A night sky with a bright star and a church silhouette. The background is a dark blue night sky filled with stars and a bright, multi-pointed star in the upper right. Below the sky, there are silhouettes of mountains and a church with a steeple. The church is white with a red door. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whomever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

John 3:16

Harper Chapel UMC
December 2025

A Note from Pastor Eric

Preparations!

It is the time of year once again where we all run around from one gathering to another. We make lists and work hard to check off all the items on it. Gifts to buy and wrap. Food to buy and cook. So much preparation!

The season of Advent is a time of preparation as well. We often do not utilize the season appropriately. We run around and get ready for the gift giving chaos that enwraps this time of year. So much that distracts us from preparing for the coming of the Son of God.

Advent is a season set aside in the church calendar for the purpose of helping us prepare for the second coming of Christ while celebrating the first coming of Jesus. Advent and Christmas are two separate events in the church world and yet we live in world that has consolidated them both together. Well, that might not be correct, the world seems to have completely forgotten what this season is about anyway. It isn't about Santa and gifts as the world seems to think it is. It is about recognizing that God has come to the earth and became flesh and blood. God has walked among us, taught us, challenged our thinking and ultimately died for us. Christians profess a foundational belief that Jesus Christ lived, died, resurrected from the dead, ascended into heaven, and will come back again.

Advent is meant to help us orientate our hearts and minds toward the things of God with the idea that Jesus is coming again. We are to remember that Jesus isn't staying away but will return to receive us into his eternal presence. That is what we are to be preparing for. That means that we need to refocus our spiritual lives towards the things of God. We are to engage in spiritual disciplines and regular corporate worship. Our lives should be constantly growing towards holiness. So my friends, let us prepare for the coming of the Lord!

Pastor Eric

Christmas Eve Service

7PM

HARPER CHAPEL

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Poinsettias in the Sanctuary

Poinsettias will be in the Sanctuary
for service December 14 and 21.

Plants can be taken home after
Christmas Eve Service

[Poinsettias Order Form](#)
on the Last Page of the
Newsletter





Harper Chapel Christmas Schedule

- Christmas Eve Service - 7PM
- No Bible Study on December 24 & December 31.
- No Youth Group on December 24 & December 31.
- Youth Group will meet on December 10 and 17.
- The office will be closed during the week of December 21. It will reopen December 29 and 30. Will close on December 31, January 1 and 2.
- Service will be held on December 28; however no discussion group after service.
- United Methodist Men Christmas Dinner, December 5 at 6PM, Thompson Hall.



I want to make sure that you know that I am available to you to meet with at any time you need me. There are formal hours that I will be in my office for you stop by and chat about whatever you want (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10-12). You are always welcome to call or text me if you need anything (660-238-7817) or if you want to meet at a time that works best for you. Please note that I do screen my calls, so please leave a message and I will get right back to you!

Pastor Eric

From the Leadership Team:

Our final official 2025 Leadership Team meeting was held on Tuesday, November 18th. We reviewed our finances for the past thirty days and wanted to share the following information:

Income for October 2025:

Tithes & Offerings: \$14,865.71

Facility Use (AA): \$60

Youth Donations: \$72 (Kids donate toward their Wednesday night meals, if possible)

Special Funds:

Pastor Discretionary Fund: \$20

Central Missouri Foster Care (Thanksgiving Food Baskets): \$45

Harper Chapel Scholarship Fund: \$500

Total income run through the Church Budget for October was \$15,562.71.

Expenses for October 2025:

Total Expenses: \$34,364.44

Adjusted Expense Total (after deducting \$18,548.60 for a new AC unit paid for via Special Offerings): \$15,815.54

Breakdown:

Admin: \$659.22 (copier lease, misc.)

Property & Building: \$1,831 (building insurance)

Salaries, Benefits, and Payroll Taxes: \$11,426.20

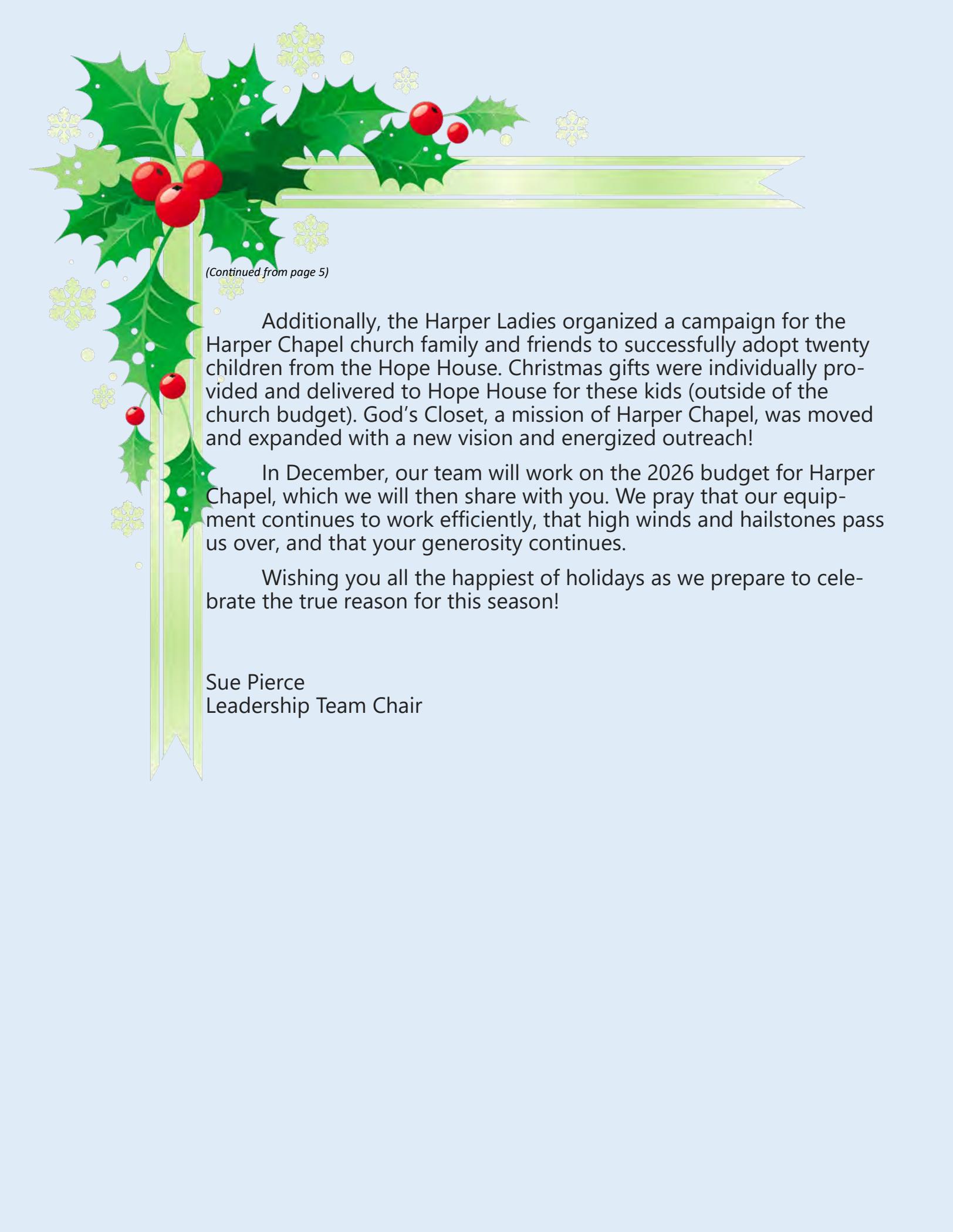
Utilities: \$1,465.60

Worship Expenses (musicians): \$433.92

We are grateful to the anonymous angel who paid the balance of our 2025 apportionments, allowing the Leadership Team to reinvest the funds at the Missouri Foundation that had been withdrawn earlier to meet that obligation.

We also extend our heartfelt thanks to Tom Reth and Bill Smits for their invaluable contributions to the Leadership Team. Their dedication and service to Harper Chapel and their Lord have been greatly appreciated.





(Continued from page 5)

Additionally, the Harper Ladies organized a campaign for the Harper Chapel church family and friends to successfully adopt twenty children from the Hope House. Christmas gifts were individually provided and delivered to Hope House for these kids (outside of the church budget). God's Closet, a mission of Harper Chapel, was moved and expanded with a new vision and energized outreach!

In December, our team will work on the 2026 budget for Harper Chapel, which we will then share with you. We pray that our equipment continues to work efficiently, that high winds and hailstones pass us over, and that your generosity continues.

Wishing you all the happiest of holidays as we prepare to celebrate the true reason for this season!

Sue Pierce
Leadership Team Chair

'TIS THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY?

By long tradition, the holiday season is the best of times: excitement, reunion, sharing, and gratitude. To the person struggling with grief, the holidays can be the worst of times, casting a harsh spotlight on grief and loss. The flood of memories triggered by the season's familiar sights and sounds can create an overwhelming yearning for the return of the absent loved one. If anyone bothered to ask, the bereaved would likely share the "GRIEVERS HOLIDAY BILL OF RIGHTS" to help them get through this emotionally packed season:



1. You have the right to say TIME OUT! Any time you need it. Time to let up, blow a little steam, step away from the holidays, have a "huddle", and start over.
2. You have the right to Laughter which is every bit as important as tears. Tell IT LIKE IT IS. When people ask "how are you...?" you have the right to tell them how you feel, not just what they want to hear.
3. You have the right to some "BAH HUMBUG" DAYS. You are not a bad person just because you don't feel like singing Christmas carols all day.
4. You have the right to DO THINGS DIFFERENTLY. There is no law that says you must always do the Holidays the same way. You can do 10 cards instead of 100-or no cards at all! You can do without a tree, have pizza instead of turkey, etc.
5. You have a right to BE WHERE YOU WANT TO BE. Be at home or with relatives and/or friends.
6. You have the right to SOME FUN! When you have a day that isn't so bad and you feel like doing something just for fun, then do it!
7. You have a right to CHANGE DIRECTION IN MIDSTREAM . Holiday grief is unpredictable. You may be all ready to go somewhere or do something and suddenly be overwhelmed. When it happens, it's okay to change your mind. There's plenty of time in life to be predictable.
8. You have a right to DO THINGS AT DIFFERENT TIMES. Don't be a slave to the holiday clock.
9. You have a right to REST, PEACE, AND SOLITUDE. You don't have to be busy all the time. Take a nap whenever you need one. Take time to pray and meditate, to recharge your spirit.
10. You have the right to DO IT ALL DIFFERENTLY AGAIN NEXT YEAR. Just because you change things one year--does not mean you have written it in stone. Next year you can always change it back or do it yet another new way.

Bruce Conley
1992

Submitted by
Billye Bennett, RN

BITTERSWEET CHRISTMAS

By Carmen Brining, Bereaved Parent

I dread Christmas-gaudy with its bangles and bows and tinsel.

It is contrived, a frenzied whirlwind

That pushes me and pulls me along

In the guise of happy-ever-after and universal love.

I am side-stepping this kind of holiday

For mine is a bittersweet Christmas.

Our son died and left too many never-mores.

It's the love-no-longer-here that diminishes Christmas.

Yet Christmas still comes.

It is, after all, a unique time to acknowledge love.

But sadness and Christmas don't mix,

And I cannot promise much.

As I struggle, a Christmas song fills the air:

For unto us a Child is born,

Unto us a Son is given ...

Suddenly, there is something I never saw before.

We celebrate this day because of Christ's birth-His coming.

Yet with every coming there is a going.

A son, God's Son, had to leave in order to come to us.

Here, even at this first Christmas, when the star lit the earth,

And the angels sang to announce the Babe, God's gift of love,

Was there not an emptiness in the heavens because Christ left?

Was not God, the Father, Himself sad? Christmas and sadness do mix!

O God, You do understand, don't You, my own bittersweet Christmas?

Peace and Grace,

Billye Bennett, RN

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

The Grief Support Group is cancelled for the months of December through March. At that time, an evaluation will be done whether the group will continue.



ARE YOU IN NEED OF MEDICAL EQUIPMENT?



If so, our medical loan closet
contains these items:

OUR EQUIPMENT

- Shower Seats ✓
- Stool Elevator ✓
- Electric Wheelchair ✓
- Electric Scooter ✓
- Crutches & Walkers ✓
- Standard Wheelchair ✓

MORE INFORMATION

To Access the Closet
Contact the Parish Nurse
Billye Bennett





**2nd Friday & Saturday
of Every Month**

**Starting December 12, 2025
11AM-2PM**

- Shopping events are open to anyone in need of gently used clothing.
- Available in various sizes for men, women, children and infants.
- Items are provided at no cost.



5567 Osage Beach Pkwy
Osage Beach, MO 65065
573-348-2617
www.harperumc.org
office@harperchapel.org

Anyone interested in helping with God's Closet, please call or text Geniece Tyler at 573.480.4847

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



DECEMBER 5
THOMPSON HALL AT 6:00 PM
NO ADMISSION CHARGE!
ENTERTAINMENT PROVIDED BY
THE CAMDENTON SCHOOL BELCANTOS

Those attending are asked to bring a side or
dessert to share with others

A Christmas Group Event



Sunday, December 7

3:00PM

Tickets

Senior Adult - \$22.00

Adult - \$23.00

Available for purchase at

Main Street Music Hall

Blair's Landing

1048 Main St. Osage Beach

Contact Chris Poland

for more information and to reserve seating.

Cut-off date is Wednesday, December 3

(573) 745-7245

Email: nanaplnd49@aol.com



Happy Birthday

Buddy Brayfield—4th

Dennis Brouillette—6th

P.J. Mossman—7th

Julia Clark—8th

Norm Vojtech—8th

Judy Jansma—16th

Rose Richey—17th

Maurice Knudson—17th

Sue Pierce—21st

Kiley Bentley—21st

Joe Barber—25th

Marcia Murrow—27th

Roy Witham—28th

Kathy Hoemeyer—30th

Poinsettia Order Form

Janine's Flowers is offering Poinsettias for \$20 each this year.
They will be in a 6" pot with red foil.

QTY

_____ In Loving Memory of _____

_____ In Honor of _____

_____ Happy Birthday Jesus!

From _____



*Thank You
for Adding to the
Beauty of Christmas*

**Please feel free to take
the plant home after
service on Dec.24.**

For more information, please feel free to call the church office:
573-348-2617