



What Does Generosity Look Like?

When you give blind animals as sacrifices, isn't that wrong? And isn't it wrong to offer animals that are crippled and diseased? Try giving gifts like that to your governor and see how pleased he is!
Malachi 1:8

Because American Thanksgiving falls in November, gratitude and giving thanks is a common theme this month. But what does gratitude mean? Even more importantly, what does gratitude look like? Gratitude can look like many things, but one thing that always accompanies gratitude is generosity. Thinking about generosity raises the discussion about Christian obligations for giving in the 21st century.

There are some who declare that the tithe (10%) is God's universal principle of giving and that nothing in the New Testament changes that. There are others who say that tithing is an antiquated Old Testament principle and that since the New Testament doesn't mention it, it is therefore no longer required by God. I think that both ways of thinking are right and wrong.

It is true that tithing (giving 10% of our income to God) is a principle of generosity that is important to God. It is also true that the principle of the tithe in the Hebrew Bible is not reinforced in the New Testament. But this doesn't mean that God no longer cares what we do with what we have. I think that it means that God is less concerned with a rule and more concerned with a mindset.

The tithe is a baseline for generosity. God seems to be telling us that to give 10% of what we have—Time, Talent and Treasure—is the bare minimum as an expression of our gratitude. Perhaps the reason the tithe isn't mentioned in the New Testament is because God has bigger plans for his people—not to live by a rule of a minimum but to be ruled by a spirit of generosity, or better yet, to be ruled by the generosity of the Holy Spirit.

This is why Paul writes to the Christians in Corinth: *You must decide in your heart how much to give. And don't give reluctantly or in response to pressure. "For God loves a person who gives cheerfully"* (2 Corinthians 9:7). We can give based on a rule and have no mental, emotional, or spiritual engagement with it. We can give time, talent and treasure by rote and feel like we have done our duty. But God isn't nearly as interested in duty as in passion. Paul's admonition appears to be an overrule of the tithe, but not to lessen it to whatever we want to do with what we have, but to increase it to an attitude, a spirit of generosity. We move from how little can I give and not make God angry to how much can I give as an act of trust in God's ability to meet my needs. We move from giving God the least to giving God the most.

Through the prophet Malachi, God accuses his people of showing contempt for his name. When they ask what he means, he points their attention to the sacrifices they are bringing as their offering to Yahweh. God says: *When you give blind animals as sacrifices, isn't that wrong? And isn't it wrong to offer animals that are crippled and diseased? Try giving gifts like that to your governor and see how pleased he is!*

The great 19th century London pastor Charles Spurgeon once said: *If you were giving a present to a prince, you would not find Him a lame horse to ride upon; you would not offer Him a book out of which leaves had been torn, nor carry Him a timepiece whose wheels were broken. No, the best of the best you would give to one whom you honored and loved. Give your very best to your Lord.*

Generosity of time, talent and treasure is an act of gratitude. It's a means by which we acknowledge and give thanks to God for his infinite blessings—those seen and those unseen.

As we move into November, we remember all of God's blessings and give thanks in every way that we can.

In Christ

Pastor Wes



Stewardship – A Life of Generosity

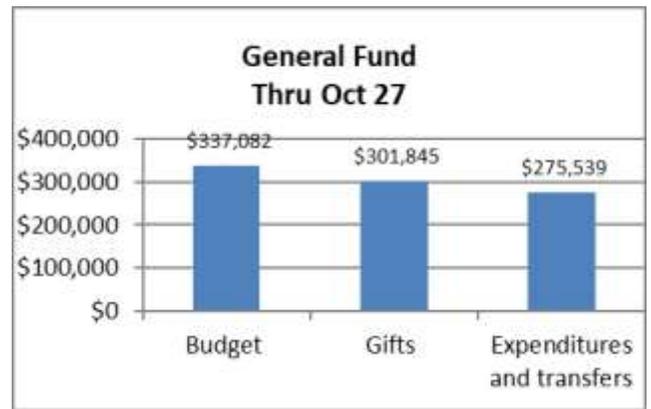
November is a time when our thoughts turn to giving thanks. How do we express our thankfulness? An appreciative note? . . . a token gift? . . . a kind word?

The Thanksgiving season is a time to reflect on God’s grace to us as a body and as individuals. We have much to be thankful for. Every good thing is a gift from God. We can show gratitude to God by being openly obedient to the message of Christ. And, because of God’s extravagant giving to us, we feel free to give to others. One way God uses us to bless others is through our giving to the church.

Among many other things, giving to Houghton Wesleyan Church helps young people know about God’s love and promises through the children’s 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, and other programs available through streaming for our church community and beyond.

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

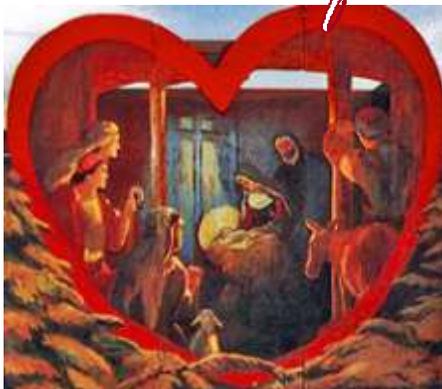
So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. Colossians 2:6-7.



**Help Us “Spruce”
Up the Church!**

Saturday, November 27, from 10:00 – 12:00 noon – all are invited to help decorate the sanctuary for Advent or join us outside to help put up The Heart of Christmas display on the front lawn of the church. All ages are invited to help us decorate inside and outside. Thank you!

The Heart of Christmas



Chester Barker commissioned H. Willard Ortlip to create this example of installation art around 1950.. For several years Mr. Barker erected the painted plywood display each Christmas season in the village park adjacent to the store (River Dog Fly Fishing today) on Route 19. He then donated the piece to Houghton Wesleyan Church which continued its seasonal exhibition on church property. As time and weather took their toll, Aileen Ortlip Shea and Marjorie Ortlip Stockin periodically restored their father’s work. The annual display was discontinued in the 1980s, but the tradition was restored in 2001 for the church sesquicentennial and again last Christmas. May its display remind all of the Christ of Christmas.

UPCOMING MISSION VISITS! Pray for these travelers:

Dr. Anthony and Nancy Petrillo



Dr. Jim and Donna Zoller



TEN3 is sending Dr. Anthony, Nancy, their son Anthony III, Jared Winkens and David Roorbach to usher in two new schools for their education and Bible curriculum programs. HWC is sending, by invitation of Rev. Atif Seldom, Jim and Donna Zoller to Egypt to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the planting of the Standard Wesleyan churches there. HWC supports TEN3 and their projects and our church raised \$20,000 for a church and conference center in Badr City three years ago.

HWC Kids Sunday School

In November, our HWC Kids will spend 4 weeks learning from the Old Testament Prophets. Here's what GROW has to say: "Kids love to be in the kitchen. They may even love helping prepare something delicious! Having a plan or a recipe usually helps, too. Just like having a plan in the kitchen helps the meal we hope to enjoy, the stories of the Old Testament prophets are like a cookbook that helped people prepare for the Savior that God would send one day. Even though there's no exact recipe, kids will find that they can prepare themselves for a loving relationship with God when they 1) trust God, 2) talk to God, 3) listen to God, and 4) leave the results to God." Let's "PLATE IT" together!

Memory Verse Challenge

Everyone is invited to be a part of our HWC Kids memory verse challenge!

Our October Verse was Job 37:5 - "God's voice thunders in marvelous ways; he does great things beyond our understanding."

Our November Verse: Ephesians 2:10 - For we are God's handiwork, created for Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Children ages 3-6th grade, say your verse three times to any adult in the church including your parents, your Sunday School teachers, the pastors, or the person sitting next to you on Sunday morning. Once you've mastered the verse, mark it on the chart at the Welcome Desk in the CE foyer. Memorize every monthly verse for a prize (TBD)! Youth and adults, you are welcome to memorize it with us! Kids, pick up your verse list and directions at the Welcome Desk.

A big thank you

- ♦ to everyone who donated items for the Harvest Drive-through Event. It was a wonderful day of connection with our HWC Families and outreach to our community. Thank you for blessing our families!



Valley Preschool has a couple of openings for children ages four (by February) and five. We meet MWF mornings from 9:00 - 11:45. If you are looking for a pre-school opportunity for your child or know someone who is, please contact Casda Danner, director, at casdadanner@hwchurch.org or 585-567-4314 with questions or call the church office at 567-2264.

Operation Christmas Child

Our children and the Academy students invite your family to participate in Operation Christmas Child shoebox gift packing. Toys, hygiene items, clothing, and school supplies are great ideas. You can use your own shoebox, pick up a ready-made one in the Christian education building foyer, or place individual items in the bin for the Academy kids to pack for you. Another option, online packing, benefits families in hard-to-reach areas and our goal is 100 boxes as a church.



To take that option, visit: <https://build-a-shoebbox.samaritanaspurse.org/view/ca30cb59-1db2-46bf-bac2-1dd4f8bd061c>. Collection week is November 14-20th with transporting of boxes taking place promptly at noon on the 20th. Thank you for helping to spread the Gospel through this ministry!

Youth Group Snacks 2021-2022



Friends,

It is well known that teenagers feel loved when they are being fed :)

Would you like to bless the youth of our community by (once-in-a-while) providing a snack of some kind (popcorn, brownies, cookies, prime rib, chips, carrots, hummus, pizza?) Feel free to be creative with snack ideas (frogs legs?), but also feel free to just run out and buy some Oreos and milk if you find yourself in a time crunch.

Thanks for thinking about being a part of our team! We're averaging about 50 people each week with a high of 65.

Please contact Pastor Jon if you want to help.

Pastor Jon Cole
joncole@hwchurch.org

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)/cindvoden@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.



Prism -

December 4

8:00 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.





The Starfish Story is often used to describe the work of Royal Family Kids Camp. Recently, Dean Liddick, a long-time supporter of RFKC told the following story that describes perfectly God’s Calling and Purpose for our ministry. He shared,

The starfish illustration underscores the situation of RFKC kids for me as it takes me back to my first encounter with a starfish. It was a month after the end of WWII, I was six and we were spending 10 days in a British camp for Italian POWs in Ismalia, Egypt, waiting for our ship to India. Some afternoons we spent at a beach on the Red Sea, and one day I found a light brown starfish on the shore, missing one arm – maybe still alive, maybe not.

I thought it was very sad, but dad said it could grow another, so we tossed it back into the water, hoping that was all it needed to begin healing from its trauma.

Our campers have wounds. Their spirits, minds and bodies have suffered trauma and loss unlike anything most of us will ever experience. Yet, there is Hope: God Loves These Little Ones, and God Calls Us to Love Them with His Love. Please consider volunteering! We need people 18-years-old and older to be counselors (one counselor/every two campers), to take photos, to participate in music and drama, to lead crafts. You don’t need any special training, and I promise that you will KNOW without a doubt that God wants you at camp, and that there is no other place on earth where you could be doing more good during those 5 days from July 10 – 15, 2022, than by being at Camp Asbury laughing and singing and making crafts and having a tea party and fishing and swimming with 52 of God’s Most Beloved Children.

- What? Houghton RFKC provides 52 kids ages 6 – 12 (who are referred by Allegany County DSS because of substantiated histories of neglect and/or abuse) with a week of safe, positive memories in a Christian Camp Setting (Camp Asbury)
- When? July 10 – 15, 2022
- Who? More than 60 residential volunteers and 25 dayworkers serve as individual counselors; crafts; Bible storytelling, drama and music; swimming & recreation; talent show; and more. We especially need individual counselors (1 counselor/ 2 campers); photographers (each camper gets a photo album); craft people; dining servers; drama; music; recreation; and more! Ask for an application!
- Why? Matthew 19:13-15
- How? Houghton RFKC raises all our funds through donations and with support from area churches. Consider donating a “campership” of \$300 that covers the camper’s room and board, Bible and activity book, birthday bag, and more!

Email, text or call Nancy Murphy for more information:
houghton.rfkc@gmail.com; nancy.murphy@houghton.edu; (585) 376-4053



**MEMORIAL SERVICE
FOR
MARY BOOMHOWER
ON
NOVEMBER 13 at 11:00 A.M.
Houghton Wesleyan Church**



**MEMORIAL SERVICE
FOR
BOB BROWN
ON
NOVEMBER 6 at 11:00 A.M.
Houghton Wesleyan Church**



Mark your calendars for "Nativities from Around the World" at the Church on December 12th (time TBD) as part of the Houghton Community Christmas event. More details to come! We are looking to create a beautiful, insightful display of nativities from around the world (and states). If you have one or more nativities that you would be willing to have on display for a week in the church, please consider dropping them off in the CE building foyer on Saturday, December 4th or Sunday December 5th They will be on display through the event. Notecards will be available to designate who they belong to and where they are from. If you have questions, please contact Emily at emilypateholts@hwchurch.org.

THANK YOU for BIBLE STUDIES and BANDING.

During this somewhat restricted time with the pandemic, we thank God for the opportunities for Women's Wednesday Bible Study, Small Groups, special prayer fellowships, and nearly 20 Banding Together Groups all seeking God together this Fall. God is doing great things. (contact paulshea@hwchurch.org for information.)



On Saturday, November 6, Fillmore Wesleyan Church is hosting a Climate Prayer Vigil. As world leaders meet in Scotland for the UN climate conference, churches across the world will also be gathering to host prayer vigils for the challenges facing God's creation. At 6 p.m. on November 6 you are invited to Fillmore Wesleyan for a candlelight prayer and worship service asking for God's help in solving this global crisis. Contact Brian Webb for more information.

Wellspring November News



November 17 - our Christmas Room opens for all custodial parents of children aged birth to 18. This is a room on the lower level where parents can choose 2 gifts per child as Christmas gifts. Several Amish families are especially blessed by this opportunity. We especially need gifts for teen boys, but gifts for all ages are welcome. Please label anything you send in for this room - "Christmas Room". Please spread the word - all are welcome to 'shop' here.

November 19 - our annual Thanksgiving turkey meal, serving at 11:30 am. All are welcome.

November 24 and 26 - closed for Thanksgiving. We especially are thankful to God for our volunteers.

Muscles? We need 'em!

Do you like to 'haul' stuff from here to there? Our current staff is often overworked with helping folks get items from the cars to the basement sorting area. This involves careful descent on a set of stairs with items of varied weights and dimension. Even an hour of your time and energy weekly or monthly would be an encouragement to our 'haulers'. Critical times are 9:30 am to 11:30 am.

If you have items to donate, please take to Wellspring directly. We are open Wednesdays and Fridays from 10 am to 1:20 pm, but staff is there to help unload as early as 9:15am. We can always use a batch of homemade cookies to share at the coffee bar, if there are any bakers out there!

Our hearts are thankful and encouraged that HWChurch supports this work. We are staying alert to Covid news and best practices. Currently masks are not required, but always appreciated.

A blessed Thanksgiving to you.
Beth Beardsley. (for the Board)

Proverbs 11:25 - "Whoever brings blessing will be enriched, and one who waters will himself be watered."



THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE NOVEMBER 21

On Sunday, November 21, we will collect food for the Food Pantry at both services. To help us run the food pantry more efficiently and due to space limitations, please limit your donations to the items on the following list when shopping.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------|---------------------------|
| -Pasta | -Spaghetti sauce* | -Macaroni & cheese |
| -Canned tuna | -Canned chicken | -Ramen noodles |
| -Baked beans | -Canned chili | -Canned beef stew |
| -Soup | -Boxed rice | -Boxed oatmeal packets |
| -Canned fruit* | -Canned vegetables | -Peanut butter* |
| -Cereal | -Jelly or jam* | -Jarred applesauce |
| -Syrup* | -Granola bars | -Boxed pancake mix |
| -Canned pasta (Spaghettios, Ravioli) | | -Boxed potato mixes |
| -Helpers (Hamburger, Tuna, Chicken) | | -Fruit juices/juice boxes |
| -Snacks (cookies, crackers, jello, pudding, fruit snacks) | | |

*An item with an asterisks donates a traditionally high need item.

**Due to health and safety concerns, we do not accept opened items or home-baked goods.

***We can also use your recycled plastic shopping bags if you would like to donate them.

NOTE: Monetary Donations (checks to Houghton Wesleyan Church with "FOOD PANTRY" on the Memo Line) provide fresh fruits and vegetables, bread, eggs, cheese, and milk, as well as emergency groceries for families in our community. The Food Pantry has a refrigerator and a freezer to store items. NOTE: Perishable Pantry Donations may be brought to the church office throughout the year. Thank you for your continued donations!



From the Library Shelves

Our children's section of the church library has a number of fall-themed books including *Why Do Leaves Change Color?* Then there is *Do Dolphins Really Smile?*, and a book all about Giraffes. We also have a book about being a good sport no matter what: *Win or Lose, I Love You!*

In our adult section we have *Thunder Dog*, the true story of a blind man, his guide dog and the triumph of trust at Ground Zero. We can learn how to express God's love to the people we meet everyday in *Small Things with Great Love*. Then, you can stay where you are, or you can get honest and...*Move On: When Mercy Meets Your Mess*.

We no longer have the outside bin, so please return your books inside. There are all these and many more waiting for you. Come in and find something you can enjoy!!



Joy to the World!

**An Organ Meditation on the works of Isaac Watts
November 18, 6:30 p.m.**

Though he lived a long time ago (1674-1748), Isaac Watts created timeless hymn texts—still some of our favorites today. In the next Organ Meditation, we will be invited to worship together as we reflect on the life and works of Isaac Watts, hear scripture that inspired his hymn texts, hear organ and choral music based on his hymns, and join together in singing some of his all-time favorites. If you love singing hymns with organ, this service is for you.



Drive Through Food Distribution November 10

Takes place in the church parking lot
Pre-registration required; Call after Nov. 2 at 8:30 a.m. 585-209-0052 (the Cuba Cultural Center) to register. Leave your name, phone number, and the number of families you will be picking up for.
You will receive a return call with the time for your pick up on November 10.

SUNDAYS IN NOVEMBER

- November 7** (8:45 Outdoors / 11:00 Indoor/Streaming)
The Myth that Makes Us Empty (Ecclesiastes 9:1-11)
- November 14** (8:45 Outdoors / 11:00 Indoor/Streaming)
The Myth that Makes Us Ungrateful (Psalm 17:1-15)
- November 21** (8:45 Outdoors / 11:00 Indoor/Streaming)
The Myth that Makes Us Hopeless (Luke 10)
- November 28** (8:45 Outdoors / 11:00 Indoor/Streaming)
First Sunday of Advent

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
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Emily Spateholts, Children's Ministry
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Ann McNeill, Children's Ministry
437-5151 annmcneill@hwchurch.org

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



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME ENDS:

Please remember that you need to turn back your clocks one hour on Saturday night, November 6.

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.