

The Christian Visitor

VISTA LA MESA CHRISTIAN CHURCH ~ JULY 2026
An Open & Affirming Congregation

Installation of Lay Leaders

Our new ministry year begins (the Sunday before) with a liturgy to bless those who have taken on commitments to various kinds of leadership within our congregation. Elders, Deacons, Committee Chairs and Board Officers all carry out specific vital tasks to keep our ministries faithful and robust.

As part of the ceremony, all of those leaders are reminded that “serious commitment to one’s own spiritual development is part of the role of congregational leaders, both for your sake and as an example for other members of the congregation, so that the basic Christian disciplines of worship, prayer, study and stewardship become an integral part of your being.” This is an important reminder for all of us: serving God’s people is easier and more fruitful when we’re doing it to also serve God by following Jesus!

General Assembly

Our denomination, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States & Canada, is living into a new structure for gathering and sharing life together across the whole church. Part of the new structure is having a General Assembly every year, two online and then one in person. (We used to just gather in person every 2 years.) This month is our first online Assembly!

It’s not too late to register, so you can participate in the various offerings of worship, dialogue, learning and more! Click here to check out the schedule and learn more.

O&A SPECIAL OFFERING

When we became an Open & Affirming Congregation last year, we decided to commit to that by creating a new annual special offering. We scheduled this special “over-and-above” offering on the Sunday of the weekend of San Diego’s Pride Celebration, which is July 19 this year.

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 within our church.

Watch for special offering envelopes in your bulletin that week, or give online at www.vlmcc.org. Our goal for each of our special offerings is \$500. Thank you for your contributions!

Saturday Forums

We are looking forward to two Saturday Forums in August! These hour-long sessions give us the chance to hear from leaders from around the Disciples about topics of interest and then share in discussion with them and Disciples from other congregations. We invite our friends from Missiongathering and the rest of the Region to join us! On August 1st, we’ll hear from Rev. Ryan Cullumber about Living Coast Ministry at Harbor Christian Church. On August 22nd, we’ll hear from Rev. Brian Frederick-Gray, Minister of Justice & Advocacy at Disciples Home Missions.

From My View at the Table

Dear Church,

We have spent the last few weeks in worship focused on spiritual maturity, with Ephesians 4 as our focus scripture. Spiritual maturity is essential for helping the body (the church) grow up in love. We touched on how the faithfulness with which we help the church flourish is also a model for how to conduct ourselves in the wider world, to promote justice. We looked at the importance of both trust and transparency, and how both require intentional effort and time to cultivate. We talked about how healthy congregational systems require that we share the work, so that no one person is overloaded and no one is left out. We will be finishing up with some reflections on the need for flexibility; the church isn't a rotisserie oven we can "set and forget". If we're serving a changing world, we must stay on top of how to adapt to those changes.

Early on, we talked about the fruit of the spirit as listed in Galatians 3. We decided there are many other attributes that contribute to spiritual maturity, such as empathy, courage, honesty, integrity, and wisdom. There are many other things we could say about spiritual maturity and its importance within a congregation. What would you choose to talk about if you were invited to give a sermon about spiritual maturity? Who are your examples? Is there a time you saw someone's spiritual maturity help avoid a mess turning into a crisis? What has helped you grow?

grace & peace,

Pastor Rebecca

Pastor Rebecca's Schedule

Pastor Rebecca will be taking time off while her mom, Minta Colburn, is visiting July 16-21 (but she'll be in worship Sunday & Tuesday). Please remember that her regular days off are Mondays and Saturdays when there isn't an event on the calendar.

Memorial Service

We join the family of Michael Lewis in mourning his passing on June 14, 2026, after a brief season of decline this spring. We continue to surround Marianna Kirwan with our prayers of sympathy and care. Contact the office if you would like contact information for her.

A memorial service will be held Sunday, July 26 at 2:00 pm, at Marina Village Conference Center (1936 Quiver Way, San Diego) on the South Lawn. A reception will follow in the Catalina Room.

We encourage folks to car pool to the location from the church, so we can minimize the need for parking and ensure no one gets lost!

Choir members, watch for information about specially called practice sessions, as we may be sharing an anthem during the service.

Disciples Class

Our Sunday Morning Bible Study will meet July 5 & 12, and then go on break for the summer. We will reconvene in September to continue our study of Matthew.

SAVE THE DATE!

REGIONAL ASSEMBLY

OCTOBER 16-17, 2026

Vista La Mesa Christian Church

Celebrating the Unity and
Diversity of the Body of Christ!
www.vlmcc.org

*Thank you for your donations to
the Pentecost Special Offering!
We collected \$485
for New Church Ministries!*

July Schedule

Pray for Peace – Every Tuesday!
Board Reports due – July 10
Welcome Saturday – July 11
Lunch Bunch – July 15
Pastor Off – July 16-20 (not Sunday)
Food Drive – July 19
Worship Committee – July 22
Admin Committee – July 22
Memorial Service – July 26
Fellowship Committee – July 29
Board Meeting – July 29

Novels Tea

Lots of our readers are traveling this summer, so we're taking a break in July & August.

We will reconvene on Sunday, September 6 at 2:30 on Zoom, to discuss "The Bones Beneath My Skin" by T.J. Klune.

If you like to read and discuss what you've read, talk to Pastor Rebecca to see if Novels Tea might be a good fit for you!

Send Mail to Ed by 7/5!

Edward Gurling
CYF Camp
Loch Leven Camp
36910 Mill Creek Rd.
Mentone, CA 92359

Lunch Bunch
Wednesday,
July 15, 12 pm
at Black Bear Diner,
El Cajon
Ilene Kiser, host

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

We had our first joint Outreach meeting with folks from Missiongathering last month, and Welcome Saturday was the primary focus. We are so grateful for how the congregation has stepped up to help us stabilize the financial situation of this ministry. Two years ago, we were facing serious funding problems, and now the WS Fund is stronger than ever! Thanks to all our faithful donors, sponsors, and volunteers!

In Our Prayers...

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

Happy Birthday!

7/6 ~ Mary Alynn Fallon
7/9 ~ Teaghan Townsend
7/10 ~ Gary Wilhite,
Cheryl Davis-Plotts
7/13 ~ Lisa Martin
7/17 ~ Nancy Knight
7/18 ~ Marques Gurling
7/21 ~ Adrian Morey
7/22 ~ Karen Cliffe
7/31 ~ Michael Martin

Happy Anniversary!

7/18 ~ Christi & Jaime
Neely-Carlson

Stewardship News

Our ministry year and our fiscal year conclude at the end of June. As you heard at our Congregational Meeting on June 14, our financial situation at the end of May was better than it has been at that point in a very long time! We are so grateful for all our generous and faithful donors!

As we begin the new ministry year, it's a good time to review the intentions you set during our annual stewardship campaign in April. Or if you didn't make one then, perhaps now is a better moment for you to consider what kind of commitments you are being called to make to this congregation in the next 12 months, financial and otherwise. We know that anyone's situation can change and no one will be tracked down to shake out your loose change. But humans usually follow through on their convictions better if we make a thoughtful decision to do so, rather than just assuming we'll do it when it comes up. Thanks for your prayerful consideration!

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.

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 2026-2027

The first General Board meeting of the new ministry year will be held on Wednesday, July 29 at 6:30 PM on Zoom and in the Pastor's Office. Board reports are due on Friday, July 10, and the Administrative Committee meeting will be Wednesday, July 22 at 6:30 PM on Zoom and in the office. Board meetings are open to all members of VLM.

We will be reviewing our fiscal year-end financial status and approving appointments. We will also spend some time reviewing our structure and orienting all leaders for the new year.

The General Board for 2026-2027 consists of Chair Karen Cliffe, Vice-Chair Tracy Stockdall, Secretary Jenny Angione, Stewardship & Finance Chair Tesa Hauser, Trustee Hélène Sisneros, Personnel Chair Amy Cliffe, Worship Chair Mary Alynn Fallon, Christian Education Chair Cheryl Davis-Plotts, Outreach Chair Mary Jane Fay, Fellowship Chair Vicky Wilhite, Property Chair Gary Wilhite, and Pastor Rebecca, plus the Chairs of the Elders, Deacons and the Memorial Endowment Committee, who have yet to be selected.

Ministry of the Deacons

As the new ministry year begins, all of our elected lay leaders will start or continue their work in new rotations. The Deacons, in particular, are testing out a new scheduling method. Instead of using teams assigned to each month for communion set-up & clean-up, we have created a rotation of all the Deacons that stretches through the whole year.

Deacons, as you become aware of Sundays you can't be present, be sure to check the schedule to see if you're assigned to that day, and find someone to switch with you, as needed. Please make sure to tell the office when you make switches, so we can publish accurate information. We will keep a copy of the schedule in the kitchen, inside the communion cupboard, so you can check it easily and make switches there. Remember that you can just switch set-up or clean-up if that works better.

July 2026 Worship Participants

	July 5	July 12	July 19	July 26
Worship Leader	Mary Jane Fay	Renee Bridwell	Jennefer Lehton	Steve Bridwell
Lay Reader	Tracy Stockdall	Gary Wilhite	Michaela Stockdall	Cheryl Davis-Plotts
Offering Invitation	Rebecca Littlejohn	Steve Bridwell	Rebecca Littlejohn	Rebecca Littlejohn
Elders	Mary Jane Fay Gary Wilhite	Renee Bridwell Marianna Kirwan	Jennefer Lehton Cheryl Davis-Plotts	Steve Bridwell Karen Cliffe
Deacons	Ilene Kiser John Lehton Lyn Van Winkle	Jenny Angione Tracy Stockdall Vicky Wilhite	Mary Alynn Fallon Al Flores Lisa Milan	Daphne Flores Susan Peterson Michaela Stockdall
Communion Prep & Clean	Ilene Kiser	Mary Alynn Fallon	Ilene Kiser	Al Flores
AV Tech Zoom Tech	Mary Alynn Fallon Vicky Wilhite	Tracy Stockdall Michaela Stockdall	Jenny Angione Karen Cliffe	Tracy Stockdall Michaela Stockdall
Greeters	John Lehton Mary Jane Fay	Vicky & Gary Wilhite	John Lehton Lisa Milan	Daphne Flores Steve Bridwell
Counters	Ilene Kiser John Lehton	Steve Bridwell Andy Cliffe	Tracy Stockdall Jenny Angione	John Lehton Renee Bridwell

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.

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

Office E-mail: admin@vlmcc.org

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

Church website: www.vlmcc.org