

PEACE

GLORY TO GOD
IN THE HIGHEST HEAVEN,
AND ON EARTH **PEACE**
TO THOSE ON WHOM
HIS FAVOR RESTS.

LUKE 2:14

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 10, 2023

11:00 A.M.

Prelude: Chorale Prelude on *Nun komm, der Heiden Heiland*
(Savior of the Nations, Come), BWV 659

J.S. Bach

Call to Worship

Lighting of the Advent Candle: Peace

Carolyn Kindley, Jossy Adenuga, Debbie Shea

Hymn #114: *Savior of the Nations Come*

Welcome & Announcements

Children's Sermon: *Trust the Timing*

Go Tell it On the Mountain; Hark, the Herald Angels Sing

Offering will be received during the second song.

Confession & Time of Prayer

Almighty God, there is not a gift we have received, a thing we own, or an ability we possess that has not come from you. Nevertheless, we confess that we often struggle to trust that you meet our needs. Forgive us for doubting your provision. Remind us daily of the reality that you are our Provider and Sustainer and may we live our lives to proclaim this truth. Amen.

Response: *Away in a Manger* (v.3)

Scripture Reading: Luke 7:11-23

Greeting One Another

Sermon: *Jesus Comes to Disrupt Our Ideas of the Kingdom*

Communion

We Exalt Thee; Welcome to Our World; What Child is This

Benediction

Postlude: *Hark, the Herald-Angels Sing*

arr. Noel Rawsthorne

Acolyte: Violet Bates

Reader: Anna Huizenga

Musicians:

Ryan Kullander (guitar), Grace Deitrick (vocals), Lee James (cajòn),
David Clem (viola), David Huizenga (piano)

WELCOME TO THE HOUGHTON WESLEYAN CHURCH. Advent is a bittersweet time: it's a time of hopeful anticipation for what God is going to do and a time of painful waiting for God to do what He has promised. On this Second Sunday of Advent, we are reminded that the promises of old are still true and that the presence of God with us is still real.

ADVENT CANDLE: Each Sunday during Advent this year, our readers will belong to a shared group or role in church or community life. This morning each of the readers is a member of the team that leads worship services every Wednesday at the Houghton nursing home. Thank you for your ministry, Carolyn, Jossy, and Debbie!

NEXT SUNDAY MORNING ~~NEXT SUNDAY MORNING~~ is the Third Sunday of Advent. We invite you to join us for worship at 10:00 (in-person and streaming). Pastor Wes will preach about the painful presence of Herod in the nativity story (Matthew 2:7-16): *Jesus Comes to Disrupt Our Ideas of Power.*

HWC Kids:

- **Kids Connect:** This week, kids hear how the birth of John was foretold to Zechariah. **BIG IDEA:** We can trust God's timing. **BIBLE:** Luke 1:5-25; 2 Peter 3:8-15
- **December Memory Verse:** "The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world." — John 1:9 (NIV)
- **Kids Club:** Super Cool Pool Party (minus the swimming!) on Saturday, December 16th from 9:30-11am; PreK - 6th grade, families welcome to participate
- **HWC Kids Volunteer Appreciation:** Team members stop by the new classroom across from the Primary Assembly room this morning for a special, "thank you" Christmas treat bar! We are so thankful for you!
- **Holiday Schedule:** No Kids Connect Dec. 17th through Jan. 7th (regular schedule resumes on Jan. 14th); no Children's Church on Christmas Eve morning; Nursery available every Sunday morning.

CAROL SING Please join us for the Christmas Carol Sing and Cookie Reception on Sunday, December 17th, at 4:00 p.m. We invite you to bring your instruments. Please bring a plate of cookies to share (leave them in the church kitchen) before joining voices in celebrating our annual Carol Sign in the sanctuary.

POINSETTIAS: The Church welcomes your Christmas Poinsettias for the sanctuary for Christmas. We have purchased several poinsettias which you may purchase for \$14 each or you may bring your own to drop off at the church office by December 15th. If you would like to purchase one or more poinsettias, you may use the online giving option, 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 I honor of a loved one, please call Patty at 567-2264 or email (pattystalker@hwchurch.org) with your information by December 11th.

STEWARDSHIP

Budget Needed: \$451,367.37 / **Budget Received:** \$413,326.92

CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING: A generous share of our 2023 Christmas Offering will support Czech GP's "*Media to Movement*" (M2M) strategy for the next year. Monthly advertising spots and media links direct people to one-on-one chats, leading seekers to Discovery Bible Studies and long-term discipleship. In September alone, 10 new folks with little faith background joined the process. We partner with our gifts and prayers this Christmas.

MISSION MOMENT—Global Partners is the sending branch of the N. America Wesleyan Church with 140 long term missionaries serving alongside thousands of local workers and laypeople in dozens of nations across the world. Our church supports 11 GP missionaries in Africa, Asia, Australia and Europe. What a privilege to back them all with prayer. .

PERSECUTED CHURCH – In Algeria persecution of Christians is on the rise with at least ten ongoing court cases on religion-related charges including Pastor Youssef O. recently fined and sent to prison for a year. As many as 16 Protestant places of worship have been closed by the government. Nevertheless believers are meeting in houses or outdoors, in small groups for communion, and the number of conversions and baptisms continue to grow. We pray. .

WE WILL HOST TWO CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES: 4:00 & 6:00.

Both services will include the Lighting of the Christ Candle, a Children's Time, Congregational Candle lighting, the reading of the Christmas story and music. The 6:00 service will be streamed.

HOLIDAY SERVICES

Sunday, December 17 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service

4:00 p.m. – Carol Sing/Cookie Reception (Bring your instruments)

Sunday, December 24 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service

4:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

6:00 p.m. – Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Sunday, December 31 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service

Sunday, January 7 10:00 a.m. – Worship Service

Sunday, January 14 8:30 a.m. – Worship Service

9:45 a.m. – Kids Connect, Youth Sunday School, Adult Discipleship

11:00 a.m. – Worship Service

PRAYER CONCERNS: for all who are grieving; for people with health concerns: Kyle Boon, Linda Roth, Paul Roth, Matthew Pierson (Kim Prins-Moeller's brother-in-law), James Bates, Vesta Mullen, Terry Ayers, Scarlett Gildemeister, Kim Pegula, Grace Taylor, Karen Gaerte, Andy Mikolajczyk (Mary Lingenfelter's brother), Denise Zambrano, Cameron Green, Vangie Grant, Lenore Paige, Dan and Sarah Gurley, Chelsea Ellis,, Mark Mayhle (Doug's brother), Jeshu, Kurtis and Eliyah Perry, Reuben Samuels, Emily Crikelair; for all dealing with tragedies and disasters including the recent storms; for refugees throughout the world; for protection, wisdom and peace in Ukraine and in Israel, Gaza and the entire Middle East; for a Chinese pastor who has been detained by the police for more than a year; for Northern KonXions UMC, Fillmore (Pastor Craig Buelow).



STEWARDSHIP— A Life of Generosity

Over the last few years, our Christmas Eve Offering has been given for a variety of projects in a variety of places throughout the world.

In 2018, we gave \$21,000 to help build a new Wesleyan Church in Badr City, Egypt just outside of Cairo. This church is the only Protestant Church to which the government has given a permit in this city of more than 100,000 people! The building will also be used as a conference center and training facility for Wesleyan churches and pastors in Egypt and across the Middle East.

In 2019, we gave \$18,000 for the Canaan Haiti School building which thrives today in spite of the Haiti crisis.

In 2020 we gave \$17,000 to assist Houghton Academy in re-establishing connections with international students as they struggled through the pandemic.

In 2021, we gave \$27,000 to finish the construction of a World Hope International-sponsored oxygen plant in Haiti. This plant provides oxygen for the Wesleyan hospital on LaGonave Island and is a source of income in enabling others to purchase oxygen otherwise unavailable.

In 2022, we gave \$24,000 to complete the Wycliffe Bible Translators training center in Chiang Mai, Thailand. This center and those who work there, are connected to many of the WBT missionaries we have supported for years and continue to support. The facility enables Wycliffe to train translators, provide supplementary materials for Bible instruction and audio/video resources to assist in various translation projects in Thailand and throughout Southeast Asia.

Thank you for your generosity that enabled us to give over \$107,000 to the work of the kingdom. God has used your gifts in ways we could never have imagined.



2018 Egypt



2019 Haiti



2020 Academy



2021 Haiti



2022 Thailand

Annual Christmas Eve Offering 2023

A NEW DIRECTION 2023! ** EASTERN EUROPE OUTREACH

We turn from mainly bricks and steel to **discipleship outreach** in Europe where our missionary partners (Austins and Stacia) are serving. The region is ripe for the Good News. This year's Christmas Eve offering will focus on two Eastern Europe Global Partner's outreach ministries: **M2M** (Media 2 Movement) and **Community Outreach** – concrete efforts to reach the unreached with the Gospel through felt needs in 2024.

\$20,000 GOAL

M2M, a proven (interdenominational), creative social media and personal contact approach connects and forms Discovery Bible Study and personal offline conversations and groups. Our Czech team (local believers and missionaries) has already touched new lives in a Fall 2023 startup with huge potential. Funding covers monthly advertising, site development, and staffing local "responders" to manage influx of messages and comments of those spiritually seeking.

Community Outreach continues training local teachers to tutor special needs children neglected in this region. Transitioning from previous format and facilities requires major investment. Future projects will build and expand on the established reputation in the community with new ways to introduce Christ in a formerly war-torn region.

