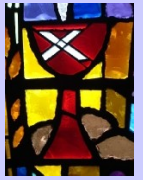


MERRIAM CHRISTIAN CHURCH

DISCIPLES OF CHRIST



Minister
Rev. Mark Willis
markswillis@gmail.com Office
(816) 616-9746

Organist and Pianist
Emily Yeh

Secretary
Open

SERVICES: SUNDAYS:

8:30 a.m. Suspended
10:00 a.m. Limited
attendance **IN-PERSON**
& **ONLINE**
10:45 a.m. Suspended

SUNDAY SCHOOL:
9:00 a.m. Suspended

9401 Johnson Dr.
Merriam, KS 66203

(913) 432-2390 &
(913) 432-5676

E-mail

merriamchristian@gmail.com
www.merriamcc.org



Dear Friends,

March 12, 2020.
That was the date
we first had the
conversation. The

Board Chair and Vice-Chair and myself had a meeting March 12, 2020 to discuss the news of this Covid Pandemic and the precautions being urged. One year ago we made the decision to pause gatherings until we had a better handle on what was happening. It was only one year ago.

I heard someone describe Einstein's Theory of Relativity like this once: "Time is relative. Spend an hour with a beautiful girl (or guy) and it will feel like it has passed in 5 minutes. Place your hand on a hot burner on your stove and a few seconds will feel like an eternity." I always knew this to be true, but this past year, which often feels like ten years, made it much more palatable. It has only been one year, but what a year.

In this past year we have lost loved ones. We have been unable to gather in large groups. We have been unable to go out to do things we used to go out and do. We have watched with wonder at ridiculous arguments over ideas and policies meant to keep

people as safe as possible. We have horrifically watched the count as a half-million Americans have succumbed to this disease. We have been scared and worried and frustrated and nervous.

But we have also been surprised at the creative ways folks have worked out how to stay in contact and stay connected during challenging times. We have been blessed with technological solutions that have broken down some barriers and opened new avenues for sharing the good news. We have been more diligent about reaching out to one another and staying in touch. We have gained a newfound appreciation for our homes, our yards, our spaces where we live and many have taken this opportunity to do repairs and improvements. And in collective hopefulness, we have watched news of vaccines, and opportunities to register for them, and we have signed up to get our shots.

With declining numbers of infections from public health and safety guidelines as well as increasing vaccinations, little by little, bit by bit, much of our "normalcy" will begin to return. That is a good thing. We have missed some things greatly and look forward to them again; like ball games and concerts, eating in a packed restaurant or

The Journey of Lent



Continued from page 1

attending a large gathering of friends or family. But much of what we have experienced and learned and adjusted to this past year will remain with us beyond this new normal. Things like using technology more to open new connections. I see live streaming of worship services and zoom options for meetings to be a permanent part of our future now.

This next year promises to bring many new changes and adjustments, much like this past year. Whatever challenges we face, whatever obstacles we encounter, we will meet them together, as Church, as Disciples of Jesus Christ, as brothers and sisters in faith. Thank you for being here during this past year. Thank you for your help, your voice, and your presence on this long hard path. And thank you for continuing on together into this next year. We go forward, together, as Merriam Christian Church.

Thank God and God Bless-
In Christ,
Mark

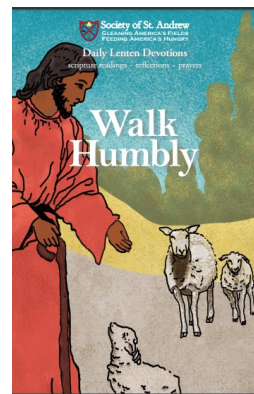
Lenten Devotional

Here is a Lenten Devotional to use for every day during Lent. You can find it online at

https://endhunger.org/docs_church/lent/Lenten_Devotions_Booklet.pdf

We also have physical copies you may pick up if you come to church.

Copies were mailed out to those without computers and shut-ins. If you want one mailed, please let Mark know.

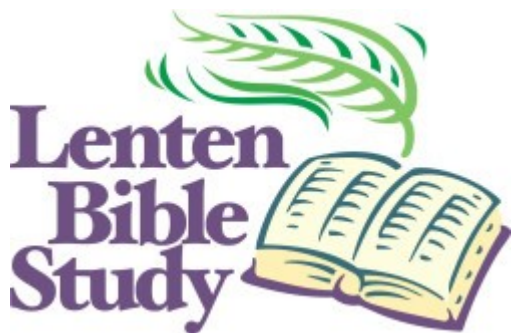


Communion Service

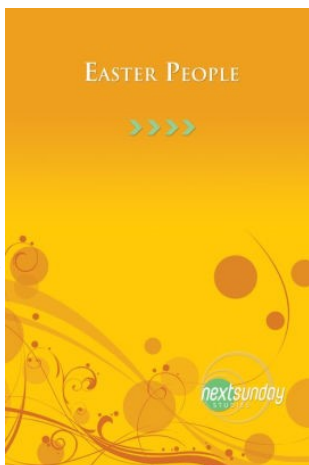
We will have a Communion Service on Maundy-Thursdays, April 1st, at 6PM. You can attend In-Person or Online. Invite someone else who could use a stop at the Table this season.



The Journey of Lent



Starting Wednesday evenings in March, Pastor Mark is leading a study, both in-person and via Zoom, at 7PM during Lent on the book: "Easter People" by Abby Thornton Hailey and Judson Edwards from the nextSunday series. This study has five lessons, and focuses on the event of Easter and how it transforms God's people. You may purchase the study book from Amazon to follow along, or simply join in the discussions each week. The weekly sessions will be on Wednesdays, March 3 through March 31, at 7PM. If attending in person, masks and physical distancing are required.



EASTER LILIES

If you ordered an Easter Lily the cost is \$12 and we will need the money by March 28th! You can send it in, made out to "Merriam Christian Church" with "Easter Lilies" on the envelope or memo line. Lilies will be out on Easter morning, April 4th, for worship. You may take it home after Easter Worship.



In-Person and Online Worship Available

The building is open for in-person worship on Sundays at 10AM. Please wear a mask (even if you have been vaccinated, not everybody has yet) the entire time you are in the building, and keep at least 6-feet of distance from anyone not in your immediate family or household, especially while entering and exiting the building. Worship is also live streamed on Sunday at 10AM if you wish to stay home and participate. Please be safe and make good decisions for you and your family.

God Bless!

Pastor Mark's Message

In case you missed any of Pastor Mark's messages sent by email, here are the last two weeks!

Feb 28th, "What Would You Sacrifice!"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySsQeZq5Ubk>

March 7th, "There Are Rules"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WBeTi6jkv7w>

Children's Worship and Wonder
by

Christina Stokes



Feb 28th "What Is Lent?"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=007vRjI7350>

March 7th "Let the Little Children Come To Me"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=esIwXcgfXaI>

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Sunday mornings at 9AM we have a School class for those interested. It meets in the Fellowship Hall but is also available via Zoom for those who wish to participate from home. We will send out a zoom link next week. If attending in person, masks and physical distancing are required.



Children's Message



[Spring Cleaning](#)

[Playing for Keeps](#)



Join us in
worship on
[Youtube.](#)



DON'T FORGET TO SHARE services & study sessions with family, friends and neighbors

Pastor Mark's
Prayerful Meditation
mid-week video (2/24)

Use this short meditation to bring a moment of God's Word to your journey. Use this time to remind yourself of God's presence and love.

This week's meditation comes from [Palm 95](#)



If this meditation is a blessing to you, consider sharing the link or posting the video to your social media, inviting others to pause their day and spend five minutes in God's Word for their life.

God Bless and Stay Safe
Pastor Mark

February 2021 Finance Report

Revenues	\$ 16,983.00
Expenses	\$ 14,762.00

THANK YOU ALL
for your continuing generosity
during this difficult time.
Your Treasurer

Calendar

Sunday - March 14th
9:00 Sunday School
10:00 Worship, **Serving Team 2**
Liturgist Anita Collins

Sunday - March 21th
9:00 Sunday School
10:00 Worship, **Serving Team 3**
Liturgist Connie Hennigh

Thursday - March 25th
Newsletter article submission deadline

Sunday - March 28th
9:00 Sunday School
10:00 Worship, **Serving Team 4**
Liturgist Joyce Luke

Multiple options of how you may give your tithes and offerings

- Write a check.
- <http://www.easytithe.com/merriamcc>
- Text giving: 913-444-6397

Currently being vaccinated

- Those 65 and older
- Health care workers
- Emergency responders
- Long-term care staff and residents
- K-12 special education staff
- Pandemic response workers

Click NOW
For More Info!



DWM NEWS

Hi Ladies,

This Sunday will be our last Sunday for collecting money for Blankets. So far, we have collected \$290.00. **Thank you all.** That is pretty good considering what the past year has been.



I sent \$50.00 to Disciples Mission Fund and will continue that amount monthly until our total is \$250.00, which was voted on by the Board.

Last but not least, a Walmart size bag of can tabs was delivered to South Park School. They were thrilled as usual. It's been nearly a year since I could do that. Thanks to all.

Minus expenses and blanket money, our current balance is \$2,589.15.

Joyce Luke,
Treasurer/Service

On the 2nd of March, Pam Boyd, Anita Collins, Joyce Luke and myself met at the church to discuss starting back up our CWF program at MCC in Fellowship Hall.

We are **going to combine our two women's groups into one and call it Sarah.** It will meet the third Tuesday of each month at 1 p.m. **Our first meeting will be the 20th of April at 1 pm.** We will have our **Business Meeting at 12:30 each Tuesday** before the Sarah meeting and everyone is invited to attend that meeting also. Of course we will have to wear mask and there will be the 6 ft social distancing for now.

We would like to invited all the ladies of MCC to attend. If you have any questions please ask Pam, Anita, Joyce or myself.

Thank you,
Jackie Watts, President
CWF



Volunteer Delivery Schedule

March 23 to April 27 2021

Merriam Southeast Route

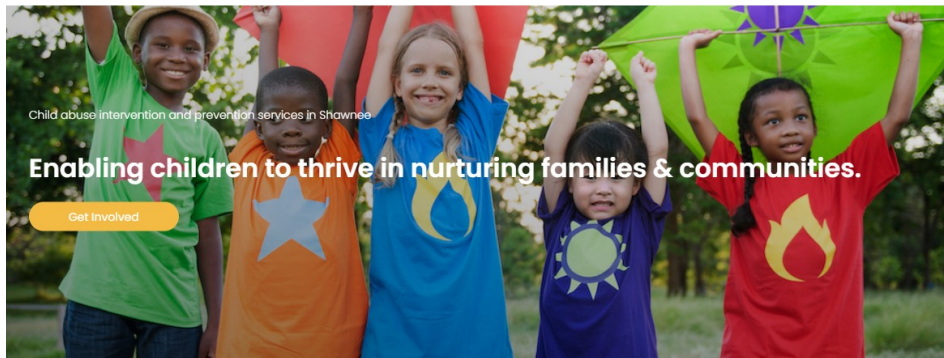
- Tuesday, March 23** Pam Boyd & Jan Pankey
- Tuesday, March 30** Mark Willis & Rick Ferguson
- Tuesday, April 6** Joan Tarwater & Linda Railsback
- Tuesday, April 13** Pat Reed & Jim Owens
- Tuesday, April 20** Carole Prentice & Anita Collins
- Tuesday, April 27** Glen and Dixie Wheaton

Subs – Carole Prentice, Jan Pankey and Rick Ferguson

Pick up meals at 10:30 am at the new Merriam Community Center, 6040 Slater, right into circle drive.



The Big
Thank you ♥
to Volunteers



The Outreach Committee has begun to be involved with the Shawnee based Sunflower House!



It is a non-residential children's advocacy and abuse prevention center serving Johnson and Wyandotte counties.

The heart for children. The courage to step up and help.

As a non-profit, Sunflower House relies heavily on community support to continue their programs for child victims of abuse in your community.

Community support in 2019 allowed Sunflower House to provide 523 children with a safe place to tell their stories and a place for them to find healing and support.

Sunflower House is a non-profit organization for child victims of abuse that was founded in 1977.

Please donate items from the wish list shown below OR if you prefer, a financial donation through our **MAKE-A-DIFFERENCE** fund. Items listed below can be dropped off at the church to the attention of Carole Prentice or Pam Boyd!

- Individually-packaged snack items
- Juice boxes
- Bottles of water
- Gift Cards (increments of \$10, \$15 and \$20)
 - Wal-Mart, Target
 - Fast food (McDonald's, Subway, Wendy's, Taco Bell, etc.)
 - Grocery stores
 - Home Depot and Lowe's (to help with our facility maintenance or family needs)
 - Other hardware or landscaping stores (to help with our facility maintenance)
 - Gift cards to GAS STATIONS for assisting families with transportation to medical, therapy or legal appointments
- Disinfectant Spray (Lysol) and Disinfecting Wipes
- AA & AAA Batteries
- Culturally diverse toys, dolls, action figures, reading materials, books or games for a variety of age groups
- Footballs, soccer balls, basketballs, and nerf balls
- Scarves, hats, gloves, mittens
- Full size personal care items (shampoo, conditioner, women's hygiene, toothpaste, lotion, chapstick)
- 16 GB USB 3.0 Flash drives
- Copy Paper, 8.5 X 11



FEEDING THE CHILDREN

BackSnack

Harvesters' BackSnack program provides a weekly backpack filled with nutritious, child-friendly food for schoolchildren to take home over the weekend. **More than 100,000 children in Harvesters' service area receive free and reduced-price school meals** during the week, and many of those are at risk of hunger on weekends.

BackSnack is a partnership between Harvesters, Merriam Park Elementary and Merriam Christian Church. Harvesters provides the food and the backpacks. We help pack and then deliver the packages to the school every Thursday.



BACKSNACK PACKING SCHEDULE

2021

PACK 70 BAGS

MARCH

Week of 15th

Week of 22nd

Week of 29th pack for 2 wks

Allen & Jackie Watts

Rick Ferguson

Carole Prentice

APRIL

Week of 12th

Week of 19th

Week of 26th

Pam Boyd

Pat Reed

Allen & Jackie Watts

MAY

Week of 3rd

Week of 10th

Week of 17th

Week of 24th

Week of 31st

Rick Ferguson

Carole Prentice

Pam Boyd

Pat Reed

Allen & Jackie Watts

JUNE

Week of 7th

Rick Ferguson

BACKSNACKS MUST BE PACKED AND READY FOR DELIVERY THURSDAY AM

Heartfelt 
THANKS
TO OUR VOLUNTEERS!



In-Person Worship is Sundays at 10AM. Online worship WILL continue for those who wish to stay home and participate. Masks are required while inside the building. Please be in prayer that all who attend are safe.

Requests for Family and Friends:

- **Bob Pape's sister-in-law Deanna Pape** passed away. Please keep the family in your prayers.
- **Bob Pape's friend Paul Drinkard** had passed unexpectedly. Please keep the Drinkard family in your prayers.
- **Donna Rankin's** nephew's mother-in-law passed away. Keep the Peabler Family in your prayers as they grieve.
- **Donna's brother Gerry** had heart valve surgery and a pacemaker installed. Her other **brother Danny** is taking chemo for his non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.
- **Jan Pankey's nephew Tyler Pankey** continuing tests at the Mayo Clinic to find out what is causing his health struggle.
- **Emily Hooker's sister Linda Collins** got to go home after seven weeks in the hospital and rehab with Covid. Pray for her as she continues to work on getting her strength back.
- **Joyce Luke's neighbor** of 46 years **Vita Hunsucker**, passed. Please keep her family in your prayers.
- **Allen and Jackie Watts' friend RJ's** major surgery on his "good" eye this week went well and is now waiting to "see" results over next 5 weeks. Please keep him in your prayers.
- **Barry Davis' sister Carol Bollmann's son James was hospitalized with covid. His wife and oldest son** also have it. James was rushed by ambulance to the ER with very low oxygenation levels, but is responding to the oxygen given him, and being treated for Covid induced pneumonia, but his prognosis is uncertain.
- **Barry has received his 2nd vaccination and he helped his sister and her husband find a vaccination site and get registered.** He then helped register his 88 year old cousin living near Branson Mo at a local site there. Barry has offered to help folks get registered over the internet for their vaccinations if anyone needs assistance. Call or email him for help on this if you want your shot but haven't been able to get it yet.
- The **families of Charles Masoner and former Merriam police officer, Wynfield Tubbs, Jr.,** who both passed recently. Pastor Mark performed the services for their families.

PRAISE:

- **Glen and Dixie Wheaton** celebrated their first GREAT-grandchild, Harvey Thomas, 10 lbs 10 oz!

We pray for all those who are sick, or are afraid they will get sick. We pray for all those anxious to get the vaccine. We pray for front line workers and the elderly and those with underlying conditions, that they may all find their way to vaccination. May God's healing spirit be upon our world during this pandemic.

We pray for all those who have lost a job, had their hours cut back, or who are struggling to make ends meet. As vaccinations arrive and numbers decline, may their opportunities return and may they get back on their feet quickly. For all those businesses struggling to make it, may they find hope in this struggle, and a way through for them and their employees.

For our churches. As the world changes, sometimes in drastic ways all around us, may we respond to each moment with God's grace and courage. May we be the church God is calling us to be in these trying circumstances. May we be the hands and feet of Christ reaching out to a hurting, broken world.

++++

Names added to the prayer list will remain on the prayer list for one month. Let the office know if a prayer request needs to stay on the list for longer or shorter than one month.





Board Meeting

Tuesday, March 9, 2021

In person &



Minutes recorded by Donna Rankin
Board Secretary

Present in Person: Pastor Mark Willis, Jackie Watts, Allen Watts, Donna Rankin, Dixie Wheaton, Carole Prentice, Michelle Land, Joyce Luke, Mike Nichols, Greg Spiegel

Present by Zoom: Pam Boyd, Bob Pape, Jim Owens, Joan Tarwater, Anita Collins, Irene Heavin, David Roebuck, Emily Hooker, Pat Reed, Joel Beaver, Barry Davis

Devotions: Allen Watts – Faith is A Risky Business
Committee Chair Reports:

Finance: Dixie-handed out 2021 Financial Statements. Reported 2019 revenues \$153,271/2020 revenues \$166,072/2020 expenses \$142,209; January revenue \$9,275; February revenue \$16,983; February Make A Difference \$224.25; February Memorials \$880.00; Lilies \$70; Easy Tithes average \$2,500 and expense \$105; DARF funds will transfer into local donations; DMF and Phillips paid monthly; local donations paid quarterly; property Insurance increase from last year \$430 per month. Discussion regarding property insurance: Trustees will research new insurance.

Clerk: Jackie-Lost Leroy Wisner; total membership 151

CDW/DWM: Jackie-Two women's groups combined into one known as Sarah. Will restart meeting on third Tuesday of each month at 1 pm. First meeting will be held April 20, 2021 with mask/social distancing requirements for now.

Elders: Allen-No report

H&G: Joel-Roof work and siding work is expected to resume at the end of March.

Outreach: Carol-JoCo Food Ministry dates for 2021: April 29, July 29, September 30 and December 30; will prepare 125-150 takeout meals until dining room reopens; Sign up sheet for cookies will be available outside of office after April 1. Sunflower House in Shawnee is nonprofit organization offering support for child victims of abuse. The building sustained water damage from frozen pipes recently resulting in damage to both the building and contents. Money donated to help and are promoting a list of needed items to lend a hand. The list will be available in the newsletter and monetary contributions are also welcome. Backsnacks from Harvesters continue to be packed each week with Rick Ferguson delivering to Merriam Park School. About 2/3 of students enrolled are now attending school each day. The summer food program is being evaluated at this time. Gas cards have been ordered and will be available soon. We will also be providing some to Merriam Park and Sunflower House to be used at their discretion.

Membership: Allen-An Easter flower bouquet will be put together & delivered to each of our homebound

members on April 2 & 3. Since an Easter Egg Hunt will not be possible again this year, we will make & deliver Easter Baskets to our MCC children. Newsletter will go out this weekend.

Memorial: Emily-Memorials received for Leroy Wisner totaled \$880.00. Thank you's have been sent. Total memorials of \$3,104 at end of February.

Worship: Pastor Mark-Lent: Liturgical colors were changed to purple and cloth was hung on cross, ordered & sent out Lent devotions. Palm Sunday is March 28: Dixie will pick up palms and have in the vase; basket of crosses in storage room. Easter is April 4: Dixie will iron white panels for sun burst; Bob & Rick will put in place; Anita will turn on window candles. Pentecost is May 23: liturgical color will be changed to red with red cloth on cross; participants will be asked to wear red. Live stream of services continues; may need to address improvement of equipment in future. I will be gone May 9 and Rev. Bill Rose-Heim will fill the pulpit.

Pastor Report: Pastor Mark-In person worship services resumed in January, averaging 22 people and another 20-30 online. We continue to offer online worship service, children's moment, children's wonder & worship and a mid-week prayer meditation. We are reaching a lot of folks and some are sharing with family & friends. These require preparing, filming, editing, posting and promoting through email and social media. In the future, better technology and programs may need to be considered. A Wednesday night study for Lent on the book "Easter People" began with 2 people in person and 4 online. Jim Owens began a Sunday school class at 9 am on Sunday morning with 6 people in-person and 1 online. An Ash Wednesday service was held; Maundy Thursday communion service is scheduled for April 1. The services are offered in person and online. Five funerals performed this month. It is time to think about Tall Oaks Summer Camp. Information will be on the bulletin board and online.

Personnel: Jackie-Maria is no longer nursery attendant, will need to look for a replacement.

Trustees: Michelle-No report

Old Business: None

New Business: None

Open Forum:

Bob-I really like the new sign!

Pastor Mark-received a message on face book page from a couple who is looking for a church and participated in the online service; reached out to them in response.

Pastor Mark closed with prayer.

Michelle Land moved to adjourn; seconded by Allen Watts