

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10:00 MORNING WORSHIP

DECEMBER 24, 2017

*As the prelude begins, let us observe silence as we prayerfully anticipate this hour of corporate worship of Almighty God.*

Prelude: *Christmas Carol Suite* .....Wilbur Held

"All My Heart This Night Rejoices"  
"He Whom Shepherds Once Came Praising"  
"In the Bleak Midwinter"  
"I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day"

Lighting of the Advent Candle: The Derck Family

\*Hymn 121 ***O Come, All Ye Faithful***

\*Words of Greeting and Peace

Anthem: *The Angel and the Shepherds* .....David Willcocks

Old Testament Reading: Micah 5:1-5a Pastor Laurie Smalley

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.  
**All: Thanks be to God!**

\*We Sing in Adoration: ***Joy to the World (Unspeakable Joy)***  
***The First Noel***

\****Doxology***

Worship through the Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory: *Who Would Have Dreamed* .....Jason Hansen & Bob Kauflin

Prayer of Confession

O God, you search us out and know us, and all that we are is open to you. We confess that we have sinned: **In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.** When we long for your coming to change the world, and yet are often unwilling for change in our own hearts: **In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.** When we do not make straight paths for justice, nor offer a welcome when you come as a stranger: **In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.** When we dismiss prophets and angels and refuse to nourish your Word in us: **In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.** When we reduce our preparation for your coming to what others need to change in their lives instead of what we need to change in ours: **In your mercy, Lord, forgive us and heal us.** We turn to you, O God of infinite mercy; **We renounce evil; We claim your love; We choose to be made whole in Christ who comes in flesh to set us free and make us new. Amen.** — adapted from Nathan Nettleton

Pastoral Prayer / **The Lord's Prayer**

*Please feel free to use the altar as your place of prayer as we bow in humility before our loving heavenly Father.*

*If kneeling is difficult for you, please use the red chairs or stand by the altar rail.*

Our Response to Prayer: ***Meekness and Majesty***

\*New Testament Reading: Luke 1:26-56

Pastor Jon Cole

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**All: Thanks be to God!**

\*Song of Preparation: ***Bethlehem***

Sermon: **I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day**  
Pastor Wes Oden

\*Hymn ***I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day***

\*Benediction

\*Congregational Amen (Hymn 656, Threefold)

\*Postlude: *In dulci jubilo*, BWV 729 .....J. S. Bach

\*Please stand if able

Organist: Judy Congdon

Acolyte: Sophia Templeton

Music Ministry Team:

Alana Brubaker, Jeff Babbitt, Kristen Sanasith, vocals; Dave Buteyn, guitar;

Amanda Cox, piano & vocals; Jan Schilke, keyboard;

Anna Schilke, flute; Dan Wartinger, bass; Noah McNeill, drums

***Children's Worship bulletins are available in the church foyer for ages 3-12.***

**Nursery:** We provide a fully staffed nursery for infants up to two years of age. The Nursery is located on the first floor of the Christian Education Building.

**Children's Church:** Children ages 2-5 are dismissed during the song before the sermon for Children's Church: 2 and 3 year olds meet in room 116; 4-5 year olds in room 115 in the Christian Education Building.

**WELCOME TO THE HOUGHTON WESLEYAN CHURCH.** We have now arrived at the Fourth Sunday of Advent and the anticipation of Christ's birth is mounting. As Mary and Joseph make final preparations for their child, so we are called to make final preparations, too. In worship today, release your heart and mind to the movement of God's Spirit—to the whisper of His voice, to the miracles of His presence, to the love of His Son.

**TONIGHT AT 5:00 PM AND 7:00 PM** you are invited to our Christmas Eve Services. In both services, we will read the Scriptures that record our Savior's birth, we will sing carols that proclaim His birth, and we will light candles as a symbol of His birth. The 5:00 service will include a time for children.

**THE OFFERING AT THE CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES** will go to aid Puerto Rico relief following Hurricane Maria.

**THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED** for the holidays on Monday, December 25, Tuesday, December 26, Friday December 29, and Monday, January 1.

**NEXT SUNDAY MORNING** we gather for one worship service at 10:00. Pastor Paul Shea will preach.

**REMINDER: ALL GIFTS FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2017 NEED TO BE**

- given in church on December 31 or delivered to the church office by the 31st
- mailed with a postmark date of December 30 or earlier,
- or need to be made online (<https://www.hwchurch.org/giving/>) by Thursday, December 28 with a transaction date of Friday, December 29 at the latest.

**KID'S CLUB** starts again on Wednesday Jan 17th at 6 pm. You can find the Kid's Club schedule for the spring on the church website and our HW Kid's Facebook page. We can still use one or two more assistants for the spring.

**MISSION MOMENT** – We pray for those in Puerto Rico working diligently to assist with continued recovery from Hurricane Maria. Tonight's Christmas Eve Offering will go directly to World Hope's efforts coordinated through Wesleyan churches, and will also assist K-12 Wesleyan Academy rebuild damaged property and programs.

**PERSECUTED CHURCH** – The 4 million Christians in Pakistan, 2% of the population, expect protection from the government. Yet last Sunday two suicide bombers killed nine and injured dozens in a packed Methodist church. We pray for Christmas celebrations all across Pakistan, including Wesleyan churches, to be peaceful and to bear strong witness for Christ the Savior.

**PRAYER CONCERNS:** for all who are grieving; for people with health concerns: Tim Nichols, Bob Brown, Jayne Swanson, Louise Prinsell, Laura Habecker, Hudson Hess, Nancy Cole, Brian Orbaker (Charlie and Connie Smith's son-in-law), Peter Lingenfelter, Ellis Brotzman, Chuck Barrett (Wendy Ott's brother), Sheryl O'Brien, Ben King, Doris Essepian, Eila Shea, Sheldon Emerson (Darby Luckey's brother), Bill Getty, Warren and Ella Woolsey, Mike Raybuck, Bev Rhett, Micah Christensen, Linda Roth, Dick Gould, Emily Crikelair; for the injured and grieving from tragedies and disasters; for refugees; for peace amid threats of war; for healing and unity in our nation; and for all area churches celebrating and sharing the birth of Jesus.

**HOLIDAY SERVICES**

Sunday, December 31 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service

Sunday, January 7 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service

Sunday, January 14 8:20 a.m., 9:40 a.m., 11:00 a.m. – Worship Services  
Small Groups

*For more information about church activities, and to read Pastor Wes's weekly blog, visit our website: [www.hwchurch.org](http://www.hwchurch.org).*

