

The Christian Visitor

JANUARY 2024 ~ VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH



75th Anniversary Summary

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

What a wonderful anniversary year we had! From parties and guest preachers to deep conversations and a brand new website, t-shirts and hats to snow cones and pie – it was a celebration for the books!

We had five big parties – the official anniversary luncheon in January with Regional Minister Richie Sanchez, our Easter worship & potluck, another potluck in June with the Deweys as we installed lay leaders, our Open House with community friends and guest preacher Rick Lowery and August, and our final Lay Sunday celebration and Pie Party in November!

We celebrated with commemorative shirts, hats, and cups, and we launched the new www.vlmcc.org, reflecting the conversations we had this year about who we are as a congregation. We “shared the joy” by sending a generous donation to the Interfaith Shelter Network.

Watch for information about how you can order a photo book commemorating this year of celebration. And be sure to join us on December 31st as we tie the year up with a bow!

Half-Sabbatical Begins

Beginning Wednesday, January 24, Pastor Rebecca Littlejohn will be on leave for a “half-sabbatical,” until Wednesday, March 6.

The Board approved this leave on the recommendation of the Pastoral Relations Committee, with all parties recognizing that a three-month leave does not seem feasible at this time. Pastor Rebecca may take the other half of her sabbatical that is overdue at a later time in 2024 or beyond.

Rev. Rachel Cooley Shawler, (see page 2) will be covering the first four weeks of this time, with Rev. Steve Bridwell covering the final two weeks. Board Chair Karen Cliffe and others will also be making sure things keep humming along.

Big Thanks to Everyone Who Helped Christmas Happen!

Thanks to everyone who...

Helped decorate the church for the season!

Sent or brought in a Christmas card!

Exchanged ornaments at Lunch Bunch!

Made finger foods & treats!

Sponsored poinsettias!

Donated gifts for El Nido!

Lit candles!

Sang carols at neighbors' houses!

Practiced and performed choir songs!

Joined in Abiding in Anticipation!

From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

What a year it has been! What a year it's going to be! As we pause in these moments when 2023 fades into 2024, it's good to take a breath and observe the state of our souls. My heart is full, with all the excitement we shared during this anniversary and with gratitude for the hard work we did, preparing ourselves to meet God's future for VLMCC. I am also pretty tired. We are still recovering from the impact of the pandemic, and while this year of celebration has been wonderful, it's also been a whirlwind of go-go-go.

I am so grateful for the opportunity to take these six weeks away, to rest and rejuvenate. I will be visiting my family and continuing to settle into our new house. I hope that you will also be able to find some time to take a breath and rest. You will be in good hands with Pastor Rachel and Pastor Steve. These weeks will pass in a flash, I am sure. Lent will come, and then I'll be back, and Easter will be right around the corner.

One way to make time slow down is to practice watchfulness, the practice of Advent's Love Sunday. When we notice the moments, they stick around longer. So let's pause and give thanks for all that has happened. Let's slow down and reflect on how everything we've been through is going to shape what comes next.

grace & peace,

Pastor Rebecca

Pastor's Schedule

Pastor Rebecca's half-sabbatical begins Wednesday, January 24. She will return to the office on Wednesday, March 6. During this time, you can contact Pastor Rachel, Elders Chair Steve Bridwell, or Board Chair Karen Cliffe if you have any pastoral concerns or other issues.

Interim Greetings!

Hello & Happy New Year, VLM!

I am so excited to serve & learn with you starting end of this month when Pastor Rebecca begins her well-deserved sabbatical. As she practices the holy art of sabbath, let's keep sharing & percolating in your end-of-2023 & sabbath dreams. How we might keep wondering & birthing these dreams with God & each other through winter, into Lent, and beyond? I pray we commit to our spiritual formation together, and am so grateful to glimpse the community & possibilities at VLM. Thank you for welcoming me.

Please come say hello to get to know me more! Music, food/restaurants, and yoga or embodiment practices are always great topics with me, though I enjoy conversation of all sorts. I grew up in Disciples churches all around the country as I moved around with a dad in the Air Force. I have two older sisters & a dog named after movie star Jennifer Garner. You may see my husband Evan around too, but he's an anesthesia resident at UCSD so who knows his schedule. I so look forward to getting to know y'all more, pulling up a chair at the table to taste this special VLM sauce!

With excitement,
Pastor Rachel

Vista La Mesa Christian Church

*Feeding Your Soul Without
Disconnecting Your Mind!*

www.vlmcc.org

Christmas Special Offering

Thank you for your contributions to our Christmas Special Offering, which goes to support our Regional Church! We collected \$389 toward our \$500 goal!

Worship Flowers

Remember that we are no longer doing weekly worship flowers going forward. But if you have a special occasion you would like to celebrate or commemorate with an arrangement, you are welcome to do so. Just let the office know by the Thursday before that Sunday, so we can share your dedication.

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

*love & blessings,
the Staff of VLMCC*

Stephanie Cadiero Scott Tiemann

Krista Trimlett Tesa Hauser

Deborah Wilson Rebecca Littlejohn

Novels Tea

We will be discussing "Salt Houses" by Hala Allan on Sunday, January 21 at 3 pm on Zoom. Anyone who has read the book is welcome to join us!

Lunch Bunch

January 17 @ 12pm
at Filippi's in Jamul
Hosted by Grace &
Lyn Van Winkle

DISCIPLES CLASS IN 2024

Disciples Class will start back up at 9 AM on Sunday, January 14, meeting in Bailey Hall and on Zoom. We will be moving into a new format for class, combining prayer time and Bible study in new ways.

Each week, we will begin with a shared prayer practice, inspired by how we do the Prayers of People in worship. Then we will be studying the gospels, beginning with Matthew, using a variety of study bibles and commentaries, with each person sharing whatever notes are offered by the one they're reading from. We won't have a schedule; we'll just read as far as we read each week and pick up where we left off the next week. The class will be self-led, with each participant helping to keep us on track.

If you have a Bible you'd like to use for this class, feel free to bring it, but we will also be providing some new study Bibles.

Happy Birthday!

Jan. 5 - Ray Adsit

Jan. 15 - Himston Flores

Jan. 16 - Troy Gurling

Jan. 23 - Jackie Hahn

Krista Trimlett

Jan. 24 - Tracy Stockdall

Jan. 27 - Mary Jane Fay

Happy Anniversary!

Jan. 6

Ray & Victoria Adsit

Jan. 20

Mandy Dohring & Julie
Germain

Jan. 24

Bob & Beckie Neely

IN OUR PRAYERS...

JOYS & CONCERNS ~ Please reach out to Pastor Rebecca for prayers and concerns

Cooking with Chef Claudette

Our youngest Disciples are in for a treat this year – well, actually way more than one! Chef Claudette has worked up a schedule of monthly baking sessions for our kids, loosely tied to various religious holidays. (We're Disciples; there are no rules. We can celebrate saints days if we want to!)

Parents, please check the schedule that Pastor Rebecca emailed to you. It will be really helpful if you can RSVP each month, so we know how many ingredients we need. We will try to adjust the schedule as needed, if possible, to make sure we can have as many kids as possible participating each month.

We can't move the January date, so please plan to be here on Sunday, January 7th for spice cake crowns in honor of Epiphany. Otherwise, we'll see in February!

Special Note for Home Bakers: If you have an old-fashioned egg beater you'd be willing to donate to this cause, please bring it in as soon as you can, so we can avoid electric mixers!

Elders Meeting

The Elders will meet at 12:15 pm on Sunday, January 14, in the Library and on Zoom. This is our last chance to meet with Pastor Rebecca before her half-sabbatical, to make sure all our bases are covered. Please make a point of being present. If you have any questions, please be in touch with Steve or with Pastor Rebecca.

New Tenant

Beginning on January 15th, the San Diego Festival Chorus will be holding their rehearsals in our Sanctuary on Monday nights from 7-9 PM. Mary Alynn & Jim Fallon are part of this community choir and involved in leadership, so if you have any questions, please check with them. The Chorus will not meet in the summer months.

The Board of VLMCC

VLMCC's General Board will meet on **Tuesday, January 23rd** at 6 pm, on Zoom. Board reports are due to Pastor Rebecca by Friday, January 12th. The Administrative Committee will meet on Tuesday, January 16th at 6 pm on Zoom. We will be appointing a Nominating Committee this month, as well as reviewing our current financial situation and finalizing details of Rebecca's leave. If you have any questions, contact Pastor Rebecca or Board Chair Karen Cliffe.

Volunteer Roles for 2024

If you're looking for a way to deepen your spirituality through service, there are some volunteer roles we could use some help with going into 2024. We really need some more greeters for before worship and some more offering counters for after worship. We could use a couple more tech volunteers in worship, to help with AV and/or Zoom. Let Pastor Rebecca know if you're interested and we will make sure you are fully trained.

Christmas Greetings!

We received Christmas cards for our Card tree from the following folks: Ray & Victoria Adsit, Norma & Jerry Bailey, Karen & Tim Cliffe and Micah, Brittany & Avi, and Baby Julian!, Mary Ann E'Golf, Mary Alynn & Jim Fallon, Mary Jane Fay, Marilyn Fiddmont (Christian Church Foundation), Ilene Kiser and Roy Jenkins, Jennefer & John Lehton, Rebecca Littlejohn & Todd Lesh, Beckie & Bob Neely, Janet Smith, Paula Stevens and Janice Matthews (Joe Joe's family), Betty Sullivan, Michelle Tolvo-Chan, Grace Van Winkle, and Lyn Van Winkle.

Merry Christmas to us all!

January 2024 Worship Participants

	January 7	January 14	January 21	January 28
Worship Leader	Ray Adsit	Steve Bridwell	Cheryl Davis-Plotts	Marianna Kirwan
Lay Reader	Mary Jane Fay	Jerry Bailey	Tracy Stockdall	Daphne Flores
Offering Invitation	Rebecca Littlejohn	Marianna Kirwan	Rebecca Littlejohn	Steve Bridwell
Elders	Tim Cliffe Marianna Kirwan	Mary Jane Fay Brian McCreanor	Larry Knight Ray Adsit	Julie Germain Karen Cliffe
Deacons	Mary Alynn Fallon Susan Peterson	Jennefer Lehton John Lehton Michelle Tolvo-Chan	Jenny Angione Claudette Toland Lyn Van Winkle	Al Flores Daphne Flores Tracy Stockdall
Children's Ministries	Stephanie Cadiero Claudette Toland	Stephanie Cadiero	Stephanie Cadiero	Stephanie Cadiero
Comm Prep & Clean up	Lyn Van Winkle	Jenny Angione	Lyn Van Winkle	Claudette Toland
Greeters	Mary Jane Fay John Lehton	Michael Lewis Ray Adsit	John Lehton Daphne Flores	Ray Adsit Michael Lewis
AV Tech Zoom Tech	Jenny Angione Julie Germain	Mary Alynn Fallon Karen Cliffe	Karen Cliffe Michaela Stockdall	Michelle Tolvo-Chan Mary Alynn Fallon
Counters	John Lehton Jenny Angione	Andy Cliffe Lyn Van Winkle	Tracy Stockdall John Lehton	Mary Alynn Fallon Steve Bridwell

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, between Interstate 8 and the 94 Freeway, and very near the #852 bus line.

Sundays: Disciples Class @ 9:00

Worship @ 10:30

Secretary's Hours: Tues/Thur/Fri 8:30-11:30

CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor: **Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn**

Secretary: **Krista Trimlett**

Music Director: **Deborah Wilson**

Nursery: **Stephanie Cadiero**

Custodian: **Scott Tiemann**

Church Tel. (619) 463-9909

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

Church website: www.vlmcc.org