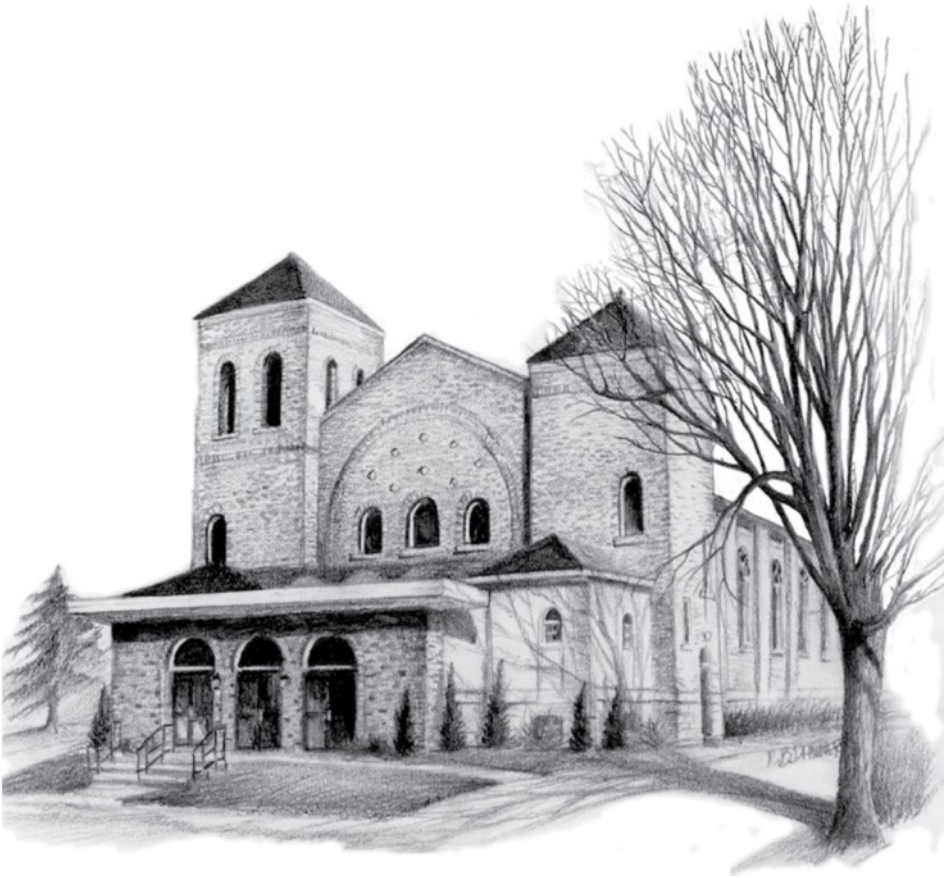
Houghton
Wesleyan Church

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*

THIRD SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

11:00AM JANUARY 26, 2025

Prelude: *Andante in G minor* .....Edmund Horace Fellowes

Call to Worship (from Psalm 119)

May your unfailing love come to us, Lord,
your salvation, according to your promise;
Never take your word of truth from our mouths,
for we have put our hope in your laws.
We will always obey your law, for ever and ever.
We will walk about in freedom, for we have sought out your precepts.
We will speak of your statutes before kings and will not be put to shame,
for we delight in your commands because we love them.
We reach out for your commands, which we love,
that we may meditate on your decrees.

*Hymn 1 ***O For a Thousand Tongues***

Life of the Church

Celebration of Ministry: Valley Preschool

Children's Sermon: **Follow the Truth**

*Songs of Adoration: ***Song of My Heart; Champion***
(Offering will be received during the first song)

Prayer of Confession

Merciful God, we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We hesitate to do your will, we justify breaking your law, we rebel against your love. We look for loopholes about loving our neighbors, and far too often we close our ears to hear the cry of the needy. Forgive us, we pray. Fill our hearts with a desire to be your instruments for setting captives free, for healing the brokenhearted, and for loving the whole world. Set us free for joyful obedience; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Time of Prayer

Song of Response: ***No Longer Slaves***

Scripture Reading: Matthew 25:1-13
Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God!

*Song ***Death was Arrested***

Greeting One Another

Sermon: **The Most Freeing Number in the Bible**
Pastor Wes Oden

*Hymn 273 ***And Can it Be***

*Benediction

*Postlude: *Fugue in C minor*, BWV 546 …….J.S. Bach

---

*Please stand if able **Organist:** Jonathan Niemi **Acolyte:** Emma Oden

Scripture Reader: Mike Jordan

Musicians:

Joanna Bates, Josey Ikker, vocals; Amanda Cox, piano & vocals;

Kevin Dibble, guitar & vocals; Tim & Sharon McGarvey, horns; Simon Sardina, cajón

WELCOME TO THE HOUGHTON WESLEYAN CHURCH. The 23rd Psalm describes God as the shepherd of his people. Jesus declares that he is the Good Shepherd who cares for his sheep. As we worship today, we remember that God promises to care for all that he has made and in response, we worship him.

NEXT SUNDAY MORNING we gather for worship at 8:30 and 11:00. The 11:00 service will be streamed. Pastor Wes continues this series of sermons on numbers in the Bible. Next Sunday's sermon is from Revelation 7: The Most Unifying Number in the Bible.

BUILDING PROJECT:

Fundraising Goal:	$250,000.00
Gifts Received:	$137,877.06
Pledges Outstanding:	$ 98,750.00
TOTAL RECEIVED:	$236,627.06
Remaining to Goal	$ 13,372.94

The Annual Valley Preschool STONE SOUP DINNER is Friday, January 31! Twelve of our seventeen students are benefiting from having a discount on tuition from the funds raised last year. We will have beef or vegetable soup, breads/rolls, and dessert available for eat-in or pick-up. We are looking for people (or groups) to make cookies or brownies for dessert for our event. If you can help with this, please contact Casda Danner casdadanner@hwchurch.org. Come enjoy some warm soup on a cold evening and support Valley Preschool!

HWC KIDS

- This week in Kids Connect, kids learn about how Jesus was rejected as God's son in his own hometown.

  BIG IDEA: I believe God's words are true.
  BIBLE: Luke 4:14–30; Psalm 19:7–14

- January Memory verse: "We have come to believe and to know that you are the Holy One of God."— John 6:69 (NIV)

MISSION MOMENT: Alan & Cheri Shea—Pray for Alan's trip to Liberia (Jan 27 – Feb 21). He will be working with one volunteer on the water system, generators, radio studio and work to upgrade ELWA hospital oxygen plant – doubling its output. Cheri would appreciate prayers as they travel to Memphis for her new specialist that we prayed for. Thank you for continuing to pray for this. Pray that God would be glorified in all they do and give Cheri extra strength while Alan is away.

PERSECUTED CHURCH IN VIETNAM: Pastor Nguyen Manh Hung, 71, was arrested on January 16 for a Facebook post that criticized Vietnam's communist government. Authorities charged Nguyen with promoting "anti-state propaganda," a charge that carries a maximum of 20 years in prison. Police reportedly cut off the power to the pastor's home, entered the home, and arrested the pastor. Officers also confiscated documents, laptops, and phones. Authorities detained Pastor Nguyen's son and interrogated him for several hours but released him later that night. Authorities have harassed Pastor Nguyen several times in the last 15 years. But he has continued to publicly challenge corruption and human rights abuses from the communist government. Please pray for Pastor Nguyen as he continues to represent Christ in spite of resistance.

STEWARDSHIP:

Budget Needed: $576,766.15 / Budget Received: $571,439.40

PRAYER CONCERNS: all who are grieving; for all with health concerns: Willis and 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 tragedies and disasters; for Swain United Methodist Church.