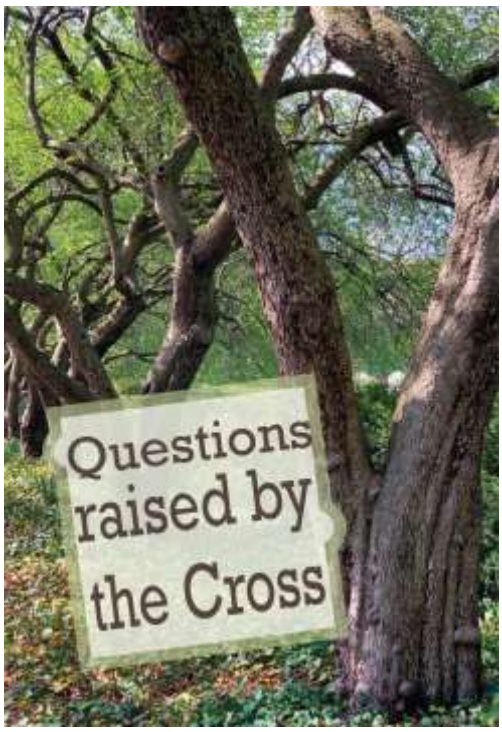
Houghton Wesleyan Church

Highlights

Joyfully loving God, wholeheartedly serving others

March 2023
Volume 54, No. 10



Why are you sleeping? (Luke 22:46)

There might not be any more effective way to learn than questions—asking questions and answering questions. Something about asking questions helps us to clarify what we don't know and what we need to learn in order to know. Asking questions also has benefit for those to whom the questions are asked. If you are leading a group or in a conversation, a poignant question can cause you to step back, think, process and clarify what you believe about the point of the conversation. A good questions can also cause us to rethink what we thought we knew with complete certainty.

The gospels record many times when Jesus is asked questions and many times when Jesus asks questions. Some of those who ask Jesus questions legitimately want to know; others are attempting trap him into saying something they can use against him. The motives for the questions vary.

This is not the case with the questions that Jesus asks. Every question is asked in sincerity—questions he asks in order to help others understand more of who he is and of what he comes to do. This intent doesn't change in the questions that Jesus asks in the final hours of his life.

Starting in the Garden of Gethsemane and his arrest to his last words on the cross, Jesus asks questions to help those who hear them in the moment and we who read them centuries later to know who he is and why he comes.

During the Sundays in Lent this year, we are going to ponder some of these questions. My prayer is that as we explore these questions, we will gain a clearer and deeper understanding of who Jesus is, why he comes and what he invites us and calls us to be.

Blessings,
Pastor Wes

EASTER BAPTISM: Easter Sunday is April 9. A yearly highlight of the 7:45 service is baptism. If you are interested in being baptized or would like to know more about being baptized, please contact Pastor Wes (567-2264/wesoden@hwchurch.org) who will host a preparatory class for all baptism candidates.

The Church welcomes your Easter lilies for Easter Sunday, April 9th. We have purchased several 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 7th. 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 3rd. Thank you.

Time. Talent. Treasure.

STEWARDSHIP—A Life of Generosity

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

As the Pastoral liaison to our **Local Outreach Committee (LOC),** it's my privilege to be a part of our church's response to the needs that exist right here among our friends and neighbors in Allegany County. The LOC mission statement states, "The Local Outreach Committee is a ministry of Houghton Wesleyan Church that focuses on expressing Christ's love in practical and tangible ways to those living closest to us: our neighbors in Allegany County and surrounding areas."

We approach this mission in a variety of ways: We have a good relationship with our county government service organizations. We have worked with the county government in support of the foster care system, the meals-on-wheels program and have worked with the office for the aging on a couple of different projects. In addition, we have served as a distribution site for food assistance and covid supplies.

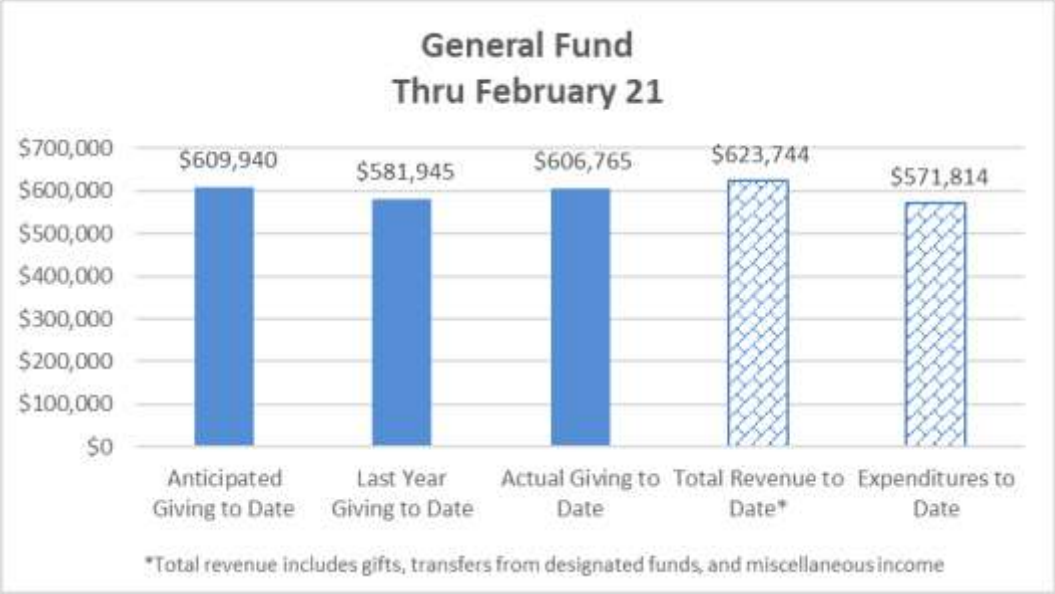
Our church also supports several local para-church organizations both with funding and with volunteer help-- Fillmore Youth Center, Habitat for Humanity, Wellspring ministries, Royal Family Kids Camp, Houghton Academy and we host the local chapter of Celebrate Recovery. In addition, in our Feed the Need initiative, we provide funding to local public-school systems working with the PTO and school officials to provide packages of food for local students to take home on extended breaks.

Two other important ministries of our church that fall under this umbrella are The Food Pantry and the Benevolent Fund: Our church's food pantry is available for anyone that could use a little help with their food budget. People simply call the church office and give us some basic info and arrange a time to pick up the food, and then the food pantry team puts together the order. Our food pantry is very active.

The benevolent fund exists to help people in crisis. That takes the form of financial assistance for things like: Disaster recovery (floods, fires, etc.), providing assistance with heat or other utilities, and the loss of critical appliances or household systems. We have helped with housing and assisted with transportation needs. We regularly help people with medical bills or transportation to and from medical appointments. This fund is part of the church's regular annual budget, and is supplemented by generous offerings from you, our church family. You make this possible.

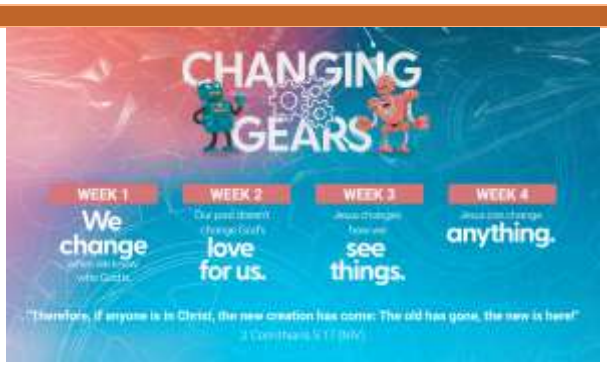
I am super grateful to be part of a community of outward facing believers that are looking for ways to show Christ's love to the people around us. Thank you for your gifts that make this involvement and outreach possible. If you want to know more or are interested in being involved, I would love to meet with you.

Pastor Jon



Save the Date: April 1 is the Women's Spring Gathering

Plan on a morning of enjoyment from 9 a.m. to noon.



Kids Connect in March:
"Changing Gears": Clank! Beep! Clunk! Kids love robots, especially ones that can transform into something new or have really cool abilities. In this four-week series from Jesus' ministry on earth, you'll introduce kids to a different story each week that shows us how God's truths never change, but Jesus changes everything — including us! We'll see that we change when we know who God is, our past doesn't change God's love for us, and that Jesus changes how we see things because Jesus can change anything!

March Memory Verse :
"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!" — 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

Kids Club: "March Madness" Game Day -
Saturday, March 18th 9:30-11:00am,
Join us for a morning of games as we are reminded that God is on our team, gives us the perfect "rules" for the game, and always wins.

Parents of 4th-6th graders - we need you to brainstorm us! Preteens live in a much different world than we did when we were little and we're working on finding new ways to engage them, excite them, and keep them connected with the Church while making them feel valued and loved. Please join us on Sunday, March 12th during the Discipleship Hour (9:45-10:45) in the Conference Room to pass on your suggestions! Contact Emily (emilyspateholts@hwchurch.org) for more info or with questions."

Drive Through Food Distribution March 8 in the church parking lot. To register call 585-209-0052 after 8:30 a.m. on 2/28
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.

Ministry Opportunity: One ministry of our Church is to provide a meal for family members connected to our congregation following a funeral or memorial service of a loved one. Because there is often very little notice for these meals, they vary in size, and they fall on a variety of the days of the week, it is helpful to have some planning and a team in place to make sure that we provide an excellent experience for those we are serving. We need people who would be willing to very occasionally help with set-up, hosting, clean-up, and providing parts of the meal. A larger team would mean very little work on any one person's part. If you would be willing to be called on to help in general or to provide a specific need, please email phyllis.gaerte@houghton.edu.

March 2023 HWC Youth News:

Join us for Youth Group at 6pm on Sunday evenings in the youth room, in March for our series on Apologetics:

Mar 5 – "I Wonder" 3 of 3.

Mar 12 – Principles for Defending Your Faith

Mar 19 – Authority, Oppression and Identity

Mar 26 – Answering common questions for the Christian Faith

Prayer Breakfast - 7am in the Community Room

PB is on for: March 7,14,21,28

Youth Discipleship Hour in March - March 5, 12,19 and 26.

In March we continue our series on the book of Genesis investigating chapters 12-50.

Upcoming Events:

Easter Breakfast – Easter Sunday Morning April 9th. We'll need all hands on deck as we prepare and serve breakfast for out church body! Put it on your calendar now!

Save-the-Date for these Summer Events:

June 30-Darien Lake Trip - $40; Deadline to sign up is June 9

July 5-9 – Youthworks – Charleston, WV - Service Project:

Total Cost $300.00 - $50 reg fee **due by March 14**. Space is limited!

You can submit your name to be considered for the trip by clicking this link.

July 23 –27–ADKs canoeing and hiking –Space is limited! - $200; Deadline to sign up July 1

July 30 – August 3 – Refresh Camp - $0

August 9 – Service project - $0

August 17 – Picnic - $0

Watch your inbox for the 2023 Summer Events Flyer for more details.

Non-perishable:
Baked Beans
Jiffy Cornbread Mix
Granola Bars
Cake & Brownie Mixes
Oil (veg. & olive)
Shelf-Stable Milk
Dish Detergent
Bar Soap
Size 2 diapers

Perishable:
Parmesan Cheese
Frozen Meatballs
Frozen Garlic Bread
Butter

Thank you for helping to carry another's burden. Please remember that all donations should be in unopened packages and have a "best used date" of 2023 or later. Perishable donations may be dropped off at the church office. All others may be placed in the blue tub behind the coffee station or tucked inside the side-door entrance.

Sabbath Together

HWC's College Ministry Team is excited to announce ***Sabbath Together,*** ***a mini-retreat planned for students in our University Fellowship group on Sunday, March 12****. It will begin at 9:45am (our weekly Discipleship Hour time) and conclude by heading up to campus together to join the Koinonia worship time at 7pm.*

Specific activities are still being planned, but some examples are these:

- *Worshipping together in 11am service*
- *Rest via physical activities*
- *Simple acts of service, visitation*
- *Writing notes of gratitude*
- *Time for solitude, reading, journalling*
- *Prayer walking in various locations*
- *Cooking meals together*
- *Fellowship via games, music, sharing*

Although the retreat itself is only for college students, ***HWC community members of any and every age are encouraged to consider making Sunday, March 12 a "special" sabbath in whatever unique ways you prayerfully desire.*** *Perhaps that will mean a drive to a special location, a new activity in your devotional life, taking pictures of natural beauty around you, reading an extended portion of scripture, visiting someone in need, writing or texting specific appreciation to an unsung servant. In whatever you do, intentionally nurture a prayerful consciousness of the One who gives us true rest.*

As we continue to promote a theme of sabbath rest into our various discipleship activities this semester, consider how you might join in this act of biblical faithfulness. ***Discover the renewal that a commitment to a sabbath rhythm can foster in your personal journey with Christ and in the life of the church.***

The UNCHAINED Word

Missions Week Events

4.16 Missionary Story Hour 4:00pm-5:00pm
HWC Community Room

4.22 Men's Breakfast 8:00am - 9:00am
HU Lennox Dining Hall

4.22 Kid's Club 9:30am - 11:00am
HWC Community Room

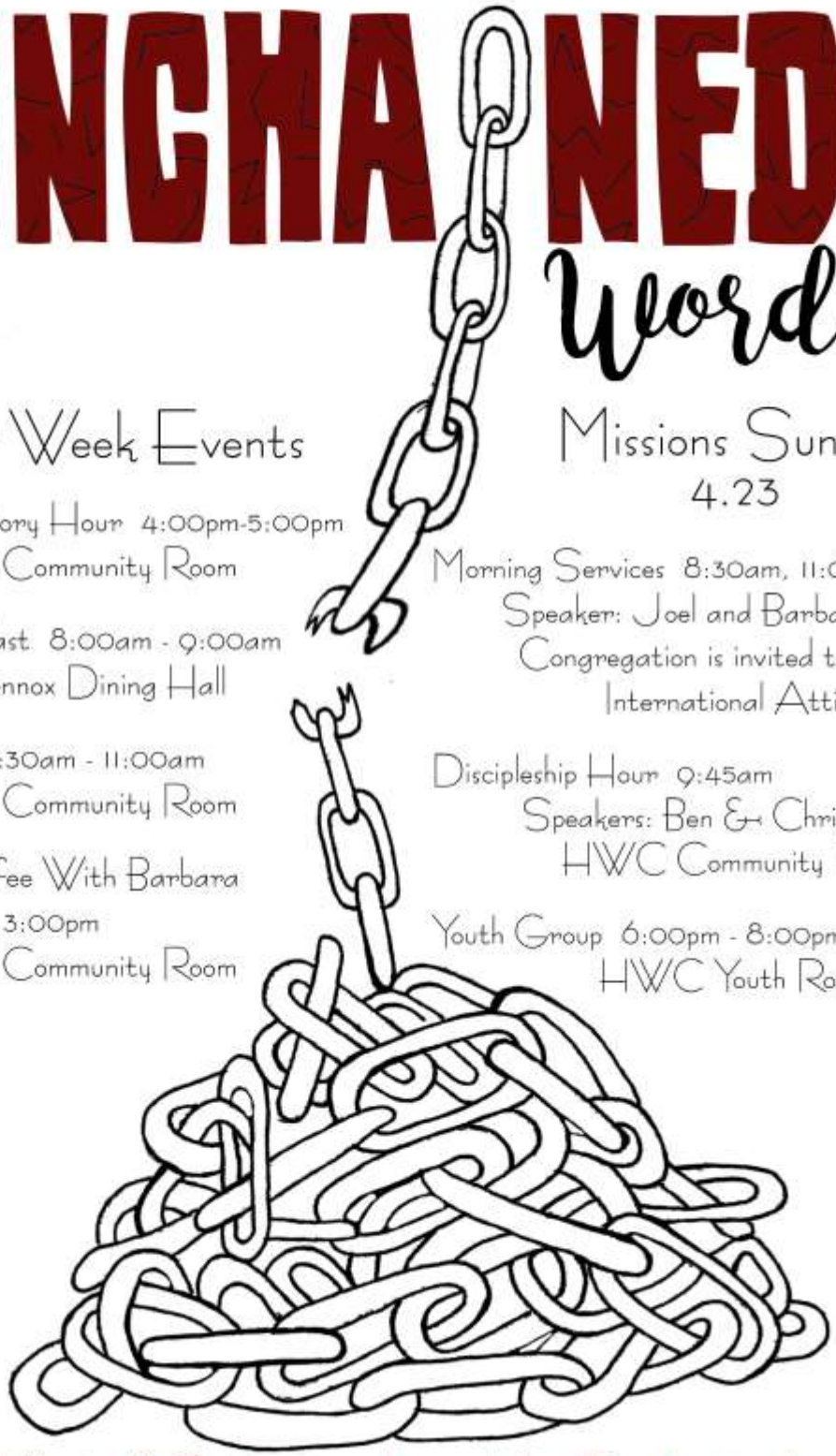
4.22 Women's Coffee With Barbara
2:00pm - 3:00pm
HWC Community Room

Missions Sunday
4.23

Morning Services 8:30am, 11:00am
Speaker: Joel and Barbara Trudell
Congregation is invited to dress in International Attire

Discipleship Hour 9:45am
Speakers: Ben & Christine Hegeman
HWC Community Room

Youth Group 6:00pm - 8:00pm
HWC Youth Room



"...the Word of God is not chained." 2 Timothy 2:9b

From the
Library Shelves

We like to see our church library in use, but I have discovered in the last several weeks that books, adult and children's, are going out without being checked out. PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, when taking books from the library, do as follows:

1. Remove card from back of book
2. Sign your name to the card
3. Stamp the date on the card, and the date due slip in the back of the book
4. Put the card in the purple box on the check-out desk

We need to know where the books are: 1. in case someone else is looking for it, then we can tell them it is checked-out; 2. so when we are ordering new books we don't get duplicates.

Having said all that, we are currently processing a number of new items. There are books by Lynette Eason, Lauraine Snelling, Francine Rivers, Janette Oke, and others. There are also new audio books by Wanda Brunstetter and some Boxcar Children ones for the kids. There are some new Boxcar Children mysteries, new horse stories, and new historical Imagination Station books, to name a few.

So, please, come on in and enjoy what we have for you!

NextHome
BRIXWOOD

Looking to Buy or Sell Real Estate?

Contact me today!

Andrew Roorbach
Licensed Real Estate Salesperson
716-983-9671 | Andrew@Brixwood.com

NextHome Brixwood | 4281 Genesee Valley Plaza Road, Geneseo, NY 14454

For rent—
Fancher Drive, Houghton, 4 bedroom house, spacious living room and dining room. Furnished or unfurnished. Month-to-month available.
Contact: Becky 585-567-2727.

Thanks...

to everyone who has been praying for our daughter Kim. We are especially grateful to our grand-daughter Jessie who wrote an excellent piece about her mother Kim that was published earlier this month. Kim has made significant progress on the road to recovery since her life altering health event last June. She continues to work hard in all aspects of her recovery. We are believing our Faithful Father for a complete recovery for Kim. We are asking that everyone join us in that prayer. Miracles still happen and we believe God will hear our prayers for Kim.

With heartfelt thanks
Marilyn and Ralph Kerr

ALL WOMEN:
Come relax together with Breakfast and a Movie on Saturday, April 1, beginning at 9 am. We'll enjoy watching the love story of Catherine Marshall - the author of the novel Christy - and her husband Peter, who became the chaplain of the U. S. Senate. Watch for more details.

Royal FamilyKIDS

July 9-14
Camp Asbury

Open Positions:

- Bible Storyteller
- Music
- Drama
- Crafts
- Fisherpeople
- Woodworkers
- Dining Hall Server
- Female/Male Counselors

New volunteer applications due March 15th HERE:
https://www.houghtonrfkc.com/get-involved

SUNDAYS iN MARCH

March 5
(8:30am In-Person / 11:00am In-Person/Streaming)
a.m. ***Don't You Know that I Could Call the Angels?***
(Matthew 26:53)

March 12
(8:30am In-Person / 11:00am In-Person/Streaming)
a.m. *Why Are You Asking Me This Question?*
(John 18:21)

March 19
(8:30am In-Person / 11:00am In-Person/Streaming)
a.m. *Why Are You Beating Me?*
(John 18:23)

March 26
(8:30am In-Person / 11:00am In-Person/Streaming)
a.m. *What Happens When the Tree Is Dry?*
(Luke 23:31)

DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME begins Sunday, March 12.
Please turn your clocks ahead one hour.

CHURCH STAFF

Wes Oden, Senior Pastor
567-2024 wesoden@hwchurch.org

Jon Cole, Youth Pastor
307-9950 joncole@hwchurch.org

David Huizenga, Discipleship & College Pastor
585-365-5863 davidhuizenga@hwchurch.org

Cindy Oden, Assistant Pastor
567-2024 cindyoden@hwchurch.org

Paul Shea Volunteer Assistant Pastor
567-4597 paulshea@hwchurch.org

Amanda Cox, Music & Worship Director
amandacox@hwchurch.org

Emily Spateholts, Children's Ministry
808-8925 emilyspateholts@hwchurch.org

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

BUFFALO NIAGARA
PRAISE ORCHESTRA
Gary Stith, Conductor
ALL WNY
Concert and Hymn Sing
WITH THE HOUGHTON UNIVERSITY CHOIR
Kevin Dibble, Conductor
6:00 PM FREE EVENT
EASTERN HILLS CHURCH
8445 Greiner Road
Williamsville, NY 14221
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MARCH