

# The Christian Visitor

OCTOBER 2024 – VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH

## World Communion Sunday

Every year on the first Sunday of October, Christians around the world celebrate our unity at the Table of Christ with special World Communion Sunday services. At VLMCC, we join in the festivities, remembering our fellow Christians all over the world, often using a variety of languages or breads in worship.

This year, our theme is “Taste and See,” a phrase you may remember from the communion hymn “All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly,” which ends every verse inviting us to “Taste and see the grace eternal. Taste and see that God is good.” On WCS, we will celebrate how the invitation to “all who hunger” stretches all around the world, uniting Christians and all who hunger for God’s goodness in love and grace. We hope to see you on October 6th!

## Trunk-or-Treat Saturday, 10/26, 3-6 pm

Trunk-or-Treat is coming, and we need your help to make it a success again this year! Our neighbors look forward to this event every year; it’s an important part of our ministry of hospitality!

We need folks to decorate your trunks and pass out candy in “trunk-or-treat” row. (Please park your car by 2:30.) We also need people to volunteer with the games, food, and more. Watch for the sign-up sheets coming out soon!

## Welcome Saturday Sunday

This month marks 8 years since we launched Welcome Saturday, our monthly ministry with our neighbors living with food and shelter insecurity! To celebrate, we will be holding Welcome Saturday Sunday on October 20!

We are excited to welcome guest speaker Bonnie Baranoff, who is deeply involved with homelessness services and issues here in East County. We will also be collecting a special offering for the Welcome Saturday Fund during worship that day. Please come prepared to be inspired by the life-changing/enhancing/giving ministry!

## Supper of Substance

It’s not too late to decide to join us for our first Supper of Substance, on Friday, Sept. 27 at 6 PM in Bailey Hall! It’s a potluck, so please bring a main dish, side dish, salad, or dessert to share. But the main “substance” will be our conversations about Things That Matter!

This time, we’ll be reflecting on our hopes and fears about the upcoming election, through the lens of our shared faith. The discussion will be carefully structured to make room for grace. People of all viewpoints are welcome! Please feel free to invite a friend or neighbor!

Our next Supper of Substance is scheduled for Friday, November 1. The topic for that evening has not been decided yet.

## From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

Sometimes I think that hope is my favorite Christian virtue. Obviously, I'm a fan of compassion and peace and joy and community and all the other things that following Jesus entails. But sometimes it feels like hope is what makes it possible to practice all those other virtues. Because a lot of the time, it seems like none of it is making any difference. If we didn't have hope, we would be pushed into demanding immediate results from every good thing we do, and that simply isn't how life works.

The thing about hope is that embedded within it is another Christian virtue that we probably don't talk about enough: humility. Wanting things to work out the way we want isn't quite what hope is about. Hope means trusting that God is working things out for the good and recognizing that we may or may not have any idea what that will look like. Hope admits that there are mysteries we do not comprehend. We may hope a loved one who is approaching the end won't die, but we know that eventually death comes to all of us. Hope reminds us that death is not the end, even though the depth of our grief may seem overwhelming.

Hope recognizes that when we say we trust that God is working all things out for the good, we admit that our idea of good and God's idea of good do not always match. Hope isn't about God magically fulfilling our wishes; it's about putting our lives in God's hands and knowing love will prevail.

grace & peace,

*Pastor Rebecca*

### Pastor's Schedule

Pastor Rebecca will be attending the Regional Assembly in Fullerton, October 18-19.

## Regional Assembly

The Pacific Southwest Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will meet for our Regional Assembly on October 18-19, at the Disciples Ministry Center in Fullerton, CA. All Disciples and friends are welcome!

The theme this year is "Love Your Neighbor As Yourself" from Matthew 22:39, following the last couple of years focused on loving God with our whole being.

Special guests will include our General Minister & President, Rev. Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens, and Rev. Dr. Eric C. Smith, our Bible lecturer. The business sessions will include Pastor Rebecca presenting the Slate of Nominees for the 2025-2026 biennium, culminating her work in her second term as the Regional Nominating Chair, in addition to a vote on extending a second term to our Regional Minister Rev. Richie Sanchez.

There will be invigorating worship sessions, which will be live-streamed, and numerous workshops. You can register and learn more about how to participate virtually at:

<http://www.disciplespswr.org/ra2024>

If you would like to attend as a voting delegate, please let Pastor Rebecca know ASAP. So far, the only VLMers attending are clergy, who already have voting privileges.

## Vista La Mesa Christian Church

Sharing the Joy of  
Christ's Welcome!

[www.vlmcc.org](http://www.vlmcc.org)

Daylight Saving Time ends  
at 2:00 AM on Sunday,  
November 3rd.  
Enjoy your extra hour!

## Cooking with Chef Claudette

Our kids have loved cook with Chef Claudette this year! And the rest of us have even gotten to taste the results once in a while. This month, there will be two opportunities.

On Sunday, October 6, Chef Claudette will be joined by special guest Marianna Kirwan and her feathered friend! The kids and the parrot will all get treats – spaghetti for birds and hummingbird cake for humans! This is all in celebration of the Feast of St. Francis.

Then on Sunday, October 13, we will explore the part of the story of Daniel when a hand wrote on the wall and Daniel was the only one who could read it. That day, we will be making “edible crayons,” though we won’t be writing on the walls with them!

If you have a special skill you would like to share with our youngest Disciples on a occasional basis, please be in touch with Pastor Rebecca or Christian Education Chair Cheryl Davis-Plotts. This is a great way to enhance the VLM experience for our families!

**Novels Tea**  
Sunday 11/3  
3 pm on Zoom  
Discussing “This Rebel Heart”

**Lunch Bunch**  
Wednesday  
10/16 at noon  
Marie Callender's  
hosted by Mary Alynn Fallon

## Disciples Class – Sundays @ 9 am

Did you know that you’re invited to Disciples Class? It is a great way to develop your relationship with scripture and with other folks at VLM. We meet in Bailey Hall and on Zoom each Sunday at 9 AM. We pray together and then explore scripture, using different translations, study Bibles, and commentaries. Right now, we’re working our way through First Corinthians, which has lots of interesting passages. Join us!

## In Our Prayers...

JOYS & CONCERNS ~ Please contact Pastor Rebecca for prayers.

## Happy Birthday!

- Oct. 1 - Cher Flores
- Oct. 4 - Jerry Bailey, Haylee Hanna
- Oct. 5 - Jenny Angione
- Oct. 9 - Josie Hahn
- Oct. 10 - Betty Sullivan
- Oct. 11 - Sara Gurling
- Oct. 17 - Mark Reagles
- Oct. 22 - Bob Neely
- Oct. 31 - Alexander Reagles

**We’ve collected \$165 (so far) toward our \$500 goal for the Reconciliation Special Offering! Thank you!**

## CONSIDERING VLM'S FUTURE(S)

When the Board met in September, Board Chair Karen Cliffe challenged the group to commit to new and bold conversations about the long-term future of our congregation. The Board was asked to consider not just our financial position, but the decline in worship attendance we have experienced during and since the pandemic. The group agreed that it is time for some serious conversations about the long-term viability of our congregation.

A joint meeting of the Board and the Elders was scheduled for Tuesday, October 15 at 6 PM, in person and on Zoom. This meeting is open to anyone who wishes to attend, but Board members and Elders are requested to be present. This will be the first of many meetings as we consider possibilities and strategies for moving toward a sustainable ministry model. Your input is vital! Even if you can't attend the meeting, it is likely there will be other ways to share your thoughts as we move through the conversations. We hope you will make an effort to be involved in some way.

## News from the Board

The General Board met on 9/25 for their first synchronous meeting of the ministry year. Remember that Board meetings are open, and you are always welcome to attend.

At this meeting, the Board discussed our current financial position, which is a bit precarious. They made the decision to join the Memorial Endowment Committee in recommending that \$10,000 be pulled immediately from the Memorial Endowment Fund, to cover immediate cash flow issues. This withdrawal represents half of what was authorized by the congregation for operating expenses in this fiscal year, so normally only one quarter of it would be pulled at this time. However, it was the clear position of the MEC and the Board that a larger withdrawal is necessary.

July & August are always thin months for giving. If you travel in the summer, please consider making your regular donations online or mailing them in, rather than skipping those months. We really do depend on all of us to make it work!

## Mark Your Calendars!

**Supper of Substance** – Friday, Sept. 27, 6 PM  
**World Communion Sunday** – Sunday, Oct. 6  
**Welcome Saturday** – Saturday, Oct. 12  
**Futures Meeting** – Tuesday, Oct. 15, 6 PM  
**Regional Assembly** – October 18-19  
**Welcome Saturday Sunday** – Sunday, Oct. 20  
**Trunk-or-Treat** – Saturday, Oct. 26, 3-6 PM  
**Supper of Substance** – Friday, Nov. 1, 6 PM  
**All Saints Memorial Service** – Sunday, Nov. 3  
**Welcome Saturday** – Saturday, Nov. 9  
**Sanctuary Decorating** – Saturday, Nov. 30, 11 AM  
**First Sunday of Advent** – December 1  
**Christmas Concert & Party** – Sun., Dec. 8, 5:30 PM  
**Welcome Saturday** – Saturday, Dec. 14  
**Caroling Party** – Saturday, Dec. 21, 2 PM  
**Christmas Eve Service** – Tuesday, Dec. 24 6 PM

## “Baptizing America”

A number of VLMers have been participating in the Regional book discussion that Pastor Rebecca has been facilitating on “Baptizing America: How Mainline Protestants Helped Build Christian Nationalism.” We have all learned a lot. And now you can too! After our last session on Oct. 6, you could borrow a copy of the book from Rebecca, Deborah, Michelle, Larry, Tesa, Claudette, or Cheryl. Various folks have other books on the topic that you could borrow as well.

If you're looking for other resources on Christian Nationalism, Pastor Rebecca curates a resource list that includes podcasts, articles, websites and more. [Click here](#) to take a look!

# October 2024 Worship Participants

	October 6	October 13	October 20	October 27
<b>Worship Leader</b>	Cheryl Davis-Plotts	Steve Bridwell	Mary Jane Fay	Tim Cliffe
<b>Lay Reader</b>	Ilene Kiser	Tracy Stockdall	Deborah Wilson	Cheryl Davis-Plotts
<b>Offering Invitation</b>	Rebecca Littlejohn	Ray Adsit	Rebecca Littlejohn	Marianna Kirwan
<b>Elders</b>	Cheryl Davis-Plotts Larry Knight (Mary Jane)	Steve Bridwell Marianna Kirwan	Mary Jane Fay Michael Lewis	Tim Cliffe Jennefer Lehton
<b>Deacons</b>	Mary Alynn Fallon John Lehton Lyn Van Winkle	Al Flores Daphne Flores Tracy Stockdall	Ilene Kiser Michaela Stockdall Claudette Toland	Jenny Angione Bill Kwon Susan Peterson
<b>Comm Prep &amp; Clean up</b>	Ilene Kiser	Jenny Angione	Susan Peterson	Bill Kwon
<b>AV Tech Zoom Tech</b>	Tracy Stockdall Michaela Stockdall	Mary Alynn Fallon Michaela Stockdall	Tracy Stockdall Karen Cliffe	Jenny Angione Karen Cliffe
<b>Greeters</b>	Michael Lewis Daphne Flores	Ray Adsit Mary Jane Fay	Michael Lewis John Lehton	Ray Adsit Ilene Kiser
<b>Counters</b>	Lyn Van Winkle Tracy Stockdall	Steve Bridwell Mary Alynn Fallon	John Lehton Jenny Angione	Andy Cliffe 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: Disciples Class @ 9:00 – Worship @ 10:30**

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

## CHURCH STAFF

Senior Pastor: **Rev. Rebecca Littlejohn**

Office Admin: **Krista Trimlett**

Music Director: **Deborah Wilson**

Nursery: **Stephanie Cadiero**

Custodian: **Scott Tiemann**

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Pastor's E-mail: [pastor@vlmcc.org](mailto:pastor@vlmcc.org)

Church website: [www.vlmcc.org](http://www.vlmcc.org)