

Barrenness Leads to Life

I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives. (John 12:24)

I assume you've noticed what I have. As I drive around the countryside, actually as I look out my office window, it seems that everything I encounter is barrenness. Most of the trees are empty of leaves. The ground is brown, with little evidence of life. In fact, on the surface, I would guess that neither the trees nor the ground are anything but dead.

But one of the reasons we like this time of year is not only because it's warmer but even more because something in us believes that despite what we can see with our eyes, we believe that there is more going on than we can see with our eyes. We love this time of year because we are convinced that buds are going to soon appear on the trees that seem dead and blades of green grass are going to come up through the barren ground that seems lifeless as well. We can't see it, but we hope.

The thing about our hope is that it's not baseless. Our hope isn't a pipe dream. Our hope isn't without reason. We hope in something more than we can see in the moment because we've seen it before.

So often our world feels barren and lifeless. We look around and all we can see is violence and war, disease and death, rejection and pain, hurt and disappointment. When all of this keeps pushing on us, it can be difficult to hope. But as Christians, we live in hope.

Our hope isn't denial of what we see. All of the problems are real. All of the pain is real. All of the struggles are real. Our hope is a belief that God is greater than what we can see. And our hope is based not on our ability to see, but on what we know of God—his nature and his activity throughout time and space.

This year April bridges the gap between Lent and Easter. The first half of April focuses on the reality of sin's barrenness, the reality of evil's power, the reality of death and its sting. But the second half of April focuses on the reality of life out of barrenness, of love conquering evil, of resurrection overwhelming death and its sting.

My prayer for you and for me is that as we make our way through this month we will embrace both the reality of sin—ours and others—and its intrusion into our world and the reality of redemption and its restoration through God's unparalleled, infinite power and love.

Because of Jesus,
Pastor Wes



Children's Palm Sunday Processional April 10—All children are invited to participate in the procession of the palms at the begin each service (8:45 and 11:00 a.m.) Palm branches are distributed at the April 9 (10-11) Kids Event.

Maunder Thursday Service: 6:30 p.m.

Good Friday Journey to the Cross—Come-and-Go event in the Community Room from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Organ Meditation by Judy Congdon at 2:00 p.m.

Easter Sunday—

8:45 a.m. Outdoors

9:45 a.m. Donuts, muffins and Coffee

10:20 a.m. Baptism in the Sanctuary

11:00 a.m. Indoors/Streamed Service

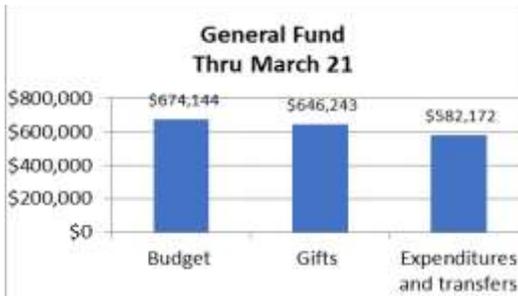
STEWARDSHIP—A Life of Generosity

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

TRUSTEES

Houghton Wesleyan Church is blessed to worship and gather in a beautiful, historic, nearly 100-years-old property and we do so by the generous gifts of our congregation. While it is easy to recognize noteworthy people (our custodian and assistant custodian) and projects such as the outdoor stage, new playground equipment, better parking lot lighting, an official welcome desk, family room, and more, much of what we do as a Church would not happen without all of the unseen and less glamorous necessities. Your recent gifts to the Church have enabled the Trustees to:

- Pay the salaries of the custodian and assistant custodian
- Buy kitchen, bathroom, and cleaning supplies
- Keep the lights, heat, and water on
- Make needed repairs to the roof
- Fix the windowsills in the sanctuary
- Pay for snowplowing as well as a new snowblower and mower
- Mulch, plant flowers, and spread gravel as needed
- Pay for garbage and recycling
- Ensure safety by subscribing to a monthly fire alarm service
- Maintain AEDs in both buildings
- Make it possible to have the Church van with insurance, gasoline, and repairs
- Print and mail all publications
- Buy office supplies and equipment
- Make building upgrades such as painting and flooring
- Replace tables and chairs as needed



All of these “minor” expenses allow all of our programs to run smoothly and our facility to be a welcoming place to worship. With your continued support, the Trustees look forward to exciting upcoming projects to include updating the church signage inside and out, modernizing classrooms, and making extensive renovations to the basement area. We look forward to continued stewardship of all that the Lord has provided.

Blessings,
The Trustees

Easter Baptism: One of our Easter traditions is to offer the sacrament of baptism on this most glorious of mornings. If you are interested in being baptized, in renewing your baptismal vows, or in knowing more about baptism, please let Pastor Wes know. He will host a class to prepare candidates for baptism.

Church Membership: If you are interested in joining HWC or if you would like more information about membership at HWC, please contact Pastor Wes; he will be planning a membership class in the coming weeks.



The Church welcomes your Easter lilies for Easter Sunday, April 17th. We have purchased a number of lilies which you may purchase for \$15.00 each or you may bring your own lily to drop off at the church office by Good Friday, April 15th. If you would like to purchase one or more lilies, you may use the online giving option, mail a check to the church office (indicate Easter lilies), or drop off payment at the church office. If you wish to purchase a lily in memory or in honor of a loved one, please email (pattystalker@hwchurch.org) or call Patty (567-2264) with your information by Monday, April 11th. Thank you!

April Youth News:

Youth Group in April

- April 3 – Never Give up! Never Give up on Others.
- April 10 – Never Give up! Never Give up on You.
- April 17 – No Youth Group – Easter
- April 25 - 30Hr Famine – The King and I



Prayer Breakfast is Back!

-April 5, 19, 26 – 7am in the community room. Prayer, Praise, Pancakes...

Sunday School in April:

- April 3 - is "Go-to-SS-with-Your-Parents" Day! All youth staff will meet in the youth room during the SS hour.
- April 10 – Palm Sunday
- April 17 – No SS – Easter
- April 24 – We're starting a series by Dave Ramsey called, "Generation Change".
 - o BE who God created: God uniquely designed each of us. That means you are who He says you are, not who the world says you are. Get a glimpse of Gods heart for you and how to find joy in Him without the need for instant gratification.
 - o DO more with your money: God's ways of handling money work! Learn to give, save and spend His way.
 - o Go write your story: Decisions will paint your future. Learn how to live the life God created you for.

Upcoming Events:



May 6-7 – 30 Hour Famine

Loving God and Fighting Hunger!



WHAT: For 30 hours, we'll fast to raise funds that will help feed and care for hungry children around the world.

WHY: Every 15 seconds, a child under 5 dies—and nearly half those deaths are from hunger-related causes. That's why we're acting now!

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

1. **Give.** Every \$40 we raise helps feed and care for a child for one month. You can:

Visit our fundraising page at <https://30hourfamine.worldvision.org/team/HFWChurchYouth22>
Or text **GIVE30HF** to **56170**.

2. **Volunteer.** We need your help to make our Famine weekend a success! There are lots of ways to help out, from assisting with our fundraising events to bringing a meal to break our fast. Please join us.
3. **Pray.** Ask for God's grace over our event and our fundraising, and that we grow deeper in our love for Him while helping change the lives of kids who are hungry.

[30 Hour famine permission slip is here.](#)

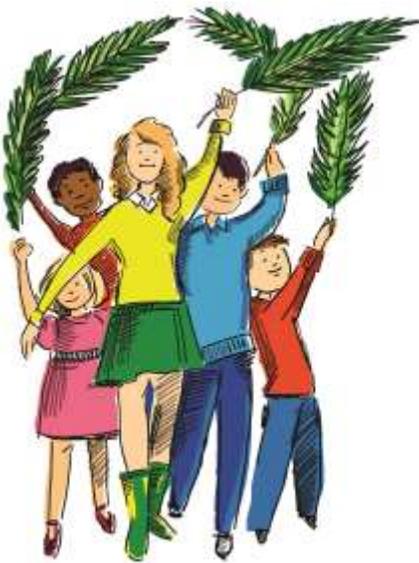


- April in Sunday School - *Did You Know?* Did you know that the largest Easter egg in the world lives in Vegreville, Canada? Did you know that the most popular Easter candy in the world are Reese's Peanut Butter Chocolate Eggs? There's a ton of fun trivia around the theme of Easter but the best questions to ask kids are about Jesus. Did you know we can love Jesus more than anything? Did you know Jesus is king over everything? Did you know Jesus is alive? Did you know we can trust Jesus? Whatever their answer, invite kids to go beyond the facts and win the grand prize of knowing Jesus for themselves!

- ◆ April Memory Verse: II Peter 3:18a - But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



- ◆ Easter Egg Scramble: HWC Kids, join us the week of April 3rd - 9th for an Easter Egg Hunt! Bring your family to the Church and walk around the outside of the building. You'll find 12 big Easter eggs hidden in the windows and doors of the Church building, each with a word or phrase on it. Collect the words and unscramble them to find an Easter promise. Turn in your completed "egg scramble" in the box at the Welcome Desk in the CE building foyer (with your name on it) and an Easter treat will be headed your way! Pick up your Palm branches for Palm Sunday while you're there! (Paper, pencils, and palms will be available at the Welcome Desk all week.)



HWC Kids EVENT April 9 from 10 to 11 a.m.

- ◆ HWC Kids, preschool through 6th grade, are invited to celebrate the Easter season with us on Saturday, April 9th from 10 - 11am. Explore the miracle of Easter through story, art, craft, and food! Events will start at the outdoor stage, weather permitting. Watch your email and the HWC Kids Facebook page for more details.
- ◆ **Palm Sunday Procession April 10 at both services:** All children are invited to participate in the procession of the palms at the beginning of each service (8:45 and 11:00 a.m.) Palm branches are distributed at the April 9 (10-11) Kids Event.

WEDNESDAY KIDS CLUB

David the heroic good shepherd, Naaman's choice, and Operation No More Tears are the Bible topics at Kids' Club this month. Come children, first through sixth grade, at 6:30 on Wednesdays to have a great time learning about God's love for us!

Contact annmcneill@hwchurch.org for more information.

Trivia Question: In what river did General Naaman wash?



Short Term Mission Applications -

Application forms for assistance to fund short term ministries this summer or beyond are due April 15. The form may be found on the church's website at <https://hwchurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/horttermMissionApplicationGeneral.pdf> or picked up at the church office and returned to Pastor Paul Shea by the 15th.



Do you love spending time with the elderly? I am looking for subs to care for the longest standing elderly couple in our community! There are four paid shifts per day covering 24/7 care. Permanent shifts may become available soon. If interested, please call Jan Schilke at 585-567-4889.



Call Pastor Paul Shea at (585) 365-3102



April 27 we host a Pop Up Pantry in the church parking lot. Registration is required and opens Tuesday, April 19 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.



Royal Family Kids Camp is short on male volunteers for our July 10 – 15, 2022 camp.

We especially need male counselors, or we won't be able to invite the full number of 20 boy campers this year. We could also really use one or two men (or male youth, ages 16 – 17) to serve in the area of drama.

Camp is July 10 – 15, 2022. Please contact Nancy Murphy at (585) 376-4053

or nancy.murphy@houghton.edu before April 7th. Requirements for counselors: Be 18 years old and have a desire to serve the mission of RFKC, which is *to create positive memories for kids in a Christian context.*

Applicants complete an application form, 3 references, have a 20-minute interview, and participate in training at Camp Asbury on Sunday afternoon, April 24th.

WELLSPRING Ministries

Dear Church Family,

We want you to KNOW -

- God enabled us to provide significant benevolent giving this winter, the latest being an electric bill payment that enabled a man to complete what he owed and keep his home heated.
- Ten Houghton College students arrived on a snowy Saturday morning in March as volunteers to help us with some deep cleaning and cobweb chasing. They were wonderful, and were part of the college's Service Day Inauguration event.. We are grateful for the work they have done.
- Belfast Central School blessed us with a generous money gift, as well as boxes, bags of food items the students collected in their "Love in Action" yearly drive.
- We gratefully welcomed Gudy Stevenson back as a monthly devotional sharer.
- Our own John-Louis Roederer is now volunteering on the porch crew along with Bill Doezema. They greet folks and transport items.
- Good Friday, April 15 - Closed. A blessed Easter season to you.

We want you to KEEP PRAYING -

- ♦ As author Catherine Marshall writes, "**Prayers, like eggs, don't hatch as soon as we lay them.**" With Spring and Easter upon us we remind ourselves that like EGGS, prayers don't hatch immediately, but rather incubate in God's overarching purposes for our world, our personal lives, and Wellspring Ministries.
- ♦ Thank you for your prayers - a vital part of this work.

Beth Beardsley (for the Board)

"Though it linger, wait for it, it will certainly come and will not delay." Habakkuk 2:30

Eila Shea's Memorial Service and Celebration of Life is May 20 at 11:00 a.m. at Houghton Wesleyan Church.

From the Library Shelves



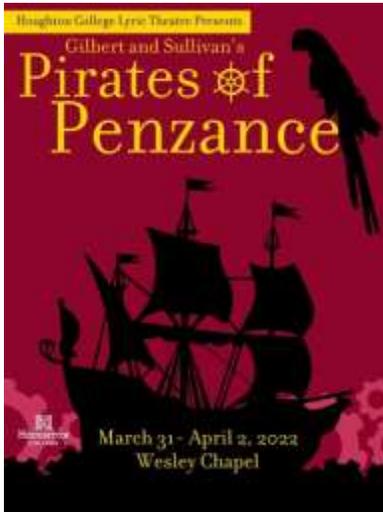
Did you know that meringue cookies can represent parts of the Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus? Find out how in *Once Upon an Easter* by William Goetz. In *An Easter Celebration* by Pamela Kennedy, discover some Easter traditions and customs from around the world. These books are in our junior section. In our children's section, Reilly hears about Davey the donkey, who learns how to be a willing servant after an encounter with Jesus in *The Donkey Who Carried a King* by R.C. Sproul. And in *Little Dove and the Story of Easter* by Megan Alexander, Little Dove follows Jesus from His teaching people to His death and Resurrection. There are other Easter books and DVDs in these sections also.

Six Hours One Friday by Max Lucado, shows us how Jesus, in just six hours one Friday, planted three anchor points for us. Follow Jesus on His last journey and see what mattered to Him in *And the Angels Were Silent*, also by Max Lucado. Some other books are *The First Easter* by Peter Marshall; *The Passion of Jesus Christ* by John Piper and the DVD *The Passion of the Christ*.

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.



Genesee Rapids players will be arriving about two months from now. Planning is well underway to give our players the best experience possible while they are here in Houghton playing an exciting and entertaining brand of baseball. As has been said before, “We may not have won a league championship yet but we have had an opportunity to minister to nearly 250 college players who without Rapids baseball we would probably have never met, let alone had an opportunity to show Christ’s love to.” As we continue to work to complete our plans our greatest need continues to be finding host families for the players. Being a host family provides your family with a unique opportunity to welcome players to be part of your family for the summer. All we ask is that you provide a bed and breakfast. The team takes care of all other meals and transportation. In return your family can provide a “home away from home” You may even be hosting a future professional baseball player. (You also receive season tickets to all Rapids games). Please consider helping the Rapids in this special ministry opportunity. If you are ready to commit or need additional information please call Ralph Kerr now, 716-969-0688.



Houghton College Lyric Theatre presents
Gilbert & Sullivan’s

The Pirates of Penzance!

March 31 at 7pm
April 1 at 7pm
April 2 at 2pm and 7pm
in Wesley Chapel

Tickets available at the door or online at:
<https://houghtoncollege.regfox.com/lyric-theatre>

Contact Amanda Cox with questions!



Schilke Lawn Care Service

Call or Text for a Quote

585-365-3486

Email: sschilkes@gmail.com



Easter Egg Hunt for All Ages at The Highlanders Shop!

When? Thursday, April 7th starting at 3:30 p.m. until all 200+ eggs are found!

Where? The Highlanders Shop & Printing Press in the Reinhold Campus Center at Houghton College

Who? All ages (section roped off for littles)!

What? Win prizes for the most eggs found or find Willard in an egg to win an Easter basket. Coupons or candy can be found in the other eggs!



Our condolences and prayers for:

Alejandra Koch and her family at the death of her sister, Patti
AC Taylor and his family at the death of his cousin, Emily Hood
Paul Young and his family at the death of his brother, David.
Anthony Petrillo and his family at the death of his brother, Marc.
Herb Williams and his family at the death of his brothers, Bert and Bob
Kathie Guyler and her family at the death of her husband, Tom



New Neighbors Welcome - 90 Days of Walk-Beside Blessing

The group helping an Afghan evacuee family resettle in our area is going strong. We have key contact people in most of the areas important to acclimation and resources. We are, however, in need of a Treasurer who will assist the family and key contacts in financial accounting. Also needed before we can apply is an Employment and Budget Facilitator who can point the way to jobs and wise budgeting & spending. Other participants are needed to fill out our team such as drivers and language tutors over tea.

The need is urgent, and the time is now. Please contact annmneill@hwchurch.org if you have any questions or can fill a need.

Summer Jobs for College Students:
RA's and Cook needed for Houghton Academy's USA Summer Stay Camp.
Contact Jon Keith at Jon.Keith@Houghton.Academy

CHURCH STAFF

Sundays in April

Wes Oden, *Senior Pastor*

567-2024 wesoden@hwchurch.org

Jon Cole, *Youth Pastor*

307-9950 joncole@hwchurch.org

Cindy Oden, *Assistant Pastor*

567-2024 cindyoden@hwchurch.org

Paul Shea, *Assistant Pastor*

567-4597 paulshea@hwchurch.org

Amanda Cox, *Music & Worship Director*

amandacox@hwchurch.org

Emily Spateholts, *Director of Children's Ministries*

808-8925 emilyspateholts@hwchurch.org

Ann McNeill, *Director of Children's Ministries*

716-801-3425 annmneill@hwchurch.org

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

567-2264 office@hwchurch.org

April 3 *The Triumph of the Cross* (Colossians 2; Ephesians 2)

8:45 a.m. Outdoor

11:00 a.m. Indoor/Streaming

April 10 *The Glory of the Cross* (Galatians 6)

8:45 a.m. Outdoor

11:00 a.m. Indoor/Streaming

April 17 *Easter Is a Wake-Up Call* (1 Peter 1)

8:45 a.m. Outdoor

9:45 a.m. Fellowship Time (Coffee and donuts)

10:20 a.m. Baptism Service

11:00 a.m. Indoor/Streaming

April 24 *Resurrection Scars* (John 20)

8:45 a.m. Outdoor

11:00 a.m. Indoor/Streaming

*We invite you to bring
a dozen muffins or donuts
to be shared during the fellowship time
following the 8:45 service
on Easter Morning.*

