

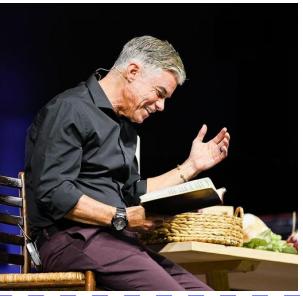
## HIGHLIGHTS FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 2026

### MISSION VIEJO CHRISTIAN CHURCH MEETS SUNDAYS AT 9AM & 11AM!

Mission Viejo Christian Church is a life-giving church in Mission Viejo, CA with powerful worship, practical messages, and programs your kids will love!

Come worship with us on Sundays. We also offer LIVE online services simply by visiting our website at [mvcchome.org](http://mvcchome.org) to watch online.

**Sundays at 9:00AM and 11:00AM**



### MISSION VIEJO CHRISTIAN CHURCH

27192 Jeronimo Road, Mission Viejo, CA 92692

[www.mvcchome.org](http://www.mvcchome.org)

Sunday Services @ 9 & 11AM

Sunday Service live ONLINE

### YOUNG AT HEART...WHERE FRIENDS BECOME FAMILY

Young at Heart meets  
Thursdays from 9:00AM–11:00AM

BRING A FRIEND... They are Always Welcome!

For more info, contact Mary at  
[Maryokida@gmail.com](mailto:Maryokida@gmail.com) or 949-933-6521



RESTAURANT

### ARE YOU PUZZLED??? & LUNCH BUNCH AT BJ'S RESTAURANT, LAG HILLS, THURSDAY, JANUARY 29TH

You will be puzzled by this day's activity, but it will be fun!

After Young at Heart, we will leave for BJ's in Laguna Hills for Lunch!

Please sign up by January 22nd to attend the Lunch Bunch.



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JANUARY 2026

### YOUNG AT HEART MINISTRY OF MISSION VIEJO CHRISTIAN CHURCH

#### REFLECTING ON THIS PAST YEAR AND LOOKING FORWARD TO THE NEW YEAR

How is your heart at the start of this New Year? Are you feeling a bit sentimental over the past year, excited about the New Year, or a little of both? I usually find myself feeling a mix of melancholy and excitement. I love reminiscing on the special times we've shared with our grandkids, but I also see them growing up too fast on us. On the other hand, once the holidays are over, I am anxiously awaiting to hear from God on what He has in store for Rich and I in the New Year.

All of this can sometimes lead us to feel unsettled as we pray for the Lord's guidance and direction and prepare ourselves for this new year. Thankfully, we know we can place it in God's hands because His plans are always best!

I encourage each of you to take a healthy, reflective approach and invite God into the process as you reflect on the past year and look ahead to the new year. Going through these steps should calm any anxious feelings and bring you peace and assurance that God has everything in His hands for the New Year!

#### Reflect on this past year

Work through each step carefully, letting God bring things to mind.

**Step 1:** Identify 3 things that happened last year that you are thankful for. Gratitude lifts our spirits and reminds us of where our help comes from. *16 Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 ESV

**Step 2:** Identify 3 prayers God answered last year.

I can't even tell you the magnitude of answered prayers I experienced last year. I often find myself raising my hands in the air and praising God with awe and wonder... and a trembling voice. God is so faithful, and He keeps pouring out His love. If you find it difficult to remember prayers God answered, that's OK. Give it some time: Let the concept roll around in your mind for a few days. I would be very interested in hearing what prayers God answered in your life this past year!

*I sought the LORD, and he answered me and delivered me from all my fears.* Psalm 34:4 ESV; When we are unsure of the future, it helps to remember God's faithfulness in the past. Be sure to write down these answered prayers. Now let's look to the year ahead.

#### Look Ahead to the New Year

Shift your focus now to the present and the future.

**Step 3:** Start with gratitude. What are you grateful for right now, this very day? Try to list three things.

**Step 4:** Identify 3 prayers for the New Year. What are your hopes for this new year? Try to identify at least three specific hopes. Write them down and turn them into prayers. These can become your foundational prayers for the New Year. I encourage you to listen for God's leading and to be bold in your prayers. *2 Thus says the LORD who made the earth, the LORD who formed it to establish it—the LORD is his name: 3 Call to me and I will answer you and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.* Jeremiah 33:2-3 ESV

**Step 5:** Rest in God's love and care for you. No matter what tomorrow brings, Jesus is by your side, guiding you and upholding you. Which of these verses did you need to hear today?

*Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.* Isaiah 41:10 ESV

If you'd like to worship your way through the New Year, look up this beautiful song of faith. It's called "**It is Well**" by Kristene DiMarco (Bethel Music). I love the main chorus lyrics... *Through it all, through it all, my eyes are on you. Through it all, through it all, it is well. Through it all, through it all, my eyes are on you, and it is well with me.*" **It's going to be a great 2026!**

## FOCUSING ON FRESH STARTS IN 2026

We asked our Young at Heart friends, "What was the best thing that happened to you in 2025 that will prepare you for 2026?" Here are a few of their responses:

**Joan Pinkus:** This year I have gotten bolder in my faith and I have discovered the joy of having strangers respond in a positive way. I love talking to someone who loves God!

**Jan Wakefield:** I moved into a beautiful home with my granddaughter, her husband and two babies... A family I really needed. And I am a new member of MVCC.

**Julie Kuno:** Our Lord and Savior saved my husband from having to get a heart transplant. He still has heart issues, but we are taking it day by day.

**Sally Maynard:** The best thing this year has been the opportunity to "Let go and let God." He has given me many wonderful, caring people that have come along side me and truly carried me through this year's journey and now into the future.

**Jim Knowles:** The Lord has allowed me to be an example to families of Jesus' love in tough situations, and become bolder in witnessing.

**Jeannie Graham:** Marrying my best friend, beginning a beautiful new chapter together, and having our family together to celebrate was the greatest joy of my life in 2025!

**Sandy Stark:** Making changes and moving forward; that will prepare me for 2026.

**Rachel Welch:** The best thing that happened to me this past year was the birth of my granddaughter, and the second best thing is growing closer to our Young at Heart Family. Looking forward to what the Lord has planned for 2026.

**Rich Okida:** Witnessing Young at Heart's sense of community with responsibility, care and genuine love for one another has been incredible this past year. Proverbs 17:17

**Nancy Stetson:** My horse competitions with Jesus! Giving glory to God!

**Rich Banks:** Returning to MVCC this past year has rekindled my sensitivity to the Holy Spirit and my desire to draw closer to Him!

**Mary O:** I'm so thankful to God for the friendships that thrived in 2025! Y@H fills my heart with a love so deep, my cup runneth over! Praying He continues to use Rich & I in 2026 as He sees fit.

**Gail White:** This year I have been going to the "Y" for exercise. I will continue to work on my balance in the new year.

**Sandy Kirtley:** This past year the Lord has led me into the valley of "great joy and peace." The Holy Spirit and relationships with wonderful friends at Y@H has deepened my intimacy with the Lord!

**Vince Concialdi:** I've been in a bible study with 3 guys for over 40 years.... We study God's Word, and pray for our wives and families.

**Phyllis Manke:** I was overwhelmed with anxiety, fear and depression, but through it, I learned the ultimate joy of leaning on Him.

**Steve Thomason:** The discovery this year that Gen Z is seeking the Lord. Hopefully, my websites will help them.

**How would you respond to the question?**

## WHAT OUR Y@H FAMILIES HAVE BEEN UP TO



The 19th Great-grandchild to our Sharen Tait, Kennedy Jo was born Dec. 27th!



Sandi Banks gifted her granddaughters new Barbie Dolls for Christmas, then brought out her special Collector's Barbie to see! Wow!



Family time is always the best for the Guerreros!



Sally Maynard had an incredible spread of deliciousness for her family at Christmas



The Knowles Life Group Christmas Party... these folks are love being together!



Ringing in the New Year for this group of friends (family). So much food, fellowship and fun for: The Okidas, Grahams, Espinosas, Jim K, Jeannine, Rachel, Jakob, Patrick and others! Great night!



2025 Recipients of the "Feel Like Home" Award: Linda Thomason, Judy Schell, Neli Rosen & Becky Downs.



Sterling St Clair



Quick refresher on Selfies for Kathy & Phyllis!

Even after Y@H, they still want to be together. Pat, Jenn, Phyllis & Kathy.

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO OUR JANUARY BORN FRIENDS!



VINCE CONCIALDI—3



RACHEL WELCH—4



RICHARD OKIDA—24



GAIL WHITE—25



SANDY KIRTLEY—29



JUDY SCHELL—30



JANET SPEELMAN—31

## HAPPY MERRY-OKI DAY AND SHINE YOUR LIGHT CHRISTMAS PARTY!

*There's so many reasons to celebrate the season, but the best reason is JESUS!*



Jakob Welch



Jill, Erma, Vickie & Nancy



Go tell it on the mountain  
That Jesus Christ is born  
Sharon, Sharen & Beverly



Carol Knowles & Diane Lemonds



Kathy Mitchell & Louray Arnott



Nancy Stetson



Sandy Kirtley & Jennifer Pereira



## MATTHEW 28:19-20

Our MISSION at MVCC focuses on the big picture...  
*"Reaching people with the Good News of Jesus Christ to make disciples who make disciples."*

## REAL. LOVE. ON MISSION.

A vibrant Church where **REAL** discipleship happens, where **LOVE** is on display and lives are released  
**ON MISSION** for Christ!

## BEST WAY TO STAY CONNECTED WITH US!

Many communications are sent via email, text or calls, so please keep us informed if your info changes! Be sure to read your Heartbeat Newsletter and Monthly Calendar to see how you can worship & connect with friends at Young at Heart & MVCC.

**Send your phone, email, address updates or photos to:**  
949-933-6521 [Maryokida@gmail.com](mailto:Maryokida@gmail.com)