

BE the BLESSING

CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

December 10, 2023

Welcome!

Thank you for joining us for worship. We pray you will encounter God as we worship together.

Today

- 9:00am Bible Classes for All Ages
- 10:00am Virtual Meet-and-Greet via YouTube Chat
- 10:15am On-Site and Virtual Service via YouTube
- 6:00pm Carols and Candlelight Service

Upcoming Events

- Dec 11 Men's Bible Study
- Dec 13 Flourishing Families Group
- Dec 13 Life Group at Reynolds'
- Dec 14 Playdate with Haylie
- Dec 14 Life Group at Fosters'
- Dec 14 Tutoring Ministry
- Dec 15 Extravagodysey
- Dec 16 Saturday Guys Golf Outing
- Dec 16 Hiking Ministry
- Dec 17 Afternoon Caroling to Seniors
- Dec 17 All-Church Christmas Party

Birthdays This Week

- | | |
|----------------|-------|
| Melissa Foster | 12/10 |
| Jerry Rushford | 12/11 |
| Josh Budde | 12/12 |



Let Ev'ry Heart Prepare Him Room!

Andy Wall

Advent n. 1. a coming into place, view, or being; arrival. 2. the coming of Christ into the world. 3. a season before Christmas, commemorative of Christ's coming.

Now that we're reached the final weeks of 2023, you may find yourself as incredulous as I am that December is upon us. Only fourteen shopping days remain until Christmas and just three weeks until 2024! As I glance at my December calendar, parties, gatherings, and holiday activities crowd every week. 'Tis the season to be...busy?

Above all this bustle I hear the whisper of centuries of Christian tradition, inviting us to recognize, participate in, and celebrate the season of Advent. Advent season is a time of anticipation and preparation. Not unlike Simeon and Anna, we long for the arrival of God's Kingdom (in all its fullness) and the coming of the Messiah (for the second and final time). Like the followers of John the baptizer, we prepare ourselves for His arrival by cultivating humble and contrite hearts and living lives of devotion, purity, and service. Like Mary and Joseph, we open our lives to God's wondrous yet potentially disruptive work in our lives. Like the shepherds and angels, our hearts are ready to joyfully give "Glory to God in the highest" and boldly bear witness to "good news of a great joy that will be for all the people."

During the month of December, our Sunday morning classes and sermons will explore various themes leading up to and surrounding the birth of Christ. In our ongoing sermon series titled "Tell It Slant," we'll flashback to Mark 1, where Mark narrates the ministry of John the Baptist. Our December Bible class, titled "Your Kingdom Come," will explore a season of hope and of longing, of joyful expectation and of peaceful preparation.

We invite you to take advantage of a variety of special Advent gatherings and celebrations for our children, teens, and whole congregation (see more on pages 2-3).

This Advent season, may each of us embrace the exhortation of that great hymn writer Isaac Watts, who taught us to sing:



What's Happening at Conejo



Advent Sermon Series: "Tell It Slant"

During the second week of Advent, our attention is on John the Baptist's declaration of good news, as told in the Gospel of Mark. We'll also reflect on Isaiah's declaration of good news in Isaiah 40:1-11. The basic Advent theme sounded in these two texts is that the time of promise is drawing to a close and the time of fulfillment is drawing near. For Isaiah, the context is the end of exile for Israelites in Babylon. For John the Baptist, it is the coming of Israel's long-awaited Messiah. God is coming to his people—and this is fantastic news!

In keeping with our "Tell It Slant" theme,* we find God's good news declared not in Rome or Jerusalem but out in the wilderness. It's there that the people of Judea and Jerusalem thronged to hear John the Baptist. The beginning of Mark shows the fulfillment of various promises. The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ reaches back to the promises of God and helps us imagine God-filled realities, both now and in our future life with God.

Advent Auditorium Class – Your Kingdom Come

Christians traditionally celebrate Advent as a time of hopeful expectation for the birth of Christ the king. There have also been other times and places where God's people waited anxiously for God's reign to be manifested in their lives, often in times of distress. In our Bible class series "Your Kingdom Come," we'll check in with God's people in five key historical moments, as they watched for signs of God's kingdom to come. Subject to change, we anticipate five classes in this series.

12/10/23: Anticipating God's Kingdom under Babylonian Rule

12/17/23: Anticipating God's Kingdom under Greek Rule

12/24/23: Anticipating God's Kingdom under Roman Rule

12/31/23: Jesus's Vision of God's Kingdom

1/7/24: Anticipating God's Eschatological Kingdom

Envisioning the Blessing

Conejo elders and ministers thank all who participated in the church's Envisioning the Blessing meeting, held November 12, 2023. Though our time was constructive and informative around the Be the Blessing project of 2017, we want to give those who attended—as well as those who could not—an opportunity to provide additional input. Click [Envisioning the Blessing Response Form](#) to share additional feedback that will tie Conejo's vision with dreams for future ministries and facilities that will support them.

You may submit this form multiple times or send additional feedback to elders@conejochurch.org.

Meals for the West Family

We have the opportunity to provide a meal for Rob, Alyssa, and Philomena West as they adjust to life with little Josie. One of Alyssa's friends has created a meal train for the West family. Please [click here](#) to access the meal delivery sign up.

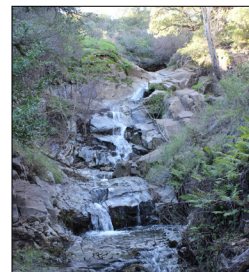
Carols and Candlelight / Today at 6pm

Join us this evening for our annual Carols and Candlelight Service at 6pm. This special service will feature the singing of favorite holiday carols, the lighting of candles, the reading of the birth narratives of Christ, and the renewing experience of the wonder of Christ's radiant coming. We will enjoy cookies and fellowship following the service. Be sure to invite friends and loved ones to this favorite holiday tradition as we enjoy the season of Advent together.



Hiking Ministry / December 16

Join us for the December "Hike" on Saturday, December 16, at 8:30am at the King Gillette Ranch. Enjoy an easy walk along Holiday Road to enjoy Christmas decorations. This hike will be good for all ages. The terrain is good, even good for strollers. Hope to see you Saturday at 8:30am at 26800 W. Mulholland Highway in Calabasas.



All-Church Christmas Party / December 17

The congregation is invited to a very special Conejo holiday gathering from 5-7pm on Sunday, December 17, 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. Come enjoy this thick multi-generational community event!



High School + Middle School

Youth Group Bible Class and Activities / Today



On Sunday mornings in December we are doing a series called "Halo" centering on the birth of Jesus. Please help our students participate, learn, grow, and encourage one another by taking part in our weekly times together. The combined group (middle and high school) gathers at 9am each Sunday with tasty treats at the beginning of each class. December youth group memory verse: *"He will be a joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth."* Luke 1:14

There are no other additional Sunday afternoon / evening meetings for our teens during the month of December due to all-church parties, Christmas events, and the holiday break. Our next youth group dinner and devo will be Sunday night, January 7 from 5:30-7pm.

YG Calendar

Teens, there are many opportunities for us to share life, build deeper friendships, and grow in our faith. Please [click here](#) to see the calendar of events for the coming weeks.

Extravagodysey 2023 / December 15

Extravagodysey is an extraordinary lock-in hosted by the Conejo Valley youth group. Come and enjoy an all-nighter filled with friends from other churches, worship, a devotional, games, prizes, and an epic scavenger hunt! The fun begins at 7pm Friday, December 15 and lasts until 7am, Saturday, December 16. Cost is \$20 per person.

Service Project: Caroling, Cards, & Cookies

On Sunday afternoon at 2pm, the youth group will meet to carol to a few of our own Conejo members and then go to the all-church Christmas party at the Marrs. We will bless a few of our members with carols and bring homemade Christmas cards, cookies, and soft chocolates. Help us make this a special day for them!

Dave & Busters New Friends Night / January 12

This night is focused on celebrating, welcoming, and getting to know some new faces at Conejo. We seek to be a thick intergenerational community of faith and these gatherings give us an opportunity for special fellowship and fun together. Dinner & game cards provided for each family that attends. More details coming soon.

Children's Ministry

Children's Class Offerings



Bible Classes This Week

Nursery - Haylie D.
2s/3s/4s - Leslie S. and Sarah G.
Elementary - Paula M. and Lynn B.

Worship Classes are available for children during the sermon.

Nursery - Katie C.
2s/3s/4s - Amy M. and Sarah G.
Elementary - Mark D.

Playdate with Haylie / December 14

Moms, Dads, and Caregivers for all of our precious preschool littles, please mark your calendars for this Thursday! The fun is set to begin at 10:30am.

Playdates with Haylie

Every 2nd Thursday of the month at the church building at 10:30am we'll have playdates with Haylie. This will be a time for our kiddos that aren't yet in school and their parent/grandparent/nanny to spend some more time with Haylie and play together. We want our littles to know the church is a safe place for them to learn, grow, and have fun.

Memory Verse

"The Word became a human being.
He made his home with us.
We have seen his glory.
It is the glory of the one and only Son."
John 1:14

Jesus' Birthday Party

Thank you to everyone who joined us for Jesus' Birthday Party! We had such a blast on the bounce house, making nativity sets and ornaments, and reading stories. Thank you to everyone who brought a gift for Raising Hope and to the many that helped prepare, set up, and clean up!



Prayer Corner

Devote yourself to prayer being watchful and thankful. Colossians

PRAISES

PREGNANCIES: **Jodi Davis** (February); **Eliza Erickson** (March); **Cassie Horton** (March); **Chloe Sutherland** (April)

ENGAGEMENT: **Matt Williams** and **Lyrice Blankfein** are engaged to be married!

BIRTHS: **Nolan Reynolds** (grandson of TJ and Suzanne) was born to Scott and Claire Reynolds

Josephine "Josie" Marie West was born to **Rob and Alyssa West** on November 14

THOSE GRIEVING

Rockey and Roby Families – loss of Jerry Roby, father of Brett Roby; grandfather of Bonnie Rockey

Smithers Family – loss of cousin of Brian / nephew of Rodney, Jason Knight

Pepperdine Community and families – of Deslyn, Asha, Niamh, and Payton following their tragic deaths

Kay Falletta – loss of brother-in-law, Bill McQuillan

Tim Willis – loss of father, John Willis

Loree Hunnicutt – loss of mother, Judy Long

Andrew Clark – loss of mother, Kerrie Clark

Friends and family of **Barbara Schlosser** (former member)

Susie Lindley – loss of husband, Jim Lindley

Dena, Elissa, Luke McAllister – loss of husband and father, Ted

Rene Heard – loss of mother,

Joan Nicholas

Jacob, Ella, Kate, Tess Michael – loss of wife and mother, Joella

Jose Rivera – loss of father, Cecilio (Chilo) Rivera

Char Hurley – loss of mother, Linda Rice

Mark and Suzanne Scarberry – loss of daughter, Caitlin Scarberry

FIGHTING CANCER

Jerry Jerabek (father of Christopher Jerabek) – neuroendocrine carcinoma

David Green – fighting two types of cancer cell lines; recovering from recent surgery

Joe Watts (friend of Rene Heard) – cancer in leg, spine, and lungs

Dede Koldyke (cousin of Steve Scott) – her cancer has returned

Cindy Hall (cousin of Matt Joyner) – stage IV metastasized breast cancer

Lucinda Hodges (sister-in-law of Darlene Rivas) – multiple myeloma and cardiac amyloidosis

Kurt Krebs (friend of Ed Sanders) – multiple myeloma

Justice Howard (cousin of Yashica Budde) – thyroid cancer

VARIOUS CONCERNS

Griffin McAfee – (grandson of Maxi McAfee, brother of Freya) – blockage in kidney; currently on antibiotics; upcoming surgery this week on 12/12

Amy and Kevin Stalbaum (niece and nephew of Kay Falletta) – serious injuries from hit-and-run

bicycle accident

Peace and safety for all in Israel and the Middle East

Marty Lince (brother of Suzanne Scarberry) – congestive heart failure; in constant, severe pain

Marilyn Aurand – nodules discovered in lungs; also dealing with spinal stenosis

Carol McNutt – recovery from knee replacement surgery

Susan Kenny (sister of Kimberly Thomson) – fighting babesiosis

Reilly Phillips (son of Phil and Heather Phillips) – type I diabetes

Jack Horn (coworker of Robert Charles) – lineman seriously injured by high voltage wire; pray for healing and hope as he recovers at home

Joe Reynolds (father of Brittany Joyner) – heart failure

Calvin Hill (friend of Haylie Douglas) – severely burned, many complications

Andy Long (father of Loree Hunnicutt) – as he grieves the loss of his wife, Judy

Carina Grant (granddaughter of Mark and Suzanne Scarberry) – Carina's cast was removed; prayers that her hip bone will stay in the socket

Healing, peace, and justice in our nation and communities

Barb Suhr (friend of Char Hurley) – dealing with memory loss issues

Sonia Smithers – safety for friends and family in Ukraine

Martha Condley (daughter of

Janie Condley) – lupus

Mary Zollman (friend of Lisa Scott) – multiple sclerosis

Harriet Nutter (mother of Daphne Green) – depression

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

Carol McNutt – neuropathy

MISSION EFFORTS

Raul and Betty Alvarado – mission efforts in Panama

Baja Missions – Baja California, Mexico

Julie Broyles – Bible English Study Center (BEST) in Cambodia

City of Children – Ensenada, Mexico

Made in the Streets – Nairobi, Kenya

Medical Clinic Mission Support – Ghana

Daniel and Karly Napier – Thessaloniki, Greece

Megan Randolph – Associate Director of Teacher Services, TeachBeyond

David and Danna Willis and family (brother of Tim Willis) – mission work in Samoa

MILITARY SERVICE

Javon Johnson – preparing for six-month deployment to Okinawa in December

Michael Warford – stationed in Spain with the Navy

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

Attendance
+ Giving

December 3 Attendance		December 3 Giving	
On-Site Service	160	Weekly Giving Average	\$12,420
Online Viewing	67	Weekly Giving Budget	\$14,406
		Be the Blessing Giving (To Date)	\$1,658,703
		Property Settlement	\$225,000

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