



BE *the* BLESSING

CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

March 2, 2025

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

Upcoming Events

- Mar 3 Women's Bible Study
- Mar 5 Flourishing Families at the Walls'
- Mar 5 Life Group at the Reynolds'
- Mar 6 Life Group at the Fosters'
- Mar 6 Conejo Tutoring
- Mar 8 Guys Golf Group
- Mar 9 40-Day Spiritual Adventure Begins
- Mar 9 Bowls of Hope Painting Party
- Mar 9 Anchor / Flourish Meetings
- Mar 14-16 HS Winter Retreat at Big Bear
- Mar 15 Women's Day at CVCC
- Mar 15 MS Fun Night
- Mar 22 Hiking Ministry

Upcoming Birthdays

- Braedon Wooton 3/3
- Emmett Hatfield 3/3
- Matthew Johnson 3/5
- Michael Williams 3/5
- Michael Thomas 3/7
- Jim White 3/7
- Jennifer Downey 3/9
- Eloise Erickson 3/9

Unity in Christ

[**Editor's note:** Today's guest editorial is an abridged article by Don McLaughlin, the preaching minister of the North Atlanta Church of Christ.]

Unity or Oneness in Christ is a big deal. Even a basic overview of the mission of Jesus and the writings of the New Testament make this clear. But, unity among Christians remains as elusive as ever. Perhaps our approach to unity needs to be reviewed and recast.

For two millennia, followers of Christ have tried to generate unity through a variety of approaches, including the content of creeds and wording of confessions, claims of interpretive objectivity and superiority, the elevation of doctrinal distinctiveness, and the canonization of specific interpretive models. In essence, those participating in conversations about unity often think that what they believe should be standardized for all Christians. If everyone would believe like me/us, we would all be on the same page—the correct page—and thus we would be unified.

Under this model, unity is a human project. The tools I use to build my understanding of the faith become indistinguishable from the faith itself. For this reason, even the most well-intentioned call to unity comes up short. To illustrate, there are between 45,000 and 47,000 Christian denominations globally. In the U.S., there are more than 200 “umbrella” denominations (major identified Christian traditions).

I know... talk of unity can be a little depressing. But what if our approach to unity is broken, or at least misguided? I believe in unity and in striving for it. But unity in Christ requires a specific approach to come to fruition.

First, in Christ, humans pursue living the unity Christ already established. Christians do not create or control unity. Unity is made possible by what God accomplished on the cross through Jesus (Eph 2:11-3:11). Oneness is God's gift, and we are called to live it, not take charge of it.

Second, unity is a matter of Christ-formed-character, not human made creeds. The history of creed-creation is both inspiring and disturbing. What is included in creeds matters but not more than a transformative relationship with the living Christ. In Christian unity, Christlike character counts, and the absence of it is devastating.

Third, unity in Christ is not created or sustained by Bible study. Unity in Christ is created by Christ and sustained by the Holy Spirit. This statement does not diminish the essentiality of Bible study. But no amount of Bible study or perceived interpretive expertise will unite us with Christ or with each other. Only Christ can reconcile us to God, and only the Spirit of Christ can reconcile us with each other (2 Cor 5:16-21).

The confession that Jesus Christ is Lord is the most profound confession in human history. And this confession is the foundation of Christian character, which is essential to unity. If Jesus Christ is Lord, then our response to his lordship in our lives is humility and curiosity. We reject the temptation of pride. We embrace the grace of Christ toward those who differ from us.

Unity is possible, but only in Christ and through the power of the Holy Spirit. Pursuing unity begins with a passion for the character of Christ.

What's Happening At Conejo

And the Angels Rejoiced!

On February 17, Wes Johnson was baptized into Christ. Wes, we rejoice with you and your family! Our prayers are that your journey as Christ's follower will be filled with joyful service to God and to all who are around you as you share your life, your love, your time, and your talents. May God guide and bless your decisions and empower you to walk faithfully in Jesus' steps.



Today's Sermon: "What Is Love?"

In today's sermon, Conejo's own Javon Johnson, who serves as a US Navy Chaplain, will bring a message on 1 John 4:7-8 titled "What is Love?" Often we throw around the word "love" as if we truly understand what it means. Do we grasp what it means to love someone, what it means to love God? Despite God showing us what love truly looks like, it is sometimes hard for Christians to display that love to their neighbors. Let's dig deeper into God's Word to find out how to love the way Christ loves.

Adult Education This Winter

Our adult auditorium class is exploring Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. The class series is titled "Churching (on the) 101" and will run through April 27. This week, Laura Estes will focus on 1 Corinthians 8-9 with a class titled "Giving up your Freedom (Part 1)."

In the overflow classroom, Bill Foster is leading a study on godly principles surrounding personal finance. This ten-week study is based on the Crown Financial MoneyLife curriculum and includes weekly homework, scripture memory and reflection, practical application to household finances, and a prayer log.

Bowls of Hope / March 9

Our fourth Bowls of Hope painting party to support Many Mansions is scheduled for Sunday, March 9, from 3-5pm. This is a wonderful and fun intergenerational Sunday afternoon activity. It costs \$20 per bowl that you paint. Sign up at [2025 Bowl Painting Party for Many Mansions](#). The bowls will be fired, glazed, then sold for the annual Bowls of Hope fundraiser for Many Mansions in June.



Small Groups

Our small group program is underway, with groups meeting around the Conejo Valley and beyond. These groups meet for a variety of purposes including prayer, Bible study, fellowship, service, mentoring, and outreach. Some groups include children, some are for teens, some are for adults, and some

include all generations. Please click [Winter 2025 Small Group ministries](#) for a detailed listing of our current small groups.

40-Day Spiritual Adventure

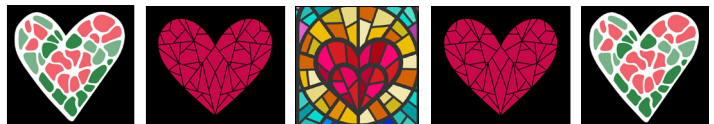
Next Sunday, we'll begin our annual 40-Day Spiritual Adventure, also known as the season of Lent. Each year during this season, Christians around the world traditionally spend six weeks preparing for the remembrance of Good Friday and the celebration of Easter Sunday. This season can include an increased 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 things we typically enjoy
- Pursuing reconciliation in broken relationships
- Please make plans to participate in ways that are meaningful and needed for your faith development and for the needs of our community.



Women's Day: "A Mosaic of Love: Embracing Our Differences To Create Unity in Christ"

God gives us unique talents, strengths, opinions, and experiences and then calls us to live and work and love together. Can we learn to disagree better so we can be a better version of God's body in the Conejo Valley? Come spend a day worshipping and learning how to strengthen our bonds of love even as we honor each other's distinctive role in God's kingdom. Kindy De Long will be our featured speaker. Join us on Saturday, March 15. We will begin at 9am and wrap up by 4pm. Lunch and a light breakfast will be included. Click to [register here](#).



Hiking Ministry / March 22

The March hike will take place at the Arroyo Verde Park in Ventura on Saturday, March 22. It is at the corner of Foothill Road and Day Road; there is a \$3 charge for parking. Hikers will meet at the toddler playground at 10am. This hike is good for all ages (babies and strollers welcome)!

Photo Updates

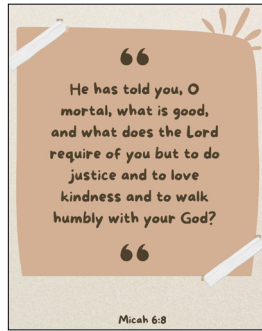
We like to keep our photos current for the member directories both in the foyer and on the website. If your photo is not included in the foyer photo directory, or if it is there, but your children have aged, please help us get an update. See either Stu Warford or Rene Heard after church services and let them know that you'd like a photo update.

Middle School and High School

Youth Ministry Bible Classes

The Bible class theme for the spring is "Profiles In Faith." Today, the teens will continue this series with a study of "Adam and Eve," taught by Ty De Long.

Dinner and Devo meets today from 5:30pm to 7pm. This week we have an "intern homecoming," with Nico Heard launching our March series "The Making Of" about spiritual growth.



Anchor & Flourish Meetings / March 9

Anchor will meet at the home of David Rhoades from 5:30-7pm. The youth group guys will share dinner and Javon Johnson will be their speaker.

Flourish will meet at the church building. The youth group girls are encouraged to participate in the Bowl Painting Party for Many Mansions from 3pm to 5pm. Following this time, the girls will share dinner together and participate in a discussion panel of women in our congregation at the building from 5-6:30pm. Please join us! Be sure to see the CVYM newsletter for more details.

2025 HS Winter Retreat / March 14-16



Registration is now OPEN for our upcoming Winter Retreat in Big Bear which will take place from March 14-16. This retreat is open to all students in grades 8-12. The registration fee is \$90 per participant. See all of the details in the Newsletter below.

We are praying that this retreat will be a powerful time for growth and connection among the teens, and a wonderful time

for the teens to listen to and hear truths from God's word and God's followers. **Register TODAY:** [2025 HS Winter Retreat](#).

Middle School Fun Night / March 15

Middle School students are invited to the Rocky's on Saturday, March 15, from 5:30-7:30pm for an evening of fun. Please scan the QR Code for the Current Newsletter below.

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 [CVYM Connect Google Calendar](#) to help us support our teens at their various events!

Upcoming CVYM Events and Calendar

Please scan the QR code or click [CVYM Current Newsletter](#) to see information for all upcoming events (including dates, times, locations, and costs). Also, included in the newsletter is a list of Bible classes for the winter and spring as well as a list of the topics for Dinner and Devo gatherings. There are a lot of wonderful classes and times to be together lined up. Please make every effort to be present and engaged in these times to study, grow, encourage one another, and learn with your peers in Bible class, at devos, at sporting events, and at special church events. Let's walk faithfully together each week!



Mexico Mission Trip / June 22-27

Each summer, CVCC sends a team of workers to Mexico to build a house for a family there. This mission trip is open to our teens who are entering grade 8 and older as well as adults. **If you plan to go and do not yet have a passport, please start the process now. Passports are essential for every team member.** Our next preparation meeting will be on Sunday, March 30, at 12:30pm.

Children's Ministry

Children's Bible Class Offerings

Nursery - Noel T.

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

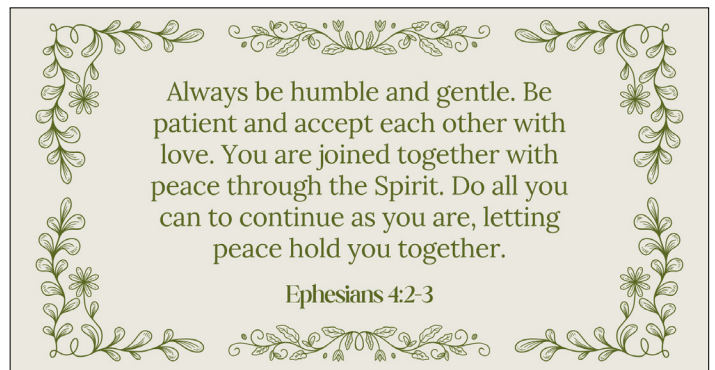
Kinder-5th grade - Paula M. and Co W.

Worship Classes are available for children during our sermon time.

Nursery - Johnelle O. and Nora O.

2's-5's - Shaya B. and Sarah G.

Kinder-5th grade - _____



Updated Children's Ministry Roster

If you have children in the Children's Ministry, please fill out the Google form at tinyurl.com/cvccroster24. Please fill this out if you have not yet done so for the 2024-2025 school year. 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

New Members – Will, Nissa, and Emmett Hatfield; Mike and Maureen Thomas; Jonathan Pearce

Pregnancies: Stacy Iverson (March); Valerie Patenaude (May)

THOSE GRIEVING

Arlene Leedy – loss of husband, Bill Leedy

Bob Falletta – loss of sister, Karin Carlstedt

Javon Johnson – loss of sister, LaShaunia Pross

Matt Joyner – loss of grandmother, Joyce Joyner

Larry Bumgardner – loss of sister, Linda Browning

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

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

FIGHTING CANCER

Marilyn Aurand – cancer has returned; physically and mentally battle-weary

Becky Russell (grandmother of Haylie Douglas) – breast cancer

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

Maria Baake – undergoing treatments for breast cancer

David Green – semi-monthly tests yielding positive results

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

Kurt Krebs (friend of Ed Sanders) – multiple myeloma

VARIOUS CONCERNS

Susan Pratt – complete knee replacement scheduled for March 3 at Los Robles

Brandon Starkey – recovering from recent back surgery

Larry Bumgardner – recovering from recent back surgery

Firefighters, first responders, linemen, and other support personnel as they continue to work in burned areas

For all who have lost lives and property in the many recent fires

Sharon Gatchell (mother of Sheryl Sanders) – sciatica issues, debilitating back pain

Janie Condley – recovering from broken hip

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

Eliza Erickson – problems with thyroid function

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

Carol Overton (mother of Daniel Overton) – recovering at home from effects of a brain infection

Kendra Davis (sister of Suzanne Scarberry) – lost home in recent fire; dealing with health issues

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

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

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

Joe Reynolds (father of Brittany Joyner) – heart failure

Calvin Hill (friend of Haylie Douglas) – severely burned

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

February 23 Attendance		February 23 Giving	
On-Site Service	144	Weekly Giving Average	\$9,761
Online Viewing	64	Weekly Giving Budget	\$13,550
		Be the Blessing Giving (To Date)	\$1,683,234

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