Houghton Wesleyan Church

Highlights

Joyfully loving God, wholeheartedly serving others

February 2025
Volume 56 No. 10

Love Is About Others

When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt." So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. (Exodus 13:17-18)

St. Ignatius was a 16th century reformer who founded the Society of Jesus, also known as the Jesuits. In one of his writings, he makes this interesting statement: "God uses crooked sticks to draw straight lines."

When I read this, I immediately thought about a sermon I heard years ago from one of my preaching professors about Israel's journey out of Egypt. The gist of the sermon was that God doesn't lead Israel on a straight line to Canaan but leads them on a winding journey through the desert. He talked about how when you are God's people sometimes the shortest path is a zigzag.

I don't know about you, but I tend to think that he is right. There are so many times when I wonder and question why the path of life isn't the road of least resistance or the road that seems the most straightforward. So often, the path on which I am being lead is a road with all kinds of twists and turns…far more than I would have wanted or think reasonable.

Like Israel (and so many other of God's people), you and I may feel that the zigzag journey with God seems far more challenging than it might need to be. And these feelings lead us to question God's wisdom, God's grace, God's love.

But I am learning that my journey with God is not about what is easiest or even what makes the most sense to me; it's about what God knows is best for me. And what is best for me is centered in learning to trust him, which is often the reason for the zigzag: it's only when I need to trust that I learn to trust.

Obviously, I do not know what your zigzag has or will look like. But whatever it is, I can guarantee you a couple of things: 1) If you are honest with God (and he always wants us to be), you will wonder about where God is leading you; and 2) No matter what, God is eternally faithful. He walks with you. He surrounds you. He loves you. He is always working in ways that are eternally best for you.

Blessings,
Pastor Wes

STEWARDSHIP—A Life of Generosity

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

LOCAL OUTREACH

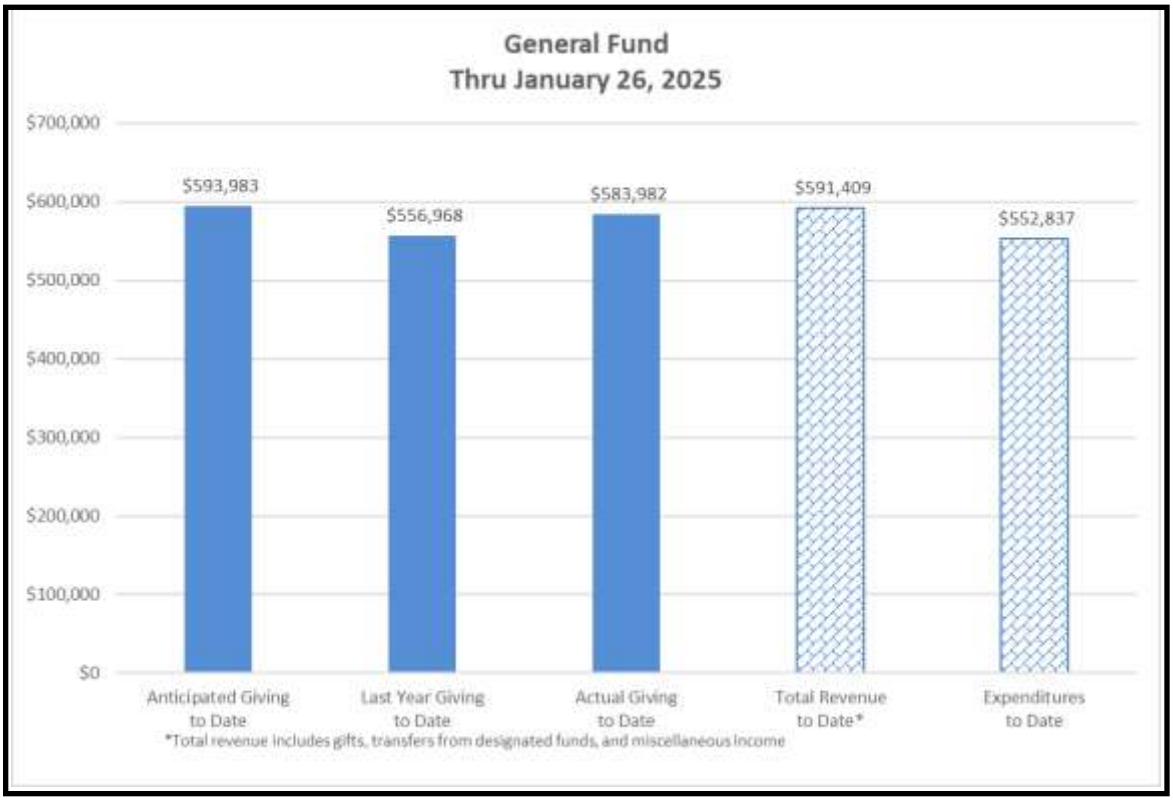
.As the Office for the Aging representative to our Local Outreach Committee, it's my privilege to be a part of our church's response to the needs that exist right here among our family, friends and neighbors in Allegany County. The LOC mission statement states, *"The Local Outreach Committee is a ministry 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"*

While there are a variety of ways that we go about this mission, this article will focus on our church's benevolent fund that helped The Musical Memories Café which is a gathering place for caregivers and their loves one to relax, socialize, enjoy a meal and some great music.

It is a program that is a partnership with Ardent Solutions and the Allegany County Office for the Aging. A grant was secured to start the program in September – December 2024. It was so well received we are working on another grant to help continue the program but in the wait for new grant we didn't want to stop the monthly Musical Memory Café's. I presented to the LOC committee for a donation for the meals so the events could continue to be free. We voted on donating $300 in which will pay for the meals for 2 months. We have continued to find funding to continue the program until Spring when they can secure another grant.

I am super grateful to be part of a community of outward-facing believers who are looking for ways to show Christ's love to the people around us.

Lynn Oyer



HWC kids

February GROW series: "Miraculous"
When we visit an aquarium, we find a whole world filled with sea creatures, plants, and more. Some of the discoveries we've made about what lives underwater can seem almost like a miracle. But it's not just under the sea where miracles happen—Jesus used water in some of his most well-known miracles!
In this four-week series, kids will learn about some of the incredible miracles Jesus performed to help people grow closer to God. As they do, they'll learn how Jesus does everything out of love, calls us to follow him, knows what we need, and, most of all, that Jesus can do anything!

February Memory Verse

- Kids Club - Saturday, February 15th from 9:30-11:00am

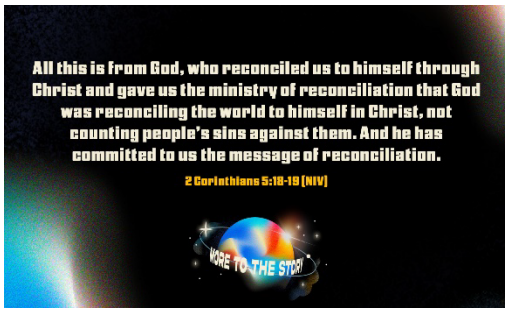
- Preteen Hangout - Sunday, February 16th from 6-8pm

- Stewards of Children training on Saturday, February 1st, 8-10:30am

February 2025 HWC Youth News:

Youth Group in February – Sun evenings 6-8pm – 7th – 12th

- **Feb 2 – Worship Night!**
- **Feb 9 – No Youth Group**
- **Feb 16 – More to the Story - God is writing a good story!**
- **Feb 23 – More to the story – Jesus can re-write our stories!**



Prayer Breakfast,

Wednesday Mornings

in February – 7am:

February 5,12,26

No prayer breakfast on Feb 19!

Pancakes and Prayer in the community room.

Discipleship Hour (SS) 9:45 in the youth room, 7th – 12th grades:

We have SS every Sunday in February and will begin studying the minor prophets.

We'll cover: 1-2 Sam, Hosea, Amos, and Micah.

See you in church!

Upcoming Events: Follow Tour – Regional event is here! -

April 11-12 - $50 – Revive Wesleyan in Hamburg.

Friday April 11 – Leave from the church at 4:30pm (eat dinner before you get here!) Return approx. 11:30pm

Sat April 12 – Leave from the church at 7:30am – Return approx. 10pm. Lunch is included in the Registration price, bring money for dinner. Food trucks will be onsite.

The deadline to sign up is March 31st! You can register at this link.

Musical Artists, speakers, seminars and IZone!
You know the drill…

From the
Library Shelves

Biographies, fiction, missions, parenting, history—including some local history, Bible book studies, books about different Biblical characters: your church library has something for all ages. Come on in and find some books to curl up with during these cold winter days. Enjoy!

IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

We offer our condolences to Chamberlain family at the death of Joyce (December 22, 2024), to Wil Zike and his family at the death of Jane (January 5, 2025) and to Ken and Carol Stonemetz at the death of Ken's sister, Carolyn Washburn on (January 10, 2025).

Willis Beardsley died Sunday, January 26. Visitation will be January 31 from 5 to 7 p.m. at Kopler Williams Funeral Home. The funeral service will take place at Houghton Wesleyan Church on February 1 beginning at 11 a.m. and will be streamed.

Wellspring Ministries

Hours of operation: Wednesday and Friday - 10:00 to 1:15, with the noon meal at 11:55. All are welcome.
Your faithful giving is a source of joy and strength to us - always.

How does Wellspring say LOVE?

Serving those in need of food, clothing, household goods, and encouragement in Allegany County

5993 County Road 16, Belfast NY
585-365-2250

"I tell you the truth, they who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life." John 5:24 NLT

Houghton Wesleyan Food Pantry supports the Fillmore Food Pantry. We encourage volunteers to help when able.
We help people in different ways.

Items Our Food Pantry can use:

- Canned Tuna
- Canned Chicken
- Baked Beans
- Cereal
- Soups
- Canned Chili
- Beef Stew
- Macaroni and Cheese
- Canned Fruit
- Pancake Mix
- Pancake Syrup
- Peanutbutter
- Jelly or Jam
- Fruit Drinks
- SpaghettiOs
- Oatmeal
- Laundry Detergent

NOTE: Monetary Donations (checks to Houghton Wesleyan Church with "FOOD PANTRY" on the Memo Line) provide fresh fruits and vegetables, bread, eggs, cheese, and milk, and emergency groceries for families in our community. The Food Pantry has a refrigerator and a freezer to store items.
NOTE: Perishable Pantry Donations may be brought to the church office throughout the year. Thank you for your continued support!

Fillmore Community Food Pantry

23 Minard St. Fillmore NY (585) 567-2293

Fillmore School District Residents

Families chose once a month

January 8 & 22..... 2:00-5:15

February 12 & 26..... 2:00-5:15

March 12 & 26.....2:00-5:15

April 9 & 23.....2:00-5:15

May 14 & 28.....2:00-5:15

June 11 & 25.....2:00-5:15

July 9 & 23.....2:00-5:15

August 13 & 27.....2:00-5:15

September 10 & 24.....2:00-5:15

October 8 & 22.....2:00-5:15

November 12 (once this month) 12:00-5:15

December 10 (once this month) 12:00-5:15

No need to call; just come!

2025

Sundays in February

February 2 (8:30 Indoors / 11:00 Indoors/Streaming)
The Most Social Number in the Bible (Revelation 7)

February 9 (8:30 Indoors / 11:00 Indoors/Streaming)
The Most Challenging Number in the Bible (Luke 4)

February 16 (8:30 Indoors / 11:00 Indoors/Streaming)
The Most Frightening Number in the Bible (Revelation 13)

February 23 (8:30 Indoors / 11:00 Indoors/Streaming)
The Most Anticipated Number in the Bible (Revelation 20)

CHURCH STAFF

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