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LANCASTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors
918 West Ave. J
Lancaster, CA 93534
www.lancasterunited.org

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THE LINK

THE LINK (USPS 370-870)

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LABEL

TIME SENSITIVE

PLEASE DELIVER BY MARCH 12TH

LUMC Office Hours:
Mon-Fri 10 a.m. ~ 2 p.m.
PLEASE MASK UP BEFORE COMING!
Closed Saturday & Sunday (661) 942-0419

In-Person Streaming Service Sundays — 10 a.m. in Sanctuary (*masking required*)

facebook lancasterunited
(no FB membership needed)

YouTube lancasterunitedmc

LUMC Kitchen (Food Ministry):
Mondays & Thursdays, 12-1 p.m.

Footprints Pre-School — Open for business, and accepting new students!
Hours: Mon-Fri 7 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Check www.lancasterunited.org for more information on our active groups and ministries — the list is growing!

Audio/Visual Team
Caring and Hospitality
Children's Church
Grief Group
LUMC Kitchen
Music Ministries
Office Volunteers
Online classes
Prayer Team
Prayers and Squares
United Methodist Women
Youth Group
Wellness Works

1NE
1 Word 1 Book 1 Church 1 People
Lancaster United Methodist Church, CA

LANCASTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors

The Link

The Church's Official Newsletter
Vol. 66 No. 3
March 2022

Lent, a Season of Prayer & Fasting



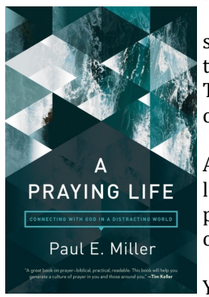
Wednesday, March 2, was Ash Wednesday, marking the beginning of the 40 days of Lent by placing ashes in the form of a cross on our foreheads. Ash Wednesday is one of the most puzzling days of the year. Why put ashes on our foreheads to mark the beginning of the season of prayer & fasting? It seems to contradict Jesus' words. "When you pray go into your room, close the door and pray… And whenever you fast, don't let everyone know what you are doing." (Matthew 6:5 & 16)

The application of ashes on our foreheads is not announcing to everyone that we are praying and fasting; instead, it is like a mini-billboard on our brows reminding everyone that today begins the 40 day season of prayer and fasting.

The ashes symbolize our mortality and limitations. It also represents our need to be reconciled (joined, merged, closer) to God. We become more aware of our own damaged emotions and fractured relationships through prayer and fasting. This realization is uncomfortable, and we often respond by avoiding this reality and not trusting God's way of repentance. Lent is about intentionally confessing our sins and forgiving those we hold a grudge against.

Repentance is the way we draw near to God. To repent means to change our minds about our humanity and God's divinity. It begins by asking God to change our understanding and experience as God's children. Our recommended book for Lent is ***A Praying Life*, by Paul Miller**, who shares a beautiful antidote to our natural resistance to confess our sins and forgive. The key is to see ourselves as God sees us, as his small children.

Mr. Miller explains how adults struggle relating to God as small children because it is difficult for adults to seek God because praying seems to make things seem worse. When we slow down to pray, we are often confronted with how unspiritual we are with how difficult it is to concentrate on God. We have so many problems we don't know where to start.



In contrast, little children never get frozen. They come rushing to their parent and seldom do things just right. Yet, as parents or grandparents, we delight to find out what is on their little hearts. We don't scold them for being self-absorbed, fearful, silly, needy, or confused. That is just who they are. God sees us just that way, and we grow closer to God when we see ourselves that way, too.

There is no better time to grow in our relationship with God and with each than now. And there is no better book to remind us of the truth about our childlike relationship with our loving heavenly Father. Read it with a friend or join our Bible study on Wednesday nights at 5 pm beginning March 9 by Zoom or in the conference room. You may purchase ***A Praying Life*** online or in the office.

Your Little Brother in Christ,
~ Pastor Greg



Ash Wednesday, March 2nd — Service at 4 p.m.

Palm Sunday, April 10th — 10 a.m. (live and streaming)

Maundy Thursday, April 14th — 6:30 p.m. ***with prayer labyrinth at 5:30 p.m.***

Good Friday, April 15th — TBA

Easter Sunday, April 17th—Sunrise Service, TBD in church courtyard
Sanctuary (live and streaming) 10 a.m.

All-Church Notices

Homosexuality and the United Methodist Church

Our visioning leadership team recommends one or two books to better inform every sincere Christian's struggle over ordination and marriage of self-avowed practicing homosexuals. Both authors maintain a high view of scripture. We acknowledge we all bring assumptions and presupposition as we read the Bible. Therefore, we ask everyone to read a book expressing another viewpoint.

If you are progressive-leaning, we encourage you to read the conservative-leaning book ***A People to be Loved*** by Preston Sprinkle. If you are conservative-leaning, we hope you will read the progressive view of what it means to be a faithful gay Christian in ***God and the Gay Christian*** by Matthew Vines.

If you only want to read one book, we suggest you read ***A People to be Loved*** by Preston Sprinkle because it challenges all sides to what the Bible says and models how we should approach this topic in love. Our goal is not to change beliefs but to soften hearts towards others. Thank you for your humble and prayerful participation in this controversial subject that defies simple answers in our church and society. — Pastor Greg

LUMC Passages

Dorothy Jean Finifrock
(February 15, 2022)

Services will be held at a later date.

Velta Mann
(January 30, 2022)
Funeral Service will be held in the LUMC Sanctuary on March 12th at 11 am.

ONGOING PRAYERS
Andrea Lackvoic
Bill & Alease Goesch
Bob Barry
Carmen Lane
Cynthia Christensen
Doreen Maynard
Gaylin Schmitz
Gerry Saul
Jack Melano
Jennifer Lawrence
Phillip Trujillo
Ramona Beck
Randy Beckett
Ray Wolleman
Sheila Gonzales
Steve & Cindy Farrand
Tina Waller
Vicki & David Fisher



FAMILY & FRIENDS (1 MONTH)
Christa Arthur
Francisco Ramirez
Isabel Molina
Jesus Salcedo
LaNiece Cannon
Lois Wilk
Pastor Bill Jenkins
Trina McCombs Perry

RECENT PRAYER QUILTS
Virg Pekoc
Charlene Moore
Arthur Dennis



PRAYERS FOR THE MILITARY
Edinson Kinsey Sr.
Hallie (Day) Herrera &
Felix Herrera
Rayden Finifrock
M. Todd Kelly
Nathan Maldonaldo
Matthew McDougall
Heather McDougall
Joseph Perez
Edwin Henao
Branden O'Carroll

MEMBERS (2 MONTHS)
Ann Thomas & Billy
Barb & Dick Urmanski
Destiny McCaslin
Dorothy & Roger Finifrock
George & Janet Yamakawa
Jane Van Howling
Jean Youngquist &Family
Jean Youngquist &Family
Marguerite Shirley
Melinda Hunter
Philip Portugal
Suzanne Dearborn
Velta Mann & Family

All Church Notices



Keys to Forgiveness Workshop
Saturday, March 26, 8:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.
Led by Joanne Van Hook of Agape Journeys — *Free-will offering taken*

Forgiveness doesn't come easy for most of us. Our natural instinct is to recoil in self-protection or lash out when we've been injured. We don't naturally overflow with mercy, grace, and forgiveness when we've been wronged.

But Jesus tells us we must forgive…or we will not be forgiven.

In this workshop we'll learn the keys to forgiving others, ourselves, and God.

Please RSVP to the church office at 661-942-0419. Masking and social distancing will be in effect; vaccinations and boosters are strongly recommended for those attending in person. Refreshments will be served in accordance with health regulations in place at time of workshop.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Children begin their Sunday's in the Sanctuary, then are invited to join Children's Church in the Dining Room after the Children's Sermon. All children are welcome! Our youth are assisting as part of their Confirmation studies, helping with crafts, singing, audio-visual, puppetry, and Bible navigation. Please join us!

FOOT PRINTS
Christian Children's Center

March roars in like a lion at Footprints! During the first week of March we will learn about "lions and lambs" as well as other items associated with wind, like kites and tails, wind socks and wind chimes. The second week will be spent learning about the food groups and how to eat in a healthy way.

The "luck of the Irish" will be with us as we learn about leprechauns, shamrocks, and pots of gold — be sure to wear green for our St. Patrick's Day party on March 17th! We'll devote the rest of March to studying about farms and farm animals. We'll also be conducting earthquake drills on March 18 and 25th, and a fire drill on March 31.



The **Bereavement Committee** is seeking volunteers to help with church member funerals. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Bette Jo Valdez at 661-860-8588, or quiltingnana@msn.com.

The church van is back in business! Call the church office if you need a ride to church.

Sunday Worship Flowers are once again available to purchase for $65 per arrangement. Flowers may be purchased to honor or memorialize, as well as to celebrate birthdays, anniversaries, or other special dedications.

The 2022 Flower Notebook is on the Book table in Grand Foyer to sign up. Contact the church office with questions at 661-942-0419.



FINANCIAL NEWS

The counting team is always looking for volunteers. If you like counting money, are available on Tuesdays at 10:00 AM and would like to join the counting team, please contact the church office.
— Dayna Rodriguez, Treasurer