



Johnson County Fire Protection District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Monday, July 6, 2020

Church Fire Determined to be Incendiary

JOHNSON COUNTY, MO – At 11:22 PM on Sunday, July 5, 2020 Johnson County Central Dispatch received a 911 call reporting a structure fire at the Harmony Baptist Church located at 805 SE 251 Road north of Leeton, MO in rural Johnson County. The call came from a neighbor in the area. The Johnson County Fire Protection District was dispatched to respond to the fire. While responding, personnel were notified of an alarm activation from inside of the church.

At 11:38 PM the first fire personnel arrived and located extensive fire involvement from the over 100 year old structure. Personnel initiated an aggressive fire attack which resulted in the fire being under control at 1:36 AM (7/6/2020).

Four JCFPD stations responded. Due to the rural location and extensive fire involvement, over 50,000 gallons of water was hauled to the scene to assist with the extinguishment.

The JCFPD was assisted by the Warrensburg Fire Department who responded with their ladder truck. The Johnson County Ambulance District and Johnson County Volunteer Fire Auxiliary responded and assisted with rehabilitating firefighters throughout the incident. There were no firefighter or civilian injuries.

The preliminary origin and cause of the fire was investigated by the Missouri State Fire Marshal with assistance from the United States Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and the Johnson County Fire Investigation Unit.

The preliminary cause of the fire was determined to be incendiary (intentionally ignited) in nature initiating an arson investigation.

“This fire is devastating to members of our community. We need our community’s assistance in finding those responsible for this fire,” said Fire Chief Larry Jennings.

The arson is being investigated by the Missouri State Fire Marshal with assistance from the ATF. Anyone with information is requested to contact the Fire Marshal at 1-800-39-ARSON (1-800-392-7766) or the ATF by texting “ATFKC” to 63975.

More information about the Johnson County Fire Protection District can be found online at www.jcfpd.net or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/johnsoncountypfd.