THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

11:00 MORNING WORSHIP DECEMBER 15, 2019

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

Prelude: *I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day* …….arr. Wilbur Held

Lighting of the Advent Candle

*Hymn 117 ***Hark! The Herald Angels Sing***

*Words of Greeting and Peace

Celebration of Ministry: Christmas Eve Offering

Anthem: *The Hands that First Held Mary's Child* …….Dan Forrest
Dan Zambrano, cello

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10
Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
All: ***Thanks be to God!***

Doxology

Worship through the Giving of Our Tithes and Offerings

Offertory: *Prelude on "In dulci jubilo"* ……...Marcel Dupré

Prayer of Confession

Our Gracious God, despite your generous love to us, we have too often turned from your way to our own. We have tarnished the gift you freely gave. We have buried you so deeply in our hearts, the world doesn't see you. We have ignored your teachings. We have defaulted to apathy. We have built fences and fortresses to push people away, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Forgive us. Free us from our sin, free us from our captivity, free us to live in the joy of your Incarnate Son, in whom forgiveness is real and possible—for us and for the whole world. Amen.

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 Response: ***What Child is This?***

*New Testament Reading: Matthew 11:2-11
Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
All: ***Thanks be to God!***

*Hymn 118 ***Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming***

Sermon: **What You Hear and See**
Rev. Dr. Michael Jordan

*Hymn 138 ***In the Bleak Midwinter***

*Benediction

*Congregational Amen (Hymn 656, Threefold)

*Postlude: *Prelude on "In dulci jubilo"* BWV 729 ……J. S. Bach

*Please stand if able
Organist: Judy Congdon
Worship Leader: James Mullen
Acolyte: Brendan Stevick

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.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH: Preschool Children ages 2-5 are dismissed during the song before the sermon: they meet in the Nursery (Christian Education Building)

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

WELCOME TO THE HOUGHTON WESLEYAN CHURCH. On this third Sunday of Advent we find ourselves in the middle of December—looking back and looking forward, pondering what has taken place and wondering what is yet to come. As we prepare for the celebration of Christ's coming, let's ask for open hearts and minds to Christ who is the Living Word.

GUEST PREACHER. We are pleased to welcome the Rev. Dr. Michael Jordan today. Dr. Jordan is Dean of the Chapel at Houghton College.

TONIGHT AT 5:00 Christmas Carol Sing in the sanctuary. Bring your instruments and bring a plate of cookies to share (leave them in the church kitchen) before joining voices in celebrating our annual Carol sing.

THE FLOWER COMMITTEE WELCOMES YOUR CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS to help beautify the sanctuary for Christmas. We have purchased a number of poinsettias which you may purchase for $12.00 each or you may bring your own on December 14. If you care to purchase one, please leave $12.00 with Patty Stalker in the church office and fill out a reservation form indicating your preferences. If you wish to honor a loved one, please leave information with Patty by December 17.

MEETINGS THIS WEEK: Elders, Tuesday, 7:00 pm

NEXT SUNDAY MORNING we gather at 10:00 to celebrate the Fourth Sunday of Advent.

PASTORS' CHRISTMAS GIFT - Please give your contributions to one of the Elder representatives, David Mercer or Matthew Webb, or leave it with Patty Stalker in the church office by December 22. Gifts can also be made online. (Please remember that your gift is tax-deductible, but taxable for those who receive it.)

MISSION MOMENT: We praise God for the decades of HWC partnership with God's work in Haiti – Ortlips, Emmetts, Thedes, LaGonave Hospital, Dental/Medical annual mission trip, youth group child sponsorship, last winter's roof project, other short term trips over the years, and more. May God bless the Canaan Village partnership and our Christmas Offering this month for His glory!

THE PERSECUTED CHURCH: In the Democratic Rep. of Congo, Christians are simply caught up in the ongoing attacks of Muslim extremist groups on the whole area. In the last month over half the 87 men, women and children killed were Christians. Pray for local pastors, who as community leaders attempt to bring God's hope, comfort and courage in this troubled land.

STEWARDSHIP
Received (June 1—Present): $ 402,998.86
Budgeted (June 1—Present): $ 433,090.84

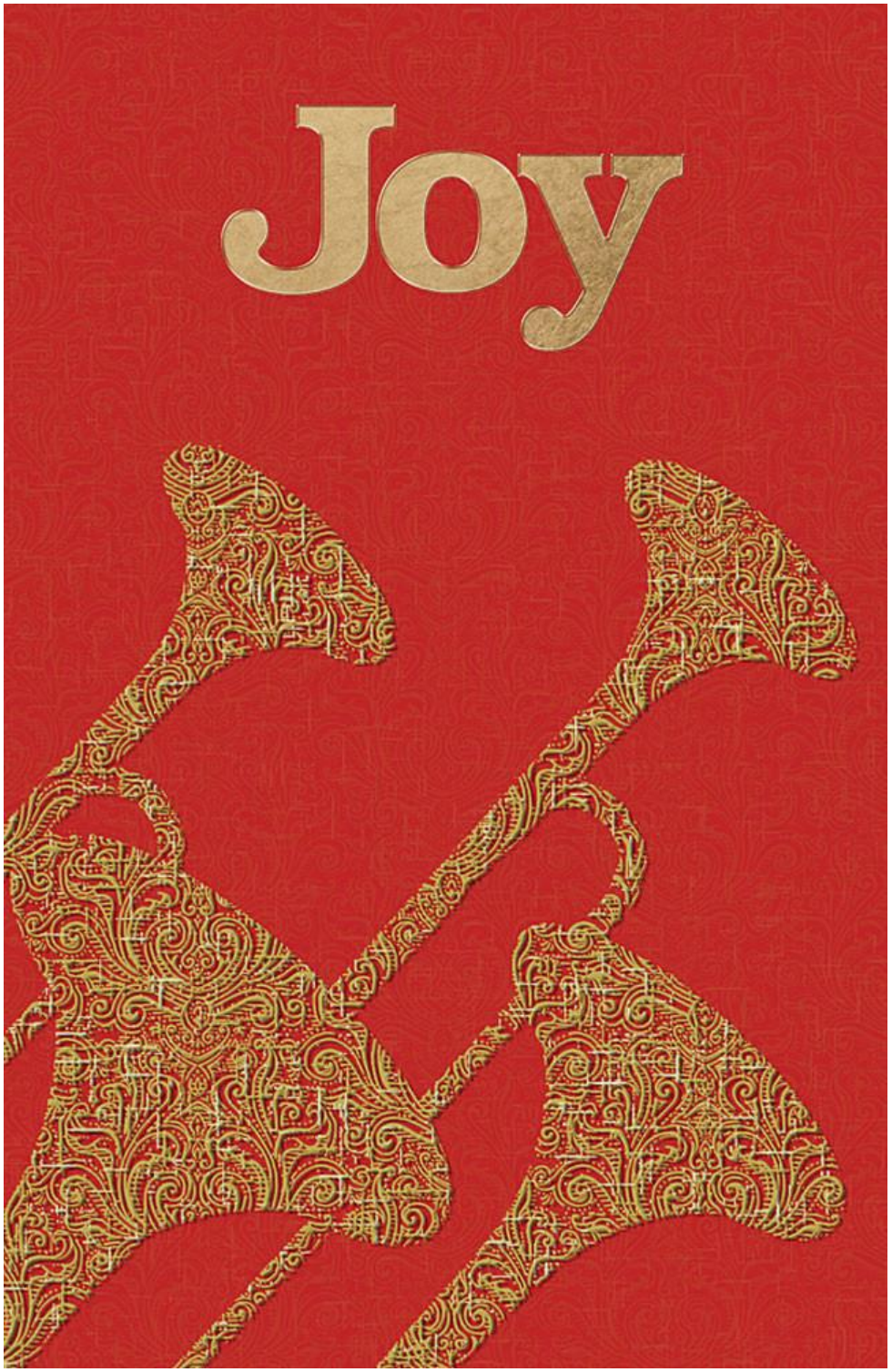
REMINDER: All Gifts for Calendar Year 2019 need to be:

- Given in church on December 29 or delivered to the church office by the 31st
- Mailed with a postmark date of December 31st or earlier
- Given on-line by 2:00 pm on December 31st in order to ensure a transaction date in 2019

HOLIDAY SERVICES

Sunday, December 22	10:00 a.m. – Worship Service
Tuesday, December 24	5:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (special time for children) 7:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service
Sunday, December 29	10:00 a.m. – Worship Service
Sunday, January 5	10:00 a.m. – Worship Service
Sunday, January 12	8:20 a.m., 9:40 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. – Worship Services Small Groups resume

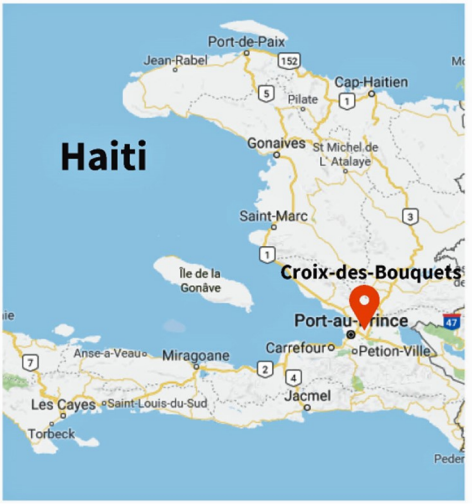
PRAYER CONCERNS: for the family of Sheldon Emerson (Darby Luckey's brother) and for all who are grieving; for people with health concerns: Diane Emmons, Chris Stewart, Karen Szymanski, Cindy Lastoria, Leonard Watson, Jerry Isaman (Joe Breton's step-father), Mark Mayhle (Doug's brother), Paulette Schierer, Ruby Schierer Williams, Elly Plaza (Alejandra Koch's sister), Jeshu, Kurtis and Eliyah Perry, Reuben Samuels, Debbie Alderman Wilson, The Marsh Family, Jon Retz, Emily Hood (A.C. Taylor's cousin), Bob Brown, Bill Getty, Nancy Cole, Eileen Spear, Evelyn Heil, Dan Gurley, Bethie Liddick, Bev Rhett, Phil Main, Emily Crikelair, Mike Raybuck, Eila Shea, Izabela Daugherty (Dave and Karen's daughter-in-law), Peter Lingenfelter; for the injured and grieving from tragedies and disasters; for refugees; for peace amid threats of war; for the leaders of our government; for Resurgence City Church, Buffalo (Pastor Elijah Shamenda).



CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING 2019

Canaan, Haiti School Project Goal: $20,000

Classroom Completion and Solar Power



WHERE: Canaan is in the sprawling city of Croix-des-Bouquets, 20 miles from Port-au-Prince, Haiti. Almost all residents' former homes and belongings were destroyed in the devastating 2010 earthquake. The Wesleyan Church has a strong presence and a school in a section of Canaan with over 5,000 people.

WHAT: World Hope International and the WNY District Wesleyan Churches and friends have committed to long term development of school, community center, water and power, and Child Sponsorship projects. Houghton Wesleyan is excited to join this effort this Christmas.

HOW: Our gifts will help complete much needed classrooms and upgrade solar power supply. Hundreds of children attend our Wesleyan school under the local church's leadership.

(left) Pastor Lea Dominique & husband

HWC and friends may give to the Christmas Eve Offering:

- **By check through December 31st with note, "Haiti Christmas Offering" on memo**
- **One-time December 24th Offering by cash or check or**
- **Online Giving at www.hwchurch.org "Haiti Christmas Offering"**