



Christmas in July

The angel of the Lord appeared to Manoah's wife and said, "Even though you have been unable to have children, you will soon become pregnant and give birth to a son ... and his hair must never be cut."
Judges 13:3-5, NLT

I've never understood the attraction of Christmas in July.



We like to watch some of the mysteries on the Hallmark Channel. They aren't the quality of Agatha Christie or Rex Stout or Tom Clancy or Vince Flynn, but I find myself getting engaged in the story and the characters, trying to guess the answer to *Who Done It?* I look forward to watching these stories. In fact, it frustrates me when the weekly mystery is substituted for a Christmas show. So, you can imagine my level of irritation to discover that for the month of July, Hallmark is flooded with Christmas shows.

I've never understood the attraction of Christmas in July. But I am beginning to see something valuable in it.

I'm beginning to understand that Christmas in July can be a reminder of how often I compartmentalize not only my life but my thoughts about Jesus. I don't think all that much about the incarnation in the middle of summer: that's something on which we focus in December. But that's a mistake.

God in flesh isn't an idea that can only be appreciated in the cold of winter. In fact, it's an idea that shouldn't only be appreciated in the cold of winter. The fact that the Almighty God humbles himself to take on human flesh in order to have relationship with and to redeem his creation is a truth that should be pondered and embrace and celebrated year-round.

The Incarnation is in many ways the foundation of all else we know of Jesus—his perfect life of love and obedience, his willingness to lay down his life for the redemption of all human sin, his resurrection in victory over death, his ascension and subsequent heavenly intercession and his promised reappearance when he will establish his kingdom in all of its fullness and redemptive glory. All that Jesus does on earth and all that Jesus promises to do on earth ties back to that manger in Bethlehem.

When I think of it this way, perhaps Christmas in July isn't such a crazy idea after all. In fact, it might be such a good idea that some Sunday in July we might just find ourselves singing together *Joy to the World / The Lord is Come!*

In Christ,
Pastor Wes



Baptism and Dedications: In light of the vaccination progress and the low positivity rate, we are ready to resume baptisms and dedications. If you or someone in your family is interested in being baptized or in having your children dedicated, please let me know.

Organ Meditation & Hymnsing July 1

“Redeemed, How I Love to Proclaim It!”

American poet Fanny Crosby (1820-1915) is perhaps the most prolific writer of gospel hymns in all of Christian history with some 8000 hymn texts to her credit, and her hymns some of the most beloved and timeless. The next “organ meditation,” led by organist Judy Congdon this Thursday at 6:30 p.m., will provide an opportunity to hear a bit about Crosby’s life and (especially) to sing many of her hymns together. This event will be available on livestream, but will also be open for in-person participation.

COVID-19 Information

Our COVID Task Force met recently to discuss the implications for our church in light of the governor’s announcement that rolled back most COVID-related restrictions on almost all commercial and institutional entities. We received confirmation from the local DOH that houses of worship were included in the rollback. In view of this and considering the current low community transmission rate of COVID-19, we are excited to announce some significant changes to the policies around our worship gatherings.

Here is a summary of the changes:

For outdoor gatherings,

All distancing restrictions are lifted; however, there should still be ample space available to facilitate distancing for those who desire.

Masks are welcomed for all but not required. Please continue to be sensitive to one another as we navigate this change; some will want to continue masking and distancing, and we support that choice.

For indoor gatherings,

Reservations are no longer needed for attending services.

Vaccinated individuals do not need to wear a mask or socially distance, even when singing.

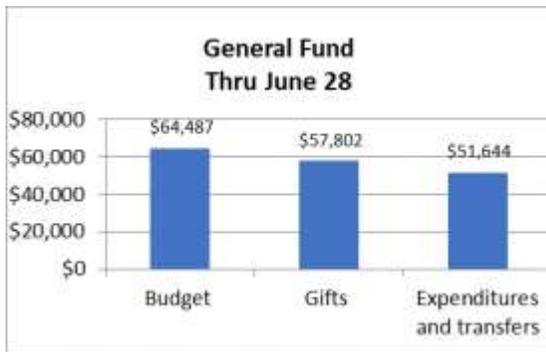
As outlined in the governor’s announcement, unvaccinated individuals continue to be responsible for wearing masks. We ask unvaccinated individuals to continue wearing a mask when not distancing as well as while they are singing.

As with outdoor worship, we affirm those who, regardless of vaccination status, desire to wear a mask and/or practice distancing and encourage grace and sensitivity to one another.

While most seating in the sanctuary will no longer be restricted, there will be designated areas of distanced seating available to all, regardless of vaccination status, who desire or need to use it. Unvaccinated individuals seated in the designated areas are free to remove masks while seated and not singing.

There are no seating restrictions on children. It is expected that they will sit with their parents.

STEWARDSHIP- A Life of Generosity



Inspirational quotes are greatly beneficial to us when we read them. They are short and sweet passages that we can build bigger ideas and pull thoughts together. In many cases, they can affect us positively and motivate us throughout our day. Take a minute to ask the Holy Spirit to encourage, motivate and inspire your heart as you read some quotes on stewardship below.

We are surrounded by God's benefits. The best use of these benefits is an unceasing expression of gratitude. -*John Calvin, French theologian*

Jesus establishes clearly that the greedy accumulation of things is an attempt by persons to evade dependency on God. The one who greedily hoards possessions in order to establish security for the future lacks the faith that Jesus expects of those who follow Him. Our security, according to Jesus, is in our relationship to God in whose hands lies our future. -*Tony Campolo, American pastor*

The compassionate life is a grateful life, and actions born out of gratefulness are not compulsive but free, not somber, but joyful, not fanatical but liberating. When gratitude is the source of our actions, our giving becomes receiving and those to whom we minister become our ministers. -*Unknown*

One of the dangers of having a lot of money is that you may be quite satisfied with the kinds of happiness money can give and so fail to realize your need for God. If everything seems to come simply by signing checks, you may forget that you are at every moment totally dependent on God. -*C.S. Lewis, British writer*

When people spend money on things they do not really need, they begin to want more things they do not need. Instead of satisfying their desires, they only increase them. Giving should begin with the tithe. All your money belongs to God. Use 100% of your income as God directs. -*John Wesley, English cleric, theologian, and evangelist*

God's work done in God's way will never lack for funds. Generosity is contagious. God never promised to meet our budget, only our needs. -*J. Hudson Taylor, British missionary*

Global Mission News

Thanks to our Global Mission Committee* for remaining active, meeting via Zoom much of the time, and putting our mission goals into action, including distribution of the handy Global Missions Partner Directory. Hopefully many are using this to pray regularly.

Summer funding update:

- TEN3 trip to Nigeria - \$2250 in short term mission (STM) funds are designated for Dr. Anthony Petrillo to train and assist educators with a computer tablet Grade 1 program for schools. Pray for safe travels in August.
- Rapids Baseball spiritual development - \$750 in STM funds have helped purchase Bibles and discipleship materials for the team and Christian literature and other support for the Baseball Day Camp for kids. Pray for this diverse group of young men from Florida to California and in between.

* Thank your Global Missions Committee and speak to any of your interest to join them: Doyin Adenuga, Elizabeth Beardsley, Karen Daugherty, Jonathan Hilsher, Carolyn Miller, Calvin and Paulette Schierer, Paul Shea, Janyce Smithley, David Stevick, and Donna Zoller.

ADULT Discipleship Thank yous!

SMZ: Thanks to all who joined the week Sunday Morning Zoom classes in the Spring and especially to our leaders: Stacia from Global Partners, Paul Young, Don Little, Anthony Petrillo from TEN3, John Keith from Houghton Academy, Sarah Derck, Ken Schenk, and Terry Paige. Hopefully full adult S.S. Will resume in the Fall.

Small Groups: Many prayer, accountability, Bible study, and small groups, all of various sizes and makeup, carried on with vital connections and ministry during the last year of pandemic obstacles. Thanks to all. Keep tuned for future developments or interest.



Valley PreSchool

Valley Preschool serves children ages three through five and meets September through May from on MWF mornings from 9:00 to 11:45. If you have questions about Valley Preschool please contact Casda Danner at casdadanner@hwchurch.org.

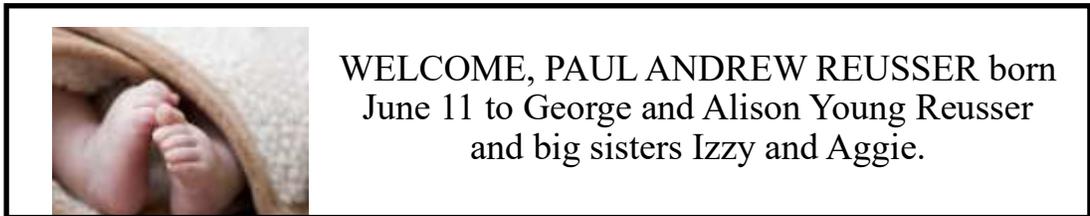
GENERAL INFORMATION and the APPLICATION FOR VALLEY PRESCHOOL FOR 2021-2022: <https://hwchurch.org/2021-22-vps-application-fillable/>

July Sunday School Series - UNUSUAL

What is a narwhal exactly? Have you ever spotted a sasquatch in the wild? Can you catch a centaur? Unusual animals are interesting and unique, just like King David's story. It was unusual for David to become a king, and he didn't always get things right, but his story teaches us that, **God uses unlikely people, and gives unexplainable joy.** Kids will use their imaginations to get to know an **unchangeable God who does unexpected things..**



Thank you to everyone who contributed time, talent, food, and craft supplies for our first co-hosted VBS at Fillmore Wesleyan!



WELCOME, PAUL ANDREW REUSSER born June 11 to George and Alison Young Reusser and big sisters Izzy and Aggie.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to the 6th grade Catechism class who were honored during the June 20 worship service. The class learned 120 questions and answers about what we believe and how we live. Thanks to Harold Blew for guiding the students to a successful conclusion in spite of the current circumstances.

From the Library



Ready to sit on your porch, under a shade tree in your yard, or in front of a fan??!! First, browse thru our collection. There are books on the Bible, Jesus, prayer, Christian living, parenting, missions, and fiction to name a few. Next, find one you haven't yet read, then get comfy in your chosen spot and enjoy!

If your kids have helped you plant a garden, they might like A Weed is a Flower, the life of George Washington Carver. Or they may like the book I Can Only Imagine for Little Ones, from the hit song by MercyMe. You can go on a "stay-cation" (vacation at home) and learn about the Rocky Mountains, the Mighty Mississippi, or the Grand Canyon.

Whatever you choose, ENJOY!

Wellspring Ministries

Dear Family,

The confluence of two of our church's ministries was evidenced this month as Amanda and Rachel (and Mama) appeared at **Wellspring Ministries** one day. These 2 women were some of the very first Allegany County children to attend **Royal Family Kids Camp** when it began in the mid-90's. Now they are in their 30's, still in Allegany County with children of their own, who also attended and will be attending Camp this July. Memories of their times at camp just poured out - the people, the music, the fun, the pool. They remember well the VanWicklins and several others. We at Wellspring are privileged now, later in life, to help them with current needs and encourage them to follow the Jesus they heard about at RFKC. **Rejoice with me** that we are part of a church that enables these 2 ministries to carry on, Embodying the love of God, which never ends from one generation to another. (I Cor. 13:8a)

Let's catch you up on WM:

News - our much-loved coffee bar is back, with Tops supplying day-old items that go so well with coffee or tea. Clients are served by a server.

- we resurrected the framed food service line, and will serve meals individually from that line.
- we are taking it one step at a time, and you will still see some masked folks, though we are not taking names and addresses of clients for tracing.

Prayer- that we seek the wisdom and direction of the Holy Spirit continually for changing times.

- that we keep the spiritual needs of folks as number one priority.
- that the fruits of the Holy Spirit will be evident.

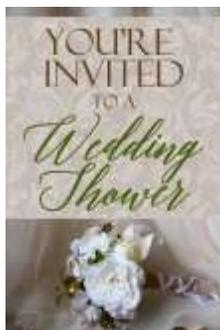
Open - Wed. and Friday - !0:00 am to 1:30 pm. Lunch at 11:55.

Because of the Love of God - Beth Beardsley (for the Board)



We as a church family want to join with the Prinsells in celebrating their 75th Wedding Anniversary on July 27th! Let's bless them with cards of love!

*Dr. Gustave & Louise Prinsell
7336 Campus Hts. Dr.
Houghton NY 14744*



Tess Schilke and Christian Scott are getting married!

We welcome you to come celebrate them at a come-and-go wedding shower.

Sunday, July 25 from 2-4 p.m. Houghton Wesleyan Church side lawn.

Stay as long or short as you would like, and feel free to drive through and greet the couple from the comfort of your car if you would prefer.

Masks are welcome but not required.

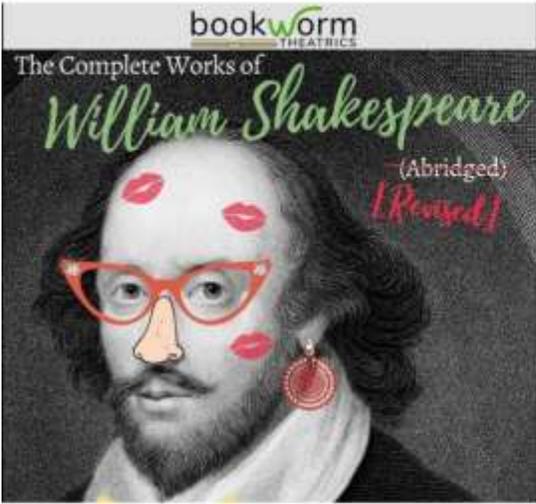
There will be snacks and lawn games if you'd like to stay a while.

Tess and Christian are registered at <https://www.pamperedchef.com/party/tessschilke0626>

Questions? Call TJ Gildemeister at 716-227-0169



Congratulations to Laurence and Vesta Mullen, who on June 23, 2021, celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. They began their courtship at 14 on a Wesleyan Campground in New Brunswick, Canada, and they've been faithful church supporters ever since. Both just recently celebrated their 93rd birthday. We wish them many more years of joy and service to their communities.



BOOKWORM THEATRICS PRESENTS our WNY tour!

William Shakespeare: One of the world’s greatest dramatists whose words live in our lexicon; Who created iconic heroes and villains, lover and fools; Whose works are performed across the globe – A legend for all time.

The brave players of Bookworm Theatrics will do the unimaginable: perform all of Shakespeare’s plays in one heart-stopping, monumental performance. Their feat will put the Royal Shakespeare Company to shame, shutter the Globe, and Stratford-upon-Avon will want to relocate to WNY. All because of this company and these performers that will bring you the finest, most faithful, most wondrous event of our time...

Well, at the very least it’ll be funny.

Friday, July 30 at 7pm – Springville Center for the Arts

Saturday, July 31 at 7pm – Houghton College

Sunday, August 1 at 7:30pm – Palmer Opera House, Cuba

Monday, August 2 at 5:30pm – David A. Howe Library, Wellsville

Contact Amanda Cox (amandacox@hwchurch.org) with questions and for ticket info!

For Rent

3-Room Upstairs Apartment ready the end of June. Gas heat, water, sewer and trash disposal are included in the rent. On Route 19. Within walking distance of the college. Call 585-567-8885

4-Room House for rent. Available the end of August. On Route 19. Within walking distance of the college. Call 585-567-8885.

Phil Merrill
(585) 610-8882

INSIDE & OUTSIDE

PAINTING & POWER WASHING

(HOUSES & DECKS)

Genesee Rapids Home Games

| | | | |
|-----------------|----------------------|--|---------|
| Friday, July 2 | Hornell Dodgers | | 7:00 PM |
| Sunday, July 4 | Cortland Crush | | 2:00 PM |
| Sunday, July 4 | Cortland Crush | | 4:00 PM |
| Monday, July 5 | Mansfield Destroyers | | 7:00 PM |
| Tuesday, July 6 | Dansville Gliders | | 7:00 PM |
| Friday, July 9 | Rochester Ridgemen | | 7:00 PM |
| Wed. July 14 | Dansville Gliders | | 7:00 PM |
| Friday, July 16 | Mansfield Destroyers | | 7:00 PM |
| Sunday, July 18 | Rochester Ridgemen | | 2:00 PM |
| Thurs. July 22 | Rochester Ridgemen | | 7:00 PM |
| Friday, July 23 | Hornell Dodgers | | 7:00 PM |
| Sat. July 24 | Hornell Dodgers | | 7:00 PM |
| Sunday, July 25 | Play Offs Begin | | |



Congratulations to Andrew Roorbach who joined Letchworth Valley Realty as a licensed real estate salesperson. Andrew and Susie recently moved to 58. S. Genesee St. in Fillmore.



Resumes meeting on Thursday evenings in August.



Art Gallery
Coffee Shop
Variety of Baked Goods
Visual Arts

www.coppaco.com
9729 Route 19
Houghton NY

HOURS
M-F 6:30-10:30 am
Saturday 7:30-11:30 am

*Summer Performance Series
at Houghton College*

Rushford Town Band
Wednesday, July 14, 2021 7:00PM
Outdoors at the Larder Courtyard

Opera Meets Broadway
Presented by: Musiktheater Bavaria
Song and dance scenes from favorite Broadway shows with scenes from German opera and operetta (translations provided)
Friday, July 23, 2021 7:30PM
Center for the Arts Recital Hall

Bookworm Theatrics
The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (Abridged) [Revised]!
Saturday, July 31, 2021 7:00PM
Outdoor Performance at Wesley Chapel

Short Track Town Theatre
The Imaginary Invalid, A Play in Three Acts, By Moliér,
An Adaption by Milles Malles
Saturday, August 14, 6:00PM
Outdoor Performance at Luckey Building

Music Circle
ENCORE at Houghton College is hosting Music Circle on Thursday evenings beginning July 1 at 7:00 p.m. at Larder Courtyard. Bring your instrument and join in a facilitated evening of pick-up acoustic music featuring, guitar, banjo, bass, fiddle, harmonica, washboard (just kidding or not) and sing-a-long. If you don't play an instrument, come for the music and time to visit with your neighbors.

All events are open to the public. Donations in lieu of admission fee. Concessions will be available for purchase. Bring your own lawn chair or blanket for outdoor events.



Warren Byerly died Thursday, June 24 after a brief illness and being in hospice for 3 days. He was 96. He had lived with his daughter Brenda Zimmerman and her husband for five years and was able to stay at home until a week before he died. Hospice kept him comfortable and he died peacefully. A service will be planned later in the summer with burial at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery.

-Brenda Zimmerman & Bobbi Caley

Home Stay Ministry Opportunity

Boys and girls ages 13-18 from Zimbabwe, Japan, Ethiopia, China, Nigeria, Vietnam, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Spain, United Arab Emirates, India and Egypt have made contact with Houghton Academy!

Recall that this past December, the Church felt led to direct its Christmas Missions offering towards supporting Houghton Academy's need to fund scholarships for more international students.

The Academy is pleased to announce that some of those students will be arriving this August to begin classes and join the Houghton Church and community. Believing that there is no better way to share the love of Jesus than by opening our homes, the Academy would love to put many of these students within church family home stays. You are invited to come learn more about this exciting family ministry opportunity. **Mr. Jon Keith, Houghton Academy's Boarding Director and CFO/COO, will be hosting informational sessions at the Academy from 7-8 pm each of the next four Tuesday nights during July (July 6, 13, 20, 27).** No RSVP required. Just show up and learn more about hosting a student for the year, serving as a backup host parent for an occasional weekend, "adopting" a student to provide regular prayer support and periodic nourishment treats, or just inviting a student or two over for Sunday dinner. Longer term we also are looking for dorm parents. We'd love to meet you and share more about the indelible impact of the ministry to international boarding students has both on students and your family.



SUNDAYS IN JULY

July 4
(10:00 a.m. Indoors/Online and 11:15 a.m. Outdoors)
Rev. David Huizenga

July 11
(10:00 a.m. Indoors/Online and 11:15 a.m. Outdoors)
Where Is God When We Are Overwhelmed?
(Esther 2:21-3:11)

July 18
(10:00 a.m. Indoors/Online and 11:15 a.m. Outdoors)
Rev. Dr. Joey Jennings

July 25
(10:00 a.m. Indoors/Online and 11:15 a.m. Outdoors)
Rev. Dr. Sarah Derck

CHURCH STAFF

Wes Oden, Senior Pastor
567-2024 wesoden@hwchurch.org

Jon Cole, Youth Pastor
307-9950 joncole@hwchurch.org

Cindy Oden, Assistant Pastor
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Paul Shea Assistant Pastor
567-4597 paulshea@hwchurch.org

Amanda Cox, Music & Worship Director
amandacox@hwchurch.org

Emily Spateholts, Children's Ministry
808-8925 emilyspateholts@hwchurch.org

Ann McNeill, Children's Ministry
716-801-3425 annmcneill@hwchurch.org

Church Office, M-F, 8 AM-Noon & 1-4 PM,
567-2264 office@hwchurch.org

