Houghton Wesleyan Church

Highlights

Joyfully loving God, wholeheartedly serving others
May 2020
Volume 52, No. 12

God Is Faithful, Even If…

Your unfailing love, O Lord, is as vast as the heavens; your faithfulness reaches beyond the clouds. Psalm 36:5
It is good to proclaim your unfailing love in the morning, your faithfulness in the evening…. Psalm 92:2
For the Lord is good. His unfailing love continues forever, and his faithfulness continues to each generation. Psalm 100:5

When you receive this newsletter, we will have been under some form of quarantine for almost two months. And it's starting to show.

In my conversations and meetings with numerous people, I am sensing a deepening fatigue about our circumstances. I feel it, too. We miss being able to go when and where we need to. We miss being with people. Everything seems to take more time and to take more energy than it did previously. In addition, we feel a growing concern about the food supply chain and a growing restlessness about getting back to life as it once was. We also feel deep sadness about the deaths and distress for those who are ill and who may become ill. We feel tension between what we might do and what we should do.

In the midst of all of this, we wonder about God. In our best moments, we know that he is with us and that we can trust him. But, quite frankly, we don't always live and operate in our best moments. Sometimes fear and worry overwhelm us. Sometimes we feel so run down mentally and physically that we struggle to hang on to our faith, or at least the level of faith we wish for and even once knew.

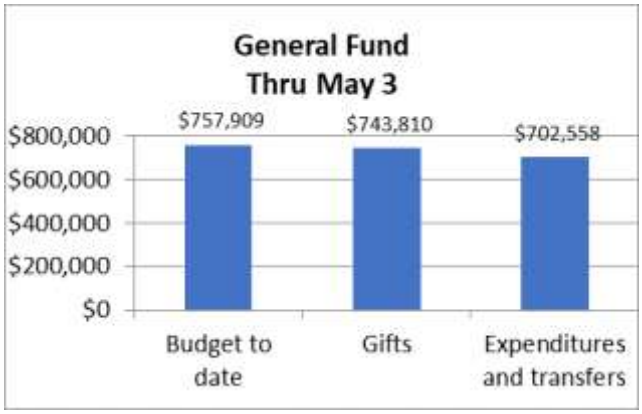
It's in these moments that we need the Word of God more than ever. We need to be reminded that God's very nature is faithfulness (Lamentations 3:22). We need to hear once again that God will never leave us nor forsake us (Deuteronomy 31:6). We need to see that nothing can separate us from the love of God that is ours in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:38-39).

The promises of God do not exempt us from the reality of our broken world, but though they may not feel like it, they are the truth of who God is and the foundation of life in him.

As difficult as it is, particularly when it feels like we are caught in the vice of this pandemic and the polarization of responses to it, God is calling us to trust him and even more to find joy and peace in trusting him. The Psalmist declares, as an act of faith, "It is good to proclaim your unfailing love in the morning, your faithfulness in the evening." There is something about saying it, again and again, day after day, week after week, that helps us to believe—with our minds and with our actions.

So, my prayer for you and me is that we will experience joy and peace in believing that he is at work, that we will experience joy and peace in believing that his work is always good, and that we will experience joy and peace in believing that he is a faithful refuge and strength, every day and in every circumstance.

STEWARDSHIP *a life of generosity*



On June 7, our congregation will have the opportunity to vote on the proposed 2020-21 Community Financial Plan (sometimes referred to as the budget).

This year because of the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect on our nation's economy, building the 2020-21 Community Financial Plan (CFP) has been especially challenging. The proposed CFP for 2020-21 remains essentially unchanged from 2019-20. We had hoped to increase support for several things, but feel it is unwise to do that now. Nonetheless, if at some point in the year we find church giving is increased over what we have projected, we will with thanksgiving add those things when it becomes possible.

There are important reasons why we seek the entire congregation's approval of this proposed CFP.

1. The Community Financial Plan reveals the mission and vision of Houghton Wesleyan Church. You have heard it said that an individual's checkbook provides a glimpse of their priorities. Church financial plans are similar. The way resources are allocated throughout the course of a year should reflect the church's mission and vision.

2. The plan reveals the path forward. Our church has goals, and the CFP demonstrates how those goals will be reached. This years' overall goal is to maintain the same level of support for all parts of the CFP – staff; missions (local, global and specific missionaries); church ministries (youth, congregational care, discipleship, children, and music/worship); building operation and maintenance; and administrative expenses.

3. The financial plan keeps everyone accountable. It keeps people from overspending, and also under-spending. You might think that underspending sounds like a point of celebration, not concern. But since our CFP reflects the current mission and game plan, underspending may also be a red flag. A financial plan keeps everyone accountable.

When you vote to approve this plan, you also indicate your commitment to support this plan through your faithful giving for which we are profoundly thankful.

How do you access the HWC CFP for 2020-21? It is posted on the church website at **this link**

STAFF UPDATES

On May 31, Austen Kewin concludes his two-year residency with us. We have enjoyed working with Austen and have been blessed by his ministry, not only to college students but to the whole church. Let me encourage you to express your appreciation to Austen for his ministry.

In light of this vacancy, the Elders have approved hiring Andrew Silbert as a part-time Director of College Ministries. Andrew ('08) and Addie ('07) are both Houghton College graduates and they have, along with their girls, Jovie, Norah and Eliza, been a part of our church since 2014. Andrew will be working ¼ time along with his current position with Sodexo. We are excited to welcome Andrew to our staff and look forward to his leadership in our ministry to and with college students. Andrew will begin June 1.

Prayer Partners Needed

The mission of Royal Family Kids is to create "positive, life-changing moments for innocent children who have been victims of neglect, abuse, and abandonment."

Currently there are 242 RFKCs, 214 in the US and 28 campus in six other countries. Since 1995, the local Houghton RFKC has served nearly 400 campers, with each of these campers returning for an average of 4 summers.

This year's RFKC at Camp Asbury is scheduled for August 2-7. In light of COVID-19, we are not yet sure if we will be offering the full camp experience, a partial camp experience, a shorter camp experience, a no-camp gathering, or some type of a creative no-gathering experience. What we *do* know is that we still are committed to engaging with and praying for our campers and those committed to ministering to them.

Thank you for considering this important role of intercession in a time as critical as ever. As RFKC CEO Paul Martin recently wrote, "This is turning out to be a year and a summer like none before. The uncertainty . . . is difficult enough for adults and children from stable homes--how will it affect the most vulnerable in our communities, such as children in foster care?"

Anyone interested in being a prayer partner should contact me, Laurie Dashnau by phone at (585) 437-2134 or email Laurie.Dashnau@houghton.edu The responsibilities of a prayer partner include praying for one specific camper, counselor, or staff member along with writing a short note to that person which will be

Parents, subscribe to our newly created Youtube channel, HWC Kids (**https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC8XkJmfQ99pmZhh-nuOl_iA**), where we are working on uploading the videos from our virtual Sunday School lessons and Children's sermons the last few weeks. Check it out!

Want to join our amazing team and help build up our kids' faith foundation? We need team members in Children's Church (2-5 year olds, 8:20 and 11:00), Jr. Church (K-3rd, 8:20), Sunday School (various positions), Nursery, and Wednesday night Kid's Club! If you would like more information or have questions, please reach out to Emily or Ann. Hope you can join us!

CONGRATULATIONS!

Luke Benjamin Ciobanu, born April 9 to Vali and Elizabeth and siblings Anna, Zoe, and Naomi.

Azalea Tatiana Newbrough, born April 30 to Bill-John and Julia and siblings Daria and Julianna

Applications for Valley PreSchool

Our preschool is open to three, four, and five-year-old children. The preschool meets Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 9:00 am – 11:45 am. (September – May) on the first floor of the Christian Education Building. The early childhood program of V.P.S. is designed to augment home experiences, providing opportunity for social, emotional, spiritual, intellectual, and physical growth and development. If you are interested in more information about your child attending VPS, please contact our director, Casda Danner casdadanner@hwchurch.org.

Here is GENERAL INFORMATION and the APPLICATION FOR VALLEY PRESCHOOL FOR 2020-2021: **https://hwchurch.org/…/…/2020/04/2020-21-VPS-Application.pdf**

Overwhelmed? Cooped Up? Lonely? How can we help you?

We know that this time is extremely stressful and confusing for you and your kids. What can we do to help you?

Click HERE

Click HERE

Click HERE

Houghton College's
Virtual Baccalaureate and Commencement

Baccalaureate will be held virtually on **Friday, May 8th at 6:30PM.** We will hear from three graduates as well as three faculty speakers (Professors Gaerte, Meilaender and Derck). Wonderful music for the service will be provided by Sharon Johnson and Judy Congdon and we will also have the pleasure of a virtual performance by our college choir.

On **May 9th at 10AM** our **Commencement Ceremony** will take place. We are very excited to hear from our Commencement speaker Dr. Birx. Another highlight will be hearing a musical performance by graduating senior Dan Bussey. Seth Pearson, Vice President of the senior class will present the class gift.

Many thanks to our staff in AV/Technology Services for their hard work in putting together all of the pieces needed for the virtual choir performance and their expertise in how we broadcast both Commencement and Baccalaureate.

Please refer to the college website
https://www.houghton.edu/commencement/
for the most recent information available and direct any questions to commecement@houghton.edu. Links will be posted to our website and sent to all graduates, faculty and staff along with a PDF of each of the programs and information on how to join the receptions hosted by academic departments. Printed programs will be sent at a later date.

Sending Our SYMPATHY

to the Jason Mucher and Becky Mastin family at the death of their sister-in-law, Vicki Mucher on April 17

to Karl and Jill Schimidt and daughter and son-in-law, Abby and Jeremy Schirle at the death of their expected grandson, Samuel on April 25.

A big, warm "Thank You" to all of the folks who volunteered to staff our Kids' Club Team this past year. Your prayers, planning, creativity, and warmth toward our children. You acted as true followers of Christ Jesus in spreading the Gospel and God's love to our youngsters. God bless you all, and we hope to see you back next year on Wednesday nights with new faces too!

FOOD PANTRY UPDATE

We appreciate all of the food donations that have been made for the Food Pantry. Because of concerns related to lingering contamination, we have decided that it would be best for us not to collect food. We have people who are willing to shop for us. If you would like to donate to the Food Pantry, right now it is better for you to donate funds rather than food. The Food Pantry continues to serve our community.

MEALS ON WHEELS

We also continue delivery of Meals On Wheels. If you have need for these services, call the church office at 585-567-2264 or the Office for the Aging at 585-268-9390. If you would like to volunteer driving a day a month, call Judi Mayhle at (585) 567-8241.

general physician pc

primary care castile

HOURS: MON 8-4
TUE 8-4
WED 8-4
THUR 8-4
FRI 8-11:30

Calvin Schierer, DO
Family Medicine

5596 Route 19A
Castile, NY 14427
Office: 585.493.9230
Fax: 585.786.0508

gppconline.com

Phil Merrill
(585) 610-8882

INSIDE & OUTSIDE

PAINTING &
POWER
WASHING

(HOUSES & DECKS)

Peter & Nancy Luckey
15905 Bancroft Ct
Apt 935
Omaha NE 68130
phluckey@gmail.com

NO YOUTH ZOOM MEETING May 10!

Happy Mother's Day, Moms

SUNDAYS IN MAY

May 3 (10:00 am Online)
a.m. *What Is the Reach of the Kingdom?* (1 Kings 20)

May 10 (10:00 am Online)
a.m. *What Is the Purpose of the Kingdom?* (Ezekiel 37)

May 17 (10:00 am Online)
a.m. *What Is the Tension of the Kingdom?* (1 Cor. 15; Jer. 29)

May 24 (10:00 am Online)
a.m. Pastor Cindy Oden

May 31 (10:00 am Online)
a.m. *Pentecost Is More Than a Day* (Leviticus 23:9-22; Acts 2:1-13)

Sunday Worship Update: Thank you for your support and encouragement in the adjustment of our Sunday morning worship. All of us realize that the current pattern of online worship is not ideal nor is it our desire. Nevertheless, if this is what we can do, then we desire to do the best that we can. Thanks to all who are helping us worship—those you see and even more working diligently behind the scenes (Balcony Bandits) that you don't see.

The staff and elders are monitoring the situation and are contemplating the best day to resume worship at the church. As decisions are made, we will communicate them to you.

CHURCH STAFF

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Paul Shea Assistant Pastor
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Amanda Cox, Music & Worship Director
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Emily Spateholts, Children's Ministry
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Ann McNeill, Children's Ministry
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Austen Kewin, Pastoral Ministry Resident
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Church Office, M-F, 8 AM-Noon & 1-4 PM,
567-2264 office@hwchurch.org

COVID-19 UPDATES are posted online at https://hwchurch.org/covid-19-updates/
We post a weekly letter from Pastor Wes, a midweek visit, special music by Amanda Cox and Judy Congdon and ways of contacting staff if you have needs, want to offer help or need to talk.

If you have pictures to share for the pre-service streaming, send them to Amanda Cox (email is amandacox@hwchurch.org)

The weekly Wednesday Prayer Group is shares a prayer sheet each week until we meet again.
(call the church office if you would like to be added to the list)

Missionary Updates continue. Would you like to receive an email with current news?

Every Thursday we have a Time of Worship at 6:30 p.m. On May 14th we will have a second Hymn-Sing.