Van Winkle Donna Morey
Flowers	Tracy Stockdall	Lyn Van Winkle	Open	Renee & Steve Bridwell	Larry Knight

Coffee Hour Hosts: Lyn Van Winkle, Helene Sisneros

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: Tue/Thu/Fri, 9-12

CHURCH STAFF

Ministers: **The Members of VLMCC**
 Pastor: **Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn**
 Associate Pastor: **Rev. Tesa Hauser**
 Secretary: **Krista Trimlett**
 Music Director: **Deborah Wilson**
 Nursery: **Stephanie Cadiero**
 Custodian: **Scott Tiemann**

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 Church website: www.vlmcc.org