

# The Christian Visitor

VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH ~ JULY 2025  
*An Open & Affirming Congregation*

## Praying for Peace

The world has gotten very heavy. The airwaves are full of what Jesus called “wars and rumors of wars.” It can easily feel overwhelming, especially when things shift so quickly from day to day.

What we know will not change is God’s call to peace, the peace that surpasses our understanding. And so we have decided to open our doors to the community, to come together and pray for peace.

Every Thursday, between 12:15-12:45, we will have the Sanctuary open, with a prayer table up front. The service will vary from week to week, but it will mostly be a time for silent prayer with soft music and candles. Participants can come and go as needed in that half hour. Join us and bring a friend!

## Open & Affirming Offering

We have decided to live out our commitment to being an Open & Affirming Congregation by creating a new annual special offering. We will hold this special, “over-and-above” offering on the weekend of San Diego’s Pride Celebration, usually the third Sunday of July.

All of the donations received in this special offering will be split evenly between San Diego Pride and Disciples Alliance Q+, our denominational body that supports this ministry of our church.

Watch for special offering envelopes in your bulletin that week, or give online at [www.vlmcc.org](http://www.vlmcc.org). Our goal for all our special offerings is \$500. Thank you for your contributions!

## Enhancing Communion

The Elders & Deacons met in June and decided to try something new at communion time. We will still be inviting the congregation to come forward to receive, and someone will always come serve those who can’t come forward in their seats.

We will still have one tray of pre-sealed communion sets for those who prefer them; these will be offered by the Elder on the window side of the room. The Elder on the hill side of the room will, instead, have a tray with the roll Pastor Rebecca has broken and a chalice with grape juice, for those who would like to partake by intinction.

We know that different folks have different concerns and priorities for this important moment in the service, and we want to offer a variety of ways to participate. We will begin in July and then assess this shift at the end of the summer.

Elders & Deacons, watch your email for the updated set-up and procedures guidelines.

## General Assembly!

The General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada will gather in Memphis, TN, July 12-15. Pastor Rebecca will be attending, along with Renee & Steve Bridwell. This is the last biennial assembly; the next one will be in 2028, and the new model that involves delegates in additional venues in between gatherings will be implemented.

Rev. Tesa Hauser will be preaching for us on Sunday, July 13.

## From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

A number of years ago, a colleague friend (who had previously been my Sunday school teacher) recruited me to be part of a skit at General Assembly. It got me thinking about other possibilities for skits at GA. Here's the one I wrote in my head, adapted for this year.

Person 1: We're so excited about our new minister!

Person 2: Well, where is she?

Person 1: In Memphis. When she arrived, the package clearly said "Some Assembly required!"

I am definitely a pastor who requires Assembly. I went to my first GA in Des Moines in 1985 at 9 years old. I have only missed a handful since then. One of my delights is introducing ministers who are newer to the Disciples to all the wonders of the Exhibit Hall and other parts of the gathering. This will be my first Assembly since 2003 when I don't have an "official" job whether as a board member or workshop leader. I wasn't too sure about that, so I've signed up to be an usher and a workshop room host. As a former Executive Committee member for Disciples Peace Fellowship, I will probably help out at their booth as well. Gatherings this size need lots of help to run smoothly! There will be lots of reunions, walking, and convention center dinners, with very little sleep. Yet, somehow, I will come home energized, because I do require some Assembly!

grace & peace,

*Pastor Rebecca*

### Pastor Rebecca's Schedule

Pastor Rebecca will be attending General Assembly in Memphis, July 11-16. She will also be one of two Disciples representatives at a working conference sponsored by Churches for Middle East Peace at the Carter Center in Atlanta, July 28-30.

## An Open-Ended Process

If you were in worship on June 22, you noticed that our pulpit swap with Missiongathering got moved up a couple weeks, and that Pastor Braeden was with us that day to lead worship and preach. (That was due to scheduling issues on their end.) That same day, Pastor Rebecca was over at Missiongathering leading worship and preaching for them.

This was just another step in having our congregations get to know each other. A closer partnership with MG is one of the things we decided to explore in our Futures Process conversations. They are also in a moment of discerning the way forward for their congregation, so we will continue to find ways to imagine possibilities together.

We are tentatively planning a "worship swap" for August, in which we would all visit them one Sunday to experience their service, and then host them the next Sunday at ours. We may also schedule a social event, where we have more informal time to get to know each other.

This is an open-ended conversation that could eventually result in a congregational merger, but such a possibility is a long way off, as there is MUCH to consider about how that would work. We will go slow, listening to everyone's thoughts, questions, ideas and dreams along the way!

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**REGIONAL GATHERING**  
**OCTOBER 18, 2024**

**Vista La Mesa Christian Church**  
Celebrating the unity and  
Diversity of the Body of Christ!  
[www.vlmcc.org](http://www.vlmcc.org)

*Thank you for your donations to  
the Pentecost Special Offering!  
We collected \$430  
for New Church Ministries!*

## Important Dates This Month

Board Reports due – July 7  
Admin Committee – July 8  
Welcome Saturday – July 12  
Guest Preacher – July 13  
Lunch Bunch – July 16  
Worship Committee – July 18  
Food Drive – July 20  
Novels Tea – July 20  
Fellowship Committee – July 22  
Board Meeting – July 23  
Pray for Peace – Every Thursday!

## Kids Cooking

All kids are invited to Cooking with Chef Claudette on Sunday, July 27. We will make prayer puzzles and prayer sandwiches for the Feast of St. Daniel.

Come and bring your friends and your friends' kids and your kids' friends! Let Pastor Rebecca know if you can be here that Sunday, so Chef can plan appropriately.

## Novels Tea

Novels Tea will be discussing "The Prophets" by Robert Jones, Jr., on Sunday, July 20 at 2:30 pm on Zoom. Anyone who has read the book is welcome to join.

## Lunch Bunch

Wednesday,  
July 16, 12 pm  
at Janet's Cafe,  
Santee  
Vicky & Gary  
Wilhite, hosts

## 2025-2026 Directory

Now that the new ministry year has begun, we will be updating our church directory. Watch for the clipboard with the draft copy coming out soon, so you can confirm, update, or correct your contact information. We like to help our church family stay connected, by letting you know how to get in touch with one another. Please let Pastor Rebecca know if you don't want certain information shared.

## Welcome Saturday

Welcome Saturday chugged along smoothly in June, with Gary & Vicky running prep, and Joanna from MG taking the reins on Saturday! They'll all do it again this month, while Rebecca is at General Assembly. We are so grateful for all our volunteers – from VLM, MG, UCC, and Helix!

We are still in need of towels – older, worn towels for bathmats, but also regular bath & hand towels.

Thanks for your support!

*Happy*

*Birthday!*

- July 6 ~ Mary Alynn Fallon
- July 9 ~ Teaghan Townsend
- July 10 ~ Cheryl Davis-Plotts  
Gary Wilhite
- July 13 ~ Lisa Martin
- July 17 ~ Nancy Knight
- July 18 ~ Marques Gurling
- July 21 ~ Adrian Morey
- July 22 ~ Karen Cliffe
- July 31 ~ Michael Martin

*Happy*

*Anniversary!*

- July 18 ~ Christi & Jaime  
Neely-Carlson

## In Our Prayers...

JOYS & CONCERNS~ Please contact Pastor Rebecca for prayers.

## Stewardship News

Our ministry year and our fiscal year conclude at the end of June. As you heard at our Congregational Meeting on June 8, our financial situation at that point was not very pretty. We were waiting on the final disbursement from the Memorial Endowment Fund to land in our bank account to pull us out of the red.

We are happy to report that, in addition to that subsidy from our investment funds, giving has been very good in June. We do not have final numbers yet, but we give thanks to all our generous donors!

Personalized offering envelopes for the new ministry year starting in July are available now for those who use them. You can pick them up in the back of the Sanctuary. Thanks also to all of our online donors using tithe or your own bank to give.

## Volunteers Needed!

There are a few volunteer rotations that could really use a couple more people. Contact Pastor Rebecca if you'd be up for any of these roles. Thanks for considering how you could help out!

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

**Lay Reader** – reads the scripture in worship.

**Offering Invitation** – share a testimony or story about the blessings of supporting the church, to inspire the congregation to give generously. (You can do this just once, instead of joining a rotation, if you want.)

**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).

## General Board 2025-2026

The first General Board meeting of the new ministry year will be held on Wednesday, July 23 at 6 PM on Zoom and in the Pastor's Office. Board reports are due on Monday, July 7, prior to the Administrative Committee meeting on Tuesday, July 8 at 6 PM on Zoom and in the office. If you need a Board report form or assistance completing your report, check with Pastor Rebecca. Board meetings are open to all members of VLM.

We will be reviewing our fiscal year-end financial status, as well as approving some appointments and discussing future possibilities.

The General Board for 2025-2026 consists of Chair Karen Cliffe, Vice-Chair Tracy Stockdall, Secretary Gary Wilhite, Stewardship & Finance Chair Larry Knight, Trustee Hélène Sisneros, Personnel Chair Amy Cliffe, Elders Chair Steve Bridwell, Deacons Chair Lyn Van Winkle, Worship Chair Mary Alynn Fallon, Christian Education Chair Cheryl Davis-Plotts, Outreach Chair Mary Jane Fay, Fellowship Chair Vicky Wilhite, Property Chair John Lehton, Memorial Endowment Committee Chair Andy Cliffe, and Pastor Rebecca.



Our Open & Affirming status was made official in June with this certificate from Alliance Q+ that now hangs in the Narthex, welcoming all!

# July 2025 Worship Participants

	July 6	July 13	July 20	July 27
<b>Worship Leader</b>	Karen Cliffe	Cheryl Davis-Plotts	Tim Cliffe	Mary Jane Fay
<b>Lay Reader</b>	Mary Jane Fay	Michael Lewis	Jennefer Lehton	Ilene Kiser
<b>Offering Invitation</b>	Rebecca Littlejohn	Marianna Kirwan	Rebecca Littlejohn	Rebecca Littlejohn
<b>Elders</b>	Karen Cliffe Tesa Hauser	Cheryl Davis-Plotts Marianna Kirwan	Tim Cliffe Gary Wilhite	Mary Jane Fay Jennefer Lehton
<b>Deacons</b>	Mary Alynn Fallon Ilene Kiser Tracy Stockdall	Daphne Flores John Lehton Lyn Van Winkle	Susan Peterson Michaela Stockdall Claudette Toland	Jenny Angione Vicky Wilhite
<b>Comm Prep &amp; Clean up</b>	Ilene Kiser (prep) Mary Alynn Fallon	Mary Fallon (prep) Tracy Stockdall	Ilene Kiser	Tracy Stockdall
<b>Greeters</b>	Michael Lewis Daphne Flores	Vicky & Gary Wilhite	Marianna Kirwan John Lehton	Ilene Kiser Michael Lewis
<b>Counters</b>	John Lehton Jenny Angione	Tracy Stockdall Renee Bridwell	Lyn Van Winkle Andy Cliffe	Steve Bridwell Ilene Kiser
<b>AV Tech Zoom Tech</b>	Tracy Stockdall Michaela Stockdall	Tracy Stockdall Karen Cliffe	Mary Alynn Fallon Michaela Stockdall	Jenny Angione Karen Cliffe

## WHO AND WHERE WE ARE

We are an Open & Affirming 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.

**Sunday Worship @ 10:30**

**Secretary's Hours:** Tues/Thur/Fri 9-12 pm  
The Pastor is off on Mondays.

## 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.org](mailto:pastor@vlmcc.org)

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