



BE the BLESSING

December 1, 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 Virtual Worship Service via YouTube
- 12:30pm Adult Education Team Meeting

Upcoming Events

- Dec 2 Men's Bible Study
- Dec 2 Women's Bible Study
- Dec 4 Flourishing Families
- Dec 4 Life Group at the Reynolds
- Dec 5 Tutoring at Conejo Academy
- Dec 5 Life Group at the Fosters
- Dec 6 Jesus' Birthday Party
- Dec 7 Guys' Golf Outing
- Dec 8 Carols and Candlelight
- Dec 14 CVYM Christmas Party
- Dec 15 Caroling for Seniors
- Dec 15 All-Church Christmas Party

Upcoming Birthdays

- Bridget Wooton 12/1
- Mike Rivas 12/5
- Andy Wall 12/6
- Kimi Calderon 12/7
- Lexy Clark 12/7
- Taylor de Bruyn 12/7
- Gabe Watson 12/8

The Advent Paradox

Andy Wall

"The future ain't what it used to be." – Yogi Berra

Advent is a season of yearning for the fulfillment of God's promises, ultimately at the second coming of Jesus Christ. Advent means "arrival, coming" and marks God's coming into our midst, first through the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and second, through his glorious return at the end of the age. During Advent we enter into Israel's longing for the coming of the Messiah while also seeking to prepare ourselves for Christ's glorious return. We sing "O Come, O Come Emmanuel" in expectation of the arrival of God's kingdom reign in its fullness.

The season of Advent has its share of paradoxes. The eternal Word becoming temporal flesh. A helpless baby stirring up the murderous fear of King Herod. Foreign-born magi bringing gifts to the Jewish Messiah. The infant who lies in the manger is "a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."

During this Advent season, we'll be exploring some of these paradoxes in a sermon series titled "The Advent Paradox." Most of our lives are lived in the middle of paradoxical tensions. For example, we must work to survive but we also need rest. We must be responsible for our lives but often we need support. If we want to receive love, we must give love. And there are other kinds of paradoxes. The more we learn, the less we realize we know. Our greatest strength can also be our greatest weakness (alternately stated as, "To the one who's good with a hammer, everything looks like a nail"). And sometimes, you have to be "cruel to be kind."

In *The Promise of Paradox*, Parker Palmer writes, "The way we respond to contradiction is pivotal to our spiritual lives." Paradox is defined as "a statement or proposition that seems self-contradictory but in reality expresses a possible truth." Paradox requires "both/and" rather than "either/or" thinking. Holding space for paradox is difficult. But as we've already suggested, the Gospel is full of paradoxes. Jesus taught "For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake... will save it." "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a single grain; but if it dies, it bears much fruit." "The last will be first, and the first will be last."

Author and Christian apologist G.K. Chesterton reflected that Christianity is most hospitable to paradox, welcoming as it does the pessimistic ("All have sinned") and the optimistic ("God so loved the world"), the bold ("Go and make disciples of all nations") and the meek ("all who humble themselves will be exalted"). During this season of Advent, then, we'll be seeking to embrace the paradoxes of the season, especially as we see them embodied in the coming of Jesus in humility into the world.



What's Happening At Conejo



Current Sermon Series: "The Advent Paradox"

Isaiah 40-55 delivers a stirring message of hope to Israel's exiles held captive in Babylon. The message is that God is reversing their circumstances and that they are going home. Isaiah 40, this week's sermon text, kicks off this powerful portion of Scripture. God is overturning the despair of the exiles with a message of comfort and a promise of homecoming. Though they might not be there quite yet, the exiles are buoyed up by that joyful anticipation. As exiles living in the "not yet" of God's promised kingdom, this Advent we too are anticipating God's promised future.

Adult Education Advent Class

During the season of Advent, our adult education program will be sharing in a combined auditorium class titled "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus." Based on the great Advent hymn by Charles Wesley, each week we'll share in an exploration of themes relating to the coming of Jesus, both as a newborn in Bethlehem and in glory at the Second Coming. This morning, Andy Wall will introduce the series and reflect on the opening of this great hymn.

Armloads of Love



Thank you, church, for your participation in providing and distributing food to twenty-one families in our neighborhood last week. We're grateful for every opportunity we have to reflect God's goodness and generosity to us within our local community. Below is an expression of thanks from one of the children whose family was blessed with groceries last week.



Carols and Candlelight / December 8



At 6pm on Sunday, December 8, you are invited to our annual Carols and Candlelight Service. This special service features the singing of favorite holiday carols, the reading of the birth narratives of Christ, the lighting of candles, and the renewing experience of the wonder of Christ's radiant coming. We will enjoy cookies and fellowship following the service. Invite friends and loved ones to this favorite holiday tradition as we enjoy the season of Advent together.

Christmas Caroling / December 15

On December 15, CVCC members and friends will meet at the church building at 2pm. We will travel together through town (in a parade of cars) to visit several of our older members to sing Christmas carols with and for them. We invite all ages to join in this outreach and afternoon of sharing joy with the world right around us.



All-Church Christmas Party / December 15

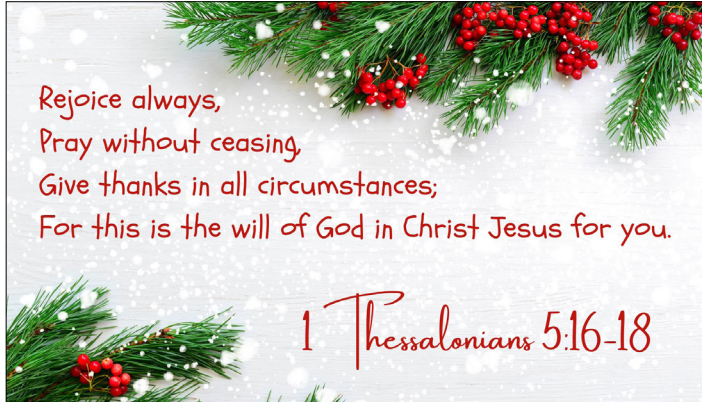
The entire congregation is invited to a very special Conejo holiday gathering on Friday, December 15, beginning at 5pm at the home of Rick and Paula Marrs. Make plans now to come share in a delightful evening filled with warm holiday fellowship, Christmas carols, and tasty treats. Please bring substantial hors d'oeuvres or a favorite dessert to share.



High School + Middle School

Youth Ministry Bible Class / Today

The December Bible class will be taught by Tim Willis. He will teach lessons about "Generosity and Gratitude." We hope that everyone will learn the memory verse that they've chosen for this month's verse: 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.



CVYM Connect Calendar

Parents, please help us know your kids' extra-curricular schedules by sending them to Kari Odenath (kariwhit@gmail.com). Kari has created a calendar to help us connect at various events for our teens. You and other members can also quickly view the [CVYM Connect Google Calendar](#) here. Thanks, Kari, for helping us all be able to support the teens in their activities. What a blessing it is to be able to be present to encourage our teens at events!

Youth Ministry Christmas Party / December 14

On Saturday night, December 14, all students in the CVYM (middle school and high school) are invited to the Daringers' home for this year's Christmas party. The party will be from 5:30-8pm. Come enjoy an evening of fun, games, and food. Those who are planning ask that you please let them know of your plans to attend—just click and sign up here [CVYM Christmas Party RSVP](#)—so that they can prepare adequately. As a way to be a blessing for others in the Conejo Valley, we are encouraging each teen to bring a new or gently used coat to donate to Coats for Kids. Watch for additional details about the party in emails next week as well as in the December 8 edition of the Family News.



Children's Ministry

Children's Bible Class Offerings

Bible Classes

Nursery - Noel T.

2's-5's - Leslie S. and Sarah G

Kinder-5th grade - Paula M. and Co W.

Worship Classes are available for children during our sermon time.

Nursery - Kari O. and Reese O.

2's - 5's - Amber J. and Sarah G.

Kinder-5th Grade - Mark D.



Memory Verse

Our memory verse is Deuteronomy 7:9:

So I want you to realize that the Lord your God is God. He is the faithful God. He keeps his covenant for all time to come.

Updated Children's Ministry Roster

If you have children in the Children's Ministry, please fill out the Google form at tinyurl.com/cvccroster24. This is for the new school year, so please fill this out even if you've done so in the past. Thank you for helping us keep accurate records as we endeavor to serve your family.

Jesus' Birthday Party

Join us for Jesus' Birthday Party. We'll have dinner, dessert, and lots of fun! Please bring an unwrapped gift for any aged child valued under \$20 to be donated to Raising Hope, an organization serving youth in foster care in Ventura County. RSVP at tinyurl.com/Jesusbdy24

DECEMBER 6TH 5:30-7:30PM



Prayer Corner

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

PRAISES

Baptisms – Zach Johnson, Matthew Johnson

New Members – Derek, Laura, Miles, and Henry Estes; Clay, Aubrey, Milo, and Ellis Smith; Scott, Johnelle, Nora, Oliver, and Logan Opel

Births – William Wiens (son of Jason and Jacqueline Dillion-Wiens)

Avery Salvador Urquia (grandson of Guy and Rosie Patenaude)

THOSE GRIEVING

Michele Davis – loss of mother, Janice McCoy

Jodi Davis – loss of mother, Mary Clontz

Tony Baird – loss of father, David Baird

Char Hurley – loss of sister, Sherry Horner

Jan Willis – loss of sister-in-law, Rosemary Davis, following brief battle with brain cancer

Chris Heard – loss of mother, Linda Heard

Michael Williams – loss of father, David Williams

Suzanne Scarberry – loss of brother, Marty Lince

Rick Marrs – loss of father, Roscoe Marrs

Tiffany Ornelas – following the death of her grandmother, Dorothy Cotton

Family of Tim Coupe – following the sudden death of Tim, former Conejo member

Nick Odenath – loss of father, Al Odenath

Phil Daringer – loss of father, Phil Daringer

Stan Thomas – loss of father, Leroy Thomas

Jim White – loss of mother, Joanna White

Vincent Chambers – loss of father, Buford Chambers

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

Char Hurley – loss of nephew, Matthew Horner

FIGHTING CANCER

Shirley Comia (friend of Bob and Kay Falletta) – recently diagnosed with cancer

Maria Baake – recovering from surgery for breast cancer

David Green – cancer suppressor working; semi-monthly biomarker tests yielding positive results

Sandra Brasher (friend of Rene Heard) – breast cancer

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

Cindy Hall (cousin of Matt Joyner) – stage IV metastasized breast cancer; recovering from hip replacement surgery

Kurt Krebs (friend of Ed Sanders) – multiple myeloma

VARIOUS CONCERNS

Eliza Erickson – health issues surrounding problems with thyroid function

Diane Owen (friend of Seth Haye) – recovering from double-lung transplant

Penny White – recovery from recent abdominal surgery

Carol Overton (mother of Daniel Overton) – trying to determine the cause of a brain infection

Brenda White – recent surgery to remove skin cancer

First Responders, Linemen, Firemen – during the recent fires and strong winds

Kendra Davis (sister of Suzanne Scarberry) – home recovering from serious complications from recent abdominal surgery

Steve Simpson (brother of Lorna T., Stephanie S. and Claudia dB.) – rare and aggressive autoimmune disease called ANCA-Associated Vasculitis

Elizabeth Cowan (mother of Christian Socquet) – memory issues, infections, difficulty understanding medical care

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

Marilyn Aurand – spinal stenosis

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

Martha Condley (daughter of Janie Condley) – lupus

Harriet Nutter (mother of Daphne Green) – depression

Mary Zollman (friend of Lisa Scott) – multiple sclerosis

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; prayers requested following recent major flooding

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 - serving as chaplain at the Ventura County Naval Base

Michael Warford – stationed in Spain with the Navy

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

Attendance
+ Giving

November 24 Attendance		November 24 Giving	
On-Site Service	129	Weekly Giving Average	\$10,929
Online Viewing	53	Weekly Giving Budget	\$12,502
		Be the Blessing Giving (To Date)	\$1,676,023
		Property Settlement	\$225,000

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