

The Christian Visitor

VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH ~ JUNE 2024

Congregational Meeting – 6/9

We hope all members will make a point of being present for our annual Congregational Business Meeting, which will be held after worship on Sunday, June 9. This is an important but usually brief time when we discuss and vote on the official business of the congregation, in preparation for the new ministry year, which will begin July first.

Our Nominating Committee has been working on a creating a Slate of Nominees, who will serve in one-, two- and three-year terms, in various positions. We thank everyone for your willingness to serve! The Board approved a special waiver for this year's slate, so please review your information packet carefully.

We will also be voting on a proposed budget for the 2024-2025 ministry year. There are some things in the works that could impact that budget, but we'll start with the document as it was approved by the Board on May 21.

Watch for the information packet in your email on 5/31. A few hard copies will be available June 2.

Installation Sunday

On Sunday, June 30, we will gather for worship and install all the lay leaders who will be serving in the 2024-2025 ministry year. This is an important time for all of us to rededicate our time and talents to the ministry of Jesus Christ, as we carry it out together here at VLM!

After worship, we will hold a celebration potluck, when we will honor those who are completing terms of service and others. We hope you will plan to stay for lunch and bring a dish or two to share. This would be a great day to wear your VLM shirt, to add to the festive spirit.

Upcoming Communion Change

The Elders & Deacons have been in discussion about how to make clear the importance and meaning that we, as Disciples, place on communion in our worship service. While it was acknowledged that the little sealed communion sets are not particularly evocative of the Bread of Life, concerns about hygiene and not increasing the deacons' workload led to a decision to keep using them.

Instead, we are going to switch to having the congregation come forward to receive communion from the Elders during the service. As usual, Pastor Rebecca will serve those for whom coming forward is difficult. We invite you to take the cup back to your seat for a time of reflection, and then dispose of it as you leave the service, as we have been doing. We will begin this new way of serving communion on Sunday, June 9, as a reminder of our Disciples identity.

July Worship Series

Our Worship Series in July will be on Incarnation, the word we use to talk about God taking on human flesh. You won't want to miss it!

The first Sunday will be on Incarnation as Specificity. The second Sunday will be "Christmas in July". The third Sunday will be a guest preacher, and the fourth Sunday will be a Service of Healing. Think about who you need to invite to each of these services!

From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

You can learn a lot about what it is we need to be doing here by looking at what people do when they don't know what else to do. The folks in our community who are aware of Vista La Mesa Christian Church turn to us for two things: when they want to help others by donating clothes and other items to Welcome Saturday, and when they're in trouble and need prayer.

We need to understand what an honor it is to be asked to pray for someone. Many of us rely on prayer to get through our daily lives, without thinking too hard about what we believe about it or how it works. And that's true of our neighbors too. Even though they may not be active participants in our faith community, when they hit a rough spot, they do know that they can ask us to pray for them.

People can pray on their own, so why would someone call a group of strangers and ask for prayer? I think there is something deep within us that knows that prayer is more powerful when it's shared. I would guess that is the most basic reason we come together as church. Spiritual power is multiplied when it's shared in community. As Christians, we have named that reality the Holy Spirit. This is part of the reason I don't worry too much about the church's future, because at some level, humans will always need that support. What a gift to be able to offer it!

grace & peace,

Pastor Rebecca

Pastor's Schedule

Pastor Rebecca is reporting for jury duty on Wednesday, June 12. Watch for an update later that evening about whether it will impact her schedule. She will be taking some time off in July when company is coming and will be directing Junior Camp, July 20-26.

Vista La Mesa Christian Church

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New Roommates?

Vista La Mesa Christian Church is in a new chapter of our life, as the church globally is, as the patterns of people's lives have shifted and community looks different than it used to. We are doing our best to recognize this moment and respond faithfully.

One of the ways that is manifesting in our congregational life right now is that we have been approached by two different congregations about opening our facility to them. Even as we would be honored to be able to meet a need in this way, we are also aware that such arrangements could be a true blessing for VLM. Pastor Rebecca and members of the Board are in serious conversations with leaders of both these churches about whether we can make this happen. Things may move very quickly this month, with a Board vote on at least one contract possible before the end of June. We are hoping to work things out with both churches relatively simultaneously, if possible. At least one church might move in this summer.

If we move into an arrangement like this, there are ways we VLMers will need to adjust our expectations. While we have done this before with a small congregation, either of these partnerships would be a different situation. We will need to be conscious of the other congregations' schedules and space. We will need to clean out some of our classrooms and storage spaces. We may even need to adjust how we use the Sanctuary and prepare for our own worship service.

This beautiful facility that we have is a blessing, one that is not just for our benefit, but for the whole people of God. Through partnerships with other parts of the Body of Christ, we as VLM may find a new pathway into our future. If you have questions or concerns, please be in touch with Pastor Rebecca.

Welcome Saturday

As you know, one of the central ministries of our congregation is Welcome Saturday, our monthly outreach to our neighbors living without shelter or food security. We began this ministry in October 2016, carried it through the difficult days of the pandemic, and now have volunteers from local high schools and 12-step groups coming to assist. It is probably the thing that the most people in our community know about what we do here on this corner.

Welcome Saturday needs your support. Just two years ago, we were receiving twice as much each month in donations as we were spending on supplies. Our donations have dropped and the price of groceries has gone up and up. We are now bringing in about half of what it takes to pull off Welcome Saturday each month.

We are so grateful for those who make regular donations to the Welcome Saturday Fund. We could use a few more regular gifts to help stabilize this ministry's finances. Every size gift will make a difference! Thank you for your support! Come by and say hi to our guests and volunteers this month, and see what the buzz is all about!

OFFERING ENVELOPES

Monthly offering envelopes for the new ministry year are now available in the back of the Sanctuary. There might be a set with your name on it, but if not, there are blank sets at the back of the box, so you can get started on a routine of regular giving. Thanks!

Cooking With Chef Claudette

All kids are invited to the next session of Cooking with Chef Claudette, on Sunday, June 23, when we will make grasshopper parfaits in honor of the Feast of St. John the Baptist!

Bonus points (samples, maybe?) to those who can explain the connection between these two things!

Novels Tea

will meet on Sunday, June 9 on Zoom at 4 pm to discuss "Matrix" by Lauren Groff. (Note later time.)

Lunch Bunch
Wednesday,
June 19
12:00 pm
Omelette Factory
(Santee)
hosted by the
Cliffes

In Our Prayers...

JOYS & CONCERNS ~ Please contact Pastor Rebecca for prayers.

Happy Birthday!

- 6/1 - Teannah Townsend
- 6/5 - Marianna Kirwan
- 6/14 - Mary Ann E'Golf
- 6/17 - Jason Sisneros, Jr.
- 6/23 - Jim Fallon
- 6/29 - Heather Morey
- 6/30 - Rebekah Morey

Happy Anniversary!

JUNE 20
Jim & Mary Alynn Fallon

JUNE 21
Dick & Noralea Penny
Rebecca & Todd
Littlejohn-Lesh

JUNE 22
Tim & Karen Cliffe

Disciples Class

Disciples Class has been working our way through the gospel according to Mark this spring, and we plan to finish up on Sunday, June 23. (No class on June 30, to prepare for the potluck.)

We will be taking a break over the summer, at least through August. During these summer months, we want to consider whether we want to resume in the fall with the format we've used this spring (reading scripture with alternative translations, notes and commentaries close at hand), or if we want to try something different.

If you have an idea for a class, preferably one that is mostly self-sustaining, please share it with Pastor Rebecca, Elders Chair Steve Bridwell or incoming Christian Ed Chair Cheryl Davis-Plotts. Thanks!

Moving to Gmail

Last summer, we unveiled our wonderful new website. But we never got our church email system linked up with the new look. We have decided to go in another direction. We will be applying for non-profit status with Google, so that we can create new email accounts through Gmail that still use our vlmcc.org handle. (At least, we're hoping that is how it will work!) Watch for more information about when we'll make the transition and what the new addresses are. (This will not affect Pastor Rebecca's yahoo address; the goal is to replace pastor@vlmcc.com and admin@vlmcc.com.)

Report from the Board

The General Board met on May 21, primarily to prepare for the Congregational Meeting on June 9.

We were pleased to hear that our deficit, as of the end of April, was a little over \$2300, which was much lower than projected. The Board decided not to withdraw any money from the Memorial Endowment Fund for now. (So far, we have only pulled half of the \$10K authorized for this year.)

The proposed budget for 2024-2025 was presented, along with a recommendation from the Memorial Endowment Committee approving the proposed draw from the Memorial Endowment Fund. The proposed budget was approved and forwarded to the congregation.

The Board received the report from the Nominating Committee and approved their request for a bylaws/term limit waiver, in order to divide the position of Treasurer from the position of Stewardship & Finance Chair (so two different people would take the two separated roles). The Slate will be presented at the Congregational Meeting, accompanied by notice of the waiver granted by the Board.

The Board also approved a request from Pastor Rebecca to dip into her sabbatical funds, if needed, to supplement her Assemblies and Retreats budget line, in order to attend The Gathering hosted by the Pension Fund in Washington DC in September.

Is It I, Lord?

Have you been feeling like you might be ready to get more involved at VLM? As the new ministry year begins, this is a great time to try out a new role. Let Pastor Rebecca know if you're interested in any of the following:

Worship Greeter – hands out bulletins & welcome packets 10-10:30 on Sunday mornings, usually serves one particular Sunday each month

Lay Reader – reads the first scripture reading in worship, on a rotation with variable frequency (usually no more than once every two months).

AV Tech – wakes up the AV system on Sunday mornings (9:45 or so) and gets everything ready, flips the slides during worship, and then puts everything away; currently once or twice a month.

Zoom Tech – hosts our Zoom congregation, including letting people in, recording the service, monitoring the chat box, sharing prayer concerns, and shifting the camera angles; currently once or twice a month.

Offering Counter – work with a partner to log and count the Sunday offering; once a month (must be approved).

June 2024 Worship Participants

	June 2	June 9	June 16	June 23	June 30
Worship Leader	Michael Lewis	Brian McCreanor	Marianna Kirwan	Brenda Rorie-Baety	Cheryl Davis-Plotts
Lay Reader	Ilene Kiser	Deborah Wilson	Cheryl Davis-Plotts	Jennefer Lehton	Jerry Bailey
Offering Invitation	Rebecca Littlejohn	Rebecca Littlejohn	Michael Lewis	Rebecca Littlejohn	Steve Bridwell
Elders	Karen Cliffe Tim Cliffe	Ray Adsit Mary Jane Fay	Cheryl Davis-Plotts Larry Knight	Steve Bridwell Mary Jane Fay	Steve Bridwell Michael Lewis
Deacons	Mary Alynn Ilene Kiser Susan Peterson	Jennefer Lehton John Lehton	Jenny Angione Claudette Toland Lyn Van Winkle	Al Flores Daphne Flores Tracy Stockdall	John Lehton Tracy Stockdall Lyn Van Winkle
Communion Prep/Clean	Tracy Stockdall	Tracy Stockdall	Ilene Kiser	Daphne Flores	Daphne Flores
AV Tech Zoom Tech	Jenny Angione Karen Cliffe	Jenny Angione Michaela Stockdall	Tracy Stockdall Michaela Stockdall	Tracy Stockdall Karen Cliffe	Tracy Stockdall Michaela Stockdall
Greeters	John Lehton Daphne Flores	Michael Lewis Mary Jane Fay	Ray Adsit John Lehton	Daphne Flores Mary Jane Fay	Ilene Kiser Michael Lewis
Counters	Lyn Van Winkle Jenny Angione	Steve Bridwell Ilene Kiser	Andy Cliffe Tracy Stockdall	John Lehton Michelle Tolvo-Chan	John Lehton Andy Cliffe

Coffee Hour Hosts: Jenny Angione, Claudette Toland, Lyn Van Winkle

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 8:30-11:30

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