



## What Does the Future Hold?

*For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

*Romans 8:38-39 (TNIV)*

I was glancing back at the January 2008 *Highlights* and when I read the opening article I was amazed at how apropos it still is. So, with a few changes, I offer it to you once again.

Everyone wants to know what the future holds. Some people spend a great deal of time and money on fortune tellers; others can't get through the day without first checking their horoscope in the morning paper. Other people spend their lives trying to predict the future, both the immediate and the long-term in hopes of making the best financial decision, in hopes of choosing the right career path, in hopes of building the most solid relationships, in hopes of walking the smoothest and most carefree path. Everyone wants to know what the future holds.

But no matter how much money we throw away on people who claim to know the future or on people who claim to predict the future, no one knows what the future holds. People who barter in the stock market follow trends and study portfolios and read *The Wall Street Journal*, but every investment they make (other than perhaps insider trading, which creates an undesirable future of its own) is nothing more than an educated guess. We simply cannot know what's going to happen in the future and that is worrisome to us. The uncertainty of what might lie ahead makes us feel insecure and nervous. As we prepare to turn the page of another calendar year, not knowing what the year may bring is disconcerting to us.

It is into this insecurity that God speaks through the prophet: "*For I know the plans I have for you,*" declares the Lord, "*plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you a hope and a future*" (Jeremiah 29:11). Jesus addresses the issue of our concern in the words that Matthew records: "*Do not worry about your life... Can your worries add a single moment to your life?*" (6:25, 27).

The point of both the prophet and Jesus is the same: don't worry about what you can't know; live wisely and trust your Father in heaven to care for you and to do what is best for you. Neither messenger promises that the future will be smooth or carefree. Neither messenger predicts that the future will not hold pain and trouble and difficulty. But both messengers are confident that God will be present in the future and His presence brings grace to our struggles, peace in the chaos, comfort for the pain, and strength for whatever we might endure.

As the uncertainty of the new year looms ahead of us, we can be sure of this: we do not know what will happen, but we do now that our great and mighty God will be with us. Instead of worry and fear and anxiety, may our lives be marked by trust and by confidence in Him who loved us and from whom nothing can separate us, including neither the present nor the future. Amen.

In Christ,

*Pastor Wes*

### Sundays in January

**January 4** (10:00 am)

a.m. Pastor Todd

NO SUNDAY SCHOOL OR EVENING ACTIVITIES

**January 11** (8:20 am, and 11:00 am, 6:00pm)

a.m. Pastor Todd

p.m. Prayer Service

**January 18** (8:20 am, 9:40 am and 11:00 am, 7:00pm)

a.m. Praxis: Dr. John Oswalt

p.m. Praxis: *Koinonia*

**January 25** (8:20 am, 9:40 am and 11:00 am)

a.m. *The Kingdom of God in the Houghton Church, Part I* (Matthew 22:34-40)

p.m. Small Groups



## FROM THE ASSISTANT PASTOR

*Not to us, O Lord, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness  
(Psalm 115:1).*

We had a good fall semester of ministry at Houghton Wesleyan! Many of you deserve much credit for the time, talent and energy you gave to make ministry happen for the glory of our Lord. I want to highlight those with whom I've had the wonderful privilege of working. Special thanks to the following leaders for their love gifts to the Lord through various ministries this past semester:

### COLLEGE MINISTRIES

**College Ministries Committee:** Jane Roeske, Sheri Reynolds, Bruce Brenneman, Ndunge Kiiti, Beth Beardsley, Dan Brubaker, Jessica Lord, Ian Galloway

**Koinonia:** Kaylan Reynolds, Jesse Fink, Ryan Johnson, Andy Vogan, Dave Allen, Caitlin Cleland, Shane Marcus, Sean Bennett, Kaylin Bull, Nate Majewski

**Nursing Home Ministry:** Christine Finnegan, Jennifer Huyett, John Paul Ockrin

### LOGOS Bible Studies:

Leaders – Jessica Lord, Adele Cameron, Dan Rechlin

Hosts – Doug & Judi Mayhle, Bruce & Donna Hess, Jim & Karen Szymanski

### SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

**Hosts:** Paul and Margaret Johnson, Doug and Judi Mayhle, Peter and Nancy Luckey, Philip and Sue Brooks, Phil and Donnie Stockin, Mike and Audra Beardsley, Nathan and Casda Danner, Carlos and TJ Gildemeister

**Leaders:** Warren Woolsey, Doug Mayhle, Peter Luckey, Steve Castor, Terry Paige, Dan and Jessica Wartinger, Steve Pocock, Carlos Gildemeister, Diane Emmons, Calvin and Paulette Schierer

NOTE: The spring semester of small groups begins January 25.

Thanks to each of you – and to ALL of our ministry volunteers – for giving sacrificially of your time, talents, and energy to the Lord and His Kingdom. The spring semester looks full of promise as we build on the foundation you laid this past semester and continue to grow and mature in Christ. You are a blessing!

Gratefully His and Yours,

*Pastor Todd*



**EPIPHANY:** Epiphany, January 6, is a day of great joy for all Christians. It completes the twelve days of Christmas; more importantly, this is the festival of the manifestation of God's Word made flesh. The central images of the Magi bearing gifts suggest the three races of humanity coming to worship the Christ. A second manifestation was the baptism of Jesus. A third manifestation was the wedding feast at Cana when Jesus first revealed his power. The season of Epiphany continues until Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent. The emphasis of Epiphany is on the revealing nature of God, his desire for all people to know his nature and power—the character of his being. The color is green which is a sign of life. The trees green in the spring to reveal that the trees are still alive. The grass also turns green revealing the life that has been hidden during the winter.

## Youth Group – “The Holiness Debate”

*All students 6:30 – 8:00pm*

- January 14<sup>th</sup> – No Students – Staff Orientation night  
21<sup>st</sup> – No Youth group... we're going to the game! Meet at Houghton Academy for the Fillmore Vs HA Basketball Game. Wear green AND blue and cheer for your team!  
28<sup>th</sup> - Holiness – What does it mean for me?

**Prayer Breakfast:** Tuesday Mornings: January 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup>, and 28<sup>th</sup>. 7:00 AM in the community room. We are studying the book of James; feel free to read ahead!

January 11<sup>th</sup> – **Super Sunday School** – All Junior and Senior high Sunday School Classes will meet at 9:40 in the community room for a unique Sunday school experience. Refreshments will be served!

Youth Committee Meeting - Wed, January 14<sup>th</sup> 6:30 – 8:00pm in the Youth room

## Winter Retreat 2009 - MOSAIC



The graphic features a blue background with a white curved border at the bottom. On the left, there are five stylized human figures in various colors (green, red, black, yellow, and blue) standing together. To their right, the word "MOSAIC" is written in a large, white, stylized font. Below the figures and the word "MOSAIC", the text "Winter Retreat 2009" is written in a white, sans-serif font. Underneath that, "January 30th - February 1st" is written in a smaller white font. At the bottom, "Camp Hickory Hill, Varysburg NY" is written in a white, sans-serif font. To the left of the graphic, the word "COST" is written in bold black text. Below it, "\$60 if received by Jan. 7" and "\$70 if received by Jan. 21" are written in bold black text. At the bottom left of the graphic, there is a paragraph of text in a small black font.

**COST**  
**\$60 if received by Jan. 7**  
**\$70 if received by Jan. 21**

We live in a broken world with broken people... but God doesn't intend for it to stay that way!! Join us for a weekend as we discover how God wants to take the broken and form it into something beautiful...A "Mosaic" that points the world towards the Savior!

We offer our condolences to Elaine Geens and her family at the death of her mother, Margaret Geens, on December 5; to the family of Herschel Ries, who died on December 7, and to Jan and Stephan Schilke and her family following the death of Jan's father, James Wayner, in a plane crash on December 13.

Congratulations to **Amy Ayers & Aaron Spicer** who were united in marriage on December 21 in Houghton. Congratulations to **Stephanie Pocock & Brian Boeninger**, united in marriage on January 3, 2009 in Houghton. We pray God's richest blessings upon these young couples embarking on their lives together.

Bruce and Donna Hess welcome two new members to the Hess Clan: Sarah Beemnetgeta, 6, and Samson Haili, 5, from Ethiopia, Africa. Glenn and Jodi with Isaac and Victor travelled to Addis Ababa to the orphanage to bring them back to Salem, OR.

# PRAXIS

The church and college have been working together on Christian Life Emphasis Week for many years. We have seen God work in marvelous ways through these events. We are continuing to seek God's direction for special spiritual emphasis as we move further into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. In response to this quest, we are offering a new format for the second semester which we have titled Praxis, which means "reflection aimed toward action."

Praxis will be a week to emphasize living as Christians. While CLEW was unified by the personality of a single speaker and by the format of the revival service, Praxis will feature a variety of speakers and discussants, and a variety of types of events, from coffeehouses and films to shared meals and service projects. Praxis will get its unity from its theme: every year, a different theme in "practical theology." Each year, we will reflect on the theme in as many different ways as we can fit into a week. In keeping with the name, "Praxis," our reflection will be aimed toward action with opportunities to begin acting on our reflections.

This January, our theme is "Welcoming the Stranger: the practice of Christian hospitality." How should our identity as citizens of God's coming kingdom affect how we receive people who are, in various ways, alien to us? Alien in their culture or language, alien in their education or physical capabilities, alien in their religion or behavior? How, practically, do we overcome our fears? What does the practice of Christian hospitality look like: in our churches? in our homes? on the street? We invite you to take this opportunity to be challenged to reflect deeply on the shape of your life and to embed your reflection in action.

In preparation for this week, there are some ways to get started on your reflection. First, there are two books for sale in the Campus Store: *God's Welcome: Hospitality for a Gospel-Hungry World* by Amy Oden and *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* by Christine Pohl. A copy of each book is available in the church library. On Thursday of Praxis week, there will be an opportunity to meet with Dr. Oden and discuss the book with her. It's short, inexpensive, accessible, and instructive. Second, if you are a writer or a visual artist, please consider whether you have, or would like to create a piece for the coffeehouse and art opening in Java 101 that will take place on the Monday of Praxis week. Third and most importantly, please bathe this week in prayer as you have past CLEWs. The schedule for the week and bios on the speakers are included below.

## PRAXIS Week Schedule

### Sunday, January 18

8:20, 9:40, 11:00 am - John Oswalt: "Hospitality in the Old Testament"

7:00 pm - Koinonia

### Monday, January 19

11:00 - 11:40 am, Chapel (WC) - John Oswalt: "Hospitality in the Old Testament"

7:00 - 9:00 pm, "Encountering Otherness" Art Exhibit & Coffeehouse (Java 101)

### Tuesday, January 20

11:00 - 11:40 am, Chapel (WC) - Marva Dawn: "Hospitality in the New Testament"

6:30 - 8:00 pm, Lecture (WC) - Marva Dawn: "Hospitality toward the Differently Abled"

### Wednesday, January 21

11:00 - 11:40 am, Chapel - Workshops: various people & locations

5:00 - 7:00 pm, Hospitality Meals for students (various locations)

### Thursday, January 22

11:00 - 11:40 am, Chapel Workshops- various people & locations

6:30 - 8:00 pm, Lecture (WC) - Amy Oden: "What's for Dinner: God's Welcome & Congregational Hospitality"

### Friday, January 23

11:00 - 11:40 am, Chapel (WC) - Communion Service

8:00 - 10:00 pm, Film co-sponsored by CAB "Places in the Heart" (WC)

### Saturday, January 24

To be announced.

In addition, the student-led ministry Mercy Seat will offer nightly communion (Monday through Thursday). Times will be announced.

## PRAXIS SPEAKERS

### Marva Dawn

Internationally renowned theologian, author, and educator Dr. Marva J. Dawn serves as Teaching Fellow in Spiritual Theology at Regent College in Vancouver, BC, Canada. Under *Christians Equipped for Ministry* (CEM), she has preached and taught at seminaries, clergy conferences, churches, assemblies, and universities throughout the United States, Canada, and the world. A scholar with four masters degrees and a Ph.D. in Christian Ethics and the Scriptures from the University of Notre Dame, Dr. Dawn is also a popular preacher and speaker for people of all ages. She is the author of numerous articles and over 20 books, several of which have won awards and/or been translated into Chinese, Korean, Portuguese, and other languages.

### John Oswalt

John Oswalt, a native of Mansfield, Ohio, is Research Professor of Old Testament at Wesley Biblical Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi. He began his term of service at Wesley in July 1999. He has also served as a Professor of Old Testament and Semitic Languages at Asbury Theological Seminary, President of Asbury College, and a member of the faculty of Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois. Dr. Oswalt holds degrees from Taylor University, Asbury Theological Seminary, and a Ph.D. in Mediterranean Studies from Brandeis University. His particular interest is in Old Testament studies with special attention to the Hebrew language and to the formation of Hebrew religion against the background of the ancient Near East. Dr. Oswalt's writings have appeared in Bible encyclopedias, scholarly journals, and popular religious periodicals. He has written five books, the most noteworthy of these being a two-volume commentary on Isaiah in the New International Commentary on the Old Testament series. Dr. Oswalt is an ordained minister in the United Methodist Church. He is married to the former Karen Kennedy, and they have three children.

### Amy Oden

Dr. Amy Oden is Professor of History of Christianity at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C. She has also served on the faculties of Saint Paul School of Theology in Kansas City and Oklahoma City University. She earned her Ph.D. in religious studies from Southern Methodist University, writing her dissertation on Augustine. She has published an anthology of women's primary source writings in the history of Christian thought, *In Her Words*, (Abingdon Press, 1994) and was a primary sources editor for the study series *Christian Believer: Historic Teachings of the Church*. She developed a video-study series, *Women Speak of God*, produced by the Wesley Ministry Network for congregational study in 2004. Her interest in the Christian practice of hospitality has issued in *And You Welcomed Me: Sourcebook on Hospitality in Early Christianity* (Abingdon Press, 2001) and *God's Welcome: Hospitality for a Gospel-Hungry World* (Pilgrim Press, 2008). Oden has served as president of the Southwest Region of the American Academy of Religion.



### **It's Coming..... Sunday February 8, 2009!**

Annual Missions Focus "Good News from the Southern Tier to Southeast Asia"

Speakers: Ralph Eastlack, South Tier YFC

Steve and Margie Doty, Wycliffe Thailand

Special Guests at combined Youth/Adult Sunday School:  
Hope Refugee, Buffalo / Prison Ministry / Wellspring, Angelica

Watch & listen for spots in Sunday services in January!

**THANK YOU:** The Pastoral Staff would like to thank you for your generosity and gratitude to each of us this Christmas season. We were overwhelmed by the outpouring of love and appreciation we felt through the monetary Christmas gift, your personal acts of kindness, and through your spoken words. We feel privileged to be a part of the godly tradition of the Houghton Wesleyan Church and to participate in ministry with you. We look forward to the year ahead and all that God has planned for you and for us.

## W.K.F.M. Korner

WKFM meets January 18 at 9:40. We will be studying New Zealand, and our offering goes to the total ministry of WKFM worldwide.

### Wednesday Evening Children's Ministries in January:

Due to the holidays, our children's ministries (AWANA Puggles & Cubbies, Girls' AWANA Club, and Boys' AWANA Club) will NOT meet on January 7th. They will resume their regular schedule on Wednesday, January 14th, at 6:30 p.m. Thank you!



**Thank you** to those who decorated the church so beautifully for Christmas:

Bruce Brenneman	Roselyn Danner
Margaret Wynn	Jack Wolfer
Grace Taylor	Cindy Lu Taylor
Jane Buteyn	

**SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE WEEK**, which begins January 18th, is a week Christians of all denominations have chosen to affirm that human life is of inestimable worth and significance in all its dimensions, including the unborn, the aged, the widowed, the mentally handicapped, the unattractive, the physically challenged and every other condition in which humanness is expressed from conception to the grave. In this regard, we join with our brothers and sisters in Christ as we reflect on the value of God-given life and the importance of sharing this truth with others through both words and deeds.

Sanctity of Human Life Week is observed in January to mark the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* decisions to legalize abortion. Since then, the scope of the issue has broadened as stem cell research, euthanasia, physician-assisted suicide, chemical and partial-birth abortion, cloning, xenotransplantation, artificial intelligence and cybernetics have become part of the discussion. To learn more about these crucial issues and how we as Christians can respond, consider exploring the excellent books and DVDs on various topics in bioethics in our church library or investigate these online resources: **The Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity:** [www.cbhd.org](http://www.cbhd.org); **Heartlink:** [www.heartlink.org/hottopics/index.cfm](http://www.heartlink.org/hottopics/index.cfm); **Focus On the Family:** <http://resources.family.org/category/social+issues/sanctity+of+human+life.do> and **The Center for Bioethics and Culture:** [www.thecbc.org](http://www.thecbc.org).

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH** has been blessed this semester with many new faces. The 8:20 service and the 11:00 service has have numerous dedicated college students teaching the children about God's loving ways. The lessons have been put together by Karry Beardsley, including an Old Testament story with songs, activities, and a craft to go with it. It is a joy to see so many eager children come to hear more about God's Word. You can tell by the smiles on their faces that the children enjoy this time of worship. We would like to thank the many college students, young people, and parents who help to carry out his important ministry.

Rebekah Hozjan	Johnny Wanjiku	Jenny Huyett	Kaitlin Fadden
Rachel Spear	Victoria Blair	Sheri Taber	Darby Emerson
Katie McLendon	Hannah Gardner	Sarah Jarvis	Chase Rangel
Heidi Harrington	Janae Rangel	Audrey Miller	Gretchen Ingraham
Michael Pocock	Phil & Rea Holcomb	Mike Platt	

**CHURCH SERVICES ON THE RADIO** A low-watt transmitter enables us to broadcast our Sunday morning services at 89.9 FM. Unfortunately, because of FEC regulations limiting the size of the transmitter, the coverage radius is limited to Houghton and areas just outside of Houghton village limits. A radio with a digital tuner and an antenna will give the best reception. Please let us know if you are able to receive the services and/or if you have trouble with reception.

## ORGAN RECITAL JANUARY 16

The next recital in the inaugural series for the Louder organ will take place on Friday, January 16, 2009, at 8:00 p.m. The program will feature Elizabeth Oswalt Claar. Dr. Claar, a 1992 graduate of Houghton College, holds the doctorate in organ performance from the University of Michigan, and is presently employed as organist at Trinity Lutheran Church in Grand Rapids, Michigan, as organ instructor at Cornerstone University and as accompanist for the music department at Hope College. Those who knew Elizabeth as a student will not be surprised to learn that she is an energetic church musician, recitalist, and teacher, with a special passion for introducing the pipe organ to young people. She serves as dean of the Holland Chapter of the American Guild of Organists, and has served on the faculty for several AGO-sponsored Pipe Organ Encounters (organ conferences for teenagers). Elizabeth directed a very successful POE last summer Holland, Michigan in which our own Nicholas Liddick participated.

The program will present a variety of organ repertoire, including music of J.S. Bach, church music from Armenia, and much more. Please include this exciting program in your plans, and invite your friends!

### Houghton Area Senior Citizens

January 2, 9 a.m., Senior Coffee Hour at Subway

#### January 8, 12:15 p.m., Monthly Luncheon Meeting

**Program:** Organ Recital featuring organist Jennifer Nugent, assistant to our organ builder James Louder. The program is in the sanctuary.

*Please bring your table service and the dish designated by the initial of your last name:* A-F, Salad G-O, Dessert P-Z, Casserole



### Potluck



### THE LIBRARY CORNER

In anticipation of PRAXIS week at the college, and at the recommendation of Pastor Wes Oden, the library has purchased two books on the topic of hospitality and its relation to our Christian faith: Christine D. Pohl's, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition*, and Amy G. Oden's, *God's Welcome: Hospitality for a Gospel-Hungry World*. But there is also an excellent, older book in the library about the subject of hospitality by a former CLEW speaker: Karen Mains. Her book is *Open Heart, Open Home: The Hospitable Way to Make Others Feel Welcome & Wanted*. One review of this book says:

It is a classic on Christian hospitality. In it Mains steps far beyond how-to-entertain hints to explore a biblical and spiritual approach to using your home to care for others. She shows how this approach to hospitality can literally transform the fabric of your community and your world. And if you labor under the illusion that hospitality requires Martha Stewart-like abilities, Mains frees you from such guilt! Instead, she offers fresh and inspiring ideas for using your own resources to serve rather than to impress with new "opening the door" activities in each chapter. You will discover how the Holy Spirit can work in and through you to make others feel welcome and wanted. Whether you are a business executive or a homemaker, a professional minister or a layperson, a seasoned entertainer or an entertaining klutz, you will find here the encouragement and skills you need to reach out with the Gospel through daily acts of acceptance, belonging and love.

The most helpful bit of wisdom I gained from reading Karen Main's book was the difference between hospitality and entertaining, or being guest-centered (serving) rather than self-centered (impressing).

Donnie Stockin  
Library Committee

# COMMUNITY PAGE

*Peter W. Roeske Snowplowing Services, 567-8632*

Free upright cabinet grand piano. Please call the church at 567-2264.

## **Invest in the life of a local student-Be a mentor!**

CA-BOCES Youth Mentoring Program is recruiting mentors for the Houghton College site. Mentors meet once a week, Monday or Wednesday from 4-6 p.m. on the Houghton College campus, with a Fillmore or Belfast student. For more information contact Erica Fleischman at [erica\\_fleischman@caboces.org](mailto:erica_fleischman@caboces.org) or 716-376-8370.

**Student requests work for room and board:** [benjamin.hammer@houghton.edu](mailto:benjamin.hammer@houghton.edu).

NOTICE: We'll be giving all lost and found items to charity in January so come and check if you're missing something.



## **Weather Closing Information**

**During periods of hazardous weather conditions, Closing Information will be posted on WKBW-TV and online at [www.wkbw.com](http://www.wkbw.com). We will also endeavor to update this information on the church website: [www.hwchurch.org](http://www.hwchurch.org)**

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**Address Service Requested**

## CHURCH STAFF

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