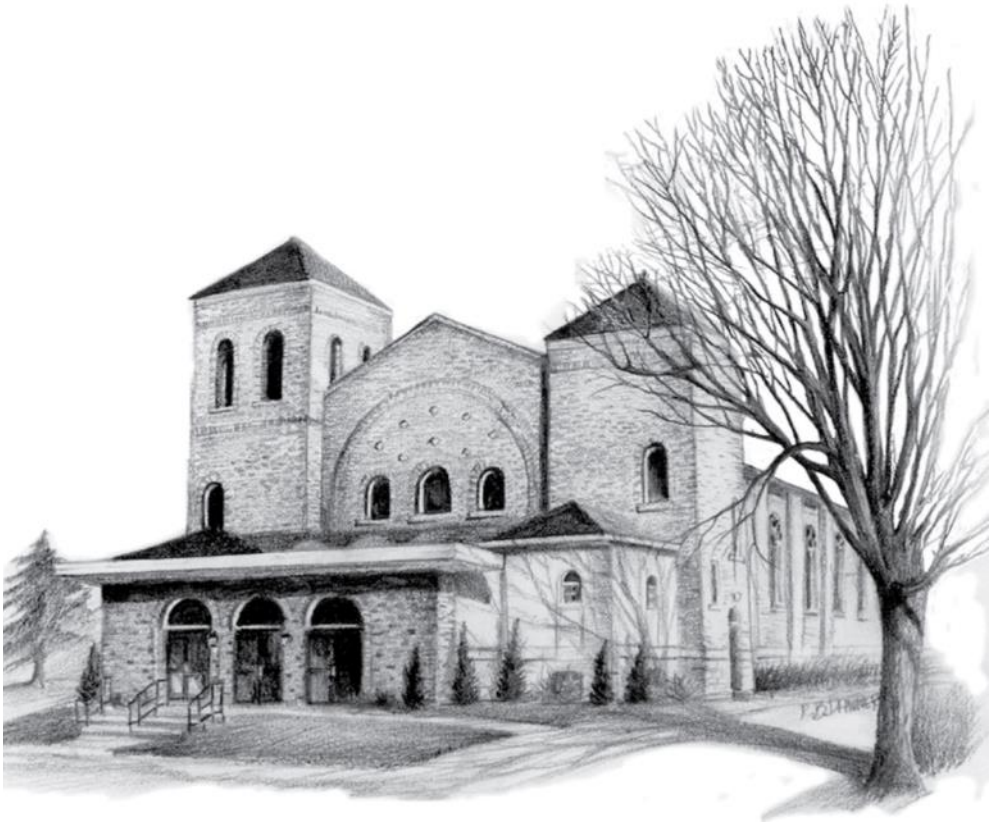




Houghton

WESLEYAN CHURCH

*Joyfully loving God,
wholeheartedly serving others*



WESLEY ODEN, *Senior Pastor*

JON COLE, *Youth Pastor*

DAVID HUIZENGA, *Assistant Pastor*

CINDY ODEN, *Assistant Pastor*

GRACE DETRICK, *Assistant Pastor*

EMILY SPATEHOLTS, *Children's Ministry Director*

JUDY CONGDON, *Organist and Choir Director*

FIRST SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 31, 2023

10:00 A.M.

Prelude: Choral Prelude on “In dulci jubilo”

Marcel Dupré

***Call to Worship:**

Emmanuel, God with us, came to earth as a baby in a manger.

O Come, let us adore him.

He came in a lowly stable.

O Come, let us adore him.

Shepherds brought their worship.

O Come, let us adore him.

Angels sang his praise.

O Come, let us adore him.

What shall we do?

O Come, let us adore him, Christ, the Lord! Amen.

***Hymn #121 “O Come, All Ye Faithful”**

***Greeting one another**

Welcome, announcements

Celebration of Ministry—Kevin & Cindy Austin

Children’s Sermon—*Gift to the World*

Offering Prayer:

Gracious God, you have shown your great love for your children by using commonplace things for your purpose—water to mark your children, bread and wine to feed and nourish us ordinary people to be disciples, a child in a manger to announce your grace. Take these commonplace things, these gifts of paper and metal and the lives that stand behind them. Bless and use them to proclaim your gracious love, for we offer them in the name of Jesus, the Lamb of God. Amen.

Offertory “Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

arr. Wilbur Held

Doxology

Pastoral Prayer & The Lord’s Prayer

Special music: “Meekness and Majesty”

Graham Kendrick

Kim Prims-Moeller, mezzo soprano

***Scripture:** John 1:1-18

Sermon Dr. Terrence Paige

***Response Hymn #140 “Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne”**

***Benediction**

Postlude: Variations on an Ancient Polish Carol

Alexandre Guilmant

***Congregation standing**

Acolyte: Cora Sanasith

Reader: Ben Hegeman

WELCOME TO THE HOUGHTON WESLEYAN CHURCH. This morning we continue to celebrate the coming of Christ in human flesh even as we embark on a new year. It is because Christ is born that we approach the new year in a spirit of hope and anticipation for what God is going to do in all of the circumstances of life. In this hour of worship, may God fill us with the hope of Christ.

THANK YOU to guest speaker Dr. Terrance Paige for preaching this morning. We also thank our organist Dr. Judy Congdon for planning today's worship service. Next week Rev. David Huizenga will be preaching and Amanda Cox will be leading us in worship.

NEXT SUNDAY MORNING we will gather for worship at 10:00 a.m. Pastor David Huizenga will preach: *Does Grace Lead You to Grow?* from Ephesians 2:1-10. The service will be streamed.

CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING: We give thanks to God and to all who gave generously to our Christmas Eve offering. As of this time, we have received over \$8,838. If you have not given and would like to, please send your gift to the church or use the online giving option.

IN PERSON VISIT WITH STACIA from Eastern Europe. 6:30 p.m. Wednesday January 3rd in the HWC Community Room. Get in-person, first hand, total disclosure report from our Christmas Offering Field before Stacia returns from her short holiday visit with family. All are invited and most welcome to hear from our missionary ambassador to Eastern Europe. Light refreshments as well.

HWC KIDS:

- Kids Connect: This week, kids hear how Simeon and Anna met Jesus in the temple. **BIG IDEA:** Jesus is God's gift to the world. **BIBLE:** Luke 2:22-40; 2 Corinthians 9:6-15
- December Memory Verse: "The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world." — John 1:9 (NIV)
- Schedule: Nursery is available this week; no Children's Church (resumes January 7th) or Kids Connect (resumes January 14th). Kids Club on Saturday, January 20th, 9:30-11am

HOLIDAY SERVICES

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

THE CHURCH OFFICE WILL BE CLOSED on New Year's Day.

STEWARDSHIP

Budget Needed: \$501,519.30 / **Budget Received:** \$455,469.59

Reminder: gifts for calendar year 2023 need to be delivered to the church today, mailed with a postmark date of December 31st or earlier, or need to be made online by December 31st at 2:00 p.m. with a gift date of December 31 or earlier.

MISSION MOMENT—Two in one week: the missionaries we've been praying for visit us in person! Today we welcome Kevin and Cindy Austin bringing greetings from the Czech Republic. Praise God for fruitful ministry over seven years there. This Wednesday, the 3rd, 6:30 p.m. in the Community Room, Stacia will bring reports before she travels back to continue her sixth year of ministry. Thank God for the privilege sharing in mission with these partners.

PERSECUTED CHURCH – We pray for Christians and others who were attacked in 20 Nigerian “Middle Belt” villages a week ago, on Christmas Eve, with at least 140 killed and others missing. It's the worst attack on these mostly Christian villages since 2018. May God bring comfort, peace, repentance, and justice.

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 all area churches starting a new year of ministry.