



# BE *the* BLESSING

## CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 15, 2019

# Welcome!

We are so glad you are here!  
We pray that you will encounter  
God as you worship with us.

## Today

- 8:00am First Worship Service
- 9:30am Bible Classes for all ages
- 10:45am Second Worship Service
- 5:00pm All-Church Christmas Party at the Marrs' home

## This Week

- Dec 16 Women's Bible Study
- Dec 16 Monday Night Guys' Group
- Dec 18 Caroling at TO Royale
- Dec 20 T.O. Small Group Bible Study (Fosters')
- Dec 20 Extravagodyssey

## Upcoming Events

- Dec 22 Christmas Celebration Services

## Welcome and Response

Please fill out a Welcome Card located beneath the chair in front of you. Let us know if there are ways that the ministry team can pray for you or those you love.

## How Would You Do It Better?

By Andy Wall

*"Criticize by creating."* — Michelangelo

There are several variations of the above saying, attributed to Renaissance artist Michelangelo Buonarroti. One is, "I criticize by creating something beautiful." The Roman statesman Marcus Tullius Cicero said, "I criticize by creation, not by finding fault." Finnish composer Jean Sibelius said, "Pay no attention to what the critics say. A statue has never been erected in honor of a critic."

Relatively speaking, it's easier to criticize, find fault with, or point out the error of another's ways. And while criticisms are sometimes warranted, often they are simply the deification of one person's subjective opinions. Far, far more difficult is to actually improve something, to bring about renewal, to infuse with life that which has grown stale or dull. Far more difficult still is to create something of self-evident beauty, value, or utility.

It's one thing to harangue Hollywood for shows and movies that are deemed unsavory and unhealthy for our society. It's quite another to create and produce shows and movies that are uplifting, inspiring, and ennobling. It is one thing to criticize the political system and its leaders as inept or corrupt. It's something else to enter the fray and try to be part of a solution to the numerous challenges facing our world. And don't even get me started on Monday morning quarterbacks!

There's nothing wrong with constructive criticism offered amidst the open exchange of ideas. But so much of what we hear these days is long on criticism and short on construction. Two other responses to challenges in our world include indifference and cynicism. Indifference shrugs its shoulders and says, "This is way too big for me; there's nothing I can do about this." And while cynicism may be a fashionable pose to strike, it ultimately is far less constructive than whatever it purports to denounce.

***I'm reflecting this year-end on several in our church family who just this year, have lit candles rather than curse the darkness. In early August, Jady DeBruyn, a high school senior, visited School On Wheels, a nonprofit tutoring center for homeless children on Skid Row in Los Angeles. Energized by what she saw there, she came home, organized a school supply drive at our church, and inspired all of us to make a difference. This fall, Audrey Charles, a fourth grader, learned about the ministry of Shelter Care Resources, a Ventura County non-profit that provides support to foster families. Then she invited and inspired us as her church family to share boxes of diapers that will bless foster babies in Ventura county.***

So the next time you're tempted to speak critically, ask yourself this question: "How would you do it better?"

# What's Happening at Conejo

## All-Church Christmas Party / Today at 5pm

The entire congregation is invited to a very special Conejo holiday gathering this evening beginning at 5pm at the

home of Rick and Paula Marrs. Make plans now to come share in a delightful evening filled with warm holiday fellowship, Christmas carols, and tasty treats. Please bring substantial hors d'oeuvres or a favorite dessert to share.



## Carols and Candlelight Service



## Diaper a Baby For Christmas!

During the month of December, we are attempting to collect 50 boxes of size 5/6 diapers to bless the babies in need in Ventura County. This particular size is especially in demand as fewer come in a box and they cost more. We are partnering with Shelter Care Resources (a non-profit 501c3) as they provide support to foster families and have a crisis teen pregnancy program. Please see Audrey and Katie Charles for questions.

## Amazon Non-Profit Program

Amazon.com has a program to support nonprofit organizations based on certain product sales. We've registered with Amazon to allow the Conejo Church to participate in this program. For this to work to our benefit, simply shop at smile.amazon.com and designate the Conejo Valley Church of Christ as your chosen charity. Amazon will send the Conejo Church 0.5% of sales on certain products.

## Online Giving

For the last few years, we have offered online giving as one way to participate in congregational giving. Our hope is that online giving will provide flexibility in how and when we give and will also help us better develop the habit of giving regularly. This will be particularly helpful during the summer months when many are out of town for weeks at a time.

There are three ways you can access our online giving:

- (1) The **Conejo website**: go to [conejochurch.org](http://conejochurch.org) and click on the "online giving" link.
- (2) Go directly to [conejochurch.churchcenter.com](http://conejochurch.churchcenter.com).
- (3) **Text** a dollar amount to **84321**.

You'll be able to make a one-time donation or to schedule regular donations directly from your checking account or from your debit or credit card. You can even designate giving toward the regular offering, the Be the Blessing campaign, or the youth group mission trip. If you have any questions, please contact Jay or Wendi King at [finance@conejochurch.org](mailto:finance@conejochurch.org).



## Advent Class

This December, our adult education program features a combined auditorium class that will explore "The Christmas You Always Wanted: **Surviving** Thriving in a Stressful December." Come join together as we tackle the busy and often stressful holiday season head-on. We will unpack practical ways to refocus and embrace the incredible joy and meaning of **Christ**-mas. If you're able to bring a favorite baked good or holiday treat during the weeks of this class, please contact Lori Brawner at (805) 416-4692.

**December 15.** Which is for All the People: Uniting With Family (Andy Wall)

**December 22.** The Savior is Born, Who is the Messiah, the Lord: Finding Salvation (Jack Williamson)

**December 29.** Peace on Earth: Resting in Christ (Steve Kliest)

## Date Night Series: Marriage Check Up

*Date Night:* Couple Checkup

Life moves fast. We can all use a bit of a break now and then. Take this opportunity to

have dinner with your spouse and take a closer, positive look at your marriage.

For five consecutive Saturday nights, **January 11-February 8, 2020**, Jack and Tami Williamson are hosting a series of date nights. These nights will feature a marriage assessment from Prepare/Enrich and include five weeks of meals and time to reflect and enjoy each other at the Conejo church building.

Child care and dinner will be provided for couples each week. Registration is \$100 per couple without childcare and \$125 per couple including childcare. Please mark your calendars and watch your email and Family News for more details. Invite your friends!



## Women's Retreat 2020

Ladies, please mark March 6-8 on your 2020 calendar planner and make plans to join the women of Conejo for a wonderful Women's Retreat. Men, please encourage your wife to take this weekend for a time of spiritual, social, and emotional encouragement.

# High School + Middle School

## REFRESH / Wednesdays at 6:30pm

From 6:30pm to 8pm weekly during the school year, the entire youth group is encouraged to gather at the church building to reconnect and encourage each other in the middle of the week. Bring your own meals and meet for dinner at 6:30. At 7pm, we have variety of activities focused on building community and studying God's Word. Come, connect, and be refreshed!

## Youth Group joining Auditorium Advent Class

The Conejo Valley youth ministry values the youth being integrated with older and younger generations, so that a deeper and more meaningful discipleship of our youth can occur. Developing relationships, serving alongside, and listening to the stories of our families at Conejo are a tool that aids in this discipleship process. From Sunday, December 1 through Sunday, December 29, the middle school and high school will join the Advent auditorium class and listen to stories of how some of our families at Conejo sift through the stress of the holiday season to find real the joy and meaning of Christmas.

## Caroling at Thousand Oaks Royale / December 18

Wednesday night, December 18, the youth group will be Caroling at Thousand Oaks Royale. All are invited to join us. If

you are a parent with younger kids not in the youth group bring them along. If you are an older member who wants to join us in singing carols to the residents, come join us. The more the merrier. We will meet at Thousand Oaks Royale (45 Erbes Rd, Thousand Oaks) at 6:15pm to practice singing a few carols before we go in and sing at 6:30pm. Please eat dinner before arriving. We will be done and off to Starbucks together by 7:30pm. Come help us bring in the joy of the season to those at Royale!



## Extravagodysey 2019 / RSVP Now

THIS Friday night, December 20, will be a night of "extra" proportion. The middle school and high school groups will gather at Conejo with other area-wide youth groups to celebrate the 2019 year and to look forward to taking greater strides in our walk with Christ in 2020. This will be an all-night event filled with worship, prayer, and loads of fun. The cost for the event is \$40 per person. This cost includes a "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker" movie ticket, unlimited missions at Lazertag Xtreme for 2 hours, and breakfast.

# Children's Ministry

## Scripture Memory

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulders.

And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6 NIV

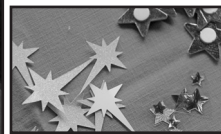
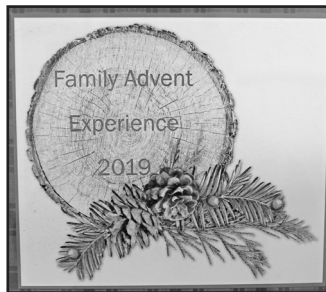
## Bible Classes

Grades 1-3 — How Great Thou Art Studio

Grades 4-5 — Museum of Biblical History

## Thank you, Volunteers and Participants

Special thanks to Alexis Lasiter, David and Leslie Stephens, Kemba MacPhee, Gram Stephens, and Tim Horton for your help with our Family Advent Experience. And thank you, families, for your enthusiastic participation during the event.



# Prayer Corner

Devote yourself to prayer being watchful and thankful. Colossians 4:2

## PRAISES

PREGNANCIES: **Holly Chambers** (April)

ENGAGEMENT: **Eric Rogers and Shannon Markiewicz**

BIRTH: **Addison Lynn Knight** (granddaughter of Ron and Sheryl Hall) born December 3.

MEDICAL: **Jenna Sepulveda** (sister of John Downey) – recovering well from surgical removal of cancer in her neck; recent tests indicate that the cancer hasn't spread

**Dede Koldyke** (cousin of Steve Scott) - successful surgical removal of stage IV squamous cell thymic carcinoma; Dede is now cancer free!

**Robin Brown** (former member) – cancer free following treatments for breast cancer!

## THOSE GRIEVING

**Neil Socquet** – loss of brothers, Scott and Ben, in helicopter accident

**Linda Jameson** (mother of Neil Socquet) – loss of her sister, Patti, and two of her sons, Scott and Ben

**Rhonda Lowry** – loss of her mother, Phyllis Appleby

**Carol McNutt** – loss of sister, Judy Erickson

**Heather Phillips** – loss of father, Dick Williams

**Gunderson family** – loss of Miriam Gunderson

**Char Hurley** – loss of father, Dale DeForest

**Sandy Stivers** – loss of mother, Nadine Tiner McBee

**Grace Price** – loss of brother, Mark Poblete

**Alexis Lasiter** – loss of mother, Mary Bell

**Tony Alvarado** – loss of mother, Linda Marcinkoski

## FIGHTING CANCER

**Jenna Sepulveda** (sister of John Downey) – metastatic thyroid cancer

**Clifton Tuggle** (uncle of Rene Heard) – prostate cancer, undergoing radiation

**Michael Smith** (friend of Coupe family) – 4-year-old diagnosed with neuroblastoma

**Shirley Moore** (mother of Nicole Montanez) – diagnosed with leukemia, started chemo; bone marrow transplant scheduled during Thanksgiving

**Ted McAllister** (former member) – multiple myeloma

**Taneisha Schuman** (friend of Buzz Guilbault) – diagnosed with stage IV cancer

**James Wooley** (uncle of Rene Heard) – too weak to continue cancer treatment; hospice care

**Kurt Krebs** (friend of Ed and Sheryl Sanders) – multiple myeloma

**Ryan Lohoff** (Julia Chesson's dance teacher) – stage IV brain cancer

**Joella Michael** – recovery following mucosal melanoma treatments

Yashica Budde's friend, **Ruth** – final stages of cancer

**Dana Sheehan** (friend of Lisa Scott) – undergoing new round of chemo

**Marlene Michaels** (friend of Lisa Scott) – stage IV cancer

**Justice Howard** (Yashica Budde's cousin) – thyroid cancer

## VARIOUS CONCERNS

**Nicole Montanez** – recently diagnosed with Lupus

**Claudia deBruyn** – recovering from surgery to remove a nerve sheath tumor on thoracic spine

**Pat Tudor** – gained better understanding cell damaging kidneys; learned of non-chemo treatment option at Mayo Clinic

**David and Allegro Rankin** (uncle and aunt of Daelan Blankfein) – continuing physical therapy

**Adria Ballard** – back surgery during holiday break

**Sarah Ballard** – relief from chronic back pain

Sarah Ballard's mom, **Becky**, facing multiple back and shoulder surgeries for chronic pain and unknown node in lung

**Ashlyn Thomas** – continued health issues; pray for answers and successful treatments

**Kathy Cocke** – pulmonary fibrosis, pulmonary hypertension

**Margie Caldwell** – heart issues

**Sam Audenino** – recovery from bicycle accident

**Harriet Nutter** (Daphne Green's

mother) – recently fell and injured knee; struggling with depression and loneliness

**Betty Brown** – pain relief, healing, and regaining of strength

**Carol McNutt** – neuropathy

**Mary McQuillan** (Kay Falletta's sister) – Parkinson's disease

**Caleb Rodriguez** (son of Marcus and Julia) – ongoing seizures

## MILITARY SERVICE

**Tyler Scott** – serving in the Navy in Camp Lejeune, NC

**Bobby Blackburn** – serving in the Navy in Pensacola, FL

**Micah Smith** – serving in the Army Rangers

**Derek Willis** (Tim Willis' nephew) – serving in PA in the Army

**Michael Warford** – stationed in San Diego with the Navy

## MISSION EFFORTS

**Megan Randolph** – teaching in Thailand

**Julie Broyles** – Bible English Study Center in Cambodia

**Raul & Betty Alvarado** – mission efforts in Panama

**Charles & Darlene Coulston** – mission work in Kenya

**Tom Bonner** – mission work in Albania

**David & Danna Willis** – mission work in Samoa

**Ryan Campbell** – mission work in Philippines

## Attendance + Giving

December 8 Attendance	
8:00 Service	60
10:45 Service	111
<b>Total Attendance</b>	<b>171</b>

December 8 Giving		\$32,409
Weekly Giving Average (2019)		\$11,837
Weekly Giving Budget (2019)		\$12,995
Be the Blessing Giving (To Date)		\$1,108,528
Wall Settlement		\$225,000

## CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

(805) 371-1381 Office | (805) 371-1384 Fax  
[www.conejochurch.org](http://www.conejochurch.org)



### CHURCH

2525 E. Hillcrest Drive  
 Thousand Oaks, CA 91362



### OFFICE

31225 La Baya Drive #214  
 Westlake Village, CA 91362

**Rene Heard / Kathia King**  
 Office Managers  
 (805) 371-1381 office  
[office@conejochurch.org](mailto:office@conejochurch.org)

**Travis Moore**  
 Youth & Family Minister  
 (520) 591-8246 cell  
[travis.moore926@gmail.com](mailto:travis.moore926@gmail.com)

**Andy Wall**  
 Preaching Minister  
 (805) 331-0187 cell  
[andy@conejochurch.org](mailto:andy@conejochurch.org)

**Penny White**  
 Children's Minister  
 (818) 857-6213 cell  
[pennymwhite502@gmail.com](mailto:pennymwhite502@gmail.com)

**Jack Williamson**  
 Outreach Minister  
 (805) 331-0183 cell  
[jack@conejochurch.org](mailto:jack@conejochurch.org)

**Elders:** Greg Brawner, Michael Ditmore, Chris Stivers, Stu Warford, Tim Willis – [elders@conejochurch.org](mailto:elders@conejochurch.org)