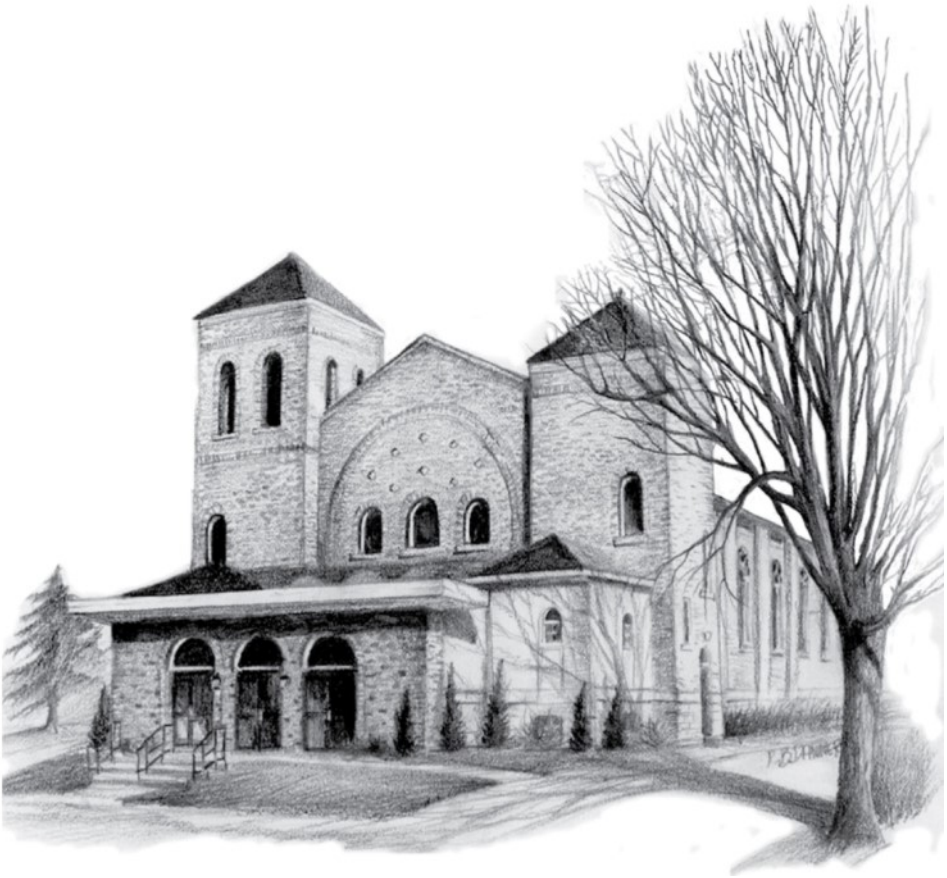
Houghton
WESLEYAN CHURCH

Joyfully loving God,
wholeheartedly serving others



WESLEY ODEN, *Senior Pastor*

JON COLE, *Youth Pastor*

DAVID HUIZENGA, *Assistant Pastor*

CINDY ODEN, *Assistant Pastor*

AMANDA COX, *Music and Worship Director*

EMILY SPATEHOLTS, *Children's Ministry Director*

JUDY CONGDON, *Organist and Choir Director*

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER CHRISTMAS / EPIPHANY SUNDAY
10:00AM JANUARY 5, 2025

Prelude: Hymn Prelude on *Puer Nobis* Robin Dinda
("What Star is This, with Beams So Bright")

Call to Worship (Psalm 130)
Out of the depths we cry to you, Lord; Lord, hear our voices.
Let your ears be attentive to our cry for mercy.
If you, Lord, kept a record of sins, Lord, who could stand?
But with you there is forgiveness,
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.
We wait for the Lord, our whole being waits, and in his word we put our hope.
We wait for the Lord more than watchmen wait for the morning,
more than watchmen wait for the morning.
Israel, put your hope in the Lord, for with the Lord
is unfailing love and with him is full redemption.
He himself will redeem Israel from all their sins.

*Hymn: ***As With Gladness Men of Old*** (see insert)

Life of the Church

*Songs of Adoration: ***Faithful Now; Weep with Me; Even If***
(Offering will be received during the third song)

Prayer of Confession
Most gracious heavenly Father, you have proven to us that you are good. You create and rule over all that is. Nevertheless, so often we allow ourselves to be overwhelmed with anxiety and fear about possessions we crave, the needs of everyday life, the present and the future. We confess that our worry is rooted in a skewed view of who you are. Forgive us for doubting your care and for doubting the truth about who you are. Fill us with faith to seek you and to trust that you are more than enough. Through Christ. Amen.

Time of Prayer

Song of Response: ***I Will Wait for You*** (Psalm 130)

Scripture Reading: Matthew 2:1-18
Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God!

*Hymn 444 ***When Peace Like a River***

Greeting One Another
Children in grades PreK-1st are dismissed for Children's Church.

Sermon: **Living in Bethlehem**
Pastor David Huizenga

*Song ***Blessed Be Your Name***

*Benediction

*Postlude: Toccata on *Dix* ("As With Gladness...") Robin Dinda

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*Please stand if able **Acolyte**: Alexander Zambrano **Scripture** Reader: Joanna Bates

Music Ministry Team:
Evie Cox, Grayson Cox, Mike Cox, vocals; Caleb Hilsher, guitar;
Amanda Cox, piano & vocals; Jan Schilke, keyboard; Dan Zambrano, cajón

WELCOME TO THE HOUGHTON WESLEYAN CHURCH. Today is a bridge that connects the end of Christmas (which celebrates the coming of Christ) and Epiphany (which celebrates the revelation of God in Christ to the whole world.) This season of the Church year is a time to remember God's calling on the Church to bear witness to Christ. As we worship this morning, may God open our eyes to His call on us and His plan for the world.

NEXT SUNDAY MORNING we gather for worship at 10:00. The 10:00 service will be streamed. Pastor Wes begins a series of sermons based on numbers in the Bible. Next Sunday's sermon is rooted in Matthew 3: *Is Three Really a Crowd?*

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 $16,378.95. If you have not given and would like to, please send your gift to the church or use the online giving option.

BUILDING PROJECT: We are continuing to raise funds for the building project to create an indoor, assessable walkway between our buildings, upgrade the sanctuary basement, expand our current handicap parking, upgrade our maxed-out electrical service and add a layer of security to our buildings. The project is estimated to cost $572,000. Thanks to the generosity of people who have named us as beneficiaries of their estate, a large memorial gift, some surplus funds and some building funds, we have $322,000 in hand. This means that we are attempting to raise $250,000 (gifts and pledges) to cover the remaining expenses. Giving Cards are available in the hymnal racks of each pew. You may access the recording of the December 11 meeting through the regular streaming channels, including the church website. The website also provides a rendering of the addition and floor plans. Please contact Pastor Wes if you have any questions related to the project. Thank you for your prayers and support. Our goal is raise the necessary funds by January 10.

Here is an update on current project giving:

Fundraising Goal:		$ 250,000
Gifts Received:	$100,610	
Pledges Received:	$ 89,700	
TOTAL RECEIVED:		$ 190,310
Remaining to Goal		$ 59,690

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: We are having a second congregational meeting next Sunday, January 12, following the morning worship service, to discuss the building project next steps based on what we have raised.

HWC KIDS IN JANUARY:

- "Camp Believe It: People love camping, and for good reason! You can take in nature, practice special skills, or just take time to relax in a new environment. And when it comes to camping, no one loved it as much as John the Baptist. In this 4-week series, kids will hear about John the Baptist's special role in preparing the way for Jesus and his ministry. John's story will help kids to say their camp motto, "I believe God gives me purpose. I believe God can speak to me. I believe God is powerful. I believe God's words are true."
- January Memory Verse: "We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God." — John 6:69 (NIV)
- No Kids Connect this week. This week in Children's Church, kids learn about how John the Baptist's purpose was to get people ready for Jesus.
- BIG IDEA: I believe God gives me purpose. BIBLE: Mark 1:1–8; Ephesians 1:3–14

STEWARDSHIP:

Budget Needed: $ 525,115.45 Budget Giving: $ 514,680.73

MISSION MOMENT: Martin & Sheri Hegemon Praise for the way God is providing for them and the ability to work alongside Caleb and Nadia in the ministry to MK's (Missionary Kids). Praise that their financial deficit has been reduced; please pray that the remainder of the support will come in soon. Pray that they will be an encouragement to their colleagues and to their church family and for wisdom in purchasing a vehicle.

PERSECUTED CHURCH: INDONESIA Although Christmas is a time of sacred anticipation and joy for Christians worldwide, believers in Indonesia have experienced rejection. On Dec. 8, locals blocked a Christmas celebration organized by a local church. The protest started after the community learned that the pastor was sharing his plans for the Christmas celebration with the police. Soon, about 100 residents blocked access to the location of the planned worship activities. Police and other local officials intervened to mediate between pastors and village leaders. Residents still refused to allow the Christmas service to take place. Please pray for our brothers and sisters in Indonesia experiencing resistance to worshipping freely.

PRAYER CONCERNS: for all who are grieving; for all with health concerns: Beth Beardsley, Gary Wickard, Dick Pocock, Peter Lingenfelter, Linda Leax, Beth Pocock, Paul and Linda Roth, James Bates, Terry Ayers, Scarlett Gildemeister, Kim Pegula, Karen Gaerte, Cameron Green, Vangie Grant, Dan and Sarah Gurley, Chelsea Ellis, Mark Mayhle, Jeshu, Kurtis and Eliyah Perry, Reuben Samuels, Emily Crikelair; for refugees throughout the world; for protection, wisdom and peace in many places of conflict, including Syria; for all recovering from recent hurricanes and disasters; for the Riverside Assembly of God (Pastor John Francisco).