



Houghton Wesleyan Church

# Highlights

*Joyfully loving God,  
wholeheartedly serving others*

August 2021  
Volume 54, No. 3



## *The Bittersweet Nature of August*



*Always be joyful. Never stop praying. Be thankful in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you who belong to Christ Jesus.*

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

August is a bittersweet month for us. On one hand, it's a month in which a couple of family birthdays fall and that's always fun. It's also a month for picking things from the garden after waiting months for them to fully develop. And August is usually a month of good weather and for those last-minute family outings before the fall schedule kicks in.

But August is also a month in which we begin to feel a little sad. We know that the vacations are coming to an end. The leisurely nature of summer is also fading away. And all of the anticipation of trips and plans in June and July are now memories.

As I ponder the bittersweet nature of August, I am reminded that this month is not a bad metaphor for our walk with Christ. There are highs and lows. There are times of anticipation and excitement and times of completion and sadness. In one way or another, at one time or another (typically many times), we face the ups and downs of life, even in our spiritual journey.

The call of the gospel is to keep our focus on Jesus through it all. It may seem that it's easier to stay focused when life is good and that it's more of a struggle when life isn't so good. But the reality is that we are every bit as tempted to take our eyes off Jesus when we feel no stress as when we do. In fact, we might even be more susceptible when life is good and easy than when life is disappointing and hard.

When we are cruising along, we have a tendency to think that we are more powerful than we are. We have a tendency to feel that we don't need to be as diligent in prayer, or as thoughtful in our reading of scripture or as passionate in our commitment to corporate worship. *I'm doing just fine, thank you.* But this is an illusion—perhaps THE illusion that is most dangerous to our spiritual journey.

The Apostle Paul warns the Corinthian Church: *If you think that you are standing strong, be careful not to fall* (10:12). But Paul doesn't stop there. His admonition is not just about who they are and what they do. His solution is not: *Try harder.* His solution is to remember who God is. He follows verse 12 with these words: *The temptations in your life are no different from what others experience. And God is faithful. He will not allow the temptation to be more than you can stand. When you are tempted, he will show you a way out so that you can endure* (10:13).

Our hope in the ups and downs of life, our hope in the joys and struggles of life is not different for one situation compared to the other. Our hope is our hope in every situation: *God is faithful.* When we know that God is faithful, all of life becomes an act of worship to him, enabling us to rejoice and give thanks in every circumstance (1 Thessalonians 5:16-18).

Whatever your thoughts about August, my prayer for you and for me is that we will know in deeper ways the faithfulness of God—with us, in us and through us.

Blessings,  
Pastor Wes

# 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.



*Indoor service on July 4, 2021*

**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

Why is giving so important? Here are two simple reasons that exist among many more.

## ***Giving makes me more like God.***

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16/NIV)

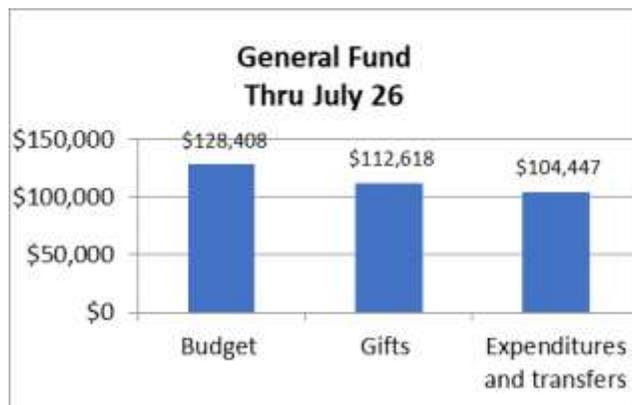
God is the ultimate giver. God gave us life, He gave us this world and most importantly He gave us his Son to be in deep relationship with that would last for eternity. John 3:16 shows us the strong relationship between loving and giving. You can give without loving, but you cannot love without giving.

## ***Giving strengthens my faith.***

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops. (Proverbs 3:5,9/NIV)

There has not been anything more rewarding in my life then when I've been able to give to the Lord when I haven't always known where the money is coming from. Giving the way that God wants us to give needs to go beyond our budgeting. Our giving must require faith. The more we give, the more He provides us the ability to give. The more we give, the stronger our faith becomes, and we realize that we simply cannot out give the Father.

Luke 6:38 states, "Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you."



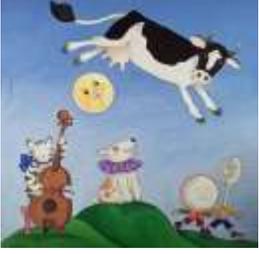
## MEMBERSHIP CLASS

If you are interested in becoming a member of HWC or are interested in knowing more about membership at HWC, contact Pastor Wes or the church office (585-567-2264) right away. Pastor Wes is hosting a membership class on Monday, August 16, 7:00 pm.



**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 contact Pastor Wes or the church office (585-567-2264).

# 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](mailto:casdadanner@hwchurch.org).

GENERAL INFORMATION and the APPLICATION FOR VALLEY PRESCHOOL FOR 2021-2022: <https://hwchurch.org/2021-22-vps-application-fillable/> or stop by the church office or Parents' Bulletin board outside the Valley Preschool classrooms.

Valley PreSchool will meet with half the class and half of the parents on September 8 & 10 and the full classes on September 13.

## August Sunday School—A 5-week Series on **FAMOUS**

Our August series, "Famous," begins on Sunday! Here's what GROW has to say: " Lots of kids dream about becoming famous . . . and why shouldn't they? It sounds awesome to have fans who celebrate your wins with you! On the flip side, it would be pretty tough to have people always watching, even when you're not having the best day. In Famous, we are going to talk about a family in the Bible who lived in such a spotlight. Through their stories, kids will learn that no matter our celebrity status, we can make things right, God gives us friends, we can ask for God's guidance, we can give God what we have. Fame and fans may come and go, but you don't need to be liked by everyone when you're loved by God!"

### From the Library



LOOK, LOOK, LOOK!! Have you seen any of these books, CDs or DVDs at your house???

*Abandoned!*, by Jenny Dale; *Apple Dumpling Gang* DVD; *The Bible Jesus Read*, by Philip Yancey; *Black* by Ted Dekker; *Chronicles of Narnia* DVD: *Prince Caspian*; *Every Day Heroes*, by the Alliance Defending Freedom; *Gods at War*, by Kyle Idleman; *Inside Story*, by Susan Page Davis; *Knowing Christ Today*, by Dallas Willard; *Little House in the Big Woods*, by Laura Ingalls Wilder; *Magic School Bus* DVDs #1, #2, #4; *Mama Said There'd Be Days Like This*, by C. Baumbich; *Mr. Marble's Moose*, by D. J. May; *Open Windows*, by Philip Yancey; *Prayers That Get Answered* CD; *Promise Me Tomorrow*, by Lori Wick; *Race Against Time*, by Carolyn Keene; *Secret of Red Gate Farm*, by Carolyn Keene; *Secrets in the Dark*, by Frederick Buechner; *Soul Surfer* DVD; *Strong-Willed Child* by James Dobson; *Surprised by Prayer*, by Karen Barber; *Why Noah Chose the Dove*, by Singer.

These are just a few of the books that have been checked out for more than a year. I am sure others might enjoy them if only they were back in the library. You can return them to the library or drop them off in the bin outside the Community Room doors.

Thanks for looking.....and reading!!

# Wellspring Ministries

Renovations from grant monies are now completed. We are grateful for new windows and updated bathrooms. Our front porch renewal is a future project.

Thank you for prayer, finances, and donations. Things come in, are sorted, and go out quickly. We urge folks to take only what they themselves need or desire for their families, homes.

There is a slight increase in numbers of people who stay for the noon meal, and that is an answer to prayer. We can always use additions to our 'substitute list' in the kitchen if you are so inclined and would be free on Wednesday or Friday.

Times when we are open are Wed. and Friday from 10:00 am to 1:30 pm. Dropping off donations during those hrs. is preferable, however, there are workers around as early as 9:15 am on those days to help unload.

Grateful for this church family - Beth Beardsley (for the board)

PS - I must add this quote from CTA, Inc.

*"We hold our money and other resources loosely. As we earn and save and give, we have a wonderful secret: In heaven, the gold we so cherish here will pave the streets. Just think! Gold - the new asphalt." (Revelation 21)*



## Warren Byerly Memorial Service August 15 at 3:00 p.m.



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 held on August 15 with burial at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. The service will be streamed for those who cannot attend in person.

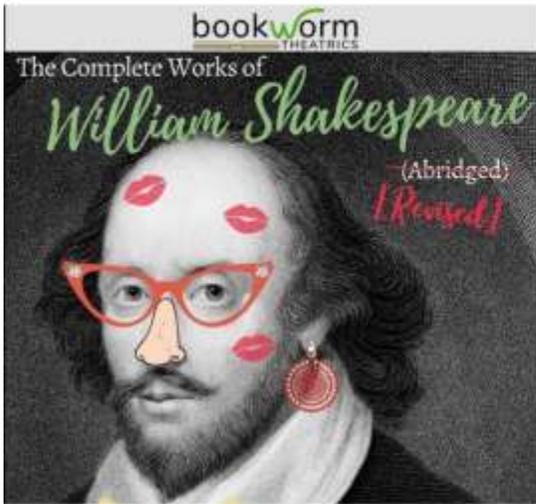
-Brenda Zimmerman & Bobbi Caley



## Celebrate Recovery Meets

**Thursday Evenings beginning at 7:00 PM in the Good Shepherd Room.**

CR is safe place to find community and freedom from the issues that are controlling our lives.



**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](mailto:amandacox@hwchurch.org)) with questions and for ticket info!

**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

**Phil Merrill**  
**(585) 610-8882**

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Genesee Rapids Season Comes to an End Rapids players from 16 states and Canada have returned home after spending the summer here in Houghton. One of the comments we heard again this summer relates to the wonderful support the players receive from our community. Many people contribute in so many ways to make the summer an outstanding success. Thanks goes out to host families, press box personnel, concession stand and team store workers, bus drivers, families who provided special dinners, our sponsors, ambulance personnel, and everyone else who contributed in anyway. Once again in addition to regular church attendance the team had weekly Bible studies on Proverbs and Jesus' teachings in the Gospels. Please continue to pray for the players as they return to their homes and colleges this Fall.

## Drive-thru Food Distribution on August 11



Takes place in either the church or the firehall parking lot (TBD). Preregistration is required and opens 8:30 a.m. on August 3 for appointments between 3 to 4:30 p.m. on August 11. Arrive 10 minutes before your pick-up time and bring grocery bags, laundry baskets, etc. Food is no longer preboxed and more fresh food is available. A driver can pick up for multiple families. Call 585-209-0052 to register for this distribution or in the case of a food emergency.

If you enjoy high quality, hand-picked, fair trade coffee, Jockey Street Coffee has a roast for you. Order online at [www.jockeystreetcoffee.com](http://www.jockeystreetcoffee.com) or find them in local places including Shop 'N Save, Valley Bread & Bounty or Nevy's Pizzeria & Deli.



The Inn at Houghton Creek is looking for a new part time team member. Duties include housekeeping, taking reservations, checking guests in and out, setting up continental breakfast, and general customer service duties.

The ideal candidate would be hard working, self-motivated, good at multitasking and would possess great interpersonal skills.

Please email [innkeeper@innathoughtoncreek.com](mailto:innkeeper@innathoughtoncreek.com) or call Joanna at 585-567-8400 for more details on how to apply.



**The Alderman Family  
invites  
the Houghton Community  
to celebrate  
Dick's 90th Birthday  
with a  
Come-and-Go Party  
at the Alumni House on  
August 22nd  
from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

Please, no gifts but your presence.



## SUNDAYS IN AUGUST

- August 1** (10:00 a.m. Indoors/Online and 11:15 a.m. Outdoors)  
am *How Does God Accomplish His Purposes in the World?*  
(Esther 4:1-5:8)
- August 8** (10:00 a.m. Indoors/Online and 11:15 a.m. Outdoors)  
am Rev. Dr. Michael Jordan
- August 15** (10:00 a.m. Indoors/Online and 11:15 a.m. Outdoors)  
am *Where Is God When the King Can't Sleep?* (Esther 6)
- August 22** (10:00 a.m. Indoors/Online and 11:15 a.m. Outdoors)  
am *What Does God Do About Evil?* (Esther 7-10)
- August 29** (10:00 a.m. Indoors/Online and 11:15 a.m. Outdoors)  
am *The Privilege of Influence* (Psalm 72)



Church Office Hours (585-567-2264)  
Monday thru Friday, 8 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m.

## 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**  
567-2024 [cindyoden@hwchurch.org](mailto:cindyoden@hwchurch.org)
- Paul Shea Assistant Pastor**  
567-4597 [paulshea@hwchurch.org](mailto:paulshea@hwchurch.org)
- Amanda Cox, Music & Worship Director**  
[amandacox@hwchurch.org](mailto:amandacox@hwchurch.org)
- Emily Spateholts, Children's Ministry**  
808-8925 [emilyspateholts@hwchurch.org](mailto:emilyspateholts@hwchurch.org)
- Ann McNeill, Children's Ministry**  
716-801-3425 [annmcneill@hwchurch.org](mailto:annmcneill@hwchurch.org)

