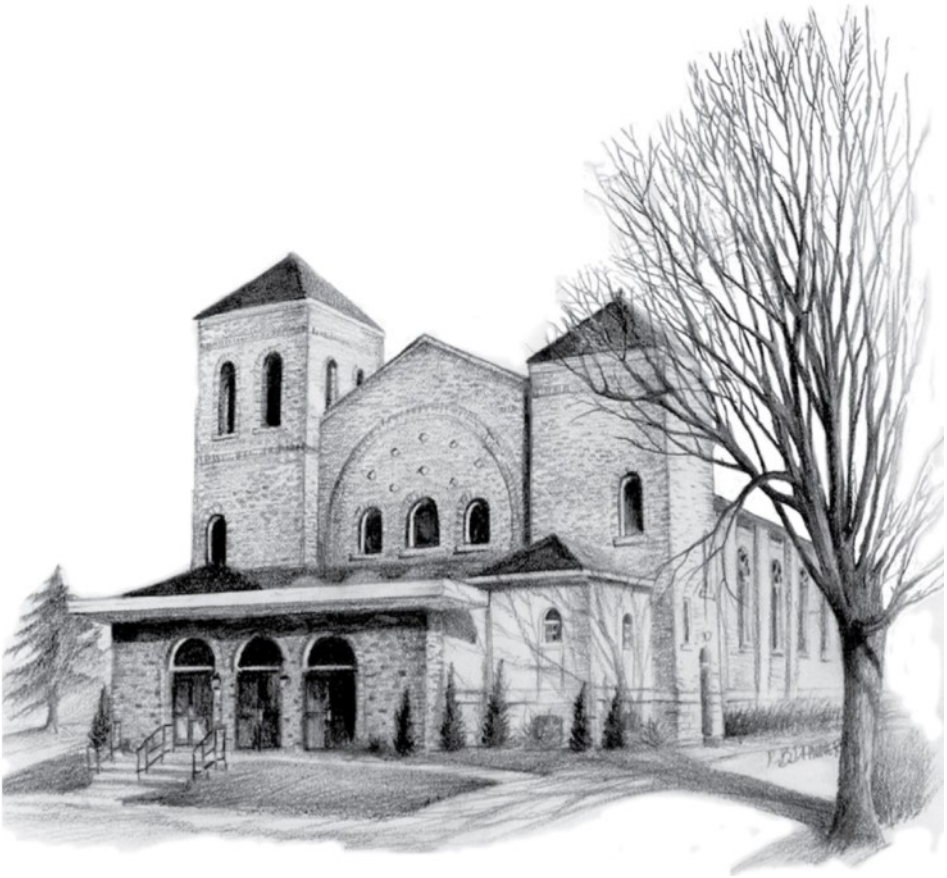
Houghton
Wesleyan Church

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*

FIFTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

11:00AM MAY 18, 2025

Prelude: *Here I Am, Lord* .....Dan Schutte, arr. John Carter

Call to Worship

God makes the sun to rise and set;
He causes the summer and winter to come and go.
He is faithful from generation to generation.
God helps plants grow and flowers bloom; He gives us food to eat,
places to live, people to love us.
He is faithful from generation to generation.
God is always with us, always guiding us, keeping His promises to us.
He is faithful from generation to generation.
Let us praise and give thanks to our faithful God!
Alleluia, Amen!

*Hymn 85 ***Blessing and Honor and Glory and Power***

Life of the Church

Choir Anthem: *For the Beauty of the Earth* .....John Rutter

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

*Songs of Adoration: ***Light of the World; Is He Worthy?***
(Song sheets available in the foyer; offering will be received during the first song)

Scripture Reading: Ruth (selected verses)
Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.
People: Thanks be to God!

*Song: ***King of Kings***

Greeting One Another

Sermon: **God's Love Story**
Pastor Wes Oden

*Hymn 43 ***Great is Thy Faithfulness***

*Benediction

*Postlude: *Prelude for Organ* ……..Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel

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*Please stand if able **Acolyte**: Willow Knapp **Scripture Reader**: Jeanie Little

Musicians:
Emily Quick, Jon Hutmire, vocals;
Alison Young Reusser, guitar & vocals; Amanda Cox, piano & vocals:
Dianna Clem, flute; Dan Zambrano, cajón

WELCOME TO THE HOUGHTON WESLEYAN CHURCH. We gather during this Easter Season to give thanks to God for the resurrection of Jesus that brings power and hope in our brokenness and pain. During this hour of worship, may God open our minds and hearts to his presence with us and to his work through us.

ELECTION BALLOT: If you are a member of HWC and have not yet cast your ballot for the election of 2025-2026 leaders and for the 2025-2026 Financial Plan, please do so today. We have paper ballots available in the sanctuary lower foyer and CE building foyer as well as people to assist you. The online ballot will close at 12:30 today.

MUSIC CELEBRATION: Today at 5:00pm, you are invited to a celebration of music in the church sanctuary. This gathering will include songs by the church choir, an ensemble, a men's quartet and Pastor Wes.

NEXT SUNDAY MORNING our church youth group will lead us in worship. Join us for worship at 8:30 and 11:00. Discipleship Hour is at 9:45 with classes for children, youth and adults.

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

June 1
10:00 a.m. Indoor/Streaming Worship
11:30 a.m. Pastors Wes and Cindy Retirement Celebration

June 8
8:30 a.m. Indoor Worship
9:45 a.m. Discipleship Hour
11:00 a.m. Indoor/Streaming Worship

June 15 – August 24
8:30 a.m. Outdoor Worship
10:00 a.m. Indoor/Streaming Worship

August 10
10:00 a.m. Outdoor Worship / Pig Roast and Picnic

August 31 – September 28
8:30 a.m. Outdoor Worship
11:00 a.m. Indoor/Streaming Worship

September 7
9:45 a.m. Discipleship Hour restarts

HWC KIDS

- This week in Kids Connect, kids learn about how God spoke to Cornelius and Peter to show that everyone is welcome to follow Jesus. BIG IDEA: We can love like Jesus does. BIBLE: Acts 10:1–8; 11:1–18; John 13:34–35
- May Memory Verse: "In their hearts humans plan their course, but the Lord establishes their steps." — Proverbs 16:9 (NIV)
- Preteen Hangout: Sunday from 6-8pm! 6th graders, it's your first chance to join the youth and, 4th graders, you get to join us! Hope to see you there!

MISSION MOMENT: John & Sylvia Christensen--Praise God for healing from the accident April 6, 2025; Naomi is able to transfer from wheelchair to bed; John can walk with walker and put 50% weight on his injured leg; and Sylvia's fractured sternum is healing. Pray for the numbness in Naomi's legs to heal completely. Pray for John's back and leg to heal completely. Pray for the Kisar team and their consultations in the books of Esther and Exodus. Praise and prayer that Micah, Bethany and Lydia could all come home to help with the family and for their safe travels to return to their homes.

PERSECURED CHURCH-- IRAN: After spending three months in Panama, Artemis Ghasemzadeh, a 27-year-old Iranian woman is still praying and searching for a safe country to accept her by June 7, when her two-month humanitarian visa expires. Otherwise, she'll be returned to Iran, where she will face extreme persecution for leaving Islam. "In Iran, being a Christian when you're born is OK," Ghasemzadeh said. But if you're a Muslim and you convert to Christianity, it's a problem. Armenian, Assyrian, and Catholic communities exist in Iran. Yet, like other Muslim-majority countries in the Middle East and beyond, Iran has strict anti-conversion laws that are punishable by imprisonment or death. Ghasemzadeh said she would "rather die" than go back to Iran, knowing the fate that awaits her. Please pray Ghasemzadeh can find safe refuge.

STEWARDSHIP

Budget Needed: $852,236.55 / **Budget Received:** $824,405.63

PRAYER CONCERNS: for all who are grieving; for all with health concerns: Bruce Hess, Jane Allen, Jane Roeske, 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 grieving and recovering from the recent earthquake in Myanmar, Thailand and surrounding countries; for our church and the leadership of our church as we move toward this time of pastoral transition; for Grace Community Church, Buffalo (Pastor Barb Farrow).