

The Outlook

WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors"

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Vol. LXIV, #23

Anne Schlesinger, Pastor

December 6, 2023

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

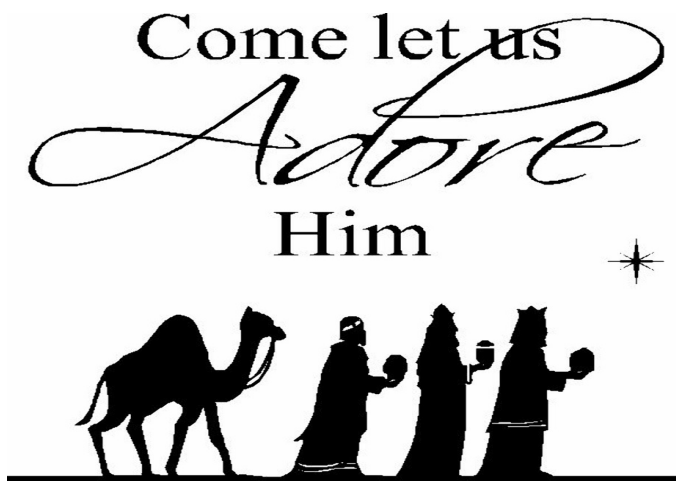
December 10: Isaiah 40: 1-11, Mark 1: 1-8. "Being Present with Peace"

December 17: Isaiah 61: 1-11, Luke 1: 41-55. "Being Present with Joy"

Rev. Anne Schlesinger, preaching

Charge Conference

Wesley's annual Charge Conference is scheduled for Sunday, December 10, after worship with our District Superintendent, David Niu, leading our celebration. Our yearly Charge Conference celebrates Wesley's ministry, past and future. Please try to fill the sanctuary that day as evidence of our vital and welcoming congregation.



Christmas Schedule at Wesley

Sunday, December 24, 2023

10:30 a.m. Fourth Sunday of Advent

5:00 p.m. Christmas Eve

♪ A Note from the Pastor

We began Advent worship last Sunday with the Worship Design Studio series, “The Gift of Being Present.” It’s a reminder that our presence with our loved ones is what will be remembered, much more than something we can buy at the store. Most of us already know that. I still watch a holiday movie I first saw as a little girl, where the Grinch, voiced by Boris Karloff, learns that lesson. “Maybe Christmas,” he thought, doesn’t come from a store. Maybe Christmas...perhaps...means a little bit more!”¹ I got upset one year because I had a class the night it was to be shown on television (there were no TIVO’s or even VCRs when I was in college) so I was going to miss it. My daughter taped it for me on her audio tape recorder, so at least I got to listen to it. I do not remember any gift I received in 1982. But I do remember my little girl taking the time to make a recording of a television show that I was sad to miss. Advent is a season of expectation. It is sometimes difficult to separate the traditions of a lifetime from the search for a significant change that the birth of a Savior brings.

Please plan to attend Charge Conference Sunday December 10 after worship. Our District Superintendent Rev. David Niu will preside.

I have a request for all of you who have children and/or grandchildren who go to school in Bakersfield. I want to be a supportive presence for all young people, so if a child in your family is participating in a school event, would you please let me know the details? I would like to attend if possible. (If your child plays football, I will have no idea about what is going on in the game, but I still will be happy to attend.) School concerts and plays are my favorites, but sports, science fairs—whatever your child’s interests are—are all things I would like to attend. I read something a long time ago that successful children have at least five adults who take sincere interest in them. I’d like to help.

Bakersfield’s Temple Beth El held a prayer vigil December 4 for the hostages still held captive by Hamas. Several of us read the names of the individuals still held, and everyone who attended received a picture of a person held hostage. I will post the picture I received of a young lady still captive. I support the State of Israel and the release of all hostages. And yet, Palestinians are also children of God, and I have reservations about the affect of violence on young innocents, so I am conflicted. Please pray for peace. Please pray that God’s presence will comfort all who suffer.

Don’t forget our food ministry December 15. You may participate as a volunteer helping prepare bags and boxes of food to share with our neighbors, and you may receive food from the pantry as well. There seems to be a large number of families who are food-insecure in Bakersfield, so please come early. We sometimes run out of food before 4 p.m.

I will have cataract removal surgery next Wednesday, so I will be unavailable all day. It should be one day only, but then they will schedule surgery for my other eye. I will no doubt be unavailable on the day of that surgery as well.

Blessings! My wish for you is for peace and love this holiday season.

Pastor Anne

¹ Dr.Seuss. How the Grinch Stole Christmas. (New York: Random House, 1957)



Christmas Caroling

Christmas Caroling is happening on Sunday, December 10 at 2 p.m. We will meet at Rosewood Retirement Home, 1301 New Stine Rd.

Dream Center Christmas Donations from Wesley

This year Wesley will collect food items for the Dream Center. Please bring individually wrapped snacks (granola bars, fruit snacks, trail mix, etc.) as well as emergency food items (soups, tuna, peanut butter, cereal, etc.). We will collect food through December 31. There are baskets in the Narthex for your donations.

Deadline

The deadline to submit articles to the newsletter, *The Outlook*, is December 18. Thank you for your cooperation.

Bring Your Own Craft (BYOC)

Date: Wednesday, December 13, 2023

Time: 9:30-11:00 AM

Place: The Gathering Place at Wesley

Who: Everyone

Event: Bring your favorite craft to work on while we visit. If you are not "crafty," please come anyway. Also, bring your favorite mug and personal water.

Coffee & Tea will be provided.

Organizer: June Braun



Congratulations to Andrew and Katelynn Cavazos on the birth of their daughter, **Audrey Rose Cavazos**, on November 18, 2023, 7 lbs., 14 ozs. Her sisters are Alexia and Allison.

Prayers

We pray for those in need of healing—body, mind and spirit:

• Susan M — healing and help • Linda T • Lea • Ruth • for quick recovery for Eisha after her medical procedure • for Dan O'Dell after his surgery for skin cancer • healing for Tammy who had hip replacement surgery

We pray for those who are grieving:

• Chavez Family and friends on the death of Alvesa • Sherry A—grieving for the loss of a dear friend Peggy who died Nov. 24 • The family and friends of Chase C a 19 year old declared brain dead following an auto accident.

We pray for other needs:

• For an end the violence that leads to mass shootings and riots • Racism • Fear (anger) for immigrants/immigration policies • For people alone on holidays • For the joys and difficulties all holidays bring • For the people of Ukraine and the suffering of people no longer in the news • For all people living in violent conditions • Israel • Palestine • We pray for peace • We pray for church leaders • In this local church • In our district, especially DS David Niu • In our Conference, especially Bishop Minerva Carcaño • And for the whole body of Christ • For the tech team to get online worship working again, even without Linda's presence

We pray for travel mercies:

• For all traveling for Thanksgiving and other family events—may they travel safely & with patience • For Linda R and family

In gratitude, we remember and praise God for our abundant blessings...

• Stella celebrating the sixtieth anniversary of her marriage to John. • Linda T got a visit from her mother, sister and brother-in-law on Thanksgiving • Rose for her friendship and help • The life and witness of Peggy, Sherry's friend for over 50 years • For Sunshine & Trevor's 28th wedding anniversary. Anne is very grateful for the family created that day • The blessings of Advent, including the work of those who have prepared this sanctuary • The joy of children, especially baby Audrey born 11/18. Blessings for her sisters as they adjust to their new family member • The blessings of this church community • For supportive friendships, especially Rose L's loving support of Susan • For the hostages who have been released.