

CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

BE the BLESSING

December 8, 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
- 6:00pm Carols and Candlelight Service

Upcoming Events

- Dec 9 Men's Bible Study
- Dec 9 Women's Bible Study
- Dec 11 Flourishing Families
- Dec 11 Life Group at the Reynolds
- Dec 12 Tutoring at Conejo Academy
- Dec 12 Life Group at the Fosters
- Dec 14 Guys' Golf Outing
- Dec 14 CVYM Christmas Party
- Dec 15 Caroling for Seniors
- Dec 15 All-Church Christmas Party

Upcoming Birthdays

- | | |
|--------------------|-------|
| Gabe Watson | 12/8 |
| Melissa Foster | 12/10 |
| Jerry Rushford | 12/11 |
| Josh Budde | 12/12 |
| Mila Luisa Starkey | 12/12 |

Keeping Faith Supple

Andy Wall

Stories of underdogs have long fired my imagination. From the Biblical classic "David and Goliath" to Cervantes' "Man of La Mancha", I love stories of great courage against impossible odds. I suppose that in my heart of hearts I want to be an idealist. I want to "dream the impossible dream," "fight the unbeatable foe," and "run where the brave dare not go."

But the longer I live, the more I keep stubbing my toes on reality. I'm realizing that there are some aspirations I had during my 20s that probably won't be realized in my lifetime. There are aspects of my personality that won't go away, try as I might to change them. The wisdom of accepting things for what they are is sounding more and more sensible.

This is why I can muster a lot more sympathy these days for Zechariah (Luke 1). God's messenger appears to this aging priest, announcing that his prayers have been heard and that his wife Elizabeth is pregnant with a son. Zechariah, a battle-weary veteran of disappointment, knows better than to get his hopes up. They have been dashed too many times. The reality is, he and Elizabeth are past their child-bearing years. That opportunity is gone. Better to simply accept what is than to foolishly hope.

But of course the story of Advent (the coming of Christ into the world) transcends hands-in-your-pockets, glum-faced resignation, however prudent it might seem. And so the less jaded Mary (Luke 1), who receives a similar birth announcement, humbly embraces the good news despite her inability to understand it. When the God of the impossible is at work, no telling what might happen.

I'm grateful for this season of Advent (the four week period before Christmas that commemorates Christ's coming) for exactly this reason. The more comfortable I grow with Zechariah, the more I need to be jarred by the improbable story of Mary, Mary's God, and Mary's baby. The more resigned I become to a closed and predictable future, the more I need to be surprised by God's intrusive, unexpected, inexplicable grace. Advent reminds us that God's future is not one we can logically anticipate, any more than one could have anticipated the creation, the calling of the Hebrew nation, the Exodus, the incarnation, the resurrection, Pentecost, or the Second Coming. May we, like Mary, keep our hearts open and our spirits willing throughout this season of Advent.



What's Happening At Conejo



Current Sermon Series: "The Advent Paradox"

Advent is a time of anticipation, longing, and preparation. Last week we looked at Isaiah's hopeful message to prepare Judah's exiles to return home. This week, we move to the ministry of John the baptist, a prophet in the classic mold of Elijah. His teaching presented a strong warning to the people of God to prepare themselves for the coming of Israel's last, best king. John's call was two-fold: To repent or turn your life back to God and to bear fruit worthy of repentance.

Adult Education Advent Class

During the season of Advent, our adult education program will be 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, several of our moms will be reflecting on Mary's annunciation in Luke 1 as we think about "From our fears and sins release us."

Carols and Candlelight / December 8

At 6 this evening, you are invited to our annual Carols and Candlelight Service. 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."



Christmas Caroling / December 15

Christmas Caroling With Senior Saints
15 DECEMBER, 2024
BEGINNING AT 2PM

On December 15, CVCC members and friends will meet at the church building at 2pm. We will travel together (in a parade of cars) to visit several of our senior members to sing Christmas carols with them. We invite all ages to join in this outreach and afternoon of sharing joy with the world right around us. Come help us make this a special day as we bless and are blessed by some of the senior saints in our church!

All-Church Christmas Party / December 15

The 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.



Thank You Note from 2024 AMOR Family

This week, we received an email note from the family of Maribel Martinez Garcia concerning the house that our teens built during this past summer's AMOR mission trip. Enjoy!

The moment the group left, we immediately moved into our new home. We were so excited and thankful that we couldn't wait any longer. We even painted our home and are continuing to make improvements to it each day. Our new home has felt so comfortable, and each day we thank God and you.

We have a 13-year-old who is in middle school, and a 20-year-old. Our oldest used to attend university; however, money was tight, and he had to drop out to start working. I did not even get to finish elementary school, but my dream is that both of our children will one day be able to go to and finish university.

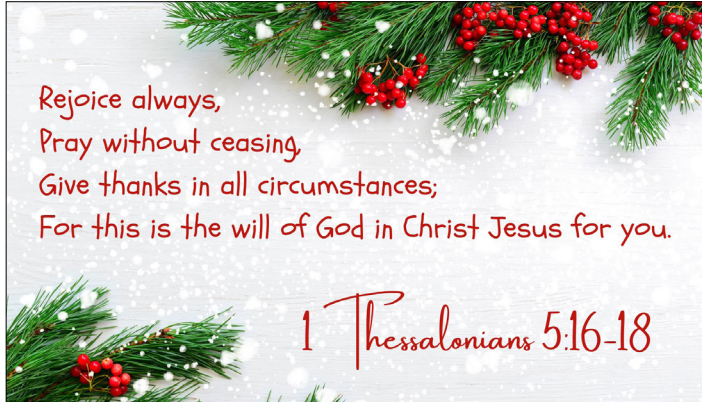
We do not have enough words to express our gratitude. Our prayer is that He blesses each hand that helped build our home.



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. The details:



CVYM Christmas Party

When: Saturday, December 14, 5:30-8p.m.

Where: Daringers' Home

Blessing Gift: Each student is asked to bring a coat to donate to *Coats for Kids*

Party Game Gift: Each YM student is asked to bring a gift (max cost \$10) that begins with the first letter of their name.



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 - Noel T. and Harmony H.

2's -5's - Rene H., Ashlyn T., and Sarah G.

Kinder-5th Grade - Penny W.



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.



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

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

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

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 – loss of 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

FIGHTING CANCER

Becky Russell (grandmother of Haylie Douglas) – breast 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

Kurt Krebs (friend of Ed Sanders) – multiple myeloma

VARIOUS CONCERNS

Marlene Tomlinson (grandmother of Noel Tomlinson) – recovering from two strokes

Eliza Erickson – health issues

surrounding problems with thyroid function

Diane Owen (friend of Seth Hays) – 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 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 Condeley (daughter of

Janie Condeley) – 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

December 1 Attendance		December 1 Giving	
On-Site Service	166	Weekly Giving Average	\$12,391
Online Viewing	35	Weekly Giving Budget	\$12,502
		Be the Blessing Giving (To Date)	\$1,676,532
		Property Settlement	\$225,000

CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

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