

The Outlook

WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors"

office:(661) 871-3030

e-mail: office@wesleybakersfield.org

website: wesleybakersfield.org

Facebook: [WesleyUMCBakersfield](https://www.facebook.com/WesleyUMCBakersfield)

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Anne Schlesinger, Pastor

February 23, 2022

10:30 a.m. Worship on Facebook and In-Person

February 27: (Transfiguration) Exodus 34:29-35, Luke 9:28-43; "Seeing the Glory."

March 2: (Ash Wednesday) Psalm 51:1-17, Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21;

"Transformation is Possible."

March 6: Deuteronomy 26:1-11, Luke 4:1-13; "Ordinary Lives Can Be Holy."

March 13: Genesis 15:1-12, 17-18, Luke 13:31-35; "So Much Is Out of Our Control."

Anne Schlesinger, preaching



March 2, 2022

5:30 p.m., in the sanctuary

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21, "Transformation is Possible"

Ash Wednesday marks the beginning of Lent, the forty days prior to Easter Day. Lent is a time of reflection, repentance and remembrance of the final weeks of the life of Jesus and his sacrifice. The name Ash Wednesday comes from the tradition of marking the forehead of people with ashes to symbolize mourning and repentance. Join us in the sanctuary for worship, including the traditional imposition of ashes.

Renew Your Subscription

Each year at this time, we request each of you to renew your subscription to the church's newsletter, *"The Outlook"*. It is now time, and for \$15 you can renew for a full year. Mail in your check or place it in the offering plate, designated *"The Outlook"*.

♫ A Note from the Pastor

Jesus returned from the Jordan River full of the Holy Spirit, and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness. There he was tempted for forty days by the devil. He ate nothing during those days and afterward Jesus was starving. Luke 4: 1-2

This year during Lent our focus will be based on a book by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie called *Good Enough: 40ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection*. I was hesitant at first, because I believe John Wesley when he says “One thing is needful” for every person, and that is to “recover our first state,” that is, to return to reflecting God’s image. The title of the book, therefore, seems to indicate an inadequate striving for that state. However, this is what worship design studio says on the subject: “Every year, billions of dollars are pumped into a wellness industry defined by the theory that we can be perfected. We can organize ourselves, heal ourselves, budget ourselves, love ourselves, track ourselves and eat well enough to make ourselves whole... Everyone was now an evangelist of good, better, best. Harness your mind to change your circumstances. Salvation is only a decision away. But I cannot outwork or outpace or out-pray my cancer. I can’t dispel it with a can-do attitude. After a diagnosis. After a pandemic. That is the right time to question our popular theories about how to build a better life. We cannot “have it all” if we just learn how to conquer our limits. Infinity isn’t at the bottom of your inbox or in the next level on the Peloton. The problem with our lives is that we cannot solve them. We can only live them.” (Kate Bowler, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/09/24/we-cant-upgrade-our-lives- we-canonly-live-them/>].

Who thought we would still be figuring out how to live well in a pandemic and post-pandemic world two years later? We need wisdom, healing, and discernment. Lent is, of course, a season of contemplation. I pray this series will help us discern how God is calling us forward.

Blessings,
Pastor Anne

Prayers

We pray for those in need of healing:

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- Adele, and comfort for the whole Chavez family
- Natalie Larry and Carolyn L.
- Barbara K.—may her healing be smooth and quick
- Brian H.—back in hospital, not doing well
- Stan Moore
- Laura D—both gratitude and concern: MDs found a blockage in her carotid artery. She is thankful they found it and she can receive treatment.

- Song T. —Home from hospital, but she needs continued prayers for complete recovery
- Freda H. is losing too much weight and is feeling tired
- Lissy—tested positive for COVID, but she is asymptomatic
- Bob S—home from the hospital but he is feeling weak and needs continued prayer.
- John Rous—testing to seek answers for source of seizure disorder.
- Linda T
- Carolyn, Linda T’s physical therapist

• People who have tested positive for COVID, including Siobhan, Song D., Sunshine • All people with cancer, including Danny, Jan, Kimberly, Natalie, Adele and Brian. May they feel God's presence and healing hand, and may all who care for them be a gentle blessing.

For people grieving: • Marion T—lost a dear friend who lived in the same facility • Gerry—friend of Eddy's—her brother died and her husband is hospitalized • For the Bewley family, especially Janet, on the death of her "little" sister Charlotte. • For the Darling family. (Rev. Darrell Darling was Anne's mentor when she was a student pastor in Santa Cruz.)

Other prayer concerns: • Pray for peace—everywhere—but especially in Ukraine. May God send peace, discernment and mercy, especially for the people in the line of fire. • Pray for hungry people throughout the world, and pray for wisdom for us all to learn how to help. • For the cancer treatment Louise's niece Kim is receiving in Atlanta. May it have positive results that lead to healing • For understanding and discernment for the family of Rose and Danielle • Gratitude for Enes Kanter who is making public the plight of the Uyghur people in China. Please pray for this oppressed population. • For the fires in Laguna Beach, especially for firefighters and for residents who have been evacuated • Jerry is having technical problems with her computer, and would also like prayers for her ability to pack efficiently. She's feeling lots of pressure to get her house ready. • For Cleona C.—We are unable to reach her by phone, and we lift her up for whatever her needs are. • Linda's nephew Joe desperately needs a job and help with

his finances. • For "bunker children"—young children of the pandemic who are not learning how to socialize • Women who are caring for one or more adult children—gratitude for the care they give, but they need prayers of support • Ukraine and all of Europe. May the leaders find peaceful solutions receive discernment • Michael Atkins—patience and support as he waits for his intern practice number. Prayers that the process speeds up • May the people Eddy visited receive the support they need • Travel mercies for David, Jennifer, and Caroline as they travel to and from her swim meet. May all the people competing and attending feel God's love • We pray for Jerry as she makes progress packing • Travel mercies for Louise and blessings for a wonderful visit • Children in the Foster Care system • Easing of mask mandates: may people in the know make good decisions

In gratitude, we remember and pray for our abundant blessings... • Jerry gives thanks for all the love she received on her 90th birthday, especially for being able to see people in community • Sherry's wonderful time last weekend • For the lives and witness of Mary Crown and her daughter Jane who passed within days of each other • For the care given to Stella by Dr. Muhammad Alim • For seeing Al Savery back in church. May he feel God's blessing • Melinda is feeling better • Evan fixed our Facebook connection • This is a blessing and a concern: Praise for answered prayer: Andy is finally being honest with Lea. He is facing a long prison term. May he be safe. • Pacheco has been released from jail. He has turned his life around and is now gainfully employed and "livin' the

dream.” • Grateful for science • Praise that Jenifer is in her job orientation at Knotts Berry Farm. • Lea has spoken with Child Protective Services in Virginia and will be able to FaceTime with her grandsons 1 hour per week starting soon. They confirmed the court date in April, and the boys will come to Bakersfield soon after. (And they will be part of Wesley!) • Happy birthday to Stella’s granddaughter Caroline. For Jenifer’s job training • Jerry’s grandson David’s engagement to Natalie • Joe’s second interview—prayers that he does well, gratitude the company asked him back for a 2nd interview. He resolved his car insurance issues. • Linda does not need to have another round of painful treatment on her lips this month. The doctor will assess next month. • For Carolyn Ashlock’s loving care of Barbara • Natalie M. is very appreciative of the prayers we lift up for her. She had minimal side affects from her last chemo, and she is feeling better and has been released to return to work on Tuesday. • Happy birthday to Brendan, Anthony, Mandi and Matthew • For Eddy who listens to the nudging of the Holy Spirit & responds with good work • Josephine is visiting Barbara, and Barbara is enjoying it very much • For the beautiful weather; gratitude that Lisa and Nick were able to de-stress a bit by taking a hike • Flowering trees

Linda Tilton would like greeting cards and stickers that you no longer use. Please leave them at the church office. Thank you.

Let's Celebrate!

Jerry Ludeke, an active Wesley member since 1964, is “retiring” to the Bay Area to live closer to one of her sons. She will be missed! But let’s get to celebrate her ministry here and for all the blessings she has given this community. Jerry has strongly requested that there be “no gifts.” However, there will be an opportunity for you to write a message for Jerry to keep and read - a memory, a quality you appreciate, a hope for her new life. All who know and wish to honor Jerry are invited. Hosted by David and Sherry Atkins (their phone numbers are listed in the directory).

Where: Wesley United Methodist Church, The Gathering Place
When: Sunday, March 27, 3-5 pm
Please: NO GIFTS!