CONEJO VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

BE the BLESSING

September 13, 2026

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	Town Hall Meeting

Upcoming Events

Sept 19	Crafty Women Craft Event
Sept 20	Infant Dedication Service
Sept 20	YM Parent Meeting
Sept 26	Hiking Ministry
Sept 27	CVCM Harvest Festival Planning Meeting
Oct 2-4	HS Pismo Retreat
Oct 4	Health Ministry Event
Oct 11	Mexico Mission Fundraiser
Oct 15-19	Yosemite Men's Trip
Oct 16	Women's Dinner
Oct 23	Many Mansions Fall Festival
Oct 24	CVCM Fall Harvest Festival
Oct 25	YM Harvest Festival

Upcoming Birthdays

Harriet Overton	9/8
Everly VanAtta	9/9
Kimberly Thomson	9/12
Callan Kliest-Blankfein	9/18
Cindy Stephens	9/19
Amber Johnson	9/20
Taylor Wooton	9/21
Joy Zola	9/21
Bill Foster	9/22
Darlene Rivas	9/22

Difficult But Necessary

Andy Wall

"If there is no room in the heart, there is no room in the house."
—Danish proverb

There are many things in our lives that fall into the category of "Difficult But Necessary." For example, exercising patience in the face of frustration. Or denying our impulses to overeat, overspend, or over-react. Or behaving responsibly on days when we're just not feeling it.

I would place the practice of Christian community into this Difficult but Necessary category as well. Loving one another, welcoming one another, and caring for one another in the name of Christ are not easy tasks. Relationships require hard work. In the normal course of all relationships, there is frustration, disappointment, and hurt.

Our relationships in community are further challenged by our yearning to be free and unencumbered, able to do whatever we want to do. Every relationship cuts into our personal autonomy. Every friendship exacts a price on our time and emotional energy. Every community we commit ourselves to comes with some sacrifice of our personal preferences.

Additionally, our society trains us to be consumers: we get our burgers our way, stream the movies we want when we want, and customize our music playlists to suit our tastes. All these choices train us to expect similar things from our communities: if a relationship doesn't give me what I want, I'll just take my business elsewhere. But expecting to always have it our way in relationships is neither realistic nor wise.

So community is, in a word, inconvenient. What we'd really love is to be connected without being encumbered, to have community on our terms, with lots of choices and minimal responsibilities. But this is not how community works. Just ask anyone who has a family. All of us are complex and have sharp edges when you get close to us. Richard Neuhaus observes that real community "is the discipline and devotion of disparate people bearing with one another in the hard tasks of love." In other words, people who are willing to put in the difficult but necessary work.

Is this work worth the trouble? Christine Pohl argues that "The best testimony to the truth of the gospel is the quality of our life together. Jesus risked his reputation and the credibility of his story by tying them to how his followers live and care for one another in community (John 17:20-23)." That whole bit about "and they'll know we are Christians by our love." May we engage more deeply in the difficult but necessary work of welcoming one another, as Christ has welcomed us, for the glory of God (Romans 15:7).

What's Happening At Conejo

Sermon Series: "The Parables of Jesus"

At the heart of Jesus' parables was his message of the present reality and availability of God's kingdom reign. Though the fullness of God's kingdom is yet coming, Jesus has invited people then and now to be participants in its growing reality and life. Today's sermon will reflect on a cluster of kingdom parables in Matthew 13 (and one from Mark 4), all of which begin with "The kingdom of heaven is like … ." Our understanding of these parables is vital because they help us better understand the kingdom of God, which Jesus taught us to seek first.

Auditorium Class: "Back to the (not so) Basics"

"What are the 'first things' of Christian belief and practice? Or, what self-understandings and behaviors give our faith its unique contours and ways of being in the world? This fall, our auditorium class will reflect on these questions in a series titled, "Back to the (not so) Basics." The class title hints at the simultaneous simplicity and complexity of our shared faith. Through class discussion, group dialogues, and communal reflection, we hope to deepen our understanding of the foundations of Christian belief and practice—to have what the theologian Anselm once called "faith seeking understanding." Join us as we explore topics like the Bible and inspiration, God the Father, Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit, the nature and mission of the Church, the Christian life, worship and prayer, and more. This series starts this Sunday (9/13) with Derek Estes providing an introductory overview.

Young Professionals Class / Starts Sunday

If you're in the post-college years of young adulthood and seeking to grow in your faith while building community with your peers, you're invited to come take part in our Young Professionals group. The class will start on Sunday, September 13, at 9am, in the overflow classroom nearest the coffee and donuts. Mike and Darlene Rivas will be leading this class and during the first week, the discussion will center around what themes the group would like to explore together.

Endeavor Together / Starts September 20

What does it mean to live a good life? Are you living one? Join us to explore these questions in a Sunday morning discussion-oriented class centered on what it truly means to live well. Using podcasts (assigned between sessions) and supplementary materials, participants will engage in meaningful conversations each week. We'll be listening to *No Small Endeavor*, a podcast with a wide variety of guests from a range of fields and perspectives. Lee Camp, who recently concluded three decades of service as a professor of theology and ethics at Lipscomb University, hosts the podcast.

Not sure? You're welcome to come to the introductory session on Sunday, September 20, at 9am in the overflow room nearest the front entrance. You may also talk with facilitators Ty De Long and Connie Horton to see if this is for you.

Welcome to Conejo!

We are delighted to welcome ***Johnny Warwar*** and ***Emma Perkins*** to the Conejo Church family! We look forward to sharing ministry and community with you. Our prayer is that you will be blessed by your association with this church family and that you will be encouraged to grow in faith, love, and service to others. Contact information:

Johnny: 4188 Ventavo Road, Moorpark 93021
johnnywarwar@yahoo.com • (805) 298-3953

Emma: 1285 Barry Avenue, Unit 201, Los Angeles 90025
emkperk0419@gmail.com • (405) 445-2935

Town Hall Meeting / This Evening

This evening at 6pm, our elder selection process will continue with a town hall style meeting in which we'll get to know our elder candidates better. As a reminder, our candidates are Kindy De Long, Bill Foster, Rick Furino, Chris Heard, Connie Horton, Paula Marrs, and David Rhoades. Childcare will be available; if you haven't contacted Char to confirm, please email char.hurley@conejochurch.org Thank you!

Fall Small Groups

Our small group program is launching over the coming weeks. 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 ***Fall 2026 Small Groups*** for a detailed listing.

Saturday Small Groups / September 19 and 26

Crafty Women: Next Saturday, September 19, CVCC women are invited to bring your current craft project(s) to the church building from noon to 6pm. Invite a crafty friend as well, if you would like to! RSVP to office@conejochurch.org.

Hiking Ministry: On Saturday, September 26, at 10am, you are invited to meet at Marina Park in Ventura (just north of Ventura Harbor Village at 2950 Pierpont Blvd. in Ventura). This is perfect for everyone; families are encouraged to come. Marina Park features a wonderful playground for the kids, and the main walking area is completely stroller-friendly. The 0.7-mile out-and-back Jetty Trail is surrounded by water on both sides.

Upcoming Health Ministry Seminar / October 4

Our Health and Care Ministry will present a seminar on Sunday, October 4, from 1:30–3:00 p.m. on the theme "Recognizing Medical Emergencies: What to Do When Seconds Matter." This session will focus on developing practical skills to help you recognize when something may be a true medical emergency and identify important warning signs. We will discuss questions such as: When should you call 911? When is it appropriate to drive to the hospital? When might urgent care or a call to your doctor be enough? Topics will include recognizing signs and symptoms of emergencies such as heart attack, cardiac arrest, stroke, serious breathing problems, and severe allergic reactions, along with other conditions as time and interest allow. RSVP to Suzanne Scarberry by September 27 at mecmom@yahoo.com, or sign up on the sheet in the foyer.

Middle School and High School

Youth Ministry Bible Classes

The youth group is going through a series on Luke-Acts to get a big-picture view of Jesus' life, work, and ministry—and what it looks like for the church to carry on his mission in the world today. As we read through the stories aloud and dive into individual sections in groups, we are noticing key emphases and connections that Luke is drawing out for his readers/listeners. This week, we explore the calling of the first disciples and the early stages of Jesus' ministry in Luke 5.

Youth Ministry Sunday Evening Devos

In lieu of our regular Sunday evening Devo, all members are invited to participate in the Town Hall this evening at 6pm, where you will have the chance to get to know the elder candidates better. See the "Town Hall" blurb on page 2 for more information. We continue with our "Devos at the Park" series next week, on September 20!

CVYM Extracurricular Events Calendar

Be a part of the supportive community for our teens as they participate in a multitude of extracurricular activities this fall: volleyball, choir, football, band, soccer, theatre, dance, water polo, and more. Access the schedule through this Google calendar to learn of the dates, times, and locations for our teens' upcoming events.

Upcoming CVYM Events

TONIGHT!	**Town Hall Meeting @ 6pm, CVCC**
Sept 20	Devo at the Park @ 5:30-7pm, Paige Lane Neighborhood Park
Oct 2-4	Pismo Beach High School Retreat

Children's Ministry

What Our Kids Are Learning

During our ***Bible Classes***, our **Little Lights** and our **Kingdom Kids** begin a series today called, *"Problems and Promises."* God fulfills His promises by making a way through any obstacle. In this series, kids will explore how God helped Israel conquer the Promised Land through the miraculous victories of the Jericho spies, the falling walls, and the sun standing still.

In ***Children's Worship***, our **Little Lights** will begin a series called, *"We Go Together."* As a child, one of the best and easiest ways to shine your light for Jesus is to be a good friend. The friendships in the Bible show qualities of protecting, mentoring, and being honest with each other. Most importantly, we can learn what a friendship with Jesus is all about. Our **Kingdom Kids** begin a series entitled,*"Donuts and Disciples: The Sweet Life of Following Jesus."* This series uses kids' favorite sweet breakfast treats to look at what the Bible says about becoming and growing as a disciple of Jesus.

CVCM Teachers

Thank you to our amazing volunteers. Please consider serving this fall in the Children's Ministry as a teacher or helper for our nursery, preschool, or elementary classes. Contact Char Hurley.

Memory Verse

He will keep his covenant forever.
He will keep his promise for all time to come.
1 Chronicles 16:15

Children's Ministry Newsletter

All of this information and more can be found in our Children's Ministry Newsletter! Check it out! Click Children's Ministry Newsletter or use the QR code to the right.

Parent Meetings: Mark Your Calendar

Join us for one of two parent meetings to connect with Char and hear what's happening in our Children's Ministry. Come ready to share your ideas, questions, and hopes for our kids' faith journeys. Please pick the time that works best for you.

- **Oct 4**, 9:15 am
- **Oct 11**, after church 11:45-ish

Prayer Corner

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

PRAISES

Pregnancy: Kelly Collins (January), Taylor Duenes (March)

New Members: Johnny Warwar, Emma Perkins; Gabriel Levai; Jerry Mehler; Alex Wall, Cassidy Woodward, Richard and Jess Wall-Smith, Paul and Maya Nutley, Jeffrey Ignarro

Baptisms: Ella Rockey, Jeffrey Ignarro, Rylan Downey, Genevieve Gaffga, Hayven Gaffga, Paxton Van Atta

THOSE GRIEVING

Joe Cocke – loss of brothers, Paul T. Cocke and Larry Cocke

Christian Socquet – loss of mother, Elizabeth Cowan

Ed Sanders – loss of mother, Barbara Sanders

The Beck Family in Simi Valley (friends of Rylan Downey) – loss when 13-year-old Reis Beck was killed in an e-bike accident

Bill Foster – loss of mother, Sonja Foster

Kym Churchman (friend of Rene Heard) – loss of son, Ayden Churchman

Family and Friends of Steve Rouse

Lynn Burke – loss of cousin, Steve Foster

Will Gaffga – loss of father, Davis Gaffga

Dwayne Hunnicutt – loss of brother, Kevin Hunnicutt

FIGHTING CANCER

Harriet Overton – undergoing treatment for leukemia; complication with blood clot forming in central artery near heart

Bruce McAfee (husband of Maxi McAfee) – pet scan indicated cancer is gone; dealing with blood clots and other side effects from cancer treatment

Marti Lewis (sister-in-law of Maureen Thomas) – recently diagnosed with cancer

Marilyn Aurand – additional cancer in the right lung; physically and mentally battle-weary

Rick Marrs – prostate cancer

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

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

Cheryl Argano – 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

Hayven Gaffga – healing and recovery from recent accident that required stitches

Peggy Allin (mother of Julie Waters) – recently placed on hospice

Sue Ann Meador – hospitalized after recent medical crisis

Burnard Pearce (father of Jonathan Pearce) – recovering after recent hospitalization

Luz Rivera (cousin of Joel Ornelas) – recently diagnosed with breast cancer; age 39, mother of 2 children

Marti Lewis (sister-in-law of Maureen Thomas) – recently diagnosed with cancer; receiving nutrition and hydration from IVs

James Rhoades (father of David Rhoades) – recovering from broken femur and cracked rib

Nina Rowland (friend of Shannon Latson) - dealing with numerous medical problems and uncertainty

Louisa (Lulu) Steinwedell (friend of Lisa Scott) – a young girl (like family to Steve and Lisa) who is having brain surgery for the removal of a tumor

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

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

Joe Reynolds (father of Brittany Joyner) – heart failure

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 around the world

Healing, peace, and justice in our world, 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

Medical Clinic Mission Support – Ghana

Daniel and Karly Napier – Thessaloniki, Greece

Megan Randolph Lewis– Associate Director of Teacher Services, TeachBeyond

REMADE (formerly Made in the Streets) – Nairobi, Kenya

Brendin Williamson – Trekko Church, Tucson, Arizona

MILITARY SERVICE

Michael Warford – stationed in Spain with the Navy

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

Javon Johnson – serving in WA as a Navy chaplain

Attendance + Giving

September 6 Attendance		September 6 Giving	$13,798
On-Site Service	156	Weekly Giving Average	$12,464
Online Viewing	47	Weekly Giving Budget	$13,590
		BtB Giving (Funds Remaining)	$1,803,420

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