



# BE *the* BLESSING

## CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

February 18, 2024

# 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 Worship Service via YouTube
- 5:00pm All-Church Game Night

## Upcoming Events

- Feb 19 Monday Guys' Group
- Feb 21 Flourishing Families
- Feb 21 Reynolds' Life Group
- Feb 22 Fosters' Life Group
- Feb 22 Conejo Tutoring
- Feb 23 Date Night Babysitting
- Feb 24 Flourish Meet Up
- Feb 25 YG Families' Potluck
- Feb 25 Crafty Women
- Feb 27 Fifth Commandment Group

## Birthdays This Week

Noah Socquet	2/18
James Cho	2/20
Reese Odenath	2/20
Jordan Downey	2/22
Jacob Johnson	2/22
Leslie Stephens	2/22
Shaya Baird	2/23
Christopher Chesnutt	2/23
Jacqueline Dillion	2/23
Sarah Foster	2/23
Claudia de Bruyn	2/24
Brittany Joyner	2/24
Matt Joyner	2/24
Daniel Overton	2/25

## Glittering Vices, Glorious Virtues

Andy Wall

*"To flee vice is the beginning of virtue." – Horace*

As we begin this year's 40-Day Spiritual Adventure (also known as Lent), I want to reflect with you how it is that we grow in virtue. Unlike our genes, which we inherit from our parents, virtues and vices are moral qualities that we gradually acquire through choices and habits. We can cultivate good habits or break bad ones over time through our repeated actions.

Acquiring virtues (or vices for that matter) is like what happens at a winter sledding party. When we used to go sledding in Big Bear, we would first look for the perfect run, a hilly descent without too many trees or protruding boulders. We would then take our sleds and tubes and trudge up the hill to start making our runs. The first several times down the hill, the snow was unpacked and the ride was slow. But after several runs down the same path, the snow would compact, allowing for speedier descents. The ruts we gradually created also helped "steer" our sleds down the packed trail. After half a day of sledding, our runs would create a well-worn groove and we could fly down the mountain!

Something similar happens with our character traits. Godly behaviors that initially seem difficult become, with repetition, more fluid and instinctive. Christ-like attitudes that feel unnatural can, with practice, become second nature for us. Vices develop similarly. What is the difference between a vice and a sin? A sin typically describes a single or one-time event. A vice describes a well-worn groove of habitual sin, one that becomes progressively easier to repeat and progressively more difficult to avoid because of the power of human habits. Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung describes virtues and vices as follows: "Virtues are 'excellences' of character, habits or dispositions of character that help us live well as human beings ... virtue helps us both to live and act well and to be good people. ... Vices are corruptive and destructive habits. They undermine both our goodness of character and our living and acting well."

Which brings us to our 40-Day theme: "Glittering Vices, Glorious Virtues." The New Testament speaks in many places about the avoidance of vices and the cultivation of virtues. In Galatians 5, Paul warns against the "works of the flesh" but commends the "fruit of the Spirit." In Colossians 3, he speaks of removing old habits and behaviors and being clothed with qualities such as compassion, humility, and patience. In Ephesians 4, he reminds his readers how they were taught to put away their former way of life and to put on the new self. In 2 Peter 1, the author describes a process of gradually adding to and strengthening the qualities of goodness, self-control, endurance, and love.

During this season, I want to place before us what have been called the seven capital vices. These are not the seven worst possible sins, even though they are sometimes called the "seven deadly sins." But, in the seasoned wisdom of the historic Church, these seven sins have the most potential to lead us into even greater and more destructive sins when allowed to wear a habitual rut in our behaviors.

Paired with these vices are seven "glorious" virtues, which are holy habits that serve as building blocks for the Christian life. For the next seven weeks, I invite you to ponder how you are intentionally cultivating holy habits in your own life.

The project of becoming more like Christ is one of our life's most important tasks.

# What's Happening At Conejo



## Sermon Series: "Glittering Vices, Glorious Virtues"

This Sunday we are kicking off our annual 40-Day Spiritual Adventure with a brief overview of the seven capital vices and a closer examination of gluttony and its counterpart, temperance (or self-restraint). Though in recent times gluttony has been largely thought of as excessive eating/drinking, it also can encompass desiring more pleasure from something than it was made for, inordinately avoiding discomfort, insisting on being pampered, and demanding too much from people. Self-control is the biblical word for governing our natural appetites for pleasure according to God's wisdom and revelation. Temperance and moderation are other words for describing this virtue which curbs the extremes and excesses of gluttony in all its forms.

## Adult Education This Winter

Christina Littlefield Eng is leading the adult auditorium class through a 12-week church history series using Mark Noll's text, *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity* (4th edition). Noll and his co-authors, David Komline and Han-luen Kantzer Komline, consider critical moments that shaped the faith, the church, and the larger society. Like the great parade of saints in Hebrews 11, studying the key people who have led the faith can help us better see the transformational power of God at work in the lives of human beings and help us all better follow Jesus Christ today. This Sunday, the class will explore the formal split between Eastern Orthodoxy and Western Roman Catholicism in 1054.

Our class in the north overflow room is for those raising kids of all ages at home. The class is titled *Rooted: Growing the Next Generation Together*. This class is overseen by Bill and Melissa Foster and includes time for prayer and fellowship. Topics for the spring will include a deep dive into Romans and Ephesians as well as a study on prayer and spiritual gifts.

## Welcome to Conejo!

We're delighted to welcome Noel Tomlinson to the Conejo Church! Noel, we pray that our association will bless you richly as together we continue to grow in our faith and service to Jesus. Noel's contact information is as follows:

noeltomlinson32@gmail.com (615) 613-6975  
887 Brush Hills Road #B, Thousand Oaks, 91360

## All-Church Game Night / Tonight

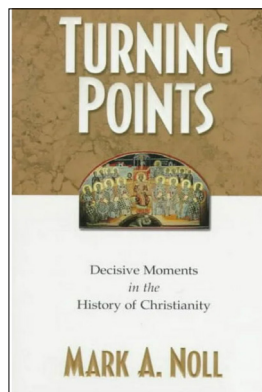
Everyone is invited to join us for a game night at the building from 5-8pm this evening. Bring games. Bring friends. Bring snacks to share. Get ready to have a great time with your

church family on this holiday weekend! Let's get to know one another better and have an evening of fun with our church family. All ages are welcome!

## With Heartfelt Gratitude to the Stivers

Last Sunday, Chris Stivers announced that after over twenty years of service, he is stepping down from serving as an elder at the Conejo Church. The Stivers will continue to take part in the life and activities of our congregation and are simply entering a new phase of ministry.

Chris and Sandy, you have been "heart and soul" members of this congregation for approaching four decades. We are deeply grateful for the many ways in which you have served, including planning and leading worship services, singing on the praise team, planning fellowship events such as the Memorial Day picnic, participating in special services, lending a caring and listening ear to many, and often being the very last to leave the building on a Sunday morning. We love you dearly, appreciate you greatly, and are so thankful you will continue to be part of the Conejo family. May the Lord bless you richly in this new phase of your life and ministry!



## 40-Day Spiritual Adventure / Starting Today

Today we begin our annual 40-Day Spiritual Adventure, also known as the season of Lent. Each year during this season, Christians around the world traditionally spend six weeks preparing for the remembrance of Good Friday and the celebration of Easter. This season can include an increased focus on any of the following:

- deeper prayer
- greater engagement in service and hospitality
- greater contrition over sins that push us away from God and neighbor
- deliberate curtailing of distractions and time-wasters
- expanding practices of generosity to those in need
- voluntary fasting from some of our typical comforts
- pursuing reconciliation in broken relationships

Please pick up a pastel-colored Commitment Sheet in the foyer if you'd like to reflect on and choose various activities and ministries you intend to help shape you this Lent.

## Crafty Women Craft Event / February 25

Conejo women, you are invited to meet at the church building next Sunday, February 25, from 1-6pm to deepen friendships with one another while making progress on your current hobby or craft project(s). RSVP to [office@conejochurch.org](mailto:office@conejochurch.org).

# High School + Middle School

## Youth Group Bible Classes



On Sunday mornings in February, we are doing a series called "Eyes to See," looking at how our thinking can distort the truth of Jesus' teachings in the gospels. 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. On Sunday nights, we have dinner and devo from 5:30-7pm. Our Sunday night series is called "Rhythm," focusing on developing spiritual rhythms that contribute to our spiritual growth and our awareness of God.

**February's Youth Group memory verse:** "Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus." Philippians 3:13-14

## YG Families Potluck / February 25

Next Sunday, the youth group families will get together for a potluck meal immediately following morning worship service. We are a family and can easily become disconnected or isolated by our own schedules over time. These gatherings give us regular opportunities for connection, fellowship, encouragement, and yummy food. All youth group families are invited to participate, bring some food to share, and enjoy the time together. Please click [YG Potluck](#) and sign up to let us know your plans to attend as well as what you plan to bring.

## Mexico Mission Trip RSVP deadline / February 25

Mission team, assemble! It's almost that time of year where we figure out who will be on our 2024 Mexico mission trip team. The mission trip is for current 8th graders and up. This is also an intergenerational trip, so we are open to others in the congregation who want to go build a home for a family in need. If you plan to attend and haven't gotten a passport, please start the process now. RSVP via this [Google document](#).

## GO CONEJO! Service Day / March 9

As a part of our 40-day Spiritual Adventure, our church family will have the opportunity to serve on Saturday morning, March 9. A few different opportunities will be offered, including completing projects at Conejo Elementary School, donating and organizing food at Manna Food Bank, and volunteering through the organization Action VC (Ventura County). Look for a sign-up sheet soon and let us join together as a family to serve the community around us. Let's go, Conejo!

## Lip Sync Fundraiser / March 17

Save the date and start thinking about what performances you would like to present this year! Each year, the youth group hosts a fellowship fundraiser lip sync night. Everyone is invited to lip sync a song or organize a group to perform. The event will be from 6-8pm, and dessert and drinks will be provided. We appreciate the time to have fun as a church family, so even if you don't want to perform, please make plans to join us on March 17 to support our performers and to raise funds for our summer mission trip. A sign-up sheet is coming soon!

# Children's Ministry

## Valentines for Seniors

Thank you to everyone who participated in making Valentines for Seniors. We were able to send about 40 cards to sweet friends!

## Date Night Babysitting / February 23

On Friday, February 23, bring your kids to the church building from 5:30-7:30 for a night of free babysitting. We'll watch a movie, have some pizza, and play while you get an evening to yourself. RSVP at [tinyurl.com/cvccbabysit](https://tinyurl.com/cvccbabysit) by February 20. Contact Haylie if you have any questions.

## Memory Verse

"But build one another up every day.  
Do it as long as there is still time.  
Then none of you will become stubborn.  
You won't be fooled by sin's tricks."

**Hebrews 3:13**

## Children's Class Offerings



### Bible Classes This Week

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

Worship Classes are available for children during the sermon.

Nursery - Amy M. and Maxi M.  
2s/3s/4s - Sandy S. and Sarah G.  
Elementary - Mark D.



# Prayer Corner

Devote yourself to prayer being watchful and thankful. Colossians

## PRAISES

**PREGNANCIES:** **Eliza Erickson** (Mar.); **Cassie Horton** (Mar.); **Chloe Sutherland** (Apr.); **Melody Reilly** (Apr.)

**BIRTHS:** **Gwenyvere Luna Ditmore** (granddaughter of Michael and Tammy Ditmore); **Brooklyn Davis** (Jodi and Matt Davis); **Callahan Churchill Sanders** (son of Arthur and Lindsey; grandson of Ed and Sheryl S.)

**BAPTISM:** **Brooklyn Baird**

**NEW MEMBERS:** **Randy, Jennifer, Cameron, and Jacqueline Reed; Joel, Tiffany, Alexey, and Joey Ornelas**

## THOSE GRIEVING

**Darlene Rivas** – loss of Lucinda Hodges, sister-in-law

**Daelan Blankfein** – loss of father, Fred Blankfein

**Kim Milanovich** – loss of grandmother, Alice Michael

**Tammy Ditmore** – loss of mother, Darlene Fielder

**Christy Guilbault** (former member) – loss of brother, David Gonzales

**Char Hurley** – loss of nephew, Matthew Horner

**Bonnie Rocky** – loss of Jerry Roby, grandfather

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

**Pepperdine Community and Families** – recent death of student Alec Kesheshian in a

traffic accident in Los Angeles and October death of students Deslyn, Asha, Niamh, and Payton in accident on Pacific Coast Highway

**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

**Susie Lindley** – loss of husband, Jim Lindley

**Mark and Suzanne Scarberry** – loss of daughter, Caitlin Scarberry

## FIGHTING CANCER

**Erin Opdahl** – recovering from surgery for cancer on tongue

**David Green** – not a candidate for chemotherapy or radiation therapy; facing long-term cancer suppressor drug therapies ahead with unpleasant side effects

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

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

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

**Justice Howard** (cousin of Yashica Budde) – thyroid cancer

## VARIOUS CONCERNS

**Linemen, firefighters, all first responders** during the recent floods

**Griffin McAfee** (grandson of Maxi McAfee, brother of Freya)

– recovering from recent kidney surgery; doing well

**Julie Waters** – recovering from recent surgery to remove kidney stones

**Amy and Kevin Stalbaum** (niece and nephew of Kay Falletta) – returned home to continue recovering from numerous injuries following automobile / bike accident

**Peace and safety** for all in war-torn areas Israel, the Middle East, Ukraine, Russia

**Marty Lince** (brother of Suzanne Scarberry) – congestive heart failure; recovering and healing after leg amputation; infections

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

**Carol McNutt** – recovery from knee replacement surgery; neuropathy

**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

**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

## 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

February 11 Attendance		February 11 Giving	
On-Site Service	152	Weekly Giving Average	\$18,083
Online Viewing	46	Weekly Giving Budget	\$12,502
		Be the Blessing Giving (To Date)	\$1,662,931
		Property Settlement	\$225,000

## CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

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