



# BE *the* BLESSING

August 17, 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  
Back-to-School Blessings for Teens and Children
- 10:00am Virtual Meet-and-Greet via YouTube Chat
- 10:15am On-Site and Virtual Worship Service via YouTube  
Back-to-School Blessings for Teachers, Parents, and Students
- 12:30pm Kindergarten Blessing
- 3:00pm CVYM Back-to-School Bash

### Upcoming Events

- Aug 23 Crafty Women Crafting Event
- Aug 24 CVYM Sunday Evening Devotional (1st of the season!)
- Aug 31 All-Church Game Night
- Sept 7 Fall Kickoff

### Upcoming Birthdays

- |                |      |
|----------------|------|
| Banks Darby    | 8/11 |
| David Green    | 8/17 |
| Judy Tapper    | 8/20 |
| Haylie Douglas | 8/23 |
| Miles Estes    | 8/23 |

## The Importance of Being a Lifelong Learner

Andy Wall

*"Hold on to instruction, do not let it go; guard it well, for it is your life."*

– Proverbs 4:13

With a few exceptions, most local primary and secondary schools, along with a number of colleges and universities, will begin classes during the next several weeks. A significant chunk of our church family is engaged in some facet of the educational enterprise, which explains why this Sunday we are having a variety of moments during bible class, worship, and after worship to lift up teachers and students, staffers and administrators, as the school year begins. Given that I am the grandson, son, nephew, husband, father, uncle, and friend of teachers, I have a deep appreciation for their dedication at all levels of the educational ladder and in various educational formats (public, private, alternative, home-school, etc).

I am aware that some don't share my love of education. There's an important ongoing debate today concerning the value proposition of a college education. College has become terribly expensive and, in fairness, other careers are more suitable for some students. And higher education has always had its critics; long ago, Groucho Mark quipped, "The only thing I learned in college was how to be a professional student."

As followers of Jesus the Messiah, we navigate a healthy tension between "loving God with all our minds" yet refusing to make an idol of any educational attainment. The apostle Paul, easily one of the most educated Christians of the first century, warned that "knowledge puffs up while love builds up," even as he employed excellent rhetorical skills and subtle theological reasoning. Pride can twist any good thing, including a good education. But that doesn't mean ignorance is better.

Because of my faith, I find myself called to be a lifelong learner, to keep asking reflective questions, to observe carefully, to care about what is true, to listen with empathy, and to continue to explore God's revelation through Jesus Christ and through Scripture. I believe in the importance of having a broad historical understanding of the past that can enable me both to critique present trends and to respect that there is always more to learn.

In Colossians 2:3, Paul expressed that in Christ "are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." That's quite a statement! While I don't think Paul is saying that if you understand Christ, you'll understand quantum physics, I do get the sense that he is gesturing to how central Jesus Christ is for living a life of true wisdom. If you want to live wisely and be a truly educated person, immersing yourself in the life, teaching, and way of Jesus is the surest way to unlock the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.

To all who are beginning a new academic year, and to all the rest of us, I leave us with this exhortation from Colossians 2:6-7: "So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness."



# What's Happening At Conejo

## And the Angels Rejoiced...and Rejoiced!

Last week, two of the members of our youth group were baptized! On August 6, **Jake Johnson** was baptized into Christ in the Merced River in Yosemite. **Nora Opel** was baptized into Christ in the ocean at a beach in Carpinteria on August 8. Both were surrounded by family and friends for this important and life-changing commitment.



Nora and Jake, we rejoice with you and your families upon your recent baptisms. Our prayers are that your journeys as Christ's followers will be filled with joyful service to God and to all who are around you. We pray that your witness in the world will be a beautiful reflection of the life of our Lord Jesus as you share your time, talents, and the love of God

throughout your life. May God bless each of you and empower you to walk faithfully in Jesus' steps.



## Current Sermon Series: New Testament Cameos

In our current series, we're meeting some of the lesser known characters in the New Testament whose lives were impacted by Jesus the Messiah. In this week's sermon, we'll explore a New Testament leader who is hidden in plain sight. Her name is Junia and is mentioned only in Romans 16:7, "Greet Andronicus and Junia, my fellow Israelites who were in prison with me; they are prominent among the apostles, and they were in Christ before I was." Several things are noteworthy about Andronicus and Junia: 1) They were imprisoned with Paul; 2) They became Christians before Paul, possibly going back to the days of Jesus' ministry; 3) They were prominent among the apostles. And there's a fascinating historical mystery concerning Junia to unravel as well.

## Adult Education / Summer Auditorium Class

Our summer auditorium class is titled "Spiritual Practices that Shape Our Faith." Each week, various members of Conejo Church share about disciplines of the faith that have shaped them in significant ways. This week, Chris Heard will lead the class exploring the spiritual discipline of "Study."

## Welcome to Our Guests!

We are so glad to have you visit with us. Whether you are new to the area or have just chosen to visit with us today, we feel blessed and thankful for the opportunity to spend the morning sharing life and worshiping God with you.

Please fill out a welcome card (from beneath the chair in front of you) with your name and at least your email address. Then, drop it into the offering tray as these are passed or into the wooden box marked "offering" in the foyer. Having your email address enables us to share information about upcoming events and ministry of this church.

## Back-to-School Sunday

Today is a special day for life at CVCC. Many people in our church are tied to the school year. We will be devoting much of our time today in Bible classes and our worship time to prayers and blessings for our students and teachers as they begin the new academic year. Please continually pray for and encourage one another as we gear up for the next academic year.

## Crafty Women Crafting Event / August 23

Ladies, please plan to bring your current craft project(s) and share in a time of fellowship with friends from church on Saturday, August 23. The fun will begin at noon and will last until 6pm at the church building. Come for all or part of the time. RSVP to [office@conejochurch.org](mailto:office@conejochurch.org) if you plan to come so that the appropriate number of work stations can be prepared.

## Back-to-School Drive for Conejo Academy

With the rising cost of school supplies, this is an opportune time to reinstate the "fall school supplies" drive for the Conejo Academy (our neighborhood elementary school). We will be collecting the following items to share with our neighbors through September 21. The supplies will be delivered to the school the following week.

- **CRAYOLA** Colored Pencils [12 ct, 24 ct, or class pack (High Need)]—*please purchase crayola brand only*
- Student Scissors
- Ziplock Bags (All Sizes)
- Copy Paper (White and Colored)
- Glue Sticks
- Baby Wipes
- Disinfecting Wipes

## Game Night / August 31

Sunday evening, August 31 beginning at 5pm, we will meet at the building for an evening of fun and games for all ages. Bring your favorite card games, board games, and snacks to share. Since the following Monday is Labor Day, it will be a great opportunity to have extra time with friends at church!

## Fall Kickoff Sunday / September 7

Our Fall Kickoff Sunday is slated for September 7. Our plan is to share in a backyard potluck breakfast and fellowship time during our 9am Bible class hour. Pull out a favorite family recipe to share with your church family that day.

On that day, the praise team will resume and small group ministries will be highlighted. Please contact Andy Wall and/or the church office if you are planning to have a small group (weekly or monthly) for the coming year.

# Middle School and High School

## Youth Ministry Bible Classes

As we approach the fall season and anticipate a new curriculum series, the CVYM Bible class will be exploring some important questions related to the study of the Bible, such as “What makes the Bible trustworthy?” and “How does the Bible speak to my life today?” As we have done over the past two weeks, we will also continue to invite input from the teens on what aspects of Bible study are especially interesting, exciting, and perhaps confusing. These insights will inform our curriculum for the fall, so don’t miss out on the opportunity to be a part of the conversation!

## Back-to-School Blessing

All parents of CVYM are invited to join the Youth Bible class this Sunday, for a Back-to-School blessing. *Please plan to join the class at 9am.* We will commemorate the beginning of the school year by gathering around our teens and offering a group prayer on their behalf, modeled after Jesus’ admonition in Luke 10:27 to ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.’



## Back to School Bash

Following our Back-to-School Blessings and Kindergarten Blessings on August 17, all members of the CVYM are invited to the Odenath’s home from 3-5pm for a Back-to-School Bash pool party. Drinks and snacks will be provided. Make plans to be part of this full day of celebration and blessing as a new academic year begins.



## Upcoming CVYM Events

As we gear up for fall, there will be many opportunities to get together to support and encourage one another, share in studies and devos together, and share in service projects for others in the community. Below are a few of the dates currently on the church calendar for CVYM. Parents and teens, please share your extra-curricular activity schedules with Kari Odenath ([kariwhit@gmail.com](mailto:kariwhit@gmail.com)) for the CVYM Events Calendar.

- August 17 Back-to-School Blessing Sunday
- August 24 Kickoff Sunday Evening CVYM Devos
- September 7 Fall Kickoff
- September 14 CVYM Parents’ Meeting
- September 26-28 HS Pismo Retreat

# Children’s Ministry

## What Our Kids Are Learning

During **August**, the big picture for the children’s ministry classes will center around: God is always there to help us and keep us safe, no matter what happens! The scripture focus for August will be **Psalm 46:1**.

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”

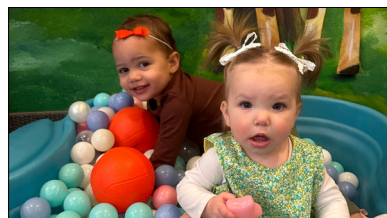
Psalm 46:1

## Back-to-School Blessing

Sunday morning from 9:00-9:30 children ages 2 years through 5th grade will be engaging in special Back-to-School activities in the classrooms that will help the children see how God is present with them on their school journey! From 9:30-10am, all CVCM parents and children are invited to the playground to join with the elders in a special time of prayer over all of the children and families as we head back to school!

## Kindergarten Blessing

Today, we will have a very special time of blessing for our students who are entering kindergarten this year—Evie Chambers and Callen Kliest-Blankfein. This will take place after our Sunday morning worship service. Lunch will be provided for all who signed up for th



# Prayer Corner

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

## PRAISES

**New Members** – Chandler, Yvonne, Luci, Banks Darby; Jonathan Pearce; Arlene Leedy

**Pregnancies:** Phil and Jordan Cho (August), Brian and Molly Sanders (October), Michael and Jenna Jolly (November), Arthur and Lindsey Sanders (February)

**Baptisms:** Nora Opel, Jake Johnson, Calleigh Hunnicutt, Gwen Hunnicutt

**Hiring and ordination of Chandler Darby**, our new Youth Minister

## THOSE GRIEVING

**Chris Heard** – loss of parents, Robert and Linda Heard

**Tami Williamson** – loss of father, Tom Bonner

**Eliza Erickson** – loss of infant nephew, Shepherd Wright

**Bonnie Rockey** – loss of grandfather, Donald Skipper

**Arlene Leedy** – loss of husband, Bill Leedy

**Javon Johnson** – loss of sister, LaShaunia Pross

**Matt Joyner** – loss of grandmother, Joyce Joyner

**Tony Baird** – loss of father, David Baird

**Char Hurley** – loss of sister, Sherry Horner

**Jan Willis** – loss of sister-in-law, Rosemary Davis

## FIGHTING CANCER

**Tony Demuth** (brother-in-law of Joe Cocke) – recently diagnosed

with renal cell carcinoma

**Cheryl Argano** – recently diagnosed with breast cancer

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

**Becky Russell** (grandmother of Haylie Douglas) – breast cancer

**Maria Baake** – breast cancer

**David Green** – biomarker tests every other month yielding positive results

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

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

## VARIOUS CONCERNS

**David and Danna Willis** (brother of Tim Willis) – as they adjust to life in the US after 20 years of mission work in Samoa

**Jeff Emery** (brother-in-law of Chris Heard) – recovering from recent triple bypass surgery

**Peggy Carter** (grandmother of Christina Eng) – recent surgery removing infected gallbladder; complications due to atrial fibrillation and congestive heart failure

**Brittany Joyner** – safety, stamina, opportunities to encourage those around her on the castle-building team in France

**Brian and Molly Sanders** (son and daughter-in-law of Ed and Sheryl Sanders) – twins due in October!

**Shirley Pacifici** (mother of Charee Landis) – ongoing heart

issues

**Susan Pratt** – recovering from knee replacement surgery

**Patricia "Gamma" Foster** (grandmother of Noel Tomlinson) – prayers for peace and comfort while she's in a memory care unit

**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

**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 the world in turbulent times

**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

## MILITARY SERVICE

**Javon Johnson** - serving as chaplain at Naval Air Station Whidbey Island, Washington

**Michael Warford** – stationed in Spain with the Navy

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

Attendance  
+ Giving

August 10 Attendance		August 10 Giving	
On-Site Service	151	Weekly Giving Average	\$13,075
Online Viewing	38	Weekly Giving Budget	\$13,550
		Be the Blessing Giving (To Date)	\$1,691,433

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