

The Christian Visitor

MARCH 2024 ~ VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Lent Continues

Join us for worship as we continue the Lenten journey through our focus on “Faithfulness in Fragile Times,” looking at the core values and practices that help us stay connected to God when life is difficult.

Holy Week Service

We will gather on Thursday, March 28 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.

In keeping with this year’s Lenten theme, “Faithfulness in Fragile Times,” this service will focus on how Jesus’ faithfulness was acted out through the fragility of his humanity. The service will begin with communion, recalling the Last Supper Jesus shared with his disciples before his betrayal.

Half- Sabbatical Update

Rev. Steve Bridwell is leading us into the month of March, as Pastor Rebecca’s half-sabbatical continues. She will be back in the office on Wednesday, March 6.

Big Thanks to Pastor Rachel and Pastor Steve for their ministerial service during these six weeks!

Easter Sunday!

We would love to have you join us for worship on March 31st, 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!

Watch for sign-ups to sponsor a lily to decorate the sanctuary on Easter, out March 10-24. 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.



FAITHFULNESS
in
FRAGILE TIMES

Steve's Stuff

A Lenten Reflection on What's Next

Our culture suggests that a frenetic and very early start on important holidays is best. Ending our celebrations quickly is standard, too. For instance, before Thanksgiving a Christmas season arrives in our stores. To preserve the spirit of the season I resolved to stop going into any retail store as soon as I heard Christmas music (gas and groceries the exception). The retail Christmas has essentially replaced the sacred observance. A minority of us hold Christmas for 12 days until January 6th.

Christ's resurrection has been similarly treated. Easter bunnies, eggs, butterflies abound. Seems an empty tomb doesn't sell well. What does sell speaks of fertility and nature's resuscitation. In the rush to capture Easter our friends head in the opposite direction- chocolate bunnies, egg hunts, and releasing butterflies. For them Easter is a day. Then it's off to the next celebration. Yet, Easter has just begun. Few know or care that Easter lasts 50 days and ends at Pentecost.

On Ash Wednesday we turned our attention to the truth that most would rather avoid; that we will die. For me, the Easter season is a chance to unlearn our fear of death. In it we embrace the promise of God. The resurrection of Jesus helps us fully live before death. Life after death is promised too, but Christian faith is about fullness of life on either side of the grave.

From God we have come. To God we shall return. Between birth and death is God. Try and buy or sell that! The marketplace may substitute symbols of resurrection with signs off resuscitation, but I think we know better than to be sucked in.

At the very end of this month, we will celebrate the resurrection as we do every Sunday at the Lord's table. In what remains of Lent I wish you a transformative maturing of that gift God gives in a daily supply - faith. May your participation in the work of the Resurrected One cause us to pause, savor, reflect, and then move at the pace of God.

Peace,
Steve

Pastor Rebecca will return on March 6th.

Vista La Mesa Christian Church

Sharing the Joy
of Christ's Welcome!

www.vlmcc.org

Thanks so much for your
generous contributions
to our
Week of Compassion
Special Offering!
We collected \$730.00!



Helping with Interfaith Shelter

If you would be interested in providing a meal, donating food, or volunteering as an overnight host for the Interfaith Shelter rotation at Summit UU in Santee, please call Al Mork at 619-402-3737. They are hosting March 9-23 and could use some help!

Easter Special Offering

We will receive the Easter Special Offering on Sundays, March 24 & 31. The Easter Special Offering is an over-and-above offering that goes to support our general church ministries. It includes Global Ministries, the Christian Unity & Interfaith Ministry, the Disciples of Christ Historical Society and much more.

Our goal is to collect \$500 for this important offering that represents our commitment to the covenantal nature of our church. You can give with the special envelopes in the bulletins on those Sundays or online at www.vlmcc.org. Thank you for your contributions!



Novels Tea

Novels Tea will meet on Sunday, March 17, at 3:00 pm, on Zoom to discuss "Fresh Water for Flowers" by Valerie Perrin. Anyone who has read the book is welcome to join the group. It's Bring Your Own Fancy Snacks!

Don't forget to set your clocks an hour ahead before you go to bed on Saturday, March 9th

Lunch Bunch
Wed., 2/20, 12 pm
at the Olive Garden
Hosted by
The Adsits



We welcomed & blessed a number of guests at our Ash Wednesday Drive thru - people & pups included!



Cooking with Chef Claudette

All kids are invited to join Chef Claudette after dismissal from worship on Sunday, March 17 to make key lime tarts and shamrock floats for St. Patrick's Day. Please let Pastor Rebecca know if your kids will be present, so we can plan the right amount of ingredients. Our next kids cooking session will be April 7.

In Our PRAYERS...

JOYS, THANKSGIVINGS & CONCERNS~ Please reach out to the pastor for prayers and concerns.

Happy Birthday!

- Mar. 1 - Micah Cliffe
- Mar. 3 - Brenda Rorie-Baety,
Ruth Tiffany
- Mar. 4 - Julie Germain
- Mar. 5 - Susan Peterson
- Mar. 14 - Andy Cliffe
- Mar. 26 - Daniel Cliffe
- Mar. 31 - Amanda Dohring

Happy Anniversary!

- Mar. 6 - Sara & Troy Gurling

Farewell - but not forever! - from Pastor Rachel

Dear VLM,

What a joy it has been to get to know, serve, & grow with you over the last month as Sabbatical Interim Pastor. I've found you all to be so welcoming, and down to earth, with little pretense or stiffness. What a gift that is to any pastor or visitor to a church! I've been invited to bring my pastoral identity, & I've grown in it too. Thank you for opening to me & giving me grace & encouragement along the way. I've observed you all to be united & dedicated to this community - to praying for & loving one another, to coming together with God at center. I will continue to thank God for you all, and I know I am not alone in that.

I know also that the church landscape around us is changing, and it can feel scary to move into a new vision still in formation. Perhaps God looks for openness & creativity among us to dream & co-create with us new ways of being. For the institutional church may be changing, but Church community will go on & on. The first disciples worshiped in homes & through service: how might we be returning to the roots of worship? What *must* we grieve to honor our past & prepare for the future? What stories *must* we share with each other of faith through trial & unknown, toward miraculous resurrections previously unimagined? Whatever we do, God goes with us. Do not be afraid, for VLM has the blessing of the Holy Spirit & will continue to be a place where Christ's light shines & the kingdom of God breaks in. And I can't wait to visit soon! **With peace & gratitude, Rachel**

The Board of VLMCC

The General Board will meet on Tuesday, March 19th at 6:00 pm on Zoom and in Room 3. Board members, please turn in your reports by Friday, March 8th to Pastor Rebecca. The Administrative Committee will meet on Tuesday, March 12th at 6:00 pm to prepare the agenda for the Board meeting.

At this month's meeting, the Board will be reviewing our financial situation and appointing a Nominating Committee for 2024.

Disciples Class

It's always a good time to make an investment in your spiritual growth! Join us for Disciples Class on Sundays at 9 AM, in Bailey Hall or on Zoom. We begin with a prayer practice borrowed our worship service, and then study the gospels together, with the assistance of a variety of translations and commentaries from different perspectives. You can join at any time, whether you've ever attended before or not!

75th Anniversary Commemoration Book

Mary Alynn and Karen will be creating a special book commemorating our 75th Anniversary celebrations last year. If you would like to help or have photos to add, please contact them. Details on how to purchase a book will be announced in the coming weeks.

Baby Shower for Tesa & Matt Hauser - March 17

It's BABY time! On Sunday, March 17, at 12:30 (after church), VLM will be hosting a baby shower for Tesa and Matt Hauser (expecting the arrival of their bundle of joy in late April). Please save the date, and come help celebrate this wonderful blessing. A light lunch will be served! Tesa and Matt have a baby registry at <https://www.babylist.com/list/tesa-hauser>. Check out the many great gift ideas you can find there. If you would like to help with the planning of this event, please contact Karen Cliffe.

March 2024 Worship Participants

	March 3	March 10	March 17	March 24	March 31
Worship Leader	Michael Lewis	Marianna Kirwan	Brian McCreanor	Brenda Rorie-Baety	Karen Cliffe
Lay Reader	Tracy Stockdall	Michael Lewis	Daphne Flores	Mary Jane Fay	Michelle Tolvo-C
Offering Invitation	Steve Bridwell	Rebecca Littlejohn	Julie Germain	Rebecca Littlejohn	Rebecca Littlejohn
Elders	Marianna Kirwan Tim Cliffe	Ray Adsit Mary Jane Fay	Cheryl Davis Larry Knight	Steve Bridwell Julie Germain	Mandy Dohring Mary Jane Fay
Deacons	Mary Alynn Fallon Susan Peterson	Jennefer Lehton John Lehton	Jenny Angione Claudette Toland Lyn VanWinkle	Al Flores Daphne Flores Tracy Stockdall	John Lehton Tracy Stockdall Lyn Van Winkle
Children's Ministries	Stephanie Cadiero Claudette Toland	Stephanie Cadiero & Volunteer	Stephanie Cadiero & Volunteer	Stephanie Cadiero & Volunteer	Stephanie Cadiero & Volunteer
Comm Set-up	Susan Peterson	Lyn Van Winkle	Susan Peterson	Susan Peterson	Mary Alynn Fallon
AV Tech Zoom Tech	Jenny Angione Michaela Stockdall	Karen Cliffe Julie Germain	Mary Alynn Fallon Julie Germain	Karen Cliffe Michaela Stockdall	Jenny Angione Julie Germain
Greeters	John Lehton Daphne Flores	Michael Lewis Mary Jane Fay	Ray Adsit John Lehton	Daphne Flores Mary Jane Fay	Ray Adsit John Lehton
Counters	Lyn Van Winkle Jenny Angione	Tracy Stockdall John Lehton	Mary Allyn Fallon Andy Cliffe	Steve Bridwell John Lehton	Lyn Van Winkle Tracy Stockdall

Coffee Hour Hosts: Al Flores & Daphne Flores, Tracy Stockdall

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 8:30-10:30 am

CHURCH STAFF

Ministers: **The Members of VLMCC**

Pastor: **Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn**

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