CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

BE the BLESSING

December 7, 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
5:00pm	All-Church Christmas Party at the Marrs' Home

Upcoming Events

Dec 8	Monday Guys' Group
Dec 8	Women's Bible Study
Dec 10	Flourishing Families
Dec 10	Reynolds' Small Group
Dec 11	Conejo Academy Tutoring
Dec 11	Fosters' Life Group
Dec 13	Guys' Golf Outing
Dec 13	CVYM Christmas Party
Dec 14	Carols and Candlelight
Dec 21	Christmas Celebration Service
Dec 21	Caroling With Seniors

Upcoming Birthdays

Andy Wall	12/6
Kimi Calderon	12/7
Lexy Clark	12/7
Taylor de Bruyn	12/7
Gabe Watson	12/8
Joey Ornelas	12/9
Melissa Foster	12/10
Jerry Rushford	12/11

The Word of the Year

Andy Wall

"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger."
– Proverbs 15:1

It's that time of year again! For the past 21 years, Oxford University Press has chosen a "word of the year" based on user evidence drawn from news sources around the English-speaking world. The purpose of the project is to identify new or emerging words that have social and cultural significance. Past winners have included "selfie" (2013), "vax" (2021), and "brain rot" (2024). The 2025 runners up included "biohack" and "aura farming". But this year's winner (drum roll please…) is "rage bait," which is defined as "online content deliberately designed to elicit anger or outrage by being frustrating, provocative or offensive."

"Rage bait" is at least as old as 2002, when it was posted in an online discussion group about drivers exchanging, um, rude gestures. Since then, it has gained currency as a slang term for a very specific form of attention-seeking online behavior. According to Oxford's usage data, its frequency skyrocketed by a factor of three this past year. Even people who've never heard the word before immediately understand what it means.

Why would people practice rage baiting? The answer is rooted in the intersection between how our brain works and how social media works. Posts that stir up strong emotions (positive or negative) elicit a more visceral reaction, thereby garnering more clicks, likes, and reposts than milder fare. The name of the game both for high-minded content creators, influencers, and brand advocates as well as wanna-be influencers, shillers, and propagandists is more exposure. Rage baiting is the low road to gaining more followers, garnering more clicks, and drawing more attention.

If "rage bait" is the word of the year, what reflecting do we need to do about how we as Christians interact within our larger culture? Here are some questions I think are worth chewing on:

- What are the ways that internet content seeks to manipulate us emotionally? When was the last time you felt manipulated by online content?
- How are you tempted to use internet content to manipulate others? How are we complicit in this project, even if we don't do rage baiting?
- How can we resist being rage baited or sucked into "eye-for-an-eye" and "tooth-for-a-tooth" exchanges in online comment sections?
- How might we keep discussions of emotional and controversial topics civil and high minded, rather than devolving into name calling, assuming the worst of others, and listening only to those who agree with us?
- How do we resist the temptation to peevishness and self-righteousness, both of which make us vulnerable to being set off by rage bait?
- At what point do we exit the conversation, understanding that some folks just love to argue for the argument's sake?

What's Happening At Conejo

Celebrating 50 Years!

This coming Saturday will mark the 50th anniversary of ***Chris and Sandy Stivers***. They were married on December 13, 1975. Congratulations on reaching this beautiful milestone. Thank you for the love and faithfulness you show to one another, to your family, and to your community. May you continue to bring fun, encouragement, laughter, and music together for many years to come! We love you!

Fall Sermon Series: Let There Be Peace

This Advent season, we're exploring the themes of peace and reconciliation in light of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ. This week, we'll reflect on Micah 4, which articulates a great vision of a healed humanity learning God's ways and walking in them, as well as living in harmony and peace. This vision is found both in the Hebrew Scriptures (Micah 4:1-5, Isaiah 2:1-5) and in the New Testament (Ephesians 2:13-16; Revelation 7:9-17). Micah 4:4 gives a particularly beautiful example of shalom, the Hebrew word that bespeaks not merely the absence of conflict/war but the presence of wholeness, health, and well-being for all. While we understand that these great biblical visions will be fulfilled in God's ultimate timeframe, we are called in the meantime to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9), ministers of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:18-19), and agents of harmony (Romans 12:16-21).

Auditorium Class

This Sunday, we're in the second of a five-part Advent class series titled "A Weary World Rejoices." God's people have always been sustained by hope. Whether the Hebrew people in times of slavery and exile or Christian communities in times of persecution and hardship, God's people are familiar with both the brokenness of the world and God's faithful sustenance through dark times. Each week we'll engage with various biblical and historical characters whom God sustained through fiery trials. Join us this Sunday as Nick Zola leads a class titled "The Other Judas: How Hanukkah Began."

Food Drive for Manna

Conejo continues to be a generous church family. As the holiday season continues, we have another opportunity to contribute to the needs of those in our community. Please click Manna's Current Needs or scan the QR code on the right to access a list of items that the Manna Food Bank has specifically requested for the winter months. You may bring them to church through Sunday, December 28, and leave them in the boxes in the foyer. Thank you so much for your generosity!

All-Church Christmas Party / Today at 5pm

The entire congregation is invited to a special Conejo holiday gathering on Sunday, December 7, beginning at 5pm at the home of Rick and Paula Marrs. Make plans 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.

Fall Small Groups

Our small group fall program includes groups meeting around the Conejo Valley and beyond. Please click CVCC Fall 2025 Small Groups for a detailed listing. This week's group activities / discussions include:

12/7	All-Church Christmas at the Marrs'	
12/8	Guy's Group	Woodranch 6pm
12/8	Women's Bible Study	Finish "Smith" book
12/10	Flourishing Families	Parenting Matters
12/10	Reynolds' Small Group	*The Chosen*
12/11	Tutoring at Conejo Academy	
12/11	Fosters' Small Group	Minor Prophets
12/13	Guys' Golf Group	Los Robles Greens

Carols and Candlelight / December 14

At 6pm on Sunday, December 14, 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.

Health Ministry Team Resources

This team is gathering information about the many community resources available as well as a variety of educational opportunities that may be of interest to the members of our congregation. Please scan the QR code on the right or click Health Resources to see the updated list of classes available throughout the community over the coming weeks. Most recently added is the Family Caregiving Symposium on December 16. Additionally, we ask that all members fill out the Health Ministry Questionnaire which will help the Health Ministry Team understand how best to help the church family. There are printed forms on the entry table for you to fill out and leave in the envelope if you prefer working with paper.

Middle School and High School

Volunteer for CVYM!

Those who have expressed interest in chaperoning for the CVYM's weekly Sunday Bible classes and devos will be scheduled through the Planning Center app. Please accept or decline each assignment (as you do for services). If you are interested in serving in this capacity and have not yet communicated that with us, please let us know through the Let Me Serve form, or through direct communication with Chandler Darby. His contact info is on page 4.

Youth Ministry Bible Classes

We have been journeying through the major movements of the Grand Narrative of Scripture, beginning with Creation and the Fall. This past week, we concluded an overview of the people of Israel, beginning with Abraham's call and concluding with a promise to God's people that a Messiah would come from the line of David. This week, as we enter into the Advent season, we reach the climax of the Grand Narrative: the story of Jesus. For, in the words of the prophet Isaiah, "to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

CVYM Christmas Bash/December 13

The party will be from 6 to 8pm at CVCC. Bring your Christmas cheer and wear your Christmas best (Christmas PJs, elf suit, Santa garb – as long as it's full of Christmas spirit!). We'll have: Classic Christmas movie screenings, hot chocolate, Christmas-themed games, and a white elephant gift exchange (item should represent a "favorite thing" of yours @ $15 cap).

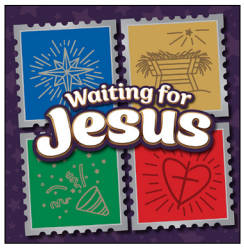
Upcoming CVYM Events

There are many other opportunities to support and encourage one another, share in studies and devos together, and engage in service projects for others in the community. Below are a few of the dates currently on the church calendar for CVYM.

December 7	All-Church Christmas Party at the Marrs'
December 13	CVYM Christmas Event @ CVCC
December 14	Carols and Candlelight
December 21	Caroling With Seniors

Children's Ministry

Our Kids Are Learning



In this series, kids will celebrate Advent in a new way as they discover the prophecies about the coming Savior from Isaiah in the Old Testament and the fulfillment of those prophecies in the birth of Jesus and the promise of His return. We look forward to seeing and sharing time, Bible stories, and faith-based conversations with your children each Sunday at 9am!

Wonder@Home™

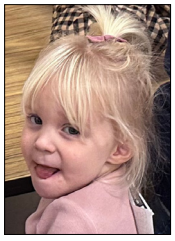
Scan the QR Code for ways to engage in the wonder of God together at home. This resource includes a video, worship playlists, activities, and more!

Volunteer Scheduling

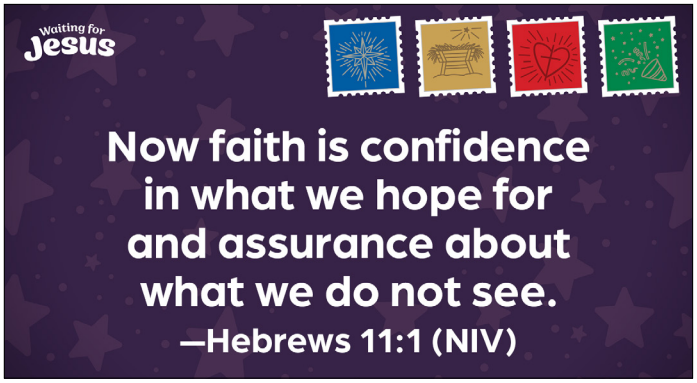
All Children's Ministry volunteers are now being scheduled through the Planning Center! Please watch for emails and app notifications and either accept or decline so that we can ensure consistent programming for all of our children! WE NEED YOU! If you are interested in serving in our ministry, please email me, text me or find me so I can get you plugged in!

Child Check-In

Please use our check-in system to check your child in before Bible Class and again before Children's Worship! This helps us know exactly who we are serving and caring for!



Word of Wonder



Prayer Corner

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

PRAISES

New Members – Phil, Jordan, James, and Jackson Cho; Ben Miller and Rachel Miner; Kelly and Charlotte Collins

Pregnancies: Lindsey Sanders (February)

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

Birth: Jordan Sierra Jolly, daughter of Michael and Jenna Jolly; granddaughter of Andy and Carrie Wall; great granddaughter of Susan Giboney

THOSE GRIEVING

Dwayne Hunnicutt – loss of brother, Kevin Hunnicutt

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

FIGHTING CANCER

Steve Rouse – Stage IV pancreatic cancer

Rick Marrs – undergoing treatment for prostate cancer

Harriet Overton – undergoing treatment for leukemia

Kiki White (sister-in-law of Jim and Penny White) - recently diagnosed with contained uterine cancer; rheumatoid arthritis

Tony Demuth (brother-in-law of Joe Cocke) – recently diagnosed with renal cell carcinoma

Cheryl Argano – recovering from recent surgery for 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

Wayne Helm (friend of Landis family) – injured in a helicopter accident; prayers for Wayne's healing, for the other person who survived, and for the family who lost a person in the crash

Jim Green (brother of David Green) – recovering from recent heart surgery

Greg Parker (brother-in-law of Sheryl Sanders) – being treated by antibiotics for sepsis from burst appendix

Steve Foster (father of Amber Johnson) – recovering from recent hip surgery

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

Peggy Carter (grandmother of Christina Eng) – dealing with some limitations due to atrial fibrillation and congestive heart failure

Shirley Pacifici (mother of Charee Landis) – recovering from heart valve repair

Eliza Erickson – problems with thyroid function

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

Joe Reynolds (father of Brittany Joyner) – heart failure

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

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

Healing, peace, and justice in our nation and communities

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

Michael Warford – stationed in Spain with the Navy

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

Attendance + Giving

November 30 Attendance	
On-Site Service	122
Online Viewing	42

November 30 Giving	$13,494
Weekly Giving Average	$12,603
Weekly Giving Budget	$13,550
Be the Blessing Giving (To Date)	$1,695,074

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