

The Christian Visitor

FEBRUARY 2023 ~ VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

75th Anniversary Fund

Our Anniversary Year has officially begun! We're kicking things off in grand style with our celebration on January 29th. That day also marks the official launch of our fundraising campaign for the 75th Anniversary Fund. We are aiming to raise around \$20,000, and we're already a quarter of the way there, thanks to some generous founding donors.

There are three main things the 75th Fund is aiming to underwrite: First of all, this year of celebration, from meals to banners to various other festive projects. Secondly, two major capital projects – an overhaul of our website, which is so out of date it's become harder to secure, and an overhaul of the lighting in Bailey Hall, making the switch from fluorescents to LEDs. Finally, we want to make another substantial contribution to Interfaith Shelter Network, especially because we were unable to host again this year.

We hope that you will consider how you might contribute to this Fund as well. We're aiming to have all the funds collected by Easter so we can get started on our projects with confidence. You can give in person or online at www.vlmcc.org. Thank you for your generosity!

Ash Wednesday is 2/22

The season of Lent is almost here. We will enter into the season with our Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday, February 22nd, at 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary and on Zoom. Lent represents an important journey toward Easter that helps us be more spiritually prepared to welcome the Risen Christ into the gardens and deserts of our lives. We hope you will be present with us during these six weeks!

Sunday School Resumes 2/5

We would love to have you join us when Sunday Morning Adult Study resumes on Sunday, February 5th. We will meet at 9 am in Bailey Hall and on Zoom. This year, we will be doing shorter classes, some Bible studies and some topical studies. In February, we're going to look at some scriptures that speak to what it means to be church and discuss how they apply to VLM and what they might be leaving out. We hope you'll be part of the conversation!

Welcome, Krista!

Our new church secretary Krista Trimlett started her job on January 12th. (Her official title is Administrative & Communications Coordinator, but that's too many syllables!)

Krista is already getting the swing of things, but please be patient as she learns all the ins and outs of our church! Krista is a CA native and has lived in La Mesa most of her life. She is married to Andy Trimlett and mother of Charlie and Oliver. She loves gardening and leads the community gardening program at Murray Manor Elementary, where she has also been active with the PTA. Krista is working Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Stop in to say hi when you have a chance!

From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

Happy Anniversary, Church! The year of celebration has begun! One of my favorite things about a time of celebration and discernment like this is the way lots of different people pitch in to share their gifts. When you get involved, your sense of belonging here is deepened and our shared life as a congregation is enriched.

I have already seen this happening, just for our big party on January 29th. Mary Alynn Fallon has been figuring out what our t-shirts and hats will look like. Tim Cliffe, Tracy Stockdall, and Andy Cliffe have been preparing our front bed to receive a Coast Live Oak, which we will dedicate during the party. Jennefer Lehton, Lyn Van Winkle, and other members of the Fellowship Committee have been planning for a smooth and festive luncheon. You will see these folks and many others pitching in to make it all happen that day. You might be one of them!

We are going to have many opportunities for people to get involved in various ways all year. The conversation starting in our Sunday morning study this month is a good place to come and share your perspective on what church is all about. We're going to have a service & picnic at the Park in May and a big Rally Weekend in late August.

Jesus is inviting you to invest your time and gifts in what God is doing here at VLM this year. And I am too! If you can't figure out how, be in touch, and we'll find a place for you together.

grace & peace,
Pastor Rebecca

Pastor's Schedule

Pastor Rebecca has a District 8 Clergy Luncheon on Thursday, February 2nd and a Regional Board meeting on Saturday, February 25th, most of the day. She will be on vacation March 1-14.

Tesa's Take

The winter season in San Diego is not as bad as in other parts of the country and world, but the cold does something to us. It calls us to slow down, reset, and strip off the heaviness of the year and prepare for a fresh new year; like a tree whose leaves fall off in the winter, preparing to bloom again in the spring. It's a necessary and important season, even though it causes us to feel tired more often or doesn't allow us to get things done as quickly as we would like or hope. I don't know about you, but this season causes me to stay home more often and find time to be alone and reflect.

I think about the times within the scriptures when Jesus goes away to pray or find a time to eat in private, away from the expectations and needs of the crowds. The primary instance of time away is his time in the wilderness before the beginning of his ministry. In the wilderness, he fasted and was removed from expectations, timelines, and his typical routine; he had to slow down and examine his life before entering the next season of his life. May we take the time this season to follow Jesus's lead, to take time away, to slow down, examine our lives and be open to what the Holy Spirit may be planting in our hearts and minds. May it be so.

Vaya con Dios,
Pastor Tesa

Memorial for Nona Nowlin

You are invited to a memorial for Nona Nowlin on Sunday, February 19th. We will have a special reception during coffee hour after worship, and then a memorial service in the sanctuary at 12:30. There will then be a brief graveside service at Greenwood at 2 pm.

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.

Week of Compassion

We will be celebrating and supporting our denominational disaster relief & humanitarian development fund, Week of Compassion, on Sundays, February 19 & 26, with some worship focus and a special offering. We will distribute coin boxes for you to use as prayer practices on February 5th.

The theme this year is "Rise Up Anew" and draws on Lamentations 3:21-23. How have you experienced God's mercies faithfully returning every morning?

Our goal is to collect \$500 for this special offering.

Novels Tea

Novels Tea will meet on Sunday, February 26 at 3 pm on Zoom to discuss "Sourdough: or, Lois and Her Adventures in the Underground Market" by Robin Sloan. Anyone is welcome to join the conversation! It's bring your own tea and fancy snacks!

Elders Meeting
Sunday, Feb. 12th
12:15 pm
in the Sanctuary
and on Zoom

Welcome Saturday

Our numbers have been growing at Welcome Saturday over the past few months, so we will be growing our shopping list to keep up.

Constant needs right now are warm and sturdy men's pants, warm clothes of all varieties, and wash cloths.

We have a great team of student volunteers from Helix Charter High School that have been helping out, which has been a great blessing! Come by on the 11th to check it out!

SAVE THE DATE!
March 19th
Guest Preacher
Rev. Sadie
Cullumber

Adventures with Oreos! Calling All Kids!

On Sunday, February 19th, our resident pastry chef Claudette Toland will be leading a special activity for our children during their service time, making various fancy treats from Oreos. Pastor Tesa will be assisting. We hope you'll make a point of being here for the fun! If you haven't confirmed with Pastor Rebecca yet, please do, so we're sure to have enough materials.

Lunch Bunch
Wed, Feb. 15, 12 pm
El Torito in La Mesa
Ray & Vicki, hosts

IN OUR PRAYERS...

JOYS ~ Contact the Pastor for prayer updates.

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

A LOVE LETTER TO VLM

FROM BRENDA RORIE-BAETY

What can I say about the life I have had with my church family? It all started September 2nd, 2001. Yes, a week before 9/11.

Walter and I walked in that morning and were greeted by George & Elaine Bailey. They were so welcoming. Elaine took us to the guest book to sign in, and then George took us in the sanctuary and showed us to our seats. We sat in those same seats for many years. We both loved the service, especially the choir. We looked at each other and said, "I think we found a home." I loved the fact that they served communion weekly. After services I approached Deborah and told her how much we loved the choir. I told her we were going to start to church here, so when is choir rehearsal?? She told me 7 pm on Thursdays. And we showed up! Apparently that was rare. It was determined that we could actually sing, and the rest is history.

Through the years I have taught Sunday school for the grade school age kids and participated in many committees. Walt helped with cleanup and other things that needed to be done. We both helped with Welcome Saturday when that got started. I have been a Deacon and an Elder, the last 4 years I have been the Worship Chair. Walt was an Elder, and when we got all of the AV equipment, he worked himself into a full-time position as AV tech. He loved that job so very much. He loved his job at Welcome Saturday too. He helped me with my position too; anytime I needed help decorating, he was the first one on top of the ladder.

When my Walter died, I was a shell and couldn't function. I had relied on Walter so much. Tim & Karen took me into their home and helped me through that first six weeks of my grief. Karen put together a team of people from the church to empty out my apartment and get me ready to move into my current residence. Helene Sisneros has been invaluable, helping me swim through the paperwork that happens when you lose a spouse. Pastor Rebecca & Todd have been there for me as well, when I needed furniture put together and help settling in, as well as the beautiful services she put together for Walter. How I appreciate those services and the support following them. I want to thank everyone in my beloved church family for supporting me when I just couldn't function. I still have days like that, but I am becoming myself again and am more grateful than I can possibly tell you. Please accept my loving thanks for your care. God bless each and every one of you.

News from the Board

At their regular meeting on January 18th, the Board of VLMCC voted to approve the Elders' recommendation that VLM become a co-sponsor of a General Assembly Resolution, "Calling the Church to Oppose Christian Nationalism." We join 12+ other congregations in sending this sense-of-the-assembly resolution to the General Assembly next July. If you would like to read the resolution, you can get a copy from Pastor Rebecca.

The Board approved the withdrawal of \$4000 from the Memorial Endowment Fund, as pre-authorized by the 2022-2023 Budget, because we ended 2022 with a deficit of just under \$10K. Income has been better in January, so we hope to not have to pull the other \$4000 that is authorized.

The Board also approved appointments to the 2023 Nominating Committee: Cheryl Davis-Plotts (chair), Jennefer Lehton, Michael Lewis, Cathy Mullican, and Brenda Rorie-Baety. They will begin their work in the coming weeks. Please hold this process in your prayers as we all discern how God is calling us to serve within our beloved congregation!

Flowers for Worship

Every week, our worship space has a special fresh bouquet, sponsored by someone in honor of a special occasion. You could be that sponsor! Please sign up on the poster in Bailey Hall or at this link: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/30E094BA5AC23ABF58-vlmsunday1>

When it's your turn, you are asked to transfer the flowers into a church vase before taking them home, and then put the original vase on the display table. Please return the "church vase" when your flowers are done. The cost is \$40, payable to VLM.

February 2023 Worship Participants

	February 5	February 12	February 19	February 26
Worship Leader	Cheryl Davis Plotts	Ray Adsit	Mandy Dohring	Tim Cliffe
Lay Reader	Al Flores	Jennefer Lehton	Cheryl Davis-Plotts	Brenda Rorie-Baety
Offering Invitation	Tesa Hauser	Mandy Dohring	Rebecca Littlejohn	Rebecca Littlejohn
Elders	Mary Jane Fay Michael Lewis	Renee Bridwell Brenda Rorie-Baety	Julie Germain Karen Cliffe	Steve Bridwell Cheryl Davis-Plotts
Deacons	Hélène Sisneros Lyn Van Winkle Lace Watkins	Jenny Angione Mary Alynn Fallon Susan Peterson	Patrice Hill Ilene Kiser Jennefer Lehton John Lehton	Al Flores Daphne Flores Tracy Stockdall
Comm Prep & Clean up	Tracy Stockdall	Tracy Stockdall	Tracy Stockdall	Tracy Stockdall
Greeters	Jerry & Norma Bailey	John Lehton Ray Adsit	Jennefer Lehton Larry Knight	Mary Jane Fay
AV Tech Zoom Tech	Karen Cliffe Tesa Hauser	Mary Alynn Fallon Tesa Hauser	Jenny Angione Julie Germain	Mary Alynn Fallon Karen Cliffe
Counters	Jerry Bailey Lace Watkins	Renee Bridwell Mary Alynn Fallon	John Lehton Jenny Angione	Lyn Van Winkle Steve Bridwell
Flowers	Cheryl Davis-Plotts	Glenda Cliffe	Andy Cliffe	Karen Cliffe

Coffee Hour Hosts: (Jennefer & John Lehton)

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: Tues/Thur/Fri 10-1

CHURCH STAFF

Ministers: **The Members of VLMCC**
 Senior Pastor: **Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn**
 Associate Pastor: **Rev. Tesa Hauser**
 Secretary: **Krista Trimlett**
 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