



November 30, 2021

Dear Houghton Church Friends,

Here is some information for this week. **New items are highlighted.**

Sunday Worship Schedule

8:45 a.m. – Outdoor (If the weather—lightning or torrential rain—prevents us meeting outdoors, we will move into the sanctuary). Coffee is available before and after the outdoor service.

9:45 a.m. – Sunday School (Children, Youth and Adults)

11:00 a.m. – Indoor/Streaming Blended Worship

Sunday Morning:

- This Sunday is the Second Sunday of Advent. We will light the Advent candle and turn our attention once again to the coming of Christ. This week's sermon, *Advent as a Return Trip*, turns our attention to the journey of the Holy Family to Egypt (Matthew 2:13-23).
- A reminder that the outdoor service is broadcast on a radio frequency that enables you to remain in your car and listen to the service if you desire to do so.

Baptism: Sunday, December 19, we are hosting a baptism service at 10:00 a.m. in the church sanctuary. If you are interested in being baptized, please contact me right away (wesoden@hwchurch.org / 585-567-2264).

Sunday School: The Bible Exposition class at 9:45 a.m. is live-streamed each week. Dr. Paul Young and class are studying the letter of 1st John. New viewers this week are welcome [HERE](#) after 9:45.

HWC Kids:

- Joy to the World!! What are your go-to Christmas traditions? It's amazing how different all of our Christmas celebrations can be, especially when you take into account how Christmas is celebrated all over the world. This month, we'll be reminded what a universal gift Jesus is, and how Jesus brought good news, joy, and peace on that very first Christmas so that the whole world could know God!
- This week, kids can rejoice that an angel foretold the birth of John the Baptist, who would prepare the way for Jesus. **THE BIG IDEA:** Jesus came to bring good news to the world.
- Join us in memorizing this month's verse: Luke 2:14 - Glory to God in the highest Heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.
- Kids' Club Wednesday will celebrate the coming of the Christ Child over the next two weeks. We conclude the 2021 year on December 8th at 6:30 with our Christmas Party for club member families.

Egypt Trip: Jim and Donna Zoller's planned trip to Egypt in order to represent our church at the 100th anniversary celebration of the Wesleyan Standard Church of Egypt has been cancelled. Due to the Omicron Covid variant, restrictions in some countries through which they were traveling, have made the trip untenable. We are disappointed for and with Jim and Donna as well as the church in Egypt. We are grateful that our connections to the church will continue as well as our prayers.

Poinsettias: The Church welcomes your Christmas poinsettias to help beautify the sanctuary for Christmas. We have purchased a number of poinsettias which you may purchase for \$12.00 each or you may bring your own to drop off at the church office by December 17th. If you would like to purchase one or more poinsettias, you may use the online giving options, mail a check to the church (indicate poinsettias) or drop off payment at the church office. If you wish to purchase a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one, please email (pattystalker@hwchurch.org) or call Patty (567-2264) with your information by December 13th. Thank you.

Advent Decorating: Thank you to all who helped decorate the church (inside and outside) for Advent this past Saturday morning. We deeply appreciate all of your help!

Outdoor Service Set Up: If you are interested in being on a rotating outdoor service set up/take down schedule, please contact the church office (office@hwchurch.org / 567-2264).

Winter Clothing Collection: An emergency request: From now to mid-December drop off donations of sweatshirts, sweatpants, warm coats and boots for men, women and children at the church office for the Vive Shelter in Buffalo. (Request comes from The Strands and Urban Advocacy/Jericho Road.)

Christmas Community Event: On Sunday, December 12th from 1-3pm, the Church is hosting "Nativities Around the World" as part of the community Christmas event. Outside, enjoy the large creche and live stable animals. Inside, come visit a display of nativities from all over the world. If you have a nativity that you would be willing to loan for the event, please contact Emily (emilyspateholts@hwchurch.org) or drop it off at the Church office this week; please leave your name and where your nativity is from.

The Little Chapel Donation Trailer will be parked at the Church during the month of December. "The Tiny House of God" was built on wheels to travel from church to church, community to community. Its mission is to be a collection point for bibles and other Christian literature (Bibles, books, devotionals, children's materials, etc.) that are no longer used and donated for the purpose of being distributed to people who deeply desire the gospel. These materials equip pastors and missionaries in places that have few resources. The Little Chapel started its ministry in 2021 and is shipping materials via Love Packages in Butler, Illinois who has a network of distributors throughout the world. Drop off your materials at any time! There are primarily two criteria in deciding what material we accept: Something that will lead someone to faith in Christ and/or something that will disciple a believer (please ensure that materials are in good condition).

Drive-Through Food Give-Away: We are excited to continue to host the area food give-away each month. You are welcome to come and receive food (this is open to everyone) on **Wednesday (December 8)** in the afternoon. To sign up, call today to pre-register at 585-209-0052. 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 arrival.

Church Finances

- Here are the giving totals for the fiscal year (June 2021 – May 2022).

Budget Needed: \$417,327.04 / **Budget Received:** \$367,925.27

- As you can see, we are significantly behind our budget for giving. Even though our income continues to meet our expenses, please be in prayer about our financial needs.
- The weekly bulletin contains up to date financial information. For financial gifts, we encourage you to use [online giving](#) or to mail your check to the church (P.O. Box 127, Houghton, NY 14744).
- If you would like to see any church financial information, contact the church office.

Streaming Information

- Send your comments, ideas or words of gratitude about the streaming to streaming@hwchurch.org.

Resources

- Even though life is moving toward a level of normalcy, we recognize that ongoing and acute needs are still prevalent. Our pastors and church family are here for you. On the [COVID-19 section](#) of the church website, you will see three buttons: [Get Help](#), [Give Help](#) and [Let's Talk](#). This is an easy way to let us know how we might engage with you. Do not hesitate to use those, to call the church, or to call one of the pastors if any of those buttons reflect what you would like to communicate with us.
- If you use YouTube, subscribe to our [Houghton Wesleyan Church YouTube Channel](#)

If you have questions, concerns, or needs, do not hesitate to contact us (585-567-2264, office@hwchurch.org, or any of us individually). If you have needs in the coming weeks, please let us know.

You continue to be in our prayers. We pray God's grace and comfort upon you.

Blessings,

Pastor Wes