We're Still Here to Serve

“With God’s help, we hope to be a service to our surrounding community and all the way to the nations because God has put a love in our hearts to help people.”

When Laurie Emerson met Charlie Sharpe, she valued her independent spirit and her highly structured life. Once she and Charlie were married, she realized those two things didn’t fit well anymore. Instead of finding comfort in her independence and organization, she began to feel higher and higher levels of anxiety.

Finally, in a search for help and comfort, she turned back to her Catholic roots. Of course, she took the journey secretly, because Charlie wasn’t interested in religion at that point in his life. And, as Laurie puts it, Charlie had a strong personality. The secret caused anxiety, though. So she eventually told Charlie she had returned to church to get her life in order. He explained that what she needed was a personal relationship with Jesus. Even though Charlie wasn’t living for God, he told Laurie how to confess to Jesus that she was a sinner in need of Him as Lord.

“I prayed; nothing happened. For about two weeks I tried and nothing happened. I finally told Charlie that prayer didn’t work. He informed me I wasn’t desperate enough then. I sure felt desperate. The next morning I tried again explaining to the Lord, ‘Seriously, if I don’t have You in my life I’m not going to make it.’ At that moment Jesus made Himself real to me. He delivered me from anxiety and from a selfish kind of independence, although I’m still a work in progress. My life has been totally different since November 25, 1992, when I met Jesus. And it continues to grow each year.”

Part of that growth came through grief when Laurie’s beloved husband of more than twenty-five years died in 2017. On top of dealing with her own sense of loss, Laurie also took on the load of becoming owner/president of Ozark National Life Insurance Company, CNS International Ministries, and Sharpe Holdings. She believes this indicates that God has a sense of humor.

“I began working for Charlie as his secretary in February, 1981. Through his training, I became the office agency manager until we started Heartland in 1995. Then, I continued to manage numerous areas, applying the training and principles Charlie taught me. Ozark and Heartland are both something we did together. But, today, this is something completely different.”

Laurie doesn’t feel that she has any special qualifications for the role she now carries. Although she does believe God called her. That, along with excellent leadership teams in every business and department, has helped her make this transition.

At the heart of everything Laurie oversees is a desire to help people. Heartland Community Church and the various recovery ministries demonstrate that. Laurie hopes people in our surrounding area know we are still here to serve.

“Heartland is made up of a bunch of sinners who have been redeemed. There is nothing special about us other than what God has done within us. We are all a work in progress. With God’s help, we hope to be a service to our surrounding community and all the way to the nations because God has put a love in our hearts to help people.”

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Please stop by! Whether it’s for church, eating at one of the restaurants, shopping at the Thrift Store, or booking a retreat for your church group... We’re here to serve!

Heartland Christian Academy...... 660-284-6300
Heartland Christian College....... 660-284-4800
Heartland Community Church...... 660-284-6330
Heartland Recovery Centers....... 660-284-6212
Calvary Medical Center............. 660-284-4300
Cleansing Waters Laundry......... 660-284-4131
Heartland Auto Repair & Body ...... 660-284-6377
Heartland Telecommunications... 660-284-6152
Mission House Thrift Store......... 660-284-6212
New Creation Country Store....... 660-284-6347
Ozark Lodge & Steakhouse.......... 660-284-6333
Scribbles & Scribes Ink............. 660-284-6230
Solid Rock Cafe...................... 660-284-6371

facebook.com/heartlandmissouri

What’s New in this Missouri Cornfield?

Chris Powell was raised in a traditional church in New Zealand. “I knew all the Bible stories,” he says. “And I thought, ‘this’s for old women and kids, but I am a teenager now, and the world has a lot of things to go after and try out!”

He didn’t find any lasting purpose or fulfillment in those things, though. One night, when he was about twenty, he came home from the tavern and noticed the stars were especially bright. “I looked up and thought, ‘There is someone, something out there. What is the purpose of life? I want to know. All these stars, this earth, life, did not just happen. I want to know who’s out there.’”

A co-worker invited Chris to a spirit filled church. It was different than anything he had experienced before. “I was surprised to hear them talking about the same God I had heard about as a child. I knew the stories. But the preacher seemed to really believe himself, and spoke with authority. I ended up at the altar call not really knowing what was going on, but I could see life in the eyes of these people, I wanted what they had.”

Someone gave Chris a Bible to take home, and they told him to read the book of John. “I could hardly believe myself, and spoke with authority. I ended up at the altar call not really knowing what was going on, but I could see life in the eyes of these people, I wanted what they had.”

“After a few trips to China, we called us one night, and we talked for five minutes. Pastor Charlie said, ‘Well you don’t know me, and I don’t know you, what do you think?’

I replied, ‘Let’s do it.’ That was 1996.”

Since then, Chris has worked in every department on the farm side of Pasture. He is proud of the dairy cows as well as the beef cattle. He is able to work with managers and people who have laid down their lives for the call God has placed on them. It is an honor and privilege to do so.”

Robert added that the sale of Heartland Dairy to Milk Source was a good transaction. “They are a solid company with a reputation for community involvement. That’s one of the things that was important to us in this process—keeping jobs and revenue coming into our local community. Their new milling partner is under construction and expected to be running in April.”

Robert has the heart to see God glorified in all that he does.

Robert Hampton

Ten years of drug addiction and brokenness led Robert Hampton to the Heartland Men’s Recovery Program in March of 2009. He came to the program not wanting anything to do with the things of God. However after a couple months of hearing Pastor Kris Palmer preach about sin and the salvation message. Robert says, “I realized how messed up I was and how desperately I needed Jesus. At the age of 29, I gave my life to the Lord.”

Robert has accepted the role of General Manager of Sharpe Holdings Inc., which can seem like a big job. But Robert is used to hard work. “My Dad had always taught me to work, and I was taught to work. I have always been working for a man of vision whose main goal was helping others and winning souls.”

Chris hasn’t lost his love for missions, either. He has been on several trips and has recently been helping with farming projects in Tanzania. “I like to help others who are not as fortunate as we are, using agriculture as a door into other countries and lives I have never been to.”

Whether he is working on a farm in Northeast Missouri or clearing land in Africa, Chris has found that fulfillment he searched for as a young man. “Now, the highlight of every day is being able to encourage people to go after God with all they have.”

Sharpe Holdings, Inc.

Gathering as God’s Family

Heartland Community Church

You may also watch Sunday services via livestream online at www.Heartlandmo.com, or you can watch live at facebook.com/HeartlandMissouri.

Our weekly show, Straight from the Heart, can be viewed at our website, or on these Quincy, IL TV stations: WGEM Channel 10 Sunday, 9am WDRK Channel 16 Sunday, 7am

To contact the church office, write to: 6417 Shelby 501, Suite A, Beth, MO 63434, or phone 660-284-8309.

Pastor Kris Palmer and his wife Martha are currently living in the Heartland community and look forward to getting to know people like you so that they and Heartland Community Church can better serve the needs of this area. While Kris spent his growing-up years living in many different states and attending many different schools, Martha is a local Missouri girl, having grown up near Atlanta, MO, where she attended all twelve years of school.

Both Kris and Martha had the privilege of being raised in homes with people who loved God, loved serving in their churches, and loved serving their neighbors in small towns and rural communities. This foundation led them to have a great desire to do the same. They have spent much of their married lives actively engaged in rural churches, loving and engaging with people in the small communities surrounding those churches. They look forward to continuing that lifestyle as they work with their Heartland neighbors.

“We moved to Heartland for the last fifteen years and have seen many changes throughout those years,” said Kris. “Rural communities face unique challenges in today’s society, and there is hope in Christ for real change. I believe that local churches can be instrumental in bringing about those changes. Rather than shrinking back or ignoring the issues of the day, we desire as a church to press forward and help people find solutions that are driven by faith.”

Pastor Kris invites everyone to join the church in its mission of loving and engaging with people in the small communities surrounding Heartland. For more information, you can visit the church website at heartlandmo.com, find us on Facebook, or stop by the church during our open house Sunday afternoon.

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AUDREY EMERSON
Andrea Edmundson and her late husband, John, came to Heartland as pioneers in the early days and helped establish the foundation in both a practical and spiritual sense. Before his passing, John left the crew that built most of the buildings and many of the houses at Heartland.

Audrey also laid a foundation at Heartland, but hers was in worship. She played the piano during church services for many years. Audrey has also poured her heart and time into developing the Women’s Recovery Program at Heartland while remaining the couple’s two children, David and Danielle.

Audrey has great compassion for the women who come into the recovery center, and she has a strong hope for them, as well.

“I grew up in a Christian home, went to a Christian school and attended church. I knew all about God, but I didn’t know Him. I bought into the secular worldview of what constituted success and womanhood as opposed to God’s view. The more I sought after the world, the emptier my life became, until alcohol began to consume me and destroyed everything good in my life.”

Audrey entered Teen Challenge at the age of thirty-four. She credits that one-year program with helping her learn to do the Word of God as opposed to just intellectually knowing the right answers. “As I began to walk it, God transformed my life.”

Even so, helping other women was not Audrey’s plan in life. “When I entered Teen Challenge the last thing I wanted to do was to work with a bunch of women.” But, as God poured into me and brought healing and restoration, He also brought the desire to turn and help other women who were hurting and broken.”

“I want everyone to know that we don’t have to walk in the brokenness of hurt, feeling used and abused, always clutching to find love and acceptance. For He has not despaired nor abhorred the affliction of the afflicted; neither has he hidden His face from him, but when he cried to Him for help, He heard; ‘but God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)’.”

ADRIENNE MILLER
Adrienne Miller says she “really got saved at a church, after being in the women’s recovery program just under a month. ‘I don’t remember what Pastor Charlie was preach ing,’ she recalled, ‘but I knew I had to get up to the altar. Going to the altar and praying this time was very differ ent than the times I had done it before. I knew it was real, and I was no longer play ing the ‘perfect little church girl’ game. This time was for keeps. It was the first time I realized that it took a real, working relationship with Jesus to have victory over sin. Since then, God has graciously delivered me from depression and feelings of worthlessness.’”

“The Women’s Recovery Program was what I needed to get my life back on track. I had done a great job of making my life a huge mess at the ripe age of twenty-one. I was able to come to the program knowing I was a mess, and that I needed help getting my mess straightened up. As I put through the pro gram I felt a reconceptualizing of what had been in my heart for years, helping people. I didn’t know that it would be working with the youth or working at the women’s home, but I was open for whatever God had for me.’”

At that point Adrienne had no idea that working full-time in the women’s home for an extended number of years was in her future, let alone becoming the director of the program.

“Many of us are aware of the des perate need around us, and most of us want to help. You may be asking yourself, ‘How do I help my loved one? I don’t know anything about addiction.’”

“You can help by placing a phone call to get some general information about one of our recovery programs or you can invite a friend who is struggling in life to come with you to one of our church services. Perhaps it starts with taking someone to dinner and just being a listening ear. Let us know if we can help, we are here to serve.”

JOHN GRAVE
John Grave had been in the Heartland Men’s Recovery Center for three months when he knew it was time to give God complete control of his life. He was thirty-seven years old, working at Cleansing Waters Laundry, and helpless to do anything to change his own life. “I was saved March 12, 2009, in a Power Barn service at the Center,” John says. “I don’t remember the topic of the message, but I knew it was time.”

John does remember the men who helped him in the following days and years as he learned to walk closer to God. “I have had wonderful men in my life, since being here, to serve alongside and under.”

“Of those one man was a mis sionary from India named Joseph. During Joseph’s stay at Heartland, he also worked at Cleansing Waters, and he spoke to John about reading and learning the Bible. Joseph came all the way from India to the Missouri communities to give John the first scripture passage that really belonged to his own. ‘If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.’”

JOHN 1:9

“Something else that came from John’s time at Cleansing Waters was his meeting his future wife. John mar ried the former Heather Florea Clary a few years later, and the whole com munity celebrated with them. John and Heather are a wonderful picture of the restoration and blessing God loves to provide for His people.”

Today, John serves as the Director of the same program that helped him find his way to Jesus. “I am a product of this program myself. I’ve been where a lot of these men are. ‘While I never dreamed of serving in this posi tion, I consider it an awesome privi lege.’”

“The 18-month Heartland Men’s program is firmly rooted in Christian principles and built around the local church, cultivating change through the power of the Gospel. It is our goal to equip men with the life changing truths found in the Bible and then give them a structured environment to walk out and apply those same truths. Daily life includes attending church, Bible studies, prayer and chapel services, memorizing Scripture, serving in the community, learning what it means to have a good work ethic, and developing healthy relationships.”

John and his team are working together to lead by example, showing others that God really does redeem and restore when we put our trust in Him.

“Porch talks” with Adrienne (left) and Audrey are just one of the ways women are being discipled at the Women’s Home in Heartland. In addition, a second home for women and their children as they learn to live life together once again.

Fordham 2011
Aspire to be the leader of a school. To went on to earn undergraduate and rated from that same Bible college and moved to Heartland. Later, I gradu the means by which I a part of a local Bible was certainly a culture. “Moving to Kirks in Kirksville, MO, on a to attend college at Tru was hurt and near the point of giv excesses. “The truth is that I age. However, as a teenager he re God’s word into his heart at an early had been raised in church where his formed my life in an instant.”

Pray for peace and safety in schools across the land—and that competent, wholesome instruction and truth will be poured into the hearts and minds of the next generation.

Gbps Kids
david & Elizabeth sharps
Our editors recently spoke with David and Elizabeth Sharps (pictured below with their family) about their life-long interest in working with chil and the different paths that brought them to the middle of these endeavors.

On Their Love for Kids...
Elizabeth: Growing up I have al ways loved working with children. I felt it was a gift that God had given me. One year my dad took a trip to Malaysia and was able to work in the orphanages. He brought home pictures and a video of his trip, and I fell in love. I knew what I want ed to do. I wanted to move to Malay sia and run my own orphanage.

David: I’ve always loved kids, too. I grew up in a family of eight children and came from a family of seven siblings so that probably something had to do with it. I was an unusual boy who really en joyed babysitting and spending time with kids. As I grew older, however, I became interested in other things so I never really invested any time or educa tion into that area.

On Their Journey to Faith...
Elizabeth: I asked Jesus to come and live in my heart when I was six years old, and I’ve been a Christian since. As I grew older I began to really understand the importance of hav ing my own personal relationship with Jesus Christ and I rededicated my life to Him when I was 13. As I grew in my relationship with Je sus I realized that I had made Him the Saviour of my soul, but I was not allowing Him to completely be the Lord of my life, to really be in con trol. I got baptized at age 22 to sym bolize I was going to allow Him to be in control of my life.

David: I was raised in Phoenix, Arizona until I was eighteen years old, and I made a series of choices that ended with me kicking it out of my house.

At the offer of my Grandpa, I moved to Missouri in November of 2003 and became part of the Heart land Youth Program. I continued with school at Heartland Christian Academy (HCA) as a senior and joined with four other students. One Saturday night in Febru ary, one of the group leaders asked me to lay my life before God and pray with him. I had already been very emo tional before going. When we ar rived, I quickly went to the front of the church and knelt at the altar. I asked for forgiveness and decided that I wanted a relationship with Christ for the rest of my life.

On Their Work with Children Today...
Elizabeth: My childhood dream has never left. Today, I manage the HCA Samuel Center here at Heart land, caring for children from ages six to 18. My heart has been healing and restored, and I feel God’s love. My life is full of blessings and joy. Though God has given me the desire of my heart, just not how I had expected it.

David: In 2013, I felt the call ing and burden to do more with our children here at Heartland, specia lly the younger ages, prior to mid dle and high school. After many con versations and prayer, we decided to start GPS Kids (Growing Physically and Spiritually, taken from Luke 1:52). This is a part of our church dedicated toward children, ages in fant through fifth grade. Since then my wife and I have happily served and led a great team of volunteers and a large group of growing and faithful families.

Elizabeth: Another dream I had was to lead worship. It has been a great blessing to get to be a part of GPS Kids. The kids have a blast worship ing and dancing which God has also given me the privilege of helping lead. I am just amazed by God.

David: I attended Heartland Christian College before we were married. I received a great edu ca tion there in biblical studies and we started GPS Kids. I invested in more study, reading, and learning so we could provide the best program possible.

On Gps Kids...
GPS Kids is for our kids at Heart land and for kids from other commu nities, too. We provide an environ ment that is safe, fun, loving, and that shows them how to respond with patience and think through problems is essential to living a Christian life. There is a joy that only comes by serv ing others, and knowing that God wants to show you how good He is.

Josh Smith’s parents divorced when he was very young, but he en joyed great relationships with people who helped him during those years. “Growing up, I had lots of people in my life who coached me, and were there for me, but my granddad was instrumental in teaching me about Jesus. He wasn’t a preacher, but he was known for bringing donuts and coffee to church, making time for a conversation, and volunteer ing his time at the local food bank. He’d show up at my house to bring me along to help hand out groceries. Going on food deliveries with him taught me the importance of serv ing. No one was above or below be ing shown the love of Jesus.”

Today, Josh works in the IT de partment at Heartland. They serv ice pretty much anything with a button, but mostly they work on computers, cell phones, printers, and network equipment. “I handle all our cell school and general customer support. I’ve been doing this job for just over 11 years. Technology can be troublesome. Responding with patience and think ing through problems is essential to my daily job. I carry the lessons I learned from my granddad as I serve my community in a practical way.”

Josh also has the privilege of working with the youth ministry in Heartland. Our fifth to twelfth grade youth group is called D18. Our name comes from 2 Corinthians 1:38, which talks about finding our identity through Jesus Christ. We meet weekly on Wednesday nights, with the last of the month off. We work with our students through sixth through eighth graders, and I love their energy and enthusiasm. I enjoy watching the youth, especially the kids who, like I did, have grown up in the church. But attending a church service doesn’t make you a Christian, it’s your decision to follow His leading. Learning to find your own path, and identity in Jesus is a vital part of being a Christian. For me, that lesson came from watching my grandparents serve his community. “Whether you’ve grown up in church, or attended your first service this week, God loves you and wants to show you how great He is. There is a joy that only comes by serv ing others, and knowing that God is in charge. I invite you to come just one of our services. Whether you watch us online, or visit in person, to hear that God takes your heart and you begin to see how amazing it is to find your identity in Jesus.”

Josh

Please join us in praying... young people in every setting need to know the heart that God the Father has for them.
Dave Barton was a junior in college and twenty years old when he bowed his knees to Jesus Christ. "I was a student at the time at North-east Missouri State (now Truman), and though I had grown up in church, I didn't want anything to do with God."

Dave's main goal was to do well in school so he could land a big job, be successful, and make money. One evening while he was studying in his dorm room, God graciously changed his course. "I heard a man on television preach the gospel, and though I had heard it a thousand times, this time it was different. It was that night over thirty-seven years ago that the Lord made Himself and my need of Him very real. The Lord saved me, and for many years now He has been such a homebody in my life (I love home and my own bed!) that those who know me best have been very surprised at what God has allowed and graced me to do these last several years."

Heartland mission teams have traveled to places like Mexico, Colombia, Brazil, Moldova, India, the Philippines, Egypt, Israel, Thailand, Tanzania, and the reservations in South Dakota. When we go, we are not just going on a trip, but are going to serve alongside the many awesome friends and family which God has joined us to through the years.

Locally, our College students learn about Servanthood as they volunteer in their local communities by doing acts of service.

Dave also serves on the Executive Team here at Heartland to help guide our church and community forward in this season of change. "I serve alongside some very dedicated men and women of God. We for so many years had the great experience of having the most loving pastor in Pastor Charlie. For me, personally, he was not just a pastor but also a spiritual father and friend. He is greatly missed. However, we are so grateful that God is the Builder of His Church, and it is not just built by a man. God has blessed us with a new pastor and leadership at Heartland which God has joined us to through the years."

Pastor Charlie. For me, personally, he was not just a pastor but also a spiritual father and friend. He is greatly missed. However, we are so grateful that God is the Builder of His Church, and it is not just built by a man. God has blessed us with a new pastor and wonderful team of young men and women to lead this church. We, as a church family, look so forward to the days ahead and what the Lord has for this region. We want to serve you and be a blessing for we know that we are called to not only reach out to the world with the love of Jesus Christ, but we are also called to reach out to our neighbor. If we can do anything to serve and be of help to you, please let us know."

For more information or to enroll at Heartland Christian College, phone 660-284-4800 or visit www.heartlandcollege.edu. HCC is an accredited 2-year Bible college, offering an Associate Degree in Biblical Studies. Our desire is to see people grow in their faith and prepare for life.