



CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

BE the BLESSING

December 24, 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 Christmas Celebration Service via YouTube

Birthdays This Week

- Elizabeth Jovel-Rivera 12/25
- Gwen King 12/28
- Alyssa West 12/30

Merry Christmas!

The ministry staff at Conejo wishes you and your family a very merry Christmas and blessings in the year 2024. We love you and count it an honor, blessing, and privilege to work, serve, and worship with each member at the Conejo Valley Church of Christ. May we work together as the body of Christ to be a blessing to those who live in the Conejo Valley each day of the coming year.

Andy Haylie Rene Travis

Christmas Wisdom from Emily Dickinson

Andy Wall

Merry Christmas, dear friends! This Advent season, we've been meditating on Emily Dickinson's poem, "Tell all the truth but tell it slant," as we've explored the stories of Isaiah 9 (the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light), Mark 1 (John the baptist's public service announcement), and Luke 1 (Mary's readiness to serve God's greater plans). We've been considering, as we will again this Sunday with the birth of Jesus (Luke 2), how God often reveals his purposes gradually, subtly, "at a slant," lest we be overwhelmed. Or as Dickinson put it, "The Truth must dazzle gradually or every man be blind."

As we now officially enter the Christmas season, here are ten quotes from Emily Dickinson, with commentary from yours truly, to sharpen our appreciation of her insight into life, and to inspire us to greater and more faithful living in 2024. May your new year be blessed by God!

"Hope is the thing with feathers that perches in the soul – and sings the tunes without the words – and never stops at all." There's always hope—don't stop believing!

"Unable are the loved to die, for love is immortality." Or as was sung in the play Les Miserables, "To love another person is to see the face of God."

"That it will never come again is what makes life sweet." Each day is a one of a kind gift, even when it brings challenges. Savor it!

"They might not need me; but they might. I'll let my head be just in sight; a smile as small as mine might be precisely their necessity." Never underestimate the power of small kindnesses.

"If I can stop one heart from breaking, I shall not live in vain." You can't fix all that is wrong in the world, but you can make a huge difference for some.

"Not knowing when the dawn will come I open every door." Be alert and ready to embrace every good opportunity.

"A wounded deer leaps the highest." You often gain strength from difficult times; you are capable of more than you think.

"My friends are my estate." True friends are worth more than wealth and fortune.

"Forever is composed of nows." The gradual accumulation of what we do each day is what creates the character of our lives.

"I dwell in possibility." *"The brain is wider than the sky."* There is always something to learn, love, and see.



What's Happening At Conejo



Advent Sermon Series: "Tell It Slant"

On this final Sunday of Advent we move from longing for the coming of Messiah to welcoming the birth of King Jesus. Our two scripture readings set us up with big expectations. Psalm 97, a classic Advent passage, speaks of the enthronement of a great king, a glorious scene full of rejoicing. John's prologue (John 1:1-18) offers extravagant language and audacious claims describing the heart of our Christian faith. But when we turn to Luke's account of Jesus' birth, it's a humble account at best, with simple shepherds, poor parents, and a rough manger. But hovering around the edges of this story are glimmers of muted glory and the song of angels.

Here, then, is the slanted truth of this Christmas gospel: in this humble place, before these humble witnesses, through this humble mother, God's glorious ancient plans and promises are unfolding. May we celebrate this great mystery with adoration and gratitude.

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 four key historical moments, as they watched for signs of God's kingdom to come. Subject to change, we anticipate two more classes in this series.

12/24/23: Anticipating God's Kingdom under Roman Rule
12/31/23: Jesus's Vision of God's Kingdom

New Year's Class

On Sunday, January 7, Jacqueline Dillion will be teaching a class titled, "Can We Feel Eternity?" The class is based on Augustine's reflections on time in his classic work, The Confessions, and will explore this concept more broadly.

All-Church Christmas Party

A huge thank you to Rick and Paula Marrs for hosting the All-Church Christmas Party last week, and to Chris Stivers for accompanying the singing of many beloved Christmas carols. It was a delightful evening of fun and fellowship.

Blessed By God To Be Together in 2023



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 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.

CVCC Christmas Caroling

Thanks to the teens and adults who gathered last week to sing for some of our beloved senior members. And, thank you to our senior members for welcoming us into their homes to share time, Christmas songs, and joy.

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.

Children's Ministry

Children's Class Offerings

Bible Classes This Week

Nursery - Noel T.
2s/3s/4s - Leslie S. and Sarah G.
Elementary - Lynn B.

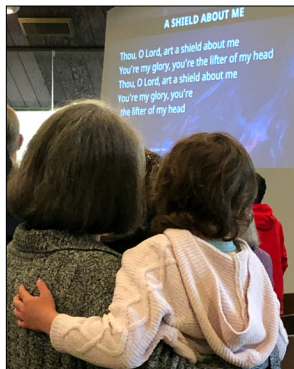
Worship Classes are available for children during the sermon.

Nursery - Katie C.
2s/3s/4s - Lauren K.B.
Elementary - Dwayne H.



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



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)

BIRTHS: **Mila Luisa Starkey** (great granddaughter of Marilyn Aurand) was born to Brandon and Flora Starkey on December 12

THOSE GRIEVING

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

Rodney and Brian Smithers – loss of nephew / cousin, 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

Mark and Suzanne Scarberry – loss of daughter, Caitlin Scarberry

FIGHTING CANCER

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

Julie Waters – recovering from recent surgery to remove kidney stones; recovering at home; still in a lot of pain

Griffin McAfee – (grandson of Maxi McAfee, brother of Freya) – recovering from recent kidney surgery; prayers for speedy and uncomplicated recovery

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

Peace and safety for all in the

Ukraine / Russia war

Marty Lince (brother of Suzanne Scarberry) – recovering from amputation of leg last Wednesday; congestive heart failure; in constant, severe pain

Marilyn Aurand – nodules in lungs are noncancerous; additional tests in 4 months

Carol McNutt – recovery from knee replacement surgery; neuropathy

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

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 – six-month deployment to Okinawa

Michael Warford – stationed in Spain with the Navy

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

Attendance
+ Giving

December 17 Attendance		December 17 Giving	
On-Site Service	123	Weekly Giving Average	\$12,550
Online Viewing	61	Weekly Giving Budget	\$14,406
		Be the Blessing Giving (To Date)	\$1,659,006
		Property Settlement	\$225,000

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