

The Christian Visitor

VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH - NOVEMBER 2023

All Saints Memorial Service

As we do each year, we will be marking All Saints Day with a Memorial Service on Sunday, November 5th. This is an important time to remember those we have lost in the last year, as well as all those who have gone on but remain in our hearts.

This is also a wonderful opportunity to think about who you may know that needs to be with us in worship that day. Often when someone loses a loved one, they need a faith community but they don't know where to turn. You may have the invitation they've been waiting for. Take a moment to consider who you need to bring to worship with you that day.

We have four precious members of our faith community to lift up that day, along with all those beyond our congregation that we have lost in the last year or earlier.

DISCIPLES CLASS

Disciples Class this fall is exploring a variety of spiritual practices that can help us deepen our faith. You won't want to miss the line-up we have this month, as we look at some practices that can make our experiences of the season more meaningful.

The class will go through December 17th. We meet every Sunday at 9 am in Bailey Hall and on Zoom (regular link). Here is the schedule for November:

- Nov. 5 – Grief/Memory Prayers, with Pastor Tesa
- Nov. 12 – Gratitude, with Marianna Kirwan
- Nov. 19 – Gratitude/Hospitality, with Mary Jane Fay
- Nov. 26 – Holy Holidays with Pastor Rebecca

Anniversary Lay Sunday

Our **final 75th Anniversary Celebration** will be held Sunday, November 26, with a few of our **lay members** sharing their thanks and hopes for our congregation. We will also have a **special musical guest, Paul Svenson**, with us that day for worship!

It's been quite a year of celebration and discernment, and we want to go out with, well, not a bang, but a good time! After worship, we will have a **Pie Party** during coffee hour. If you would like to make and contribute a pie, please let Jennefer Lehton or Pastor Rebecca know.

Advent Is Coming!

The entire season of Advent falls in December this year, but it's right around the corner! Here are the dates and information you need.

We will begin taking orders for poinsettias in honor or memory of loved ones on 11/26. The El Nido gift tree sign-up will also be out that day.

If you would like to help decorate the Sanctuary for Advent and Christmas, you may join us on Tuesday, Nov. 28 at 3 pm. We could use your help!

Lunch Bunch will have a Christmas Party on Wednesday, 12/6 at 12 pm; it's brown bag and please bring an ornament to exchange. The Christmas Choir Concert will be preceded by a "finger food potluck" on Sunday, 12/17 at 5:30 pm. The Caroling Party will be 12/23 at 2 pm.

From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

Sometimes we hear people outside the church complain that churches are full of hypocrites. Since churches are full of humans, they're probably right. But somehow even though they don't seem to like churches, they expect the people in churches to be better than other folks.

It occurs to me that one reason people might find preachers in particular to be hypocritical is that they might assume that when we preach, we're talking to other people and not also ourselves. I try not to do that, making sure to use the word "we" often instead of just the word "you." But sometimes that's not enough.

I say all this because we just moved, and it's reminded me how bad I am at dealing with change. Even though we're really happy with our new home, my toothbrush is in a different place, and the fridge is a totally different shape, and the garbage disposal is on the other side of the sink, and I have to park on a steep hill until we get rid of some of the boxes in the garage. It's exhausting. So if you hear me preaching about building up our capacity for change, please know that I am preaching to myself and not just you. I know it's confusing and exhausting. But we must work on increasing our capacity for change, because the world is changing around us, and the church needs to keep up so that we can serve our neighbors in ways that are relevant and helpful. Blessedly, many of the same strategies that help us cope with change are also practices that revive and refresh our spirits! Let's explore them together!

grace & peace,

Pastor Rebecca

The Pastor's Schedule

Pastor Rebecca will be taking days and half-days off here and there, as she and Todd settle into their new home.

Vista La Mesa Christian Church

Do Justice. Love Mercy.

Walk Humbly with God.

www.vlmcc.org

Tesa's Take

Friends,

This season is bittersweet, and I am sure many are feeling the same. We've celebrated 75 years, rejoiced in new life, and found the goodness among the trees and one another. There is much to be thankful for, and yet, there is heaviness in our world. Neighbors dealing with genocide, terrorism, and violence in our world and communities. A year ago, I spoke about how finding hope in the circumstances of this world can be difficult but that we should look towards the Holy Spirit to help us, as Romans 15 notes. It seems as though this quest for guidance from the Spirit is lifelong.

I am feeling bittersweet about moving on from my role of associate pastor at the end of this year. I have been so lucky to serve a wonderful community that values uplifting the next generation of leaders. However, I am not moving on from Vista La Mesa, which is the sweet part. I hope we continue to work alongside one another as we navigate how to be the body of Christ in the world. VLM has been the place of hope for me in my journey. Even though my official title may go away, my love for VLM's people and our mission remains.

Vaya con Dios,
Pastor Tesa

Time Change is Coming!

Set your clocks back one hour
before you go to bed on
Saturday, November 4th!

"November" Elders Meeting
will be Sunday, DECEMBER 3rd.

Half Sabbatical in '24

Pastor Rebecca will be taking a half sabbatical early in the new year, Jan. 24 – Mar. 6. The Board has approved an agreement with Rev. Rachel Cooley Shawler to cover the first four weeks. Rev. Steve Bridwell will cover the final two weeks. Pastor Rachel will be around occasionally before then, so you can have a chance to get to know her. She is an ordained Disciples pastor who has lived in San Diego for the past year and a half. She is also a chaplain at UCSD and youth minister for a UCC church in Kensington.

Novels Tea

Our Novels Tea group will meet on Zoom, on Sunday, November 5 at 3 pm to discuss "The Borrower" by Rebecca Makkai. Anyone who has read the book is welcome to join in the conversation.

In Our Prayers...

JOYS & CONCERNS ~ Please contact Pastor Rebecca for prayers.

Adieu, Worship Flowers!

As you may have heard earlier in the year, the Worship Committee decided to discontinue our weekly worship flowers at the end of the year. We have had too much trouble finding sponsors for each week.

If you have an occasion you would like to celebrate with a flower arrangement, you are welcome to bring one in on your own. If you would like the dedication listed in the bulletin, please let the office know by Wednesday of that week.

Thanksgiving Offering

The Thanksgiving Special Offering will be received in worship, 11/12 and 11/19, and online. This offering goes to support Disciples colleges & universities, and seminaries like Disciples Seminary Foundation. Our goal for this offering is \$500. Our pastors are both DSF graduates. These schools supply Disciples congregations with well-equipped leaders!

LUNCH BUNCH

will be held at
Omelette Factory
in Santee
on Wednesday,
November 15
at 12 noon.
Hosted by
Karen & Tim Cliffe.

Happy Birthday!

Nov. 1 - Norma Bailey
Nov. 7 - Janet Smith
Nov. 8 - Daphne Flores
Nov. 9 - Stephen Cliffe
Nov. 9 - Matt Hauser
Nov. 10 - Jennefer Lehton
Nov. 19 - Maria Cusumano
Nov. 20 - Katie Yoder
Nov. 21 - Tesa Hauser
Nov. 23 - Noralea Penny
Nov. 26 - Deborah Wilson
Nov. 28 - John Lehton

Happy Anniversary!

Nov. 4
Eliseo & Helene Sisneros
Nov. 20
Brian & Laura McCreanor

A LOVE LETTER TO VLM

FROM LARRY KNIGHT

I came here 17 years ago, just planning one visit to get some help dealing with the prostate cancer that I found out I had, but something kept bringing me back each week. I did not know then what was bringing me back but now I know. God was telling me “keep coming back because the day will come when you need Me.”

That day came on March 16, 2021. I lived with my sister Nancy, a longtime member of this church, for more than 50 years. She took me in when I needed counseling for not being able to talk to people. The counseling worked as you have seen.

It was on that morning of March 16th when I walked into the den of our house and found Nancy on the floor. She'd had a stroke. The stroke caused numbness in her right side which meant that she would have to have 24/7 care. I had no idea what to do as I have never been in a position where I would have to make decisions for both of us. That morning at 4 AM the first person I turned to for help was God in the form of Pastor Rebecca. That was a terrible time to call, but call I did. She was there for me. From that morning, she almost became a member of the family. She was able to find care providers to help Nancy and many other things. If not for her, I don't know how I would have survived. She was there for me last year when, because of bleeding in my brain, I had to have brain surgery.

What does this church mean to me? I can honestly say that this Church saved my life. When I say “church” I don't mean the building we worship God in. God is everywhere, so wherever we meet to worship God is “church.” When we met on Zoom or in the park during the pandemic, we were in “church.” So when I say “church,” I mean the people who prayed for a stranger when he first came for help for dealing with cancer, who prayed for Nancy and me when our lives changed forever in 2021, and who prayed for me when I had brain surgery and after recovering had to make life changing decisions for both myself and Nancy. Please know that when I say, “I thank God for bringing me to Vista La Mesa Christian Church,” I am saying thanks to all of the people who make this a “church,” and who have become my church family in the last 17 years and beyond.

I LOVE GOD AND I LOVE ALL OF YOU.

Some pictures from Trunk-or-Treat!



November 2023 Worship Participants

	November 5	November 12	November 19	November 26
Worship Leader	Tim Cliffe	Julie Germain	Larry Knight	Mary Jane Fay
Lay Reader	Jerry Bailey	Daphne Flores	Ilene Kiser	Tracy Stockdall
Offering Invitation	Rebecca Littlejohn	Michael Lewis	Rebecca Littlejohn	Steve Bridwell
Elders	Michael Lewis Ray Adsit	Brian McCreanor Steve Bridwell	Marianna Kirwan Cheryl Davis-Plotts	Brenda Rorie-Baety Mandy Dohring
Deacons	Mary Alynn Fallon Ilene Kiser Susan Peterson	Jennefer Lehton John Lehton	Jenny Angione Claudette Toland Lyn Van Winkle	Al Flores Daphne Flores Tracy Stockdall Michelle Tolvo-Chan
Comm Prep & Clean up	Mary Alynn Fallon	Ilene Kiser	Ilene Kiser	Susan Peterson
Greeters	Ilene Kiser Michael Lewis	John Lehton Ray Adsit	Mary Jane Fay John Lehton	Ray Adsit Daphne Flores
AV Tech Zoom Tech	Mary Alynn Fallon Tesa Hauser	Jenny Angione Karen Cliffe	Jenny Angione Julie Germain	Mary Alynn Fallon Tesa Hauser
Counters	Ilene Kiser Jenny Angione	John Lehton Steve Bridwell	Tracy Stockdall John Lehton	Mary Alynn Fallon Ilene Kiser
Flowers	The Lehtons	Amy Cliffe	Larry Knight	Jennefer Lehton

Coffee Hour Hosts: Al Flores, Daphne Flores, Tracy Stockdall, Michelle Tolvo-Chan

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: Tues/Thur/Fri – 8:30-11:30

CHURCH STAFF

Senior 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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Pastor's E-mail: pastor@vlmcc.com

Church website: www.vlmcc.org