

# The Christian Visitor

JANUARY 2023 ~ VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH



## CELEBRATING 75 YEARS OF SHARING CHRIST'S WELCOME!

“Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you,  
for the glory of God.” –Romans 15:7

We hope you will join us in 2023, as we celebrate 75 years of ministry at Vista La Mesa Christian Church! We have a wonderful year planned, and it will be even better if you are a part of it. Read on, here and in months to come, to see how you can get involved.

We will kick off the year in worship on Sunday, January 1st. After worship, we will parade outside to hang our anniversary banner, so that our whole community will know that we're celebrating. We will also learn a new song that, one that Pastor Rebecca wrote especially for the occasion. And we'll begin a new reflection project to help us tell the story of VLM!

Each month, this newsletter will feature a “love letter” to VLM from a church member. Check out the first one, written by Glenda Cliffe, on page 4. Let Pastor Rebecca know if you'd like to share about why you love VLMCC in a future issue.

### Anniversary Celebration!

Our “official” celebration will take place this month, on Sunday the 29th, since our church was founded in the month of January. Our Regional Minister, Rev. Richie Sanchez, will be here to preach for us, when we will also receive greetings from even further afield.

After worship, there will be a celebratory luncheon and some more festivities! On Sunday, January 8th, we will begin taking reservations for the sandwich options you would prefer in your box lunch on the 29th. Everyone is welcome, at no charge, to this celebration luncheon!

We hope to open orders for our commemorative t-shirts and other items that day as well.

### 75th Anniversary Fund

We have big plans for this year! Not just a lot of parties and preachers, but some capital investments in our future and some “sharing the joy.” Later this month, we will launch the official appeal for our 75th Anniversary Fund, with a goal of collecting \$20,000.

We would love to have you be part of this campaign, with a gift of any size, all at once this month, or spread throughout the year. Everyone has something they can contribute.

The basic details of our plans were shared in last month's newsletter, and you will see them again later this month. You can give in person or online at [www.vlmcc.org](http://www.vlmcc.org). Thank you!

## From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

Did you know that 2023 starts and end on a Sunday? It turns out every year (except leap years) starts and ends on the same day, but I've never noticed before. But I think it's particularly appropriate for us that our year of celebration will begin and end with worship. I hope that you will be along for the ride!

There have been a lot of conversations about the best ways to celebrate our 75th anniversary as a congregation, and I think we've come up with a great plan. Because we're not just celebrating once, in one particular way. We're celebrating all year, and we're doing it on many levels.

Later this month, when our 75th Anniversary Fund officially launches, you'll receive a flyer with the funding priorities for the campaign, along with the important dates for various festivities. There are lots of fun events planned!

But beyond the parties, it is my prayer that this year of reflection will be just as much about our future as it is about our past. We are emerging into a post-pandemic world, and it's a good time to regroup. This milestone year gives us the chance to have rich conversations about who we are as a congregation, how God is calling us into the future, and what our ministries can look like. We will talk about the values and convictions that shape our ministry and how to communicate them more clearly.

We are using a lot of tree imagery for this celebration. I am so grateful to my uncle, Norm Littlejohn, who developed our tree logo, starting from the cross logo based on our reredos that he made for us a few years ago. Tree metaphors are scattered throughout scripture, and their lessons will guide us well as we discern and celebrate this important moment in our history.

grace & peace,

*Pastor Rebecca*

## Tesa's Take

As I look towards the new year, I can't get our Advent theme out of my head, "Expecting a Mystery." It is a funny title but brings such a sense of wonder and hope for me; it is human to worry and ponder the possibilities of life, and the older we get, the fewer answers we receive. When clouded with uncertainty, I think about Matthew 22:37-40, where Jesus says the greatest commandment is to love God with all our hearts, souls, and mind, and the second is to love our neighbors as ourselves. These words of Jesus can bring clarity to our next steps and shine a light on our path.

With this in mind, I am excited to celebrate 75 years of our congregation in La Mesa, CA, looking towards a future that is unknown and mysterious but with moments for us to continue to show God's love. To provide moments where people feel Christ's welcome and the movement of the Holy Spirit in their lives. This year will provide moments to reflect on how we want to live out the gospel; may we be open to the new and old ideas God will plant in our midst. May it be so.

Vaya con Dios,

*Pastor Tesa*

## 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.

## Christmas Special Offering

Thank you for your contributions to our Christmas Special Offering, which goes to support our Regional Church! We collected \$440 toward our \$500 goal! Thanks!

*Thanks so much for your  
generous Christmas gifts to us!*

*love & blessings,  
the Staff of VLMCC*

*Stephanie Cadiero Scott Tiemann  
Alicia M. Gervasi Tesa Hauser  
Deborah Wilson Rebecca Littlejohn*

## Novels Tea

We will be discussing  
"The Golem & the Jinni"  
by Helene Wecker on  
Sunday, January 22 at 3  
pm on Zoom.

Anyone who likes to  
read is welcome to join  
us! It's bring-your-own-  
tea-and-fancy-snacks!

We'd love to have  
your help taking the  
Christmas decorations  
down after worship on  
January 1st!

*Lunch Bunch  
Details TBD  
Let Rebecca know if  
you can host!*

*You are invited to a  
reception after worship  
on January 8th  
to celebrate  
Ray & Vicki Adsit's  
50th Anniversary!  
Cards encouraged.*

## Welcome Saturday

Thank you for your continued  
support of our monthly outreach to  
our neighbors living without shelter.  
Our WS fund is doing quite well  
thanks to your generosity. What we  
need at the moment are men's  
clothes, especially pants, and towels  
& wash cloths.

Our numbers have finally been  
getting back to our pre-pandemic  
norms, so your donations really are  
making a difference!

## *Happy Birthday!*

Jan. 4 - Patty Severns

Jan. 5 - Ray Adsit

Jan. 15 - Himston Flores

Jan. 16 - Troy Gurling

Jan. 20 - Sonny Cusumano

Jan. 23 - Jackie Hahn

Jan. 24 - Tracy Stockdall

Jan. 27 - Mary Jane Fay

## *Happy Anniversary!*

Jan. 6

Ray & Victoria Adsit

Jan. 20

Mandy Dohring & Julie  
Germain

George & Donna Moss

Jan. 24

Bob & Beckie Neely

## IN OUR PRAYERS...

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

## A LOVE LETTER TO VLM

FROM GLENDA CLIFFE

How does one say “I love you” to a church? A church is an inanimate object, right? Incapable of responding? Oh no, just the opposite! The church is composed of a group of wonderful, supportive arms reaching out in love!

Sixty-two years ago I fell in love and was married in what we now refer to as the “upper chapel” but which at that time was the sanctuary of VLMCC. It also marked the beginning of a love affair with a church. Every important moment in my life from that date on has been supported by members of this church – the births of 3 sons, their dedications, their baptisms, weddings and anniversary celebrations. Also, much support in the grieving process for loved ones.

We have three generations who are participating members now. How is that for a love story?

May VLMCC continue to bless and be blessed!

## The Board of VLMCC

VLMCC’s General Board will meet on **Wednesday, January 18th** at 6 pm, on Zoom. Board reports are due to Pastor Rebecca by Friday, January 6th. The Administrative Committee will meet on Tuesday, January 10th at 6 pm on Zoom. We will be appointing a Nominating Committee this month, as well as reviewing plans for our anniversary celebrations. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Rebecca or Board Chair Julie Germain.

## Big Thanks to Everyone Who Helped Christmas Happen!

Thanks to everyone who...

Sent cards!

Sang carols at neighbors’ houses!

Made cookies & treats!

Sponsored poinsettias!

Donated gifts for El Nido!

Helped with Welcome Saturday goodie bags!

Lit candles!

Exchanged ornaments at Lunch Bunch!

Practiced choir songs!

Wore pajamas to Comfy Church!

Went ice skating!

Played trivia at the Christmas Concert!

Dressed up for our group picture!

Expected a Mystery!

## Elders Meeting

The Elders will meet at 12:15 pm on Sunday, January 15, in the Sanctuary and on Zoom. We have an important discussion to share on a possible recommendation to the Board. Please review the materials Elders Chair Steve Bridwell emailed and come prepared for the conversation. If you have any questions, please be in touch with Steve or with Pastor Rebecca.

## Sending a card? Update your directory!

Jack Harris II  
P. O. Box 395  
Graeagle, CA  
96103

Tesa & Matt Hauser  
8680 Converse Ave  
San Diego, CA  
92123

Larry Knight  
444 Prescott Ave.  
#334  
El Cajon, CA  
92020

Nancy Knight  
6665 Decanture St.  
San Diego, CA  
92120

# January 2023 Worship Participants

	January 1	January 8	January 15	January 22	January 29
<b>Worship Leader</b>	Michael Lewis	Renee Bridwell	Steve Bridwell	Brenda Rorie-Baety	Karen Cliffe
<b>Lay Reader</b>	Jerry Bailey	Deborah Wilson	Dick Penny	Daphne Flores	Michael Lewis
<b>Offering Invitation</b>	Tesa Hauser	Julie Germain	Rebecca Littlejohn	Mary Jane Fay	Rebecca Littlejohn
<b>Elders</b>	Cheryl Davis-Plotts Bob Neely	Ray Adsit Mary Jane Fay	Mandy Dohring Julie Germain	Beckie Neely Larry Knight	Tim Cliffe Marianna Kirwan
<b>Deacons</b>	Hélène Sisneros Lyn Van Winkle Lace Watkins	Jenny Angione Mary Alynn Fallon Susan Peterson	Patrice Hill Jennefer Lehton John Lehton	Al Flores Daphne Flores Tracy Stockdall	John Lehton Susan Peterson
<b>Comm Prep &amp; Clean up</b>	Mary Alynn Fallon	Jennefer Lehton	Jennefer Lehton	Tracy Stockdall	Mary Alynn Fallon
<b>Greeters</b>	Jerry & Norma Bailey	John Lehton Ray Adsit	Jennefer Lehton Larry Knight	Ray Adsit	Mary Jane Fay
<b>AV Tech Zoom Tech</b>	Mary Alynn Fallon Tesa Hauser	Karen Cliffe Julie Germain	Jenny Angione Karen Cliffe	Julie Germain Tesa Hauser	Mary Alynn Fallon Tesa Hauser
<b>Counters</b>	Lyn Van Winkle Jerry Bailey	Steve Bridwell Lace Watkins	Renee Bridwell Donna Morey	Lyn Van Winkle John Lehton	John Lehton Jenny Angione
<b>Flowers</b>	Mary Jane Fay	Ray & Vicki Adsit	Michael Lewis & Marianna Kirwan	Open	Open

**Coffee Hour Hosts:** Team 2 (Mary Alynn Fallon, Jenny Angione, 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, between Interstate 8 and the 94 Freeway, 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

Senior Pastor: **Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn**  
 Associate Pastor: **Rev. Tesa Hauser**  
 Admin & Comm Coord.: **Alicia M. Gervasi**  
 Music Director: **Deborah Wilson**  
 Nursery: **Stephanie Cadiero**  
 Custodian: **Scott Tiemann**

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 Office E-mail: [admin@vlmcc.com](mailto:admin@vlmcc.com)  
 Pastor's E-mail: [pastor@vlmcc.com](mailto:pastor@vlmcc.com)  
 Church website: [www.vlmcc.org](http://www.vlmcc.org)