

FIFTEENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST  
SEPTEMBER 13, 2020  
10:00 STREAMING SERVICE

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Prelude: *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing* (Michael Burkhardt)

Welcome

Call to Worship (from Hebrews 4)

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven,  
Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.

***For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses,  
but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet he did not sin.***

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence,  
***So that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.***

Opening Prayer

Hymn of Praise: ***Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing***

Words of Greeting and Peace

Children's Sermon: Emily Spateholts

Songs of Adoration: ***Christ is Risen; Kyrie Eleison***

Ministry in Music: *One Step Away*

Time of Prayer

*Please feel free sit, stand, or kneel as we bow in humility  
before our loving heavenly Father.*

Scripture Reading: Genesis 4, selected verses

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

Song of Preparation: ***All I Have is Christ***

Sermon: ***Joy in the Journey – I Can Make It!***  
Pastor Wes Oden

Communion – ***And Can it Be?*** (Hymn 273)

Benediction

Postlude: *Prelude in C major, BWV 545* (J.S. Bach)

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Organist: Judy Congdon

Scripture Reader: Amanda Zambrano

Music Ministry Team:

Alison Young Reusser, guitar & vocals; Joanna Bates, vocals;

Amanda Cox, piano & vocals;

Bekah Brennan, keyboard & vocals; Dan Zambrano, cajón

**WELCOME TO THE HOUGHTON WESLEYAN CHURCH.** The Psalmist proclaims: “Blessed is the one who fears the Lord, who finds great delight in His commands” (112:1). We are worship today because we want to delight in God whose commands are given out of His heart of love. We pray that you experience the joy of God as we worship together even though we are distant.

**VIRTUAL PRAYER VIGIL:** Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. – Thursday, 6:30 p.m. Our nation and world needs prayer as pandemic cases rise. Our leaders need prayer for good decision-making. Please sign up now for at least 15 minutes to pray (<https://hwchurch.org/prayer/>).

**THURSDAY EVENING, 6:30PM:** You are invited to the church sanctuary for a Service of Scripture, Silence and Prayer. Jeanie Little leads this time of contemplation. Please make a reservation to attend either on the church website or by calling the church office (585-567-2264).

**NEXT SUNDAY MORNING** we invite you to join us for outdoor worship at 8:30 or for streaming worship at 10:00. Next Sunday Pastor Wes leads us to think about *A Sign of How Important You Are* and our response, *That’s Just a Suggestion, Right?* from Number 20. If you plan to attend the outdoor worship service, either in the seating area or in your vehicle, please register on the church website or by calling the church office (585-567-2264).

**MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY:** If you are interested in helping as a parking attendant at the outdoor worship services, please contact Pastor Jon ([joncole@hwchurch.org](mailto:joncole@hwchurch.org)) or Ann McNeill ([annmcneill@hwchurch.org](mailto:annmcneill@hwchurch.org)).

**HELLO, FROM THE KIDS' CLUB TEAM!:** Have you ever wondered what those children who receive Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts are learning in their discipleship classes? This is your chance to take The Greatest Journey right along with them in your own home! Kids ages 5-12 are invited to sign up. We will hold a weekly Kids' Club Zoom meeting as we learn how to spread the Gospel. The course is twelve weeks long and we hope to start by September 23rd if the materials get here quickly. Should the Kids' Club open at church, we'll keep studying together in person. Email Ann McNeill at [annmcneill@hwchurch.org](mailto:annmcneill@hwchurch.org) with your children's names to join our fall on-line club!

**START OF SCHOOL BLESSING:** In the next couple of weeks, Ann and Emily will be visiting each of our families with a "start-of-school" blessing for parents and kids. While COVID precautions will be followed, if you are not comfortable with an in-person visit, please contact Ann ([annmcneill@hwchurch.org](mailto:annmcneill@hwchurch.org)) or Emily ([emilyspateholts@hwchurch.org](mailto:emilyspateholts@hwchurch.org)) to request either a no-contact drop-off or a pick-up at the church office. See you soon!

**DISCIPLESHIP INFORMATION:** Something NEW! Yes there’s a new wrinkle to Bible Studies and Small Groups. Since some traditional small groups are, and others are not meeting due to Covid-19 restrictions we are making available WEEKLY SERMON SERIES BIBLE STUDY GUIDES which can be used by individuals, couples, roommates, friends, neighbors, and new and previous Small Groups. An Info Sheet and the weekly Study Guides can be accessed each week on the Joy in the Journey Study Guide link on the church web page. For more info contact Pastor Paul at [paulshea@hwchurch.org](mailto:paulshea@hwchurch.org). Maybe it’s time to try something new to strengthen our walk as disciples of Jesus.

**CHURCH LIBRARY IS OPEN:** To use the library, you will need to follow a few guidelines: 1) masks must be worn in the building at all times; 2) use hand sanitizer (provided) before entering the library; 3) library doors will remain open and fans will be moving air in and out; 4) returned books will be cleaned and remain a few days before being placed on the shelves again; 5) only one family unit per hour will be permitted in the library; 6) in order to maintain the one family per hour requirement, please call the church office to reserve your hour.

**WANTED: BAKERS OF ALL AGES!** Bakers still needed to make Cookies of Encouragement for the staff at Houghton Nursing and Rehabilitation Center. Our goal is to send a dozen cookies to each worker in the coming weeks. Many cookies have already been donated; we need a few dozen more. Send Ann McNeill an email at [annmcneill@hwchurch.org](mailto:annmcneill@hwchurch.org) to volunteer and get more information. Many thanks to those who have already joined our effort!

**STEWARDSHIP**

Budget Need: \$220,709.72

Budget Received: \$200,132.93

**OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD:** Start thinking about spreading the Gospel through giving Operation Christmas Child gifts. This year we have the option of completely packing a box online OR packing a physical box at home and taking it to the church. In October, cardboard shoe boxes from OCC will be available outside the CE foyer overhang for families to pick up. Children ages 5-12 can join Kids' Club virtual study of The Greatest Journey discipleship class on Wednesday nights learning what the gift recipients are learning. Email [annmcneill@hwchurch.org](mailto:annmcneill@hwchurch.org) to get your free materials. First virtual meeting is September 23rd. To build a box online, go to - [https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/buildonline/?utm\\_source=Ggl&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=m\\_YGOC-B20V&utm\\_content=BASBOAd&gclid=CjwKCAjw19z6BRAYEiwAmo64LeeKqBUtS0-WXM3dJ7AZmDctVmWg33de0kJTISwXXwWpDZ3KfWZ0nhoCF0cQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/buildonline/?utm_source=Ggl&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=m_YGOC-B20V&utm_content=BASBOAd&gclid=CjwKCAjw19z6BRAYEiwAmo64LeeKqBUtS0-WXM3dJ7AZmDctVmWg33de0kJTISwXXwWpDZ3KfWZ0nhoCF0cQAvD_BwE).

**MISSION MOMENT** – Joel and Barbara Trudell, Houghton grads and long-time SIL team supported by HWC report the good news that SIL and a consortium of education agencies won a grant from USAID to fund literacy programming for refugee children in Southern Sudan. At the same time news is breaking of a signed peace accord in the strife that has raged to the north in Sudan. Let us pray for peace and healing across the region.

**PERSECUTED CHURCH** - Also, the Trudells rejoice that Cameroonian friend Nicole's mother has been released by separatists demanding ransom. After pleading and much prayer support, with a small amount way below the demands she was let go. She was traumatized but returning to her village in hopes of safely harvesting her maize crop. Nicole's faith has grown throughout this trial. We pray for all those depending on God in trials and difficulties.

**PRAYER CONCERNS:** for all who are grieving; for people with health concerns: Sarah Gurley, Grace Taylor, Wendy Ott, Chelsea Ellis, Paulette Schierer, Keith Rugg (Kathy Moore's father), Karen Szymanski, Cindy Lastoria, Leonard Watson, Mark Mayhle (Doug's brother), Ruby Schierer Williams, Jeshu, Kurtis and Eliyah Perry, Reuben Samuels, 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, Phil Main, Emily Crikelair, Mike Raybuck, Eila Shea, Izabela Daugherty (Dave and Karen's daughter-in-law), Peter Lingenfelter; for all effected by the coronavirus—grieving, ill, healthcare professionals, the workforce at risk and leaders; for the injured and grieving from tragedies and disasters, including Beirut, Lebanon; for refugees; for peace amid threats of war; for the leaders of our government; for the logistics and safety of faculty, staff and students at all of our area public schools as well as Houghton College and Houghton Academy; for the Trinity Church of Nunda (Pastor Ron Duttweiler).

*For more information about church activities, please visit our website: [www.hwchurch.org](http://www.hwchurch.org) or email us at [office@hwchurch.org](mailto:office@hwchurch.org).*

## STEWARDSHIP – A Life of Generosity

If generosity through tithing is part of our faith and we have good causes to give to, why do studies seem to reveal that Christians are less generous than we would expect?

When the Father gave his Son, he gave what we could never repay. The precious blood of Christ outweighs gold and silver. In Christ's sacrifice, we see unconditional love, unadulterated generosity, and thorough self-emptying. The wonder of salvation is that God did not have to save fallen people. He chose to save through his own sacrifice, a father's loss and a son's life. Generosity flows down to us.

When we give, we experience a split second of loss. At a speed faster than light, we calculate the costs and benefits of giving, and if the latter outweighs, we give. If the latter does not, we hesitate. Rarely do we come to the insight that it is a privilege to give. Every so often, we read of someone giving selflessly, and we are caught off balance.

We can make the case that one of the poorest churches in the New Testament did the most with its finances because it learned the value and power of partnerships (Phil. 1:5). The Philippians might not have given much, but God honored their giving and multiplied it over a hundredfold when they supported Paul. Paul's labors were theirs in a real way. Therefore, the Philippians impacted Asia Minor, Rome, and beyond. They changed the world more than any other church in the first century, perhaps more than any church in history.

Moreover, God did not give to control, but he gave to love, to save, and to redeem. When this love captivates us, we can't help but respond in love. Generosity is love's reflex. Only in God's love will we begin to understand the logic of the Macedonian churches and their surprising joy of giving.

We are in the midst of a difficult time. The church has an opportunity to show the generosity of God to a world that only knows the cynicism that often reduces people to dollars and cents. To succeed, the church will have to relearn the vertical dimension of giving to God. The proof will be giving without taking credit, without the thought of gain, and without a spirit of control. When the church gives as freely as it has received, struggles like we are facing can become portals into a new world where grace is not just preached but is seen, touched, and lived.

Excerpted from an article in the August Christianity Today by John Lee, the head of the Upper School at The Geneva School of Manhattan, titled "Who Are The Most Generous? Not Who You'd Expect"

To read the entire article, [click here](#).

In case you're wondering, in the last fiscal year, 242 households gave to the Houghton Church. This generous support helped HWC in our mission to share the love and grace of Christ locally and globally.

