

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

10:00 MORNING WORSHIP

DECEMBER 23, 2018

Prelude: *Preludes on Christmas Carols*Wilbur Held
He Whom Shepherds Once Came Praising; I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

Lighting of the Advent Candle: The Esh Family

*Hymn 121 *O Come, All Ye Faithful*

*Welcome

Anthem: *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen*arr. Eric Nelson

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 61: 1-3; 10-11

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: *Thanks be to God!*

*We Sing in Adoration: *Joy to the World/Our God Saves
The First Noel*

*Doxology

Worship through the Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory: *Birthday of The King*W. H. Neidlinger, arr. D. Kartsonakis
William Newbrough, piano

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.

Song of Meditation: *What Child is This?*

New Testament Reading: Matthew 2: 1-12

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

All: *Thanks be to God!*

Following the scripture reading, children will be dismissed for Children's Church.

*Song of Preparation *Who Would Have Dreamed?*

Sermon: **Unwrapping the Kingdom in the Heavens**
Pastor Wes Oden

*Hymn *Hallelujah!*

*Benediction

*Congregational Amen (Hymn 656, Threefold)

*Postlude: *God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen*arr. Wilbur Held

*Please stand if able

Organist: Judy Congdon

Worship Leader: Joshua Derck

Acolyte: Jadyne Mucher

Music Ministry Team:

Hannah Roeske, Lydia Schilke, vocals; Amanda Cox, piano & vocals;

Alison Young Reusser, guitar and vocals; Ken Huang, guitar;

Jan Schilke, keyboard; 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 and is available during services.

There are **KID'S BAGS AND BIBLES** available in the book shelf on the left side of the foyer next to the Men's restroom.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH: During the 10:00 services, we will staff 2 children's church rooms. Room 116 will have the 2-3 year olds and room 115 will have the 4-5 year olds.

JUNIOR CHURCH AND SUNDAY SCHOOL will begin again on January 13th.

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.

TOMORROW 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.

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

OUR 2018 CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING will join matching Egyptian donors and help bring a vision for a church and National Training Center on choice urban land near Cairo granted by the Egyptian government.

CELEBRATE RECOVERY IS NOT MEETING THIS WEEK; we resume gathering on January 3rd at 7:00 pm. Celebrate Recovery is a safe place to find community and freedom from the issues that are controlling our life.

THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED for the holidays on Monday, December 24 (after noon), Tuesday, December 25, Wednesday, December 26, and Tuesday, January 1.

STEWARDSHIP

Received (June 1—Present): \$449,827.88 / Budgeted (June 1—Present): \$443,218.60

MISSION MOMENT – Jon Cole, Josh Derck, and Mike Spateholts are preparing with three other men for a major construction project at Macieux church in southern Haiti January 5-12 – a site related to the Medical/Dental annual ministry. Pray for needed funding, safety and political calm, and especially for God's hand in the demanding work ahead.

PERSECUTED CHURCH – Let us pray for the shrinking number of Christians who remain in tense regions of the Middle East including the place of Jesus' birth, Bethlehem. War, and ethnic and political unrest have driven thousands to seek refuge and life elsewhere. May those who remain be faithful, strong, and shine the light of Jesus.

HOLIDAY SERVICES

Monday, December 24 5:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
 7:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 30 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service

Sunday, January 6 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service

Sunday, January 13 8:20 a.m., 9:40 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. – Worship Services

PRAYER CONCERNS: for the family of Monica Bramer and for all who are grieving; for people with health concerns: Ray Ott, Eileen Spear, Sheryl O'Brien, Bill Breuer, Roselyn Danner, Gwen Mercer, Bethie Liddick, Bill Getty, Bev Rhett, Nancy Cole, Gus and Louise Prinsell, Florence Teuber, Phil Main, Emily Crikelair, Mike Raybuck, Sheldon Emerson (Darby Luckey's brother), Eila Shea, Peter Lingenfelter, Izabela Daugherty (Dave and Karen's daughter-in-law), Dan Gurley, Paul Johnson; for the injured and grieving from tragedies and disasters; for refugees; for peace amid threats of war; for the Crosstown Alliance Church, Wellsville (Pastor Jeremy Gorham).

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Love



A child is born to us, a son is given to us... He will be named ... Prince of Peace. —ISAIAH 9:6