

The Outlook

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

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Anne Schlesinger, Pastor

March 10, 2021

10:30 a.m. Worship on Facebook

March 14: Numbers 21:4-9, Matthew 9:18-26, "Different Pictures"

March 21: Hebrews 5:5-10, Matthew 8:18-27, "Restoration"

Anne Schlesinger, preaching

Please remember to "Spring Ahead" your clocks March 14!

UMCOR Sunday March 14

Gifts to UMCOR Sunday lay the foundation of all United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR) work by covering the costs of doing business. This means all gifts designated to specific programs can go 100% to those programs because UMCOR's basic expenses are covered. You may mail a check to Wesley, designated UMCOR or give online. Thank you.

Help Feed Our Neighbors!

Wesley has a new feeding ministry. We continue to support the Bakersfield Burrito Project, but now have an additional way to provide food for families with food insecurity. Shawn Collins picks up food for distribution. He needs help distributing food and praying with people who ask for prayers on the third Monday every month from 11:30- 2 pm. Please consider helping in this vital ministry.

Coming Up!

April 2, 5:30 p.m., Good Friday Service

April 4, 10:30 a.m., Easter Service

♫ A Note from the Pastor

Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. While he was coming up out of the water, Jesus saw heaven splitting open and the Spirit, like a dove, coming down on him. ...At once the Spirit forced Jesus out into the wilderness. He was in the wilderness for forty days, tempted by Satan. He was among the wild animals, and the angels took care of him.—Mark 1: selected verses

We are in the middle of Lent. What exactly is Lent? It isn't Biblical... or is it? Lent is a season of reflection and preparation for Easter. It is a remembrance of the forty days Jesus wandered in the wilderness after his baptism, so it is traditionally marked by fasting. In the early church, and continued by the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, fasting is prescribed by the church, most notably fasting from certain foods. Most Protestant churches have fewer mandates, but we are all called to dedicate some time during this season to contemplate death, especially Jesus' death on a cross and what that means for our faith journey. In the 20th and 21st centuries, many people avoid thinking and talking about temptation and death and sin, much to our detriment. Avoidance of a subject contributes to our fears. But, as another pastor put it, "Without Good Friday, Easter is just a happy party ...[and] Good Friday without Easter is just a funeral." I am not the first to say that this has been a difficult year for all of us. We long for Easter to move us out of a year-long season of doing without many of the activities we call "normal." Easter is coming! But, don't forget, Easter changes everything. Look forward with hope, and remember, "hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us," (Romans 5:5).

One of the hopes we all share is that we will soon be able to return to worshipping in the sanctuary together. I am often asked when that will happen, and I want you to know I, too, look forward to that day. But Kern County remains in the "purple zone," and our Bishop rightfully has called us to be cautious, keeping the health and safety of our community a high priority. I am working on a written protocol that needs to be approved by our District Superintendent before we can even consider reopening. Once we do return, we will not be able to sing or recite prayers or liturgies together. We will be masked, and we will not be able to use paper bulletins or collection plates or other "normal" ways of the past. So I ask you to please continue to stay in touch with each other as best you can. I invite you to online worship, prayer times and study. I also invite you to include daily prayer, devotion and Bible reading through Lent and beyond. Our "new normal" will be a joyous time of hope and resurrection.

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Sunday, March 15 we will begin a new, three-week after worship study on racism led by UM Bishops. We meet via Zoom, which is accessible by phone for those without computer access. Many of us were shocked this year about how much we do not know about Black history. Please join us for this important study.

Blessings, Pastor Anne

Administrative Council

The Administrative Council will meet Tuesday, March 16 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom. Please make plans to attend.

Thanks be to God, we now have a full tech team

There is no longer a pressing need for more trainees, but if you have an interest, don't hesitate to let us know so you can be added to a future roster. I give heartfelt thanks to Evan Waits, Jerilyn Smith, and David Schlesinger who made our online presence possible. I also greatly thank all who volunteered for the team, especially Linda Ramirez who keeps us organized.

Chair the Finance Committee

Wesley's dedicated Chair of finance is retiring from that position next January. We need someone to fill that position in 2022. The sooner you volunteer, the longer training period you will have. You do not need to be an accountant! The accounting is done by Michael Daillak's accounting firm.

We need someone organized who can work well with Terry Gonzales, learn to read a balance sheet prepared by our accountant, and report to Admin council monthly. The Finance chair also creates a yearly budget for our church and writes letters to the congregation informing them of needs and requests. Please contact Pastor Anne or Marv Davisson to volunteer or for more information.

Prayers of Joys and Concerns

For people who need healing of body, mind, and spirit:

- For Nancy and Ruth
- Tiger Woods
- Barbara's sister Carol and her medical team, as well as her husband Bill
- Stella's Brother Jack & wife Catherine
- Barbara's brother John and his wife Pam
- Stella—may she receive conclusive test results and find a competent medical team
- For Brian Lewis
- For Katelynn's mother Brenda
- Laura Devine
- JoEllen Washburn
- Brian Hill
- Linda Tilton
- Jerry Smith
- Lukas—Rob Bewley's nephew
- For people needing a good night's sleep
- For Susan McQuerrey
- For Linda Ramirez
- Rose's friend Kimberly

We pray for other places in need of God's blessing:

- For all who have experienced the loss of economic security.
- For those whose businesses have gone under or are on the precipice between survival or closure.
- We pray for all who are without heat, power and/or water because of winter storms.
- We pray for residents and staff of The Orchards that is now in "lockdown" due to a staff member testing positive for COVID. We pray especially for Linda that she not lose the progress she has made in therapy.
- We pray safety for all expectant parents, especially Tiffany and Kristyn, and that their mother may attend both births. May God bless that hope.
- We pray for those whose disparity of resources has been made even more pronounced during this pandemic.
- We pray for blessings on all who grieve, especially for Sylvia Corson
- We ask for encouragement and passion to re-evaluate how we as a church can help our community now and into the future.
- We pray this day for blessings on people we haven't seen in a while, especially Margaret Grant.
- For teacher's, students and parents navigating on-line, in person and hybrid learning situations
- May all who are trying to make good decisions about re-opening or staying distant make good decisions
- For all who grieve, especially Steven Holmes & family for the loss of his brother in law, Dan Tarailo

- Those injured in So Calif. auto accident and for the families of those who perished
- Pray for RAIN
- Health & safety of students/teachers/staff as students return to campus
- For a fair and equitable distribution of vaccines
- For Katelyn & Andrew—separated by training for a new job
- For Bonnie VanVorhees & all people acclimating to new living situations, for all caregivers
- Wesley Trustees making decisions
- Discernment for Stella and Liz
- Bob Dixon grieving loss of his wife.
- Travel mercies for Sherry's daughter Kristyn & her family
- For us all to keep learning with open eyes, hearts and minds
- For Cavazos/Patterson family: quarantined because a teacher at the children's preschool tested + for COVID We give God the glory for our blessings:
- Visiting family
- We pray grateful thanks for the efforts of all who have been searching for solutions and have given generously for months of their time and resources to help alleviate the suffering of those they know and do not know.
- Rob's mom Janice has received her second vaccine without a bad reaction.
- We give thanks for the many people who have received a COVID vaccine
- We give thanks that Peggy who had no electric power for 12 days was cared for by loving and generous neighbors
- Samantha, who sent a letter of blessing and received blessings in return.
- For birdsong and all sounds of joy
- The joy of long friendships especially Cleona Cope's and Freda Hamilton's decade-long care for each other
- For the awesome video of Mars landing.
- Gratitude for Andrew Cavazos' new job, and send prayers for his safe and quick return from training in Arizona
- Nestor's release from the ICE detention center—he was picked up in error, a case of mistaken identity
- The beauty of the early signs of spring—lilac blossoms
- Happy Birthday: William Bender, Michael Daillak, Bill Blair, Meghan Droste
- Good, honest journalism
- Good to hear from Rose Garcia
- Sarah Strobel had her second vaccine
- Thanks for Jerry Ludeke's editing work • BC's Academic Senate meeting went well
- Eddy's heart for volunteering
- Lars Carver's cancer-free report
- For Netflix watch parties-opportunities to connect safely with friends

In The Military

Please keep those serving in the military
in your prayers.

Chris Armantrout - US Navy
Nathan Ashlock - US Marines
Nick Buckridge - Army National Guard
Alex Campbell - Navy
Josh Caughran - Navy
Megan Darling - Army Reserves
Bradley Delacruz - Army
Kurt Droste - US Marines
Rebek'ah Fore - Navy
Jerome Garey - Air Force
Rebecca Garey - Air Force
Dan Hanel - US Air Force
Greg Hanel - US Air Force
Colin Harrigan - US Marine Corp
Kenneth Oberg - Navy
Ellis Redmond - Marine Corp
Tiela Roland - US Air Force
Spring Walden - US Air Force
Joel Watson - Navy
Josephine Wells-Ashley - US Marines
Shon Willis - US Army
Laura Yoon - US Navy
David Yoon - US Navy

The pillar candle on the altar is to
remind us of our prayers for them.

From Our Members

Please pass on thanks to whoever was
in charge of sending out the Valentine
cards. Mine was signed by Aubree.
That is so sweet. --Jerry Ludeke

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Dear Wesley Church,

I appreciate and thank the kind people
who brought food during my surgery.
--Susan McQuerrey