CHENEY
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
To Seek, Serve, and Share Jesus Christ

Newsletter

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When Did Killing Become Entertainment?

A few weeks ago, while I was in Kansas City at a theology conference, I read a news story that made me stop and ask: What on earth is happening to us?

Our Secretary of Defense (or, as he wants to be called, “Secretary of War”), Pete Hegseth, announced plans to livestream the execution of Nidal Hasan, the former Army psychiatrist convicted of murdering thirteen people at Fort Hood in 2009. The execution, scheduled for December 3, would be carried out by firing squad, with the public invited to watch.

Yes, you read that correctly: our government was planning to turn the killing of a human being into a public spectacle.
Thankfully, following widespread criticism, President Trump canceled the livestream. The execution itself, however, is still scheduled to take place.

Now, to be clear: Hasan committed horrific crimes. Thirteen people lost their lives, dozens more were wounded, and countless families were changed forever. Justice matters. Accountability matters. And the suffering of victims and their families must never be forgotten.

But I must ask: *When did killing become entertainment?*
And when did we begin confusing justice with revenge?



As Christians, we follow someone who was himself publicly executed by the government.
Crucifixion wasn't simply about killing someone. The Roman Empire used it to demonstrate power, humiliate its enemies, and send a warning to anyone who dared challenge its authority. People were meant to watch. Fear was the point.

While there, hanging on a cross, Jesus responded not with a call for revenge, but with words of forgiveness: **“Father forgive them, for they do not know what they do.” (Luke 23:34)**
That should make us pause and think. Our United Methodist Church has a clear position on capital punishment. Our Social Principles state:

"Our commitment to the inherent dignity and worth of every person and our historic stance as United Methodists compels us to oppose capital punishment and the imposition of the death penalty." (The Social Principals – The Political Community – Section D, 2024)

Our church calls for the abolition of the death penalty. Not because we believe terrible crimes should go unpunished, but because we believe every human being possesses a dignity that even their worst actions cannot erase. And because we believe in grace.
We believe that God can redeem, restore, and transform human lives, even lives that have caused unimaginable suffering. But here's what troubles me even more.

Sometimes I hear people speak about God as though God celebrates harsh punishment, cruelty, and the suffering of those considered undeserving. And some of those same voices become furious when the government helps people experiencing poverty, welcomes immigrants, feeds hungry families, provides healthcare to the sick, or protects the planet we call home.

And I find myself thinking: A god who celebrates public executions and gets furious when we feed the hungry, welcome the stranger, care for the sick, help the poor, and protect God's creation is not the God revealed in Jesus Christ. That is a god we have invented in our own image, shaped by our fears, our greed, and our desire for power.

Thought-full

Because when I read the Gospels, I encounter a vastly different God.

- A God who tells us to love our enemies.
- A God who identifies with the hungry, the stranger, the sick, and the imprisoned (Matthew 25).
- A God who challenges those who use religion to justify their power.
- A God who, even while dying on a cross, refuses to let hatred have the final word.

Friends, I am not suggesting that following Jesus means abandoning justice or ignoring evil. Quite the opposite. Following Jesus means taking justice so seriously that we refuse to confuse it with vengeance. It means recognizing that we can condemn someone's actions without denying their humanity.

It means remembering that no government, no political party, and no religious leader gets to redefine the character of God to suit their own agenda. And most importantly, it means allowing Jesus to challenge our understanding of God rather than expecting God to agree with everything we already believe.

So here is my invitation to you this month: the next time someone tells you what God wants, ask yourself a simple question:
Does this look like Jesus?

Because if the god we worship looks more like an emperor demanding blood than a Savior extending grace, perhaps it is time to take another look at whom we are actually following.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Damian

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A Quick Note from your Office Administrator:

Online fraud and phishing emails are becoming more common. As a church, we are welcoming and generous by nature, which can make us targets for scammers. You may receive emails or even text messages that seem like they come from a familiar person or email address, or the sender may be unfamiliar but provided just enough information to make you uncertain.
Here are a few requests our church leadership will **NEVER** send and should be treated as spam/phishing attempts:

- Gift cards, cryptocurrency, or card numbers
- Money transfers via Zelle, Venmo, or similar services
- Confidential financial requests
- Personal information like banking info, birthdates, or Social Security numbers
- Copies of the church directory.

If you are not sure about the origin or content of a message or email, please **do not** reply to the sender, click any links, or scan any QR codes. **Do** reach out to myself or Pastor Damian in the church office. I have taken a lot of training on determining scams and phishing and am happy to help sort it out.

Thank you all for always seeking and serving Jesus,
Macey

Time to Celebrate

Pre-Charge Conference in October: Looking Ahead Together

On Sunday, October 18, we gathered after worship for our Pre-Charge Conference, focusing on two important topics: our Building Project and the leadership of Cheney UMC.

Pastor Damian reminded us of the WHY behind our Building Project, while Trustees Chair Patti Sooy walked us through the different phases of construction. If you haven't received a Building Project Booklet yet, please pick one up at church or find the digital version on our website: https://www.cheneyumc.org/construction-project

The booklet also includes a pledge form for both our 2027 General Budget and Building Project Fund. We invite you to prayerfully consider your commitment. We will collect and dedicate these pledges during worship on **Sunday, November 15 (not on the 22nd!)**

Following the presentation, we introduced and voted on nominations for several church leadership positions. We are grateful to welcome the following individuals:

- Church Council (Members at Large): Carol Kriegh, Mary Jane Shervais, and Jon Bennett
- Finance Committee: Roger Bertsch
- Trustees Committee: Nelson Cordill and Rosana Brooks
- Staff-Parish Relations Committee (SPRC): Caren Lincoln, Karen Runyon, and Lisa Tharp

Some nominations were approved by the members present, while additional nominations were subsequently confirmed by the Church Council. Together, these names now form our official Nominations Report for the upcoming Charge Conference.

Our official Charge Conference will take place on **Thursday, November 19, at 6:00 PM**. Everyone is warmly invited to attend! Voting rights at this meeting are reserved for Church Council members and retired clergy.

Finally, a heartfelt **THANK YOU** to everyone who participated, prayed, voted, and continues to carry the ministry of Cheney UMC forward. Whether you are stepping into leadership for the first time or committing to another three-year term, your willingness to serve is a gift to our congregation.

May God bless you, your leadership, and the ministry we share as we continue to Seek, Serve, and Share Jesus Christ!

Pastor Damian



Dates to Remember

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, November 1st – All Saints Sunday - 10 AM
With Communion
Rev. Dale Cockrum is preaching on Job 1:13-22

Sunday, November 8 – Final Batman Service – 10 AM
Pastor Damian Carruthers is preaching on Matthew 4:1-11.

Sunday, November 15 – Stewardship Sunday -10 AM
Bring your pledge forms!
Pastor Damian Carruthers is preaching on Exodus 32:20-29 + 36:3-7

Sunday, November 22 – Guest Preacher - 10 AM
Guest Preacher Shawna Breese is preaching.

Sunday, November 29 – 1st of Advent - 10 AM
Kick-off of our new Advent Series
Pastor Damian Carruthers is preaching on Luke 1:1-23

Pastor's Absence

Pastor Damian is out of office through November 5th for his stepfather's funeral in Germany.

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS!

1	Becky Reilly
	Elena Knouff
3	Loretta Glaze
	Saralynn Kerr
14	Flint Simonsen
15	Chuck Kriegh
18	Coleen Lacy
19	Caren Lincoln
20	Josie Kriegh
23	Joan Foote
26	Macey Fredenberg
28	Zoeann Osborne
29	Roger Bertsch

Need to update your birthday/anniversary information? Email the church office!

Church Office Hours *Church office closed Thanksgiving Week. Macey out of town the 21st-29th	Tuesday	10am-12:30pm
		2:30-5pm
	Thursday	6:30-8:30pm
Choir Rehearsal	Wednesday	7-9:30pm
Bible Studies: contact the church office for addresses.		
With Cheney Congregational Church, at CCC in November	Thursday	1:15-2:15pm
Leader: Margie Lindner	Monday	2-3pm
Leader: Carol Kriegh	Monday	7:30-8:30pm
Leader: Saralynn Kerr	Wednesday	7-8pm

November 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 **All Saints Sunday** 	2 AA Meeting 7-9pm	3 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm Scouts 5:30-8:30	4 Al Anon Meeting 11:30am-1:30pm Choir 7-8:30pm	5 WIC All Day Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	6	7 Holiday Baxaar! 9am-2pm
8	9 AA Meeting 7-9pm	10 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm Scouts 5:30-8:30	11 Al Anon Meeting 11:30am-1:30pm Choir 7-8:30pm	12 WIC All Day Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	13	14
15 Stewardship Sunday	16 AA Meeting 7-9pm	17 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm Scouts 5:30-8:30	18 Al Anon Meeting 11:30am-1:30pm Choir 7-8:30pm Sassy Senior Society 2-3:30pm	19 WIC All Day Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm	20	21
22 Memorial for Lynn Gronlund	23 AA Meeting 7-9pm	24 Meals on Wheels 11am-1pm Scouts 5:30-8:30	25 Al Anon Meeting 11:30am-1:30pm Choir 7-8:30pm	26 THANKSGIVING	27	28
29 Advent Begins Thanksgiving Fellowship Meal	30 AA Meeting 7-9pm FEED CHENEY 5:30pm Wren Pierson Building 615 4th Street					

Pastor Damian on on leave | Pastor Damian on leave | Pastor Damian on leave | Pastor Damian on leave

Church Office Closed | Church Office Closed | Church Office Closed

Pastor Damian's day off is Friday. Please allow him to enjoy his day off and do not contact him on Fridays. Thank you!

Building for the Future

Our Fundraising Booklet Is Here!

Friends, over the past several months we have talked, dreamed, asked questions, looked at plans, and imagined what the future of our church building could look like. Now we are excited to share the next step!
Our new Building for the Future Fundraising Booklet is available. It brings together the vision for our building project, the different phases of construction, estimated costs, and information about the different ways you can financially support the project.
If you haven't taken a copy yet, please pick one up at church and take some time to read through it or go to our website and read it in a digital way.
This booklet isn't simply about construction. It is about why we believe these improvements matter: creating a church that is more accessible, welcoming, functional, and ready to serve our congregation and the Cheney community for generations to come.

Commitment Sunday — November 15

After you have had time to read, pray, and consider, we will celebrate Commitment Sunday on November 15 (not 22nd as mentioned int he last Newsletter). On that Sunday, we will invite everyone to bring a pledge form with two separate commitments:

- ***Your General Fund Pledge*** supports the everyday ministry of Cheney UMC - our staff, worship, outreach, ministries, utilities, and all the things that allow us to Seek, Serve, and Share Jesus Christ throughout the year.
- ***Your Building Fund Pledge*** is an ***additional*** commitment specifically toward our Building for the Future project.

Keeping these two commitments separate is important. We don't want to build for the future at the expense of the ministry happening today! The commitments we receive will help our Church Council and Finance Committee plan the 2027 budget and, just as importantly, determine what is financially possible for the building project: which phases we can undertake, whether some phases can happen together, and when construction can begin.

Pray. Consider. Imagine.

Between now and November 15, we invite you to do three simple things:

- Pray about how you might participate.
- Consider what you can faithfully give, whether through a one-time gift, a monthly pledge, securities, or another form of giving.
- And imagine what we can accomplish together.

There is no single "right" amount. Every household and every financial situation is different. What matters is that we prayerfully consider what each of us can do as part of this shared effort.
Because ultimately, we aren't simply raising money for a building.
We are preparing a place where children can grow up, neighbors can find community, people of all abilities can participate fully, someone new can walk through our doors and find welcome, and generations we haven't even met yet can experience the love of God.
Building for the Future, together.

The Church Council

How does a weary world rejoice?

Let's face it: Our world is weary. Wars, political divisions, uncertainty, and the challenges of everyday life can leave us feeling exhausted. And sometimes, when Christmas comes around, we feel this pressure to be joyful, cheerful, and full of holiday spirit. But what if we're just not feeling it?

Here's the good news: The very first Christmas happened in a weary world, too!
Jesus was born into a world marked by poverty, oppression, political turmoil, and fear. And yet, right in the middle of it all, God showed up. Not in a palace, not with an army, but as a vulnerable child. And with that child came the promise of hope and great joy.

This Advent, our worship series asks a simple but powerful question:
How Does a Weary World Rejoice?

Through the opening chapters of Luke's Gospel, we'll explore how joy can exist alongside grief, uncertainty, and exhaustion. We'll discover that rejoicing doesn't mean pretending everything is wonderful. Sometimes it means acknowledging our weariness, finding strength in community, making room for hope, and remembering that we are deeply loved by God.
And we invite you to go deeper!

Alongside our Sunday worship services, we will offer four **Advent Bible studies, starting in the week of Monday, November 23** using a beautifully designed devotional booklet that includes Scripture, reflections, poetry, art, and opportunities for personal prayer.
The Advent Study Booklets **will be available for $7** each at church. If you prefer a digital version, just let us know, and we'll gladly provide one upon request.

Whether you're feeling full of Christmas excitement or simply trying to make it through another busy season, there's a place for you in this journey. Perhaps the greatest message of Christmas is not that everything is perfect, but that God comes close to us, especially when life is far from perfect.

This Advent, let's discover together
how a weary world can still rejoice!

Pastor Damian



Excited for the Future

Thanksgiving Lunch on November 29!

Let's gather with hearts full of gratitude and plates full of Thanksgiving favorites! Our **November Adult Fellowship** will take place **right after worship on Sunday, November 29**, and you won't want to miss it.
We're planning a full-on **Thanksgiving feast**—turkey, dressing, potatoes, pies, and all the delicious fixings! Come hungry and ready for food, fun, and fellowship. Be sure to **sign up on the "Door of Opportunity"** so we can set a place for you at the table.
And yes, we normally do it the Sunday before Thanksgiving, but due to Lynn Gronlund's funeral on November 22, we will do it one week later. We hope you are still able to come – maybe with leftovers from Thanksgiving?

Mittens

The mitten tree for WIC (the Women, Infants and Children program housed at our church) has been a wonderful success the last 2 years. So let's do it again! Donations of mittens, undies, pajamas, books etc. can be brought and placed on or under the Christmas tree in the narthex. The tree will **collect items from November 15-29.** WIC will have an open house for their clients in December for families to receive these donations. Have fun shopping for kids!

A Heartfelt Thank You to Carolyn Jess!

Over the past two months, we have been blessed to have Carlyn Jess share her wonderful musical talents with us at Cheney UMC! When we needed someone to step in at the piano during September and October, Carolyn graciously answered the call. We are so grateful for her willingness to help, for the beautiful music she brought to our worship services, and for the opportunity to get to know her.

Carolyn, thank you for sharing your time, talent, and love of music with our congregation! We hope this isn't goodbye, but simply see you again soon! Whether you're visiting us for worship or returning to the piano for an occasional Sunday, you will always be warmly welcomed!

From all of us at Cheney UMC: THANK YOU, Carolyn!



Coat Drive!

Over 250 coats were donated to this year's community coat drive. Many of those were distributed at Feed Cheney, even more at Salnave Elementary School and the remainder went to the Community Clothing Bank.

Many thanks to all who donated or helped distribute and special thanks to the Kiwanians who always assist with this annual event. It will be a warmer winter for many Cheney families this year.

THANK YOU!



News from our Community



HENRY

THE MASKS WE WEAR

Heroes come in all ages and sizes. Most of you know Henry and Alice who are at church regularly for Sunday Experience and who always greet us with big hugs and helping hands. You may have also noticed that Henry has a new look. This summer he cut his long hair and donated it for wigs for kids. What a beautiful and generous act of love on Henry's part. He is a genuine hero!

Survey Says... Cheney UMC Feud Is Coming in 2027!

We asked 100 church members to name something they love about Cheney UMC... Okay, we haven't actually asked them yet. But that's where YOU come in!
In 2027, we're bringing a little game-show excitement to our Adult Fellowship Time with Cheney UMC Feud, our very own version of the popular TV show *Family Feud*!
But before we can play, we need YOUR answers!

Over the next two months, we're inviting all Cheney UMC members, friends, and worship attendees to participate in a fun survey. Your responses will become the answers our contestants will try to guess during the game. The more people participate, the more fun (and unpredictable!) the game will be!
And don't worry, you don't have to be a contestant to participate in the survey. We need everyone's input and it will be anonymous!

Scan the QR code to take the survey. (link will also be emailed)

A reminder about Adult Fellowship Time:
We usually gather on the second Sunday of each month at 6 PM, beginning with a potluck meal, followed by fellowship, games, and plenty of laughter.

Before we kick off our 2027 adventures, we have two special gatherings coming up:

- **November 29 – Thanksgiving Lunch** (See the article in this newsletter for details)
- **December 13 – Annual White Elephant Party**: Get ready for one of our favorite holiday traditions! More details will follow in next month's newsletter.

Whether you're a game-show enthusiast, a potluck professional, or simply enjoy spending time with wonderful people, there's a place for you at Adult Fellowship Time.
So fill out that survey, mark your calendars, and get ready to hear those famous words:
SURVEY SAYS...!



FEED Cheney

FREE HOT MEAL & SLIPPERS AND HATS

WHEN

5:30 PM MONDAY

NOVEMBER 30, 2026

For accommodation contact Cheney Parks and Recreation at 509-498-9250 by November 25.

WHERE

Wren Pierson Building

615 4th Street, Cheney

FOR MORE INFORMATION

509.498.9250

WWW.FEEDCHENEY.COM

CHENEY
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
To Seek, Serve, and Share Jesus Christ

Newsletter

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Return Service Requested

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