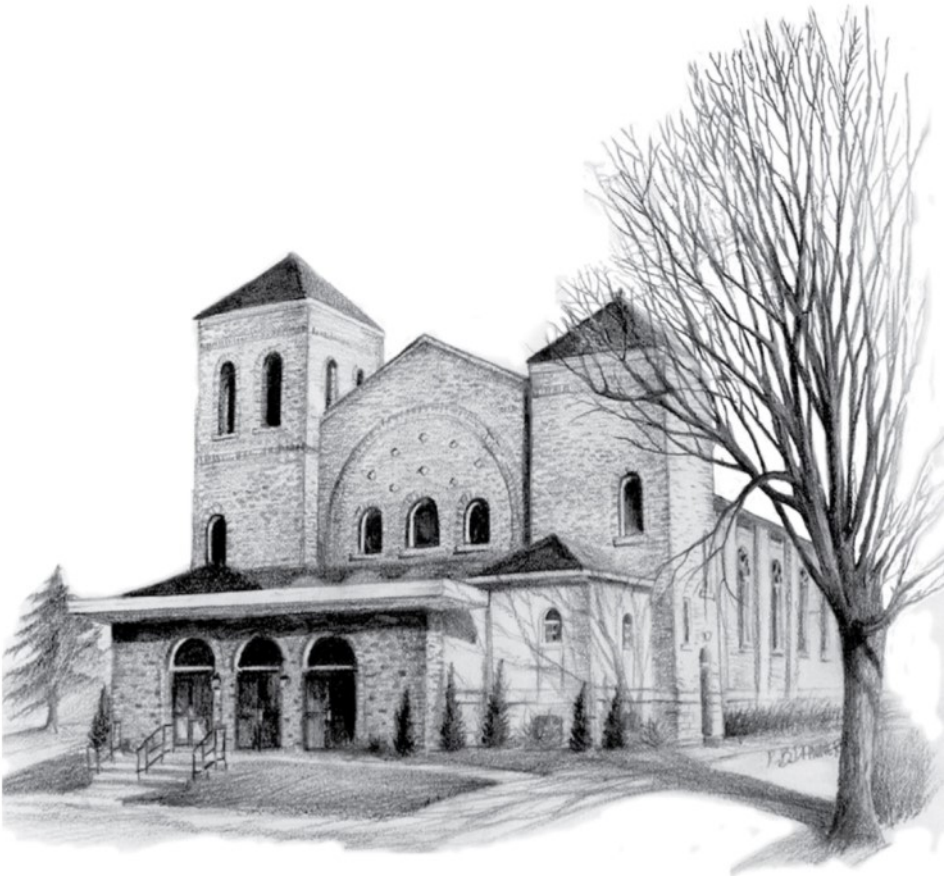
# Houghton
Wesleyan Church

*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*

# FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT

8:30AM MARCH 9, 2025

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Welcome

***This is Amazing Grace; Living Hope; Christ is Risen***
(Offering will be received during the third song)

Time of Prayer

Prayer Response: ***I Will Wait for You***

Scripture Reading: Luke 23:26-43

Children's Sermon: **Giving Back**

Life of the Church

Greeting One Another

Sermon: **Seeing the Cross Through the Lens of Guilt**
Pastor Wes Oden

***Kyrie Eleison***

Benediction

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**Acolyte**: Ruth Jacoby **Scripture Reader**: Karen Torraca

**Musicians:**

Evie Cox, Mike Jordan, vocals; Amanda Cox, piano & vocals;
Christopher Moeller, guitar; Betsy Webb, keyboard & vocals;
Jill Jordan, violin; Simon Sardina, cajón

**WELCOME TO THE HOUGHTON WESLEYAN CHURCH.** The season of Lent is designed by the ancient church as a means of reminding Christ's disciples that the passion, suffering and death of Christ are central to our faith. Though this is a solemn season in which we contemplate our sin, it is also a season to give thanks that Jesus goes to the cross to redeem all of creation.

**NEXT SUNDAY MORNING** is the Second Sunday in Lent. Pastor Wes continues a Lenten series of sermons focusing on lenses through which we see the cross. Next week's sermon, When We Are in Bondage is from Matthew 12. We will gather for worship at 8:30 and 11:00. The 11:00 service will be streamed.

**EASTER BAPTISM:** If you are interested in being baptized on Easter Sunday morning, April 20, contact Pastor Wes (office@hwchurch.org) about attending the baptism class.

**ALL WOMEN** Join us on Saturday, March 22, beginning at 9 am for the **Spring Women's Gathering.** Our theme is *Celebrating the Women in Our Lives.* Come to be inspired, to have fun and fellowship with other women, and to enjoy some delicious food. If possible, please bring a small item that represents an important woman in your life. We hope to see you then!

**BUILDING PROJECT:**

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| Fundraising Goal: | | $ 250,000 |
| Gifts Received: | $ 164,613 | |
| Pledges Outstanding: | $ 80,900 | |
| TOTAL RECEIVED: | | $ 245,513 |
| Remaining to Goal | | **$ 4,487** |

**MISSION MOMENT**: Alan & Sheri Shea Praise God that the voltage regulators arrived without delay. The diodes and bearings were installed on Tuesday. The timing could not have been more exact – clearly guided by God. Prayer for a safe return flight for Alan on March 9. Pray for strength, discipline and clear mind and a time to visit with people – to further God's kingdom. Continue to pray for Sheri as she sees her new health care provider and that all goes well with that transition.

**STEWARDSHIP**

**Budget Needed:** $680,067.55 / **Budget Received:** $654,151.79

**HWC KIDS**

- This week in Kids Connect, kids hear Jesus share a story about workers who were entrusted with different amounts of gold. BIG IDEA: We can give back to God. BIBLE: Matthew 25:14–29; Deuteronomy 26:1–11
- March Memory Verse: "Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know." — Jeremiah 33:3 (NIV)
- Kids Club Family Swim: Saturday, March 15th at Houghton University pool. FREE for HWC families from 12-1pm with open community swim following.
- Preteen Hangout: Sunday, March 16th from 6-8pm

**PERSECUTED CHURCH: INDIA—**On Dec. 5, 2021, police and members of a radical Hindu organization entered a church in western India and arrested Pastor Sawan and an elder. A Hindu priest had complained that Sawan had tried to convert him to Christianity. After 45 days, police released all the Christians except Sawan. The pastor was denied access to a Bible, and when he became ill, he was transferred to a government hospital and chained to his bed. Despite the hardships, Sawan made the best of his time in prison, meditating on memorized Bible verses and sharing the gospel with other prisoners. "I shared the love of Christ and prayed for them," he said. "I was able to bring four inmates to Christ." Almost 10 months had passed before Sawan's sixth request for bail was finally granted, and he is currently at home awaiting trial. Our Christian family members in India face increasing pressure from the government. Arrests and imprisonments are common, and "anti-conversion" laws have been used as a way to keep Christians from speaking openly about their faith.

**PRAYER CONCERNS:** for all who are grieving; for all with health concerns: Karen Szymanski, Jane Allen, Jane Roeske, Beth Beardsley, Gary Wickard, 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 protection, wisdom and peace in many places of conflict; for all recovering from recent tragedies and disasters; for Yorks Corners Mennonite Church (Pastors Matt Havens & Sarah Lehman Demster).