

The Outlook

WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors"

office:(661) 871-3030, Admin. Asst. 872-8741

e-mail: office@wesleybakersfield.org

website: wesleybakersfield.org

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

Vol. LXV, #23

Anne Schlesinger, Pastor

December 11, 2024

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

December 15: Romans 15: 12-13, Luke 1: 26-38. "Nazareth: A Place of Simplicity (Joy)"

December 22: Romans 13: 8-11, Luke 2: 1-14. "Bethlehem: A Place of Humility (Love)"

Rev. Anne Schlesinger, preaching

Come let us
Adore
Him



Christmas Eve at Wesley
Tuesday, December 24, 2024
4:30 p.m.

♪ A Note from the Pastor

***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: 3b-5

Dear Church family, I know another Outlook will be published before Christmas, but it is never too early to look forward to the birth of Jesus in our hearts. The long nights and dark days have me longing for the light shining in the darkness. (Actually, as I write this, the fog has lifted and it's sunny in my yard, but yesterday I took a trip to Colonel Allensworth State Park. The damp, foggy weather made me remember how much light can change our spirits.)

This season of joy is not always joyful for everyone. Many people experience sadness or grief for various reasons, and the lack of sunlight and vitamin D can amplify those feelings. Please remember, community and sunlight can help. While they may not solve every problem, knowing we are part of a loving community and cherished by our always-faithful God makes a tremendous difference—especially when we can enjoy a little sunshine. If your sadness ever becomes overwhelming, please don't hesitate to call me. I'm here for you.

What a wonderful potluck we had last Sunday! The variety and abundance of food were extra special since we've had so few potluck opportunities since the COVID outbreak. I hope you were able to attend, and I give thanks for the faithful women and men who worked hard setting up and cleaning up afterward. Following the potluck, nine of us went Christmas caroling to visit some who haven't been able to attend church in person. It was a blessing for everyone involved.

If you missed that opportunity, there is another chance to spread some seasonal joy. Wesley's carolers will meet at Brookdale Riverwalk, 350 Calloway Dr., Bakersfield, on Sunday, December 15, at 2:30 p.m. Please join us! Bringing Christmas cheer to others can be a gift for your own heart as well.

Our Advent worship is in full swing. I am deeply grateful to everyone who has contributed to beautifying the sanctuary this season. Special thanks to Bill Blair for creating the directional signs guiding us from Rome to Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem, and finally to a manger. The final stop will be Persia as the Magi journey home "by another way."

~ continued on the following page ~

Mark your calendars for our Christmas Eve service at 4:30 p.m. this year. It will be a meaningful service of scriptures and music. Invite your friends, family, and neighbors to join us in celebrating the birth of Christ. God bless us, every one!

In Christ's love,
Pastor Anne

Prayers

We pray for our friends and family serving in the military

We pray for healing, for ourselves and others:

- All who are without work, all without food, clean water, or shelter
- For Anne's granddaughter Mia who recently was laid off. I ask God to bless her with employment
- Linda R
- Ted Bond, a leader in Boulder Creek UMC in need of healing
- Bill B.
- Sherry's brother Wayne.
- Linda's family—Balthazar, Danny, Jenifer, Lea and Barbara
- For Nancy J—she has a long road to full recovery so will need many prayers for healing and pain relief
- For Brenden
- For Kim McAttee, healing—and gratitude for her family & several faith communities coming to her aid
- For Cathy and Ashley of Laguna Community UMC with serious health issues
- Barbara's niece Susan—to find peace and healing
- Stella's sister Tish, and for her family to help her with decisions and help with communication especially regarding changes due to new medication
- Stella's friend Cathy—healing and pain relief
- Terry's aunt Susanne to have surgery 12/23
- Cindy L—healing following another hip replacement—following a failed procedure.

For other needs:

- For peace, especially in Gaza, Israel, Ukraine, Russia, Syria, Haiti. We ask you, O God, to fill the minds and hearts of the political leaders to bring about just peace.
- Laura D unintentionally hurt someone's feelings and asked for prayer that her attempt to make amends be successful
- Prayers for peace and forward thinking in the US
- May the joy of Christmas be spread

Prayers of gratitude:

- Anne's inhaler is helping a lot with her cough
- Barbara, Anne and others are grateful for wonderful family celebrations on Thanksgiving and other days
- Birthday celebrations for Linda R and Rob B
- The de-cluttering of Linda T's space was uneventful because of her work beforehand
- Toni D worked hard and got the lead in BHS's spring production—a unique accomplishment for a sophomore to get the lead
- Vanessa was gifted with a new (to her) car
- Jerry is grateful for the gift of memory, especially precious memories recalled by holiday traditions
- For the hard work of Rose, Ernestine, Marlene, Bill and Barbara setting festive tables for today's potluck, and for ALL who helped with clean up
- We are grateful for all the pledge cards received
- Linda T is thankful for the Christmas cards and blank greeting cards she received from Stan Moore

Caroling

Caroling on the west side will meet at Brookdale, 350 Calloway Dr., on December 15 at 2:30 pm. All are invited to join voices to help share the Christmas spirit with those unable to attend worship. If you like Christmas carols please come.

Missions

from Alice Oberg

There is a hymn with the title, *What Gift Can We Bring*. We (Stella, Barbara and Alice), with an okay from Pastor Anne, are asking you to bring gifts during this season of giving for the Dream Center such as socks, hygiene products, individually wrapped snacks, and much more. With a twist on an old tradition there is an Advent Tree in the Narthex where the small items you bring can be hung on the tree, or placed in the boxes beneath the tree. You will find the Dream Center Wish List posted in the Narthex for other items.

from Stella Rous ***Sock Tree***

Please help decorate the "sock tree" in the Narthex with new socks for the young children in protective custody at the Jamison Children's Center and the youth at the Dream Center who have aged out of foster care. Our Wesley children and youth will collect your donations. The tree will be up through the Advent and Christmas seasons. In this time of giving, please be generous.

Directory Update:

June Braun: Rosewood, 1301 New Stine Rd. #B12, Bakersfield 93309.

Linda Tilton: lindatilton2560@gmail.com

Deadline

The next deadline to submit articles to the newsletter, *The Outlook*, is Friday, December 20. Thank you.