

The Outlook

WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors"

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Vol. LXIII, #23

Anne Schlesinger, Pastor

December 8, 2021

Worship Services on Facebook and In-Person
Anne Schlesinger, preaching

December 12, 10:30 a.m.

Isaiah 12: 2-6, Luke 3: 10-14. Sermon: "How Much is Enough?" Theme: Joy.

December 19, 10:30 a.m.

Micah 5: 2-5a, Luke 1: 46-55. Sermon: "A Room with a View." Theme: Love.

Christmas Eve Service, Friday, December 24, 5:30 p.m.

Isaiah 9: 2-7, Luke 2: 1-20. Sermon: "The Inn." Theme: Messiah
Christmas Eve Celebration will include Scriptures and Carols.

Sunday, December 26, 10:30 a.m.

Colossians 3: 12-17, Luke 2: 41-52. Sermon: "Dwelling." Theme: Abiding.

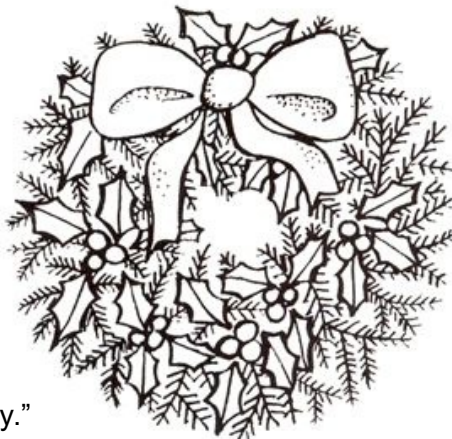
Sunday, January 2, 10:30 a.m.

Isaiah 60: 1-6, Matthew 2: 1-12. Sermon: "Gifts for a King." Theme: Magi.



♪ A Note from the Pastor

In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The Word was with God in the beginning. Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being. What came into being through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light. —John 1: 1-5



We have been worshipping God during this season of Advent using the theme “The Inn: Housing the Holy.” This theme will continue through January 2, when we celebrate the Epiphany. We have been—and will continue to be—reminded that the birth of Jesus occurred in an unlikely spot. A stable seems an unusual place to “house the Holy,” or is it? Perhaps we can find that which is holy and divine in many unlikely places, and perhaps we can all make room in our own hearts and our church to create a beacon of light to share hope and holiness. We continue to offer in-person and online worship. Our Christmas Eve service will be at 5:30 pm on Friday, December 24. On Sunday, December 26 we will have a traditional covenant renewal service in the Wesleyan tradition. Please be sure to join us.

We will not have a “Blue Christmas” service in church this year, but instead I will offer a short, on-line meditation on December 22 at 3 pm. It will include some contemplative music and several opportunities for prayer. We will meet together on Zoom, so all will have a voice. It is easy to get caught up in joyous celebrations of Christmas that celebrate the coming of our Lord. However, we have all had times of suffering, too. Some people are quite lonely this time of the year, and it is important to recognize and acknowledge difficult times as well as the joy, knowing that God will guide us through all of it. If you are interested in participating in the Blue Christmas meditation, please let me know so I can send you the Zoom link.

Thank you to all who have agreed to take up leadership positions in the coming year. The terms begin on January 1. Because we held a Charge Conference rather than an All-Church Conference to elect the leadership this year, I have posted the nominations report on the bulletin board in the narthex. If you would like to serve God, the community and your church, there are many opportunities that do not include election to committees. Some open now are positions on the tech team and as children’s Sunday school teachers. Training is available for these positions. Also, you may approach any member of the Lay Leadership/ Nominations committee to request a position in 2023 or to let us know you’re available should any positions come open during 2022. All our names are posted on the Nomination Report.

Christmas blessings,
Pastor Anne

Joys and Concerns

We pray for those in need of healing:

• June Braun following foot surgery—patience and healing • Nina S continued healing following her surgery • Kerry J. following an appendectomy—and prayers of comfort for her sister Nancy • Cookie who is hospitalized, and for her husband who needs full time care. • Pat as he recovers from breast cancer surgery • Junior E & comfort for his family • Roxanne—comfort for her daughter and family • Larry and Carolyn L. • Barbara D.—edema • Brian—ringing in his ears • For healing in school children who take to violence against others or against themselves. • Sherry who injured her leg in a fall; release of pain • Natalie facing six months of chemotherapy—for comfort, hope and healing • Linda T • Junior E and his family • Adele D. (Alvisa's daughter)—healing and treatment options

We pray for: • All caregivers • For an attorney's help in securing safety for Lee's grandchildren in foster care • For all who are grieving, including Brian who has lost four friends in the last month • A correct COVID test and safety for all who are suffering • We lift up people suffering economic hardship and insecurity in basic needs; may abundance be shared. • We lift up people suffering mentally, finding it difficult to cope; may paths open and hope return. • We lift up people suffering loneliness and isolation; may companionship and solace arrive. • We lift up people suffering discrimination, fear and violence; may they know respect, respite, and safety. • The victims and their families following the

recent school shooting in Oxford, MI • Courage for CASA supervisor Bobbie, dealing with some very difficult cases—and prayers for all the children in the midst of those difficult cases. • For tenants who deal with unjust property managers • Good decisions about gun control • Carmen—may she have strong strength of spirit, feel God's presence • Peace and comfort for John and Pam in this difficult time • For Nick as he and a team work on an application for BC to receive the Aspen prize for an excellent community college. • Continued prayers for Larry and Carolyn L and family • Lupita's family • For all students facing final exams

We pray for travel mercies for all who are traveling this season, especially:

• Students home from college • Vance and Linda • Danny and Jenifer • Linda R • Lisa and Nick • All people on the roads • Ananda and Derrik

In gratitude, we remember and pray for our abundant blessings... • For friends, love, support and prayer • Answered prayer, especially in Barbara's healing • The blessings of family able to gather on Thanksgiving • That Danny and Jenifer had a good visit with Linda, and for their concert • For a successful Charge Conference • The blessing of answered prayer: Sherry and Barbara are both beginning to feel much better • Jerry L. Is having a wonderful visit with her family • Terry is surrounded by family as her daughters visit with their children • For the work of this semester at BC • For Nick's leadership and vision • The joy of our children and grandchildren.

Faithful Givers

You should have now received your pledge card in the mail for supporting the ministries of Wesley UMC in 2022. You can also turn in your pledge via the online web form posted on our website. The web form sends the results directly to the church office.

Go to the church's homepage at www.wesleybakersfield.org and click on the "Online Pledge Form" link in the "Quick Links" section below the church's phone number. The online form will require you to enter your name and pledge for 2022. There will be places for optional second mile gifts. Please prayerfully consider a monetary pledge. Thank you and God bless you!

Meeting Reminder

The Administrative Council will meet Tuesday, December 21 at 5:30 p.m. through Zoom.

From The Missions Committee

A monetary donation was given to Horace Mann P.T.A. to purchase shoes and socks for approximately 12 children in need.

They were very appreciative.

Special (online) charge conference called by Bishop Carcaño

Monday, December 13, at 5 pm

A special, multiple church charge conference will be held online for news and instructions regarding the bankruptcy case the Boy Scouts of America are facing to protect churches that have hosted troops. You are welcome to join this important meeting. Please let Pastor Anne know if you are interested and she will forward a link to the meeting when it becomes available. In the meantime, please pray for healing for all who are part of the claims of sexual abuse.