

Lent

*...for dust thou art and to
dust thou shalt return.*

Genesis 3:19

*February 2026
Ash Wednesday, February 18*



A Note From Pastor Eric

If you are a trivia buff, you probably have heard this question before “How many months have 28 days?” Most people immediately think of February as having 28 days and will answer “1.” The answer is 12. Every month has 28, some just have a few more! Yet for February only being 28 day long, it always feels so much longer doesn’t it? Why is that? It feels that way because it is still cold and wintery around us. The trees are still bare. The day light is getting better, but still gets dark in the early evening.

We experience the same things within our spiritual lives as well. Seasons that seem dead and never ending. God seems distance or invisible. Our inner spirits feel isolated and empty. It is a rough time. If this is you, I want you to know that you are not alone. These experiences and feeling are not isolated to you alone. Many throughout history have felt this way. Even the Psalmist expresses what many of us have felt when he says “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my

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groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest.” (Psalm 22:1,2)

So what do we do? We have some options before us. We can quit. Simple, but not a very good option. Our hearts tell us that is a bad option and not realistic. The connection we have or had with God tells us that this isn't all there is, but that there yet a deeper connection that we can make. Another option is to complain to God about our situation. I would say that this one is a decent option. It shows a trust in the holiness and goodness of God and you just want God to know that you are unhappy with the current situation. God is big enough to handle your anger and frustration. This one feels sacrilegious at some level, but I want you to know that its alright and even healthy to be honest with what you are going through and feeling. The Psalmist has this mindset in the majority of Psalm 22. Upset, angry, scared, even feeling defeated. Yet in the midst of all it, his faith and trust remains in God

So even if you are not going through a “dark night of the soul” experience right now, you may down the road. Maybe you know someone who is, share with them that is ok to go down that road as the Psalmist did. Paul tells us that nothing can separate us from the love of God, not even our doubts, fears, or feelings of isolation. May we all be reminded that God is with us through every high and every low of life. Let us hold on with all our faith!

Pastor Eric



Happy February Birthdays!

Bob Seider	Feb. 3	Jody Hanner	Feb. 6
Dustin Cox	Feb. 7	Nancy Sappington Hopper	Feb. 17
Marilyn Kern	Feb. 19	Chris Poland	Feb. 27

Worship With Us

All Are Welcome

Sunday 10AM

Pastor Eric Schmidt



Lent

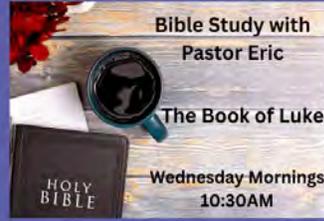


United Methodist Men will meet on
Thursday, February 26 at 6PM in
Thompson Hall.

Lent offers men a powerful opportunity for spiritual growth through practices like prayer, and fasting, focusing on self-discipline, strengthening faith, overcoming worldly desires (like excessive tech or comfort), and fostering self-donation for others.

- **Fasting:** Daily fasting (no snacks between meals, giving up sweets/alcohol), abstaining from meat on Fridays, or limiting screen time.
- **Prayer:** Daily prayer, reading scripture, joining the men's group for shared reflection.
- **Charity:** Donating money saved from sacrifices, or focusing on *caritas* (self-giving love) in relationship
- **Asceticism:** Taking on voluntary discomforts (like sleeping without a pillow) to build spiritual muscle.
- Your Lenten sacrifice cannot be a sin, we're supposed to give those up everyday, but the temptation to give in during Lent might *feel* like the temptations to sins that you might be struggling with. We all have heavy crosses we have to bear. It is through the desert that we prepare for the cross. That doesn't mean that our crosses will feel *lighter*, but it does mean that we will be stronger as we carry them. Lent is an opportunity for God's grace to transform us into whom we were made to be. If we become men who are constantly in need of pleasure and comfort, we will never be able to sacrifice ourselves for the love of others. We weren't made for comfort or pleasure. Our lives were meant to be self-donating gifts for God and those around us.
- Jesus gave us the example of self-donation and sacrifice by His death on the cross. Jesus also gave us a roadmap of what our lives are destined to be if we choose to follow Him.

Steve Grass,
President UMM



February Luncheon
Vista Grande Mexican Restaurant
4579 Osage Beach Pkwy
(Across from the Outlet Mall)
February 16@ 11:30AM

Please let Robin Roehl know that you are planning to attend at 314.750.3020.

Harper Chapel Prayer Team

Sue Pierce, Carol Weatherford, Carolyn Moore, Linda Craig,
Beth Hargrave, Chris Poland
Robyn Roehl, Jannette Smith, Helen Schmidt
Eric Schmidt, Sue Fletcher

2 Corinthians 1

He is the one who comforts us in all our trouble so we can
comfort other people who are in every kind of trouble".

We Did it



Harper Chapel volunteers
contributed an impressive 920 hours
to the success of Hope House.
Great job, everyone!

PRAYERS & CONCERNS

Pastor Eric tells us each Sunday we are a people of prayer. Did you know we have a prayer team that is here for you anytime you need us. Prayer Team has been in place for about a year.

How do YOU request Prayer?

1. Fill out a prayer card in the pew and place it on the alter during communion or give it to Pastor Eric.
2. Call or text Pastor Eric or Sue Fletcher (573-480-278).
3. Call the church office.

Unless you specify otherwise, your prayer request will remain confidential to the prayer team only. You can also ask that your request to remain only with Pastor Eric. If you want church-wide prayer, you can ask that your request be placed in the newsletter. Typically, either Pastor Eric or Sue Fletcher will be in touch with you regarding your request. I hope you will consider reaching out for prayer. It is not even necessary to state the details of your needs. God knows and we will pray for his comforting arms to hold you.



Take time to recenter with us on Tuesday mornings. Beginning on Feb. 3, join us virtually for Soul Space, 15-20 minutes of guided reflection and prayer. Designed with both clergy and laity, Soul Space provides space to reflect on the presence of God with a spiritual director. You can join from wherever you're at, whether it's the comfort of your home or your cubicle. Get the Zoom info at www.moumethodist.org/eventdetail/soul-space-2026-19546651

HOW DO YOU START YOUR DAY?

One of the blessings of growing older, you have more choice in how you spend your time. No more children to get off to school, no more rushing out the door to go to work, maybe even no partner waiting for breakfast to be cooked.

What a joy to be able to begin your day by nourishing your soul!

It has been said that connecting with God through prayer is a shower for your **soul**, a meal for your spirit. Daily prayer doesn't have to always involve a large time commitment. What is important is either at the start of your day, at the end of your day or somewhere in between to make it a habit to breathe in the peace of God through prayer. Choose to take time every day to feed your soul.

Sue Fletcher

Harper Ladies



Harper Ladies adopts a new format beginning in March!

If you haven't been before or it's been a while since your last visit, we joyfully invite you to join us!

February Luncheon

Bonnie's Cafe - Back Room
February 12, 2026
11:30AM

Our Speaker

Jen Hull from The Church of Osage Hills will discuss the mission of the food pantry, which serves the homeless and others in need.



Upcoming Format Changes

Our new format will start in March. We plan to gather at Harper Chapel for afternoon coffee or tea, along with dessert, instead of a meal.

Monthly devotions will continue. We will also explore opportunities to serve our community.



The Youth group outreach program is in need of one or two more volunteers to work with the youth in order for the program to continue uninterrupted (one of our volunteers has to retire). To qualify for this position, you must only have patience and be Safe Gatherings certified. If you enjoy being around kids, please consider this opportunity. The Youth group meets on Wednesdays from 6 to 7:30. We have a kid-friendly meal, a Bible lesson, and some games. Two adults are required to be with the kids at all times. Please be in prayer about this need. If you can help, or have questions, contact Pastor Eric (660-238-7817) or Deb Larson (573-280-5203).

Another soul-satisfying weekend for the January opening of God's Closet as it provided family clothing for 44 grateful "shoppers". Among those served was a cancer patient in need of warm, comfortable clothing and another visitor recovering from serious health issues and a nearly 200 pound weight loss requiring clothes to fit her new physique. A Foster Mom looking to outfit her two recently added family members also reached out for assistance. One compassionate patron came to help residents of a long term health care facility replenish their depleting wardrobes. Not necessarily related just to clothing, was opportunity that The Closet provided to a six year old who visited the inside of a church first time.



Next event February 13-14
Noon-3PM

A new wrinkle in our mission is our collaborated effort with Osage Hills Church. Harper Chapel will begin collecting food to supplement their food pantry to help nourish those with food insecurities and the homeless. In turn Osage Hills will donate gently used clothing for our Closet. **Stronger together** is our motto.

This undertaking to serve our community is possible because of the generous donations of church and community members. Our current needs continue to be warm outer wear and additional clothing for toddlers and youth. Don't forget to check the list on the grocery cart in the narthex for suggested foods needed to assist Osage Hills food pantry.

Thank you, we are truly blessed by your continued support.

P.J. Pemberton



Recycle your 'Aluminum cans'
here at Harper Chapel!

Nourish Our Neighbors

A Partnership with the Church at Osage Hills Food Pantry

Harper Chapel membership is invited to join The Church at Osage Hills in love and generosity by donating nutritious, shelf-stable food items that can fill hearts and cupboards alike.

Requested Food Items:

Please consider donating from the list below-these items are affordable, last a long time, and help create balanced meals



Dry beans or lentils	Rice (white or brown)	Canned tuna, chicken or salmon	Peanut butter or nut butter	Rolled oat
Canned vegetables (low sodium)	Canned fruit (in juice not syrup)	Whole grain pasta	Pasta sauce (canned or plastic jars)	Shelf stable milk or plant based milk
Canned soup or stews	Cooking oil (vegetable, olive or canola)			

Please donate cans with pull tab opener Please consider donating heavy bags for homeless to carry groceries.

“Monetary donations are accepted as well, and Church Volunteers will be the hands and feet of Jesus to grocery shop. A \$40.00 donation will purchase food for one family. Checks can be made out to The Church at Osage Hills, Memo Line: Food Basket”

Harper Chapel Leadership Committee
Presents the 2026 Budget &
December 2025 Offerings Expenses

Category	Budget
Administration Expenses	9,000.00
Missions	1,000.00
Apportionments	35,000.00
Outreach Expense	1,100.00
Professional Services	7,400.00
Property & Building Expense	72,500.00
Salaries & Benefits	113,948.00
Payroll Taxes/Insurance	3,780.00
Staff Salaries	20,750.00
Utilities	30,000.00
Worship Expenses	20,000.00
Youth Fund Expenses	1,000.00
Total Budget	<u>315,478.00</u>

<i>December 2025 Offerings & Expenses</i>	
General Tithes, Offerings & Other	39,854.42
December Total Expenses	40,981.48
Net Operating Income	-1,127.07



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