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## *Sinners in the Demands of a Holy God*

*The Lord God called to Moses from the Tabernacle and said to him, "Give the following instructions to the people of Israel.  
(Leviticus 1:1-2)*

Have you ever had an idea cross your mind and because you aren't sure if it's a good one or not, you set it aside for a while? Then, later, perhaps years later, that idea comes back to you, and you decide to throw caution to the wind and proceed with it?

That was my experience. I had an idea for preaching in Lent a few years ago, but I wasn't sure if the idea was a good one or not. I wasn't sure if I was ready. I wasn't sure if everyone else was ready. Well, I've decided to throw caution to the wind and forge ahead.

During the season of Lent this year, I'm going to preach through the book of Leviticus.

Now, I suspect that you might be thinking, *Oh, boy! It might have been better to keep that one tied up.* Most of us don't spend much time in Leviticus. If we follow a Bible reading plan, when we come to Leviticus, our goal is to get through it. I've felt that way myself. But the reality is that Leviticus isn't in the canon of scripture by accident. It was God's plan to include it and that means we need to at least give it some of our attention.

One of my study Bibles gives background information about each book of the Bible. It provides context, an outline, the generally accepted author and the generally accepted date, the themes of the book and the purpose. For the purpose of Leviticus, it says this: *To outline the Levites' duties in worship and to teach the Israelites how to live holy lives.* I like that. But like every part of scripture, Leviticus realizes this purpose by providing us with *a clearer revelation of who God is to people who struggle to understand who God is so that they might be more like who God is.*

I realize that Leviticus reveals the nature of God in a way that seems foreign and disconnected from our lives. There are many laws and rituals that feel not only antiquated but insignificant. But I am convinced that there is more to Leviticus than this. If nothing else, it's a reminder that the Bible is not primarily about us; it's primarily about God speaking to us—revealing who he is, who we are and his gracious plan for bringing us into a holy and loving relationship with him.

And Leviticus, like all of the OT, points to the One who comes in human flesh and gives his life in human flesh on a cross to make this relationship with our Creator a reality.

During this season of Lent, my prayer is that we will gain a clearer vision of who God is and who can be in him—pointing to the cross through his grace to us.

Blessings,  
Pastor Wes



DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME begins Sunday, March 13.  
Please turn your clocks ahead one hour.

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# STEWARDSHIP—A Life of Generosity

*“Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” (2 Corinthians 9:15)*



As we are all very much aware, the worship life of our church over the past two years has had to stretch and evolve in ways we would have never previously anticipated. We have been asked to exercise creativity and push the bounds of our resourcefulness as we seek to engage and encourage the church family we deeply love in this challenging environment. God continues to provide us with the strength and endurance we need, and He gives us moments of joy and laughter that keep us going – especially in our weekly staff meetings!

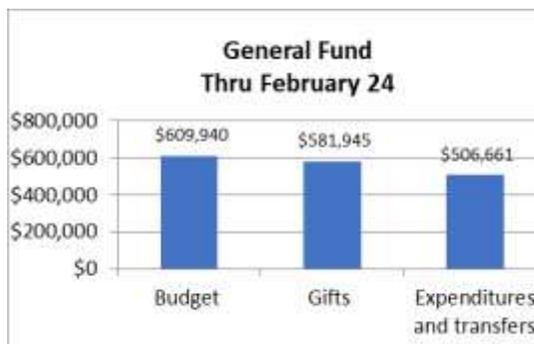
The major area in which we have moved forward in leaps and bounds over the past two years is our worship service streaming. Beyond serving and worshipping with the congregation who is able to join us in person, we are engaging with streaming worshipers from around our area, the country, and even the world. On Sunday, February 20, we had 578 people joining us via streaming in real time as we celebrated in church together. After that, we have more people who choose to watch our streaming services at other times during the week. Over the last month we had 1,631 viewers spread out over every day of the week!

Beyond simply making it possible for our services to stream, which we had even before the pandemic, our amazing tech volunteers have improved and enhanced our streaming experience to an incredible degree. Most (if not all!) of us have had the opportunity to stream a service, and I am sure you would agree that the quality is really remarkable. None of this would be possible without our tech team.

On any given Sunday there are five tech team volunteers working on the streamed service, not to mention the early/outdoor service and Sunday School class streaming. The crew (10-12 people) each work on average every other Sunday. If you glance up into the balcony, you’ll see them at various stations: house sound, stream sound, ProPresenter (slides), and Switcher – the program which allows us to switch from camera to camera during the service. The fifth tech team member is the Director for that day, and oversees the whole process. Our tech team members work with both skill and artistry as they support our service. Most of the tech team are cross-trained to work at any station on any particular week. And behind the scenes are an additional three “experts” who help us as technical consultants.

We are currently using seven donated iPhones, which provide close-up shots of the organ, cajon, guitar, keyboard, and piano, one in the balcony, and one that we can move around. On top of that we employ a purchased, high-level camera at the front of the balcony that pan, tilts, and zooms from our remote controls. For audio, the tech team is managing about 15 mics in each service, on average.

We are thankful for the encouragement, financial support, and prayers of our church family as we continue to do our best to facilitate the worship life of our congregation. Also, **we are currently looking for 2-3 more people to add to our tech team!** If you have ever considered joining – Or even if you have not! It’s an adventure! – please feel free to contact Ken Bates ([streaming@hwchurch.org](mailto:streaming@hwchurch.org)) for more information. We would be deeply grateful to have you!



## Missions Updates:

GOD AT WORK SUNDAY – 9:45 Adult Sunday School Option in the Community Room – Anthony and Nancy Petrillo and others report on their December Mission to Tanzania. All are welcome to hear what God has done and is doing through TEN3 in Africa, Sunday, March 20th.

## CHRISTMAS OFFERING REPORTS!

Construction of the church building in Badr City, outside Cairo, Egypt continues and in December the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of the Wesleyan Church in Egypt included worship in the partially complete facility.



*Pictured (left)  
Celebratory worship in the  
Badr City church., Egypt.*

*Pictured (right) is an O2 plant similar  
to the one our Christmas offering will  
help send to LaGonave Hospital. The  
front and center unit was paid for by  
our donation. The Muncion, N.B. Wes-  
leyan Church has joined us in providing  
funds for this vital project.*



## Announcing: NEW COLLEGE focused 9:45 Ministry.

On March 13 we welcome students a place to meet, fellowship, learn, and pray together. Keep looking for the location and an exciting new name for this regular opportunity to connect as a congregation with college students.



### March Adult Sunday School News—9:45 Opportunities:

- I John - Bible Study in Community Room and streamed
- “Chosen” - Film Discussion in CE 105
- “Spiritual Conversations with Children” (Borge) - Book discussions below sanctuary.
- Moms That Pray - Group Prayer below sanctuary



**JULY 10-15, 2022**  
[www.houghtonRFKC.com](http://www.houghtonRFKC.com)



### Needed:

- ⇒ Counselors
  - ⇒ Individual Counselors
  - ⇒ Roving Counselors
  - ⇒ Activity Counselors
- ⇒ Bible Storytellers
- ⇒ Camp Grandma and Grandpa

Application is on the website; 20-minute interview in March; training on Sunday, April 24, in the afternoon.



**EASTER BAPTISM:** If you are interested in receiving the sacrament of baptism on Easter morning, April 17, please contact Pastor Wes ([wesoden@hwchurch.org](mailto:wesoden@hwchurch.org)).

**MEMBERSHIP:** Pastor Wes will host a membership class in March. If you would like to become a member of HWC or would like to know more about membership at HWC, please contact Pastor Wes ([wesoden@hwchurch.org](mailto:wesoden@hwchurch.org)).



**March Sunday School Series - Page Turner:** Page-turners are exciting books, the kind you don't want to put down, the kind you would stay up extra late to read. Books are exciting when we can find ourselves in the stories and imagine being a part of the adventure. This month we are going to look at some of the page-turning stories of the Bible. Each of these stories has something valuable to teach us about our patient and powerful God who prepares us to fight temptation and celebrates us, the heroes in our own real-life adventures

- **March memory verse:** But the Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one. II Thessalonians 3:3 (NIV)
- **Lent begins Wednesday, March 2nd!** Join in the "Count-up-to-Easter" family activity that you received in the mail. Read each day's Scripture to prepare you for the miracle of Easter Sunday.



**We Want Your Ideas!**

**Parents, we need your amazing ideas!**

**We're dreaming about what next year could look like for HWCKids and we would love your input. How can we help you? What do your kids want? What are we doing well and what could we do better? If you are interested in being a part of a parent focus group and joining a one-time, impactful discussion in mid-March please email Emily at [hwckids@hwchurch.org](mailto:hwckids@hwchurch.org).**



**March 2, 6:30 p.m.**

You are invited to an Ash Wednesday Service at the church at 6:30pm. During this service, we will begin to contemplate the passion of Christ through scripture, song, and the imposition of ashes.

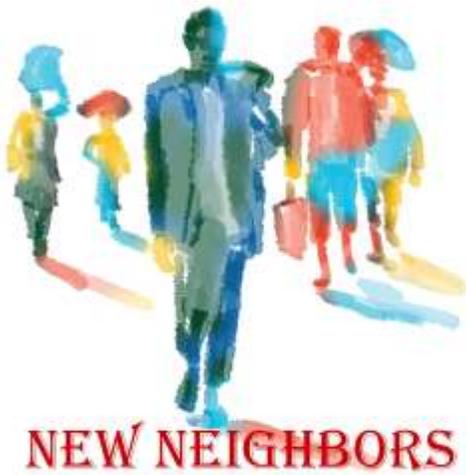


**LENTEN ORGAN MEDITATION**

**MARCH 17 AT 6:30 P.M.**

*Dr. Judy Congdon*

**STREAMED & IN\_PERSON**



## New Neighbors Meeting - March 3

Since the September airlift, tens of thousands of Afghan people are in dire need of resettlement support after being temporarily housed on US military bases and in hotels across the country. The needs have overwhelmed agencies and surpassed the availability of affordable housing in Buffalo. Come to a meeting at 6:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 3rd in the Community Room of the Houghton Wesleyan Church to see how you can help Afghan evacuee families. We will discuss big and small ways our local communities might assist efforts being made in Buffalo and to assess our own ability to sponsor a family or two in the immediate area.

Contacts are  
[annmcneill@hwchurch.org](mailto:annmcneill@hwchurch.org) or [paulshea@hwchurch.org](mailto:paulshea@hwchurch.org).



**March 9 we host a Pop Up Pantry in the church parking lot.**

**Registration is required and opens Tuesday, March 1 at 8:30 am**

**Call 585-209-0052.**

*Leave your name, phone number and the number of families you are picking up for. The Cuba Cultural Center will return your call and give you a time and number.*



*The family of Harold Grant wishes to thank the church community for all of your kind wishes, thoughts, memories, food, flowers, music, and beautiful loving service devoted to our father. He would have been grateful and proud of all of those kindnesses. God is so good.*



Ruth Miller is turning 95 on March 29th.

We would love to "shower" her with cards to help celebrate this happy occasion. Her address is:

Ruth Miller

9692 Rt. 19

Houghton NY 14744

## Memorial Service for Eila Shea May 20

The Community is invited to attend the Memorial Service and Celebration of Life for Eila Shea on Friday, May 20, 11:00 a.m. at Houghton Wesleyan Church. Paul and Debbie Shea wish to thank all who have graciously expressed their support and sympathy during the difficult weeks leading up to and since her passing. The family has a request: We are interested in the extent of her art work amongst friends, and invite you to drop a note to [Paulshea@hwchurch.org](mailto:Paulshea@hwchurch.org) to describe any paintings you possess. Thank you.

# WELLSPRING MINISTRIES

Dear HWC Family,

We **PRAISE** God for:

- new front steps with a middle railing installed
- faithful volunteers
- opportunities to pray with staff and visitors about specific concerns
- times when we hear, " This is just what I needed!"
- a unified Board



**PRAY**, Please, for:

- **MORE** folks to come for meals. Lunch is at 11:55, and the meals are tasty and nutritious. Coffee, tea, and pastries are offered in the morning as well. (no cost for anything at WM) Spread the word, and come yourselves to visit us.
- clarity on how to proceed with the 'item transport' issue. (maybe a 'scissors-lift' ?)
- continued wise practices as the pandemic lessens. Masks are now optional, but staff are encouraged to use them, and keep sanitizing hands.
- the **LOVE** of Jesus to be communicated to each visitor by each volunteer.

Our hours of operation continue to be Wed. and Fri. from 10am to 1:15pm. Items can be dropped off as early as 9:15am directly to the porch.

Note: We try to keep a rack of gowns, prom dresses, and fancy dresses for use by those going to special events. If you have an unwanted dress, consider that it may be recycled by a person in need.

Thank you for keeping us in the church budget. We are blessed by you.  
Beth Beardsley (for the Board.)

"A time to keep, and a time to cast away." (so keep sorting and sending!)

## From the Library Shelves



HELP, HELP, Help!! We recently discovered that we have at least four books missing from our church library, as in, they were NOT checked out and are not on our shelves. They are: *Evidence of Mercy* by Terri Blackstock; *Who Do I Talk To*; *Who Do I Lean On*; and *Who Is My Shelter*, all three by Neta Jackson. If you have them, please return them as soon as you are through reading them, so others may enjoy them also.

We have new books that are ready and waiting for someone to enjoy them. So come on in and see what we have that might interest you.

**Congratulations**  
to  
**Ray Ott and Joy Blasdell who were united in marriage on February 20.**



## **Spring is coming—Almost!**

With Spring approaching, we can start thinking warmth, outdoor fun, socializing, and **GENESEE RAPIDS BASEBALL!**

Great thanks to Ralph Kerr, Genesee Rapids General Manager, the 2022 team is shaping up quickly! Players, coaches are signing contracts, getting ready for an exciting eight weeks of competition, practice, skill-building, team-building, fun, and life development. Players LOVE coming here! They remember it for a lifetime.

Three player-opportunities make this team unique in the New York College Baseball League (NYCBL). Rapids players have the opportunity for spiritual development, community service, and they live in HOMES with families. Players LOVE families, children, pets, and a place to “come home to” while here. I’m writing to encourage you to consider inviting players to stay with you for the season. In some past seasons, there were not enough homes, and some players had to stay in the “Flats” on the college campus. It’s just not the same—lack of fellowship, supervision, a home & family. Their baseball schedules keep them busy all the time, the team provides most of their meals, but a place to call home is vital.

2022 will be the eighth year that the Hopkins (Judy, Matt) family is hosting players- in all, 32 players have enriched our lives and we look forward to more this year. Each year, they become part of our family! Accommodations don’t have to be fancy- clean, safe, bed for each player, breakfast foods available. The team takes care of the rest. Players fit into the family routine and are willing to help out! Yes, it takes some effort, but it’s not hard and well worth it.

**Please consider this wonderful opportunity for the players and your family! Check with Ralph Kerr for more information. Thank you!**

Judy Hopkins

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## **Community Announcement: TAX PREPARATION**

Houghton College students will prepare tax returns in person this year on Wednesday evenings from February 16 through April 6 (except March 2) in the library on the Houghton College campus. These student volunteers have passed IRS online tests to be certified to prepare returns and file them electronically, which shortens the wait time for refunds. The volunteers can help with special credits, such as the Earned Income Tax Credit and the Child Tax Credit, for those eligible. Eligible returns will have around \$54,000 or less of earned income. Clients will schedule an appointment at either 5:30 PM or 7:30 PM and sit with the students while they help prepare returns. Clients must be willing to wear a mask appropriately during their time on campus, per New York State and County protocol.

To ensure that their return will fit the scope of the program and to schedule appointments, interested individuals should contact Professor Elianna McHenry [elianna.mchenry@houghton.edu](mailto:elianna.mchenry@houghton.edu)

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**Community Announcement**  
Mount Pleasant Cemetery Association public meeting  
Thursday, March 24th, 8-9pm, Houghton Firehall.

The Buffalo Niagara Praise Orchestra and the Houghton College Choir will present a gala All-Western NY Concert & Hymn Sing on Sunday, March 20 at 6:00 PM at the Eastern Hills Church, 8445 Greiner Road in Williamsville. Make plans now to attend this unique and unforgettable evening as believers from churches all across Western New York gather to sing the great hymns of the faith accompanied by a full symphony orchestra! Admission is FREE. Just bring along your vocal cords!!



# Sundays in March

- March 6 (8:45am Outdoors / 11:00am Indoors/Streaming)  
The Holy Life of Sacrifice (Leviticus 1-7)
- March 13 (8:45am Outdoors/ 11:00am Indoors/Streaming)  
The Holy Life of Rhythm (Leviticus 23-24)
- March 20 (8:45am Outdoors/ 11:00am Indoors/Streaming)  
The Holy Life of Reconciliation (Leviticus 8-10, 21-22)
- March 27 (8:45am Outdoors/ 11:00am Indoors/Streaming)  
The Holy Life of Humanness (Leviticus 11-15)



Have you picked up your family's Global Missions Directory? Stop by the church office or the table in the church foyer for your copy.

# 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, Director of Children's Ministries**

808-8925 [emilyspateholts@hwchurch.org](mailto:emilyspateholts@hwchurch.org)

**Ann McNeill, Director of Children's Ministries**

716-801-3425 [annmcneill@hwchurch.org](mailto:annmcneill@hwchurch.org)

**Church Office, M-F, 8 AM-Noon & 1-4 PM,**

567-2264 [office@hwchurch.org](mailto:office@hwchurch.org)