



Houghton Wesleyan Church

# Highlights

*Joyfully loving God,  
wholeheartedly serving others*

*November 2020  
Volume 53, No. 6*



## God of Seasons

*Neither do people pour new wine into old wineskins. If they do, the skins will burst; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins, and both are preserved."*

Matthew 9:17, NIV

Corn on the cob is one of our favorite foods. When it's in season, we enjoy it multiple times a week. We anticipate the first ears, and we lament the last ones. We didn't plant corn, but we did peas, beans, peppers, and tomatoes. We felt the same way about these vegetables. When the growing season comes to an end, we feel a sense of sadness. But there is also something good about this.

I have found that seasonal access to vegetables makes me pay attention to them that much more when they are in season. As much as I love corn on the cob and as much as I eat it when it's in season, I don't think that I want to eat it year-round. When the season ends, I'm ready for squash and apples and other autumn foods. I am coming to see that this is a gift of God and that it highlights a characteristic of God.

During the forty years of Israel's wandering in the wilderness, their primary food is manna. This honey wafer like substance is the staple for an entire generation. If the Israelites are anything like us, I suspect they get tired of it...after the first 2 or 3 months! It's a gift of God to nourish them through their wandering, but it isn't God's original plan. It was supposed to be a supplement until they reached Canaan—the land flowing with milk and honey, the land of flourishing produce—until they decide that they don't trust God about Canaan. Their unwillingness to trust God about the land, however, doesn't cause God to cut off their food supply but it does mean that they must wait a long time before experiencing God's gift of flourishing and variety.

The scriptures tell us that God loves variety. He creates with variety. He works in a variety of ways in the world. He uses a variety of people. He relates to people in a variety of ways and through a variety of means. God never seems to do the same thing in quite the same way. Even as he values and uses and calls his people to remember the past, he is calling his people to his new ways in the future. His ultimate purpose—the redemption of his wondrous creatures and creation—doesn't change but his methods and messengers do. Perhaps this is something of what Jesus means when he talks about old wine and new wineskins. And this is something for which we ought to give thanks.

God doesn't treat us as if we are all the same, as if we struggle with all the same problems, as if we have lived all the same experiences, as if we have all the same needs. Rather, he treats us as we are. He knows our needs and the best way to meet them. He knows the best way to address our sin. He knows the best way to utilize our gifts and abilities. He knows the best ways to get our attention and to open our eyes to who he is. And the truth that we can always count on is that he is always right.

As we live with changing seasons, let's give thanks to God that though he never changes, his love for us leads him to see us and to work in us in our uniqueness, right where we are, in the way he knows is best.

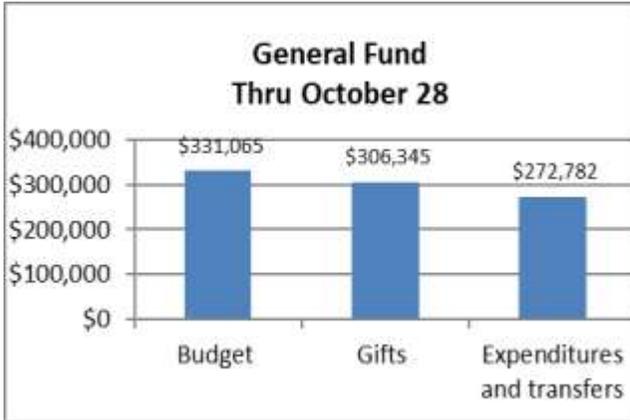
In Christ  
*Pastor Wes*



# Stewardship – A Life of Generosity

Thanksgiving is a time to reflect on God’s grace to us as a body and as individuals. We have much to be thankful for. Everything we have and everything we are is a gift from God. We feel free to give because our Heavenly Father freely gives. One way God uses us to bless others is through our giving to the church.

Among many other things, our giving to Houghton Wesleyan Church helps young people know about



God’s love and promises through the children and youth ministries; the Food Pantry provides nourishing food for families in need; the music ministry team helps us worship with relevant songs and beautiful music; the missions ministry provides ongoing support and encouragement for missionaries; and the technology crew keeps Sunday services, organ concerts and hymn sings available through streaming for our church community and beyond.

Thank you for enabling all these things through your faithful support.

*Let them give thanks to the Lord for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men, for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.” Psalm 107: 8-9 (NIV).*

**WEEKLY LETTER AND WEEKLY VIDEO:** Each week Pastor Wes sends out a letter with information related to the life of our church and a brief video with a devotional thought. If you are not now receiving these communications and would like to, please contact the church office. Both the letter and the video are distributed by email and text, depending on your preference.



**DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS:** Please remember that you need to turn back your clocks one hour on Saturday night, October 31.



The Families and Friends of

- ♦ Richard S. Fero who died October 4
- ♦ Norman Parks, Sandy Blake and Sally Johnson’s brother, who died October 5
- ♦ Betty Banker, Nancy Cole’s mom, who died October 18
- ♦ Dr. Richard H. Fuller who died October 21

Obituaries are available by calling the church office or at <https://hwchurch.org/community-news/condolences/>



Would you like to be up-to-date on what is happening in the lives of the missionaries we support? A new feature of HWC Highlights will be one or two excerpts each month from missionary letters. If you would like monthly contact with all the missionaries we have received letters from, please sign up for the Missionary Mailbag by sending me your email address. ([donna.dean.zoller@gmail.com](mailto:donna.dean.zoller@gmail.com) )

Missionary letter excerpt from Leah D. with Wycliffe in SE Asia

". . . Those of you with experience interacting across cultures may have noticed that Americans tend to say 'thank you' a lot more than people from other parts of the world. Last week B. asked me why I say 'thank you' so much. I told her that this is a highly valued cultural practice for Americans, that we like to recognize when other people help us, even in little ways. Since then, she's started making an effort to reciprocate. . . What a joy to see a friend care enough to take on this sometimes awkward practice, which happens to be one of my favorite parts of American culture. It's no small thing that I'd like to thank you for today: praying, giving, and sharing this journey with me. May our God bless you with every good thing as you seek the eternal kingdom whose residence is uninhibited by viruses and visa constraints."



#### **New Short Term Mission Partner –**

HWC is contributing to support Breanna Smithley who has embarked on two-year mission serving with Transforming Lives for Good (TLG) in Bolton, England. Breanna's branch of tutoring, nutrition and holiday youth programs meets in a Baptist Church and serves at-risk students from over a dozen local schools. Let's keep Breanna in our prayers.

See <https://www.tlg.uk>



Welcome! Visiting our church library is a little more complicated than before, but we are glad that you come in. AND, there are some new books, children and adult, that might interest you!

For the kids, do you like kittens? Are you interested in learning about dolphins, bears, or snakes? How about going thru the rain forest with the Cat in the Hat? Or learn how caterpillars change to butterflies. Did you learn how to ride a bike this summer? You might enjoy the book 'No More Training Wheels'. Come in and look over these and other new books.

For adults we have books by Lauraine Snelling: *A Blessing to Cherish* (which continues the story of Blessing, North Dakota) and *Brushstroke Legacy*; and by Suzanne Woods Fisher, the *Nantucket Legacy* series. A book by Gary Inrig, *God's Mysterious Way*, is a study on Joseph. There are other new books and DVDs, too.

So, call the church office, make an appointment and come in and see what we have. Remember too, if you have books to return and don't want to come in, they can be returned in the Library box by the Community Room doors.

## Operation Christmas Child

November 20th is fast approaching! Shoeboxes are starting to come in and we hope to reach our goal of 250 by that date.

Is your family planning on packing a shoebox? We sure hope so as this year the effects of the pandemic are hitting impoverished families very hard. It's a lot of fun filling a box together, including your photo, and writing an encouraging note to a boy or girl in need. Everyday, children and their families are coming to Christ because of you!



Physical shoe boxes may be dropped off at the church office and virtual boxes may be filled by going to our church goal page... Pre-printed boxes are available in the bin under the church overhang.

Thank you for being Christ to the little children!

Using this link <https://build-a-shoebbox.samaritanaspurse.org/goal/view/87ed7f7d-7103-4865-8290-12f3bbd99fbb> will help our church reach the 200 box goal. We can do it!

## Recovery Apartment

Dear Church Family,

With the rising number of cases of the virus in our area, we thought it would be wise to have an apartment that can be used if someone needs to quarantine for a couple of weeks away from their family. We have the apartment but need a few items to be loaned or donated for use in the apartment.

We appreciate any of the following items that you may be able to loan or donate for the apartment. Please clearly mark any item you are loaning with your name so we may return it to you. Thank you!

This initial list will develop as needed. Contact [annmceill@hwchurch.org](mailto:annmceill@hwchurch.org) with questions or for assistance.

Please don't be shy about supplying a small item or many. Each gives as he or she is able with the resources that God is providing. Each thing is important to a safe and well-equipped home environment. We are a team! To God be the glory and praise as we help each other!

Of the initial 28 apartment needs, all have been furnished except:

- Trash can
- Recycling Bi

This is an ongoing project that will be updated as we go.



Thank you all for the many ways you are serving and helping one another! We so appreciate each one of you and all that you do.

The Lay Shepherd leaders and Lay Shepherd groups continue to reach out to help their neighborhoods and area when someone has a baby, is ill or has surgery. This is a tremendous ministry but during these extra busy and often stress filled days, it can be difficult to help others as we desire. Because of this, we are inviting you to make a freezer meal or two when you have time, to have on hand in the church freezer. In this way, when a need arises meals are readily available. It could be a meal of soup or a casserole for one person or two people or for a family. If you would be able to help us stock up on meals for people in times of need or if you have any questions, please contact Cindy Oden ([585-567-2024](tel:585-567-2024)/[cindyoden@hwchurch.org](mailto:cindyoden@hwchurch.org)).

Meals may be dropped off at the church office during office hours, Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

# Wellspring Ministries

To our church family -

Wellspring continues to see an increase in folks coming back to our facility - More donations, and more clients meeting their needs.

We are open each Wednesday and Friday from 10 am to 1:15pm, with donations received as early as 9:30 am. Officially doors are open at 10 am Each client's name and address is taken, and each volunteer has temperature and Covid info recorded, We require masks of all, and have hand sanitizer readily available.

Lunch is served at noon, with a brief devotional given at 11:55. If you know of a need for food, boxes are available. Those in need just have to tell us. Spread the word, please.

We are opening the "Christmas Room" for parents or guardians to shop for their children in mid-November. You are welcome to shop yourself, or contribute items for this room that are marked for that purpose.

Thank you for your support and prayers for this ministry. We need you.  
Beth Beardsley (for the Board)

"...You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy, and to the poor, in your land." Deut.15:11,12



HWC Families -

Check your mailboxes!

The first Sunday of Advent is November 29th this year and since we can't be together to count down the days until Christmas, we wanted to give your families a couple of fun things to do together to guide you through the season - a DIY Advent wreath, Advent calendar, and nativity scene stickers.



## Congratulations!

Ben and Tonya McGraner and big sister Rose at the birth of Sylviana Quinley on October 12

Pat and Sarah Hager and big brother Miles at the birth of Emilie Joy on October 28.

## ROYAL FAMILY KIDS CAMP

Donation List

- 1. Single bed fitted sheets in good shape: We put one on each of the campers' beds and then re-use them each summer. Many of the ones we have are getting worn out.**
- 2. Beany babies or other small-to-medium-sized stuffed animals in good shape.**

In August of 1982, the Houghton Church invited me to serve for one year as interim pastor. Nancy and I had come to love Houghton during a two year stint here as Assistant Pastor and Minister of Youth in 1974-76, so I postponed grad school and we moved to Houghton with our two year old daughter. One year. Now, a bit more than 38 years later we are struggling with ways to adequately say goodbye and to express our deep gratitude to this place and its remarkable people. God has blessed our family immeasurably through our attachment to this little town and wonderful church. My thirteen years as the Houghton Church pastor will always be the highlight of my life. The people of this community and church have profoundly shaped and altered the course of my life in all the best ways, and there are not adequate words to express my gratitude to you and to God for affording me this wonderful privilege of service.

Our long-term plans were always to move closer to one of our children. With Joshua in Canada, we determined that would mean moving to Delaware to be close to Jennifer. But, in God's good providence Jennifer and her family recently moved to the Phoenix area where her husband teaches at Arizona State University. The opportunity to return to my beloved boyhood home state and the Sonoran desert is an exciting prospect for Nancy and me, but it is tempered by the reality of leaving a place that has meant so much to us and to our family. Be assured that you will never be far from our minds, and always in our hearts. As Paul put so well, "You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone." Thank you for your love and support in so many ways during our "one year" visit.

God bless,  
Mike and Nancy Walters

## **Allegany County Area Foundation**

**Serving Allegany County since 1983**

*Is it time for you to plan your legacy, honor a loved one, or make a difference for others?*

*Let us help you!*

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[www.alleganycountyareafoundation.org](http://www.alleganycountyareafoundation.org)  
[director@acacfny.org](mailto:director@acacfny.org)

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Allegany County Area Foundation



6087 State Route 19N  
Belmont, NY 14813  
**585-296-5616**



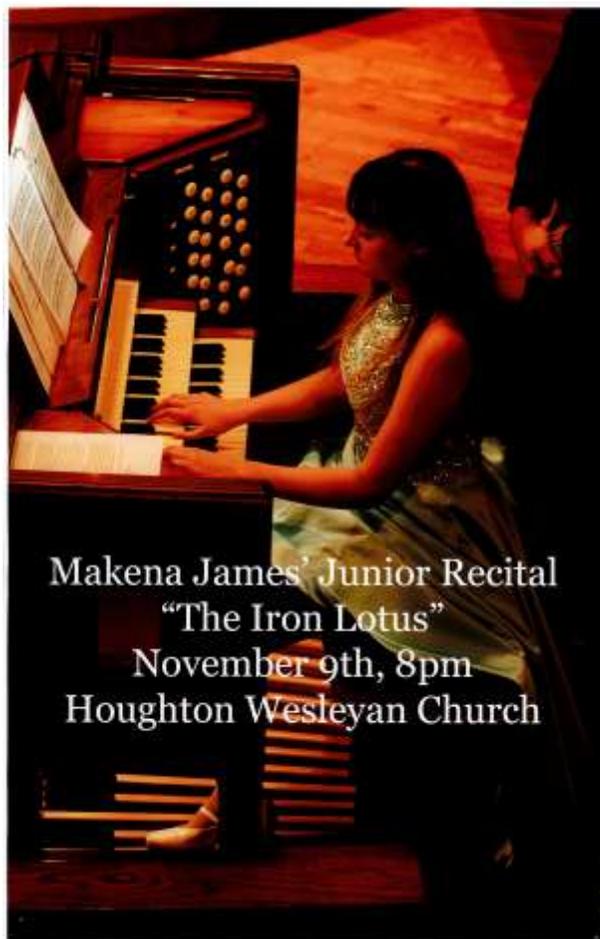
## Vintage Finds - Treasured Memories

located at 41 Main Street in Belfast is open again.

- Our current hours are Thursday and Friday 1-5 pm, Saturday 11-5.
- Our store inventory can be viewed along with announcements and updated hours on Facebook or Google Business by searching Vintage Finds Treasured Memories.
- Curb side pickup available.
- Opening on Wednesdays in November with a 25% off sale each week 'til Christmas.
- 585-365-1901 or their Facebook page.

### *A Note of Appreciation*

*Bill, Kathy, Ava and Alexis Breuer would like to thank all of you for your kindness and support we received for the untimely death of our daughter Erica in Texas. We are lucky to have you all to make this difficult time much easier. Thank you again*



Makena James' Junior Recital  
"The Iron Lotus"  
November 9th, 8pm  
Houghton Wesleyan Church

# SUNDAYS IN NOVEMBER

November 1 (10:00 Streaming / 11:15 Outdoors)  
a.m. *But We Are Right!* (Judges 12)

November 8 (10:00 Streaming / 11:15 Outdoors)  
a.m. *But I Know What I'm Doing* (Ecclesiastes 3)

November 15 (10:00 Streaming / 11:15 Outdoors)  
a.m. *Why Should I?* (John 9)

November 22 (10:00 Streaming / 11:15 Outdoors)  
a.m. *But They Are Slowing Me Down* (2 Timothy 4)

November 29 (10:00 Streaming / 11:15 Outdoors)  
a.m. *Who Do We Listen To?* (Luke 1)



KOINONIA will be streaming to the church website and on Facebook Sunday evening from 7 to 8 pm.

# CHURCH STAFF

**Wes Oden, Senior Pastor**  
567-2024 [wesoden@hwchurch.org](mailto:wesoden@hwchurch.org)

**Jon Cole, Youth Pastor**  
307-9950 [joncole@hwchurch.org](mailto:joncole@hwchurch.org)

**Cindy Oden, Assistant Pastor**  
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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**  
437-5151 [annmcneill@hwchurch.org](mailto:annmcneill@hwchurch.org)

**Andrew Silbert, Director of College Ministries**  
716-450-9179 [andrewsilbert@hwchurch.org](mailto:andrewsilbert@hwchurch.org)

**Church Office, M-F, 8 AM-Noon & 1-4 PM,**  
567-2264 [office@hwchurch.org](mailto:office@hwchurch.org)

Address Service Requested

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