



# BE *the* BLESSING

CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 22, 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

### This Week

Dec 25 Christmas Day!

### Upcoming Events

Jan 5 Kickoff of Winter Adult  
Education Classes  
Jan 5 YG Mentor Sunday  
Jan 11 Date Night Series begins

### 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.

## What If Jesus Had Never Come?

By Andy Wall

One of my favorite Christmas films is Frank Capra's 1946 classic, "It's A Wonderful Life." My family and I watched it many times as I was growing up. Call me sentimental if you must, but I can't help but grow misty eyed when protagonist George Bailey (Jimmy Stewart), who has been given the opportunity to see what his little community would have become had he never been born, realizes what a gift life is and that his life has actually made a difference to many. "It's A Wonderful Life" is a feel-good movie that reminds me that we are doing more good than we realize.

In the literary genre of "Alternative History," writers create fascinating works of fiction by posing a different outcome in key historical moments: What if Grant hadn't won the battle of Gettysburg? What if Germany had won World War II? What if George McFly didn't kiss Lorraine at the homecoming dance in "Back to the Future?"

So reflect with me about "Emmanuel," a name given to Jesus in Matthew 1:23 that means "God with us." I've been asking myself what the world might look like today had Jesus never been born. What if Bethlehem's manger was empty? What if instead of God's presence in Jesus Christ, there was simply a historical absence, an empty void?

Absent Jesus of Nazareth, the past 2000 years of world history would have undoubtedly been worse. Carlton Hayes has this to say about the difference Jesus has made in our world: "From the wellsprings of Christian compassion, our Western civilization has drawn its inspiration, and its sense of duty, for feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, looking after the homeless, clothing the naked, tending the sick, and visiting the prisoner." George Grant writes, "as missionaries circled the globe ... They established hospitals. They founded orphanages. They started rescue missions. They built almshouses. They opened soup kitchens. They incorporated charitable societies. They changed laws. They demonstrated love. They lived as if people mattered."

***Had Jesus never come, this world would be much worse off, especially for children, slaves, and women. His absence alone would account for much additional evil, misery, and injustice around our world. Or to put it positively, Jesus' presence in human history has made a world of difference. And with that thought, I bid you all a very merry Christmas indeed!***

# What's Happening at Conejo

## All-Church Christmas Party

Thank you, Rick and Paula, for welcoming the congregation into your home for an evening of Christmas celebration.



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!

## 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. (To date, AmazonSmile has donated a total of \$622.79 to CVCC!)

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

**December 29.** Peace on Earth: Resting in Christ

## 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.



## 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 / Returns January 8

There will be no Refresh for the next two Wednesday's (Christmas Day & New Year's Day). Refresh will return as normal on Wednesday, January 8. See you in the next decade! Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

## Caroling at Thousand Oaks Royale

Thanks to all who joined us for this year's caroling. You were a blessing to our neighbors at Thousand Oaks Royale!



## Mentor Sunday / January 5

The first Sunday of every month we have mentor groups that meet to build relationships, provide support for one another, and plant the seeds of faith. Older adults from Conejo have committed to walk alongside our middle school and high school students who are willing to be mentored. These groups will meet the first Sunday of 2020 following second service.

## Sunday Night Student-Led Devotional

Sunday night, January 5, from 5-7:30pm, the middle school and high school groups will gather for a Sunday night devotional at the Moore's (12904 Sleepy Wind St., Moorpark, CA 93021). Girls are asked to bring a dinner item to share and guys are asked to bring a side item to share. The Moore family will provide drinks and dessert. Come connect, blow off steam, and spend some time worshipping together!

## Youth Ministry Parent Meeting

Parents of middle school and high school students have a parents' meeting Sunday, January 12, at 9:30am in the south overflow classroom during bible class. This is an important information and planning meeting that you should make a priority to attend. Please reach out to Travis if you are unable to attend.

# 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

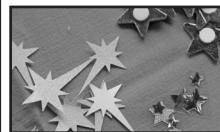
## Bible Classes

Grades 1-3 — Matters of Faith Lab

Grades 4-5 — Let There Be Light Theatre

## 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 15 Attendance	
8:00 Service	61
10:45 Service	145
<b>Total Attendance</b>	<b>206</b>

December 15 Giving		\$13,339
Weekly Giving Average (2019)		\$11,867
Weekly Giving Budget (2019)		\$12,995
Be the Blessing Giving (To Date)		\$1,114,178
Wall Settlement		\$225,000

## CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

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