



Merriam Christian Church Disciples of Christ

Vol. LV
No. 10 2020
May 9, 2020

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

Organist and Pianist
Emily Yeh

Secretary
Open

SERVICES:

SUNDAYS:

8:30 a.m.

10:45 a.m.

SUNDAY SCHOOL:

9:30 a.m.

9401 Johnson Dr.
Merriam, KS 66203

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Submissions for publication may be edited for size, clarity, and tone. We reserve the right to reject submissions deemed incompatible with the mission of this church.

CHURCH BUILDING STATUS

The church building will remain closed through at least June 7, 2020. Continue to look for emails, videos, and other communication as we strive to remain connected to one another during this time.



Today (May 6th) marks eight weeks since we have had to close the building due to the Covid-19 Pandemic. It has been a worrisome, anxious period, and we are still dealing with issues everyday: from food shortages at grocery stores, to closed businesses, to lack of physical connection with family and friends. But we make it through each day as the church, with God's peace, God's hope, and God's grace in abundance. As states and municipalities begin lessening shut-downs and restrictions, we, your leadership for Merriam Christian Church, have begun conversations on what re-opening the church might look like. With a population that falls heavily into high-risk categories for catching and struggling with this disease, our first priority is to be as cautious and safe as possible. We will take each step purposefully and carefully, and adjust as needed based on evolving circumstances. **Your safety, and the safety of**

all who would come to this building for worship, for meeting, or for help, is paramount during this time.

With that, based on our conversations, the earliest date we will consider gathering for worship would be June 7, 2020. Over this next month we will begin making preparations for what will need to be done for that date to become a reality, while also continuing to monitor this ongoing, developing situation and make adjustments as necessary.

Please know, if we are able to begin gathering for worship on that date, or when we are finally able to gather, worship is going to look and feel very different than just a couple short months ago. In order to do our best to protect all who might come, we will need to implement many changes and we will need your help to make this possible. As we get closer to an actual re-launch date, we will communicate all of the needs and changes in place. But here is a beginning list of things we will need to adjust:

- **First and foremost: Anyone that is a high risk category, especially if they have other health concerns that increase their odds of catching and struggling with this disease, should stay at home. If anyone has a fever,**

isn't feeling well, has a cough, or any other possible indications of infection, they should stay home and seek medical care.

- When we are in the building, **we will require everyone to wear a mask.** We will have some available, but if you have one please bring it.



- We will provide **vinyl gloves** for anyone who wants them.

- ANY **space used will need to be cleaned/disinfected after use.** So the sanctuary, bathrooms, hallways, stairs, will all have to be wiped down with disinfectant. We will need volunteers to help with this.

- We will need to maintain a **physical distance of six feet at all times.** No handshakes, hugging, or touching outside of your family unit. Children will need to stay with their parents for the duration of worship.



- We **will not offer nursery services at first.** Children's Worship and Wonder lessons will be brought into worship, so everyone can hear the lesson and children can stay with their parents.

- We will have **someone running the elevator, and one person may use it at a time.**

- We will have **one worship service at 10AM initially.** For at least June, we will ask other groups (Sunday school, DWM, Our Gang) to not meet. There will be no fellowship hour at first. We will assess the situation and adjust as we can going forward.

- **Pews will be marked with tape where people may sit,** to maintain at least six feet of separation. Ushers will help with entrance and exit so physical distancing can be maintained then as well.

- **There will be no passing of items during worship.** There will be a basket on the communion table for you to drop your offering/tithe into. We will ask you to bring your own communion (bread/juice, crackers/soda, donut/coffee, etc). During communion we will ask everyone to observe with what they have brought, or to simply take a few moments of prayerful reflection.



- **All Bibles, hymnals, and other items will be removed** from pews so that we do not have to wipe them down after each gathering.

- This is the really tough one – **there will be no singing initially.** Scientists have

discovered this virus spreads quickly when people sing, as we project water vapor into the air that travels farther than six feet. Our denomination, as well as state recommendations suggest singing be avoided initially.

• We **will continue to record and post worship on youtube and facebook**, so if you do not feel safe attending, you can still participate in worship. We are exploring ways to stream the service live as well.



That is what we have so far, but I am sure there will be other items added and adjusted throughout this month. It is quite a list. I know this seems very harsh and restrictive. At first it will need to be to keep everyone as safe as possible. As we move through this moment together, we will assess and evaluate where we can adjust restrictions or possibly lessen them. But this will be a slow, cautious process.

Please know this: even with these drastic changes and adjustments, even with this slow cautious approach, we are still Church. Even without singing, and passing the plate. Even without hugs and handshakes. Even without things being how they used to be (or always were). We Are Still Church. This moment will not break us. This moment will not defeat us. Because We Are Still Church. **It is God's grace and love that connects us. It is God's peace and hope that binds us. It is God's salvation and righteousness that makes us church.** We Are Still Church, and we have a mission and a ministry. This pandemic cannot change that.

Yes, things will be different for a while. Yes, some things may never go back to what they were, Yes, we will come through this affected and changed. **But we will come through this together, as the Body of Christ, as Church.**

Two things I would ask of you now. **First, be in prayer daily**, for this church and all churches, for our leadership and for me as your pastor, for our country and our leaders, and for all who will most directly be imbued with this virus. We need your prayers. This church needs your prayers. Our country needs your prayers. I need your prayers. **Second, we want to hear your thoughts** on what I have presented here. How do you feel about June 7th as a possible date to gather again? If we do open that day, would you feel safe coming to worship? We will ask the shepherds to contact everyone and get your feedback on these ideas. Please share your feelings and thoughts with them so we can hear from all of you, the congregation of Merriam Christian Church.

God bless you all. I love and miss each of you. Stay safe.

Pastor Mark Willis

Our organist/pianist **Emily Yeh** recorded some special music to share:

Be My Thou Vision

[https://youtu.be/
fw1N9OwWNE](https://youtu.be/fw1N9OwWNE)

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

[https://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=Q-
bbv71QGZQ&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-bbv71QGZQ&feature=youtu.be)



Leroy and Mary Wisner

We have a new phone number for Leroy and Mary Wisner at Brookdale at Rosehill. It is 913-248-7254. **Give them a call, they would love to hear from their church family.**

THANK YOU ALL

for your continuing generosity during this difficult time.

Your tithes, offerings and donations insure monthly obligations are met, church's ministries continue and lives are touched!

Your Treasurer

GOD IS GOOD



Pastor Mark's Message

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

May 3 2020 - Sermon - They Broke Bread at Home

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

April 26 2020 - It's OK to Not Be OK—<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UWF25w4vmPU&t=7s>

MCC VIDEO LIBRARY

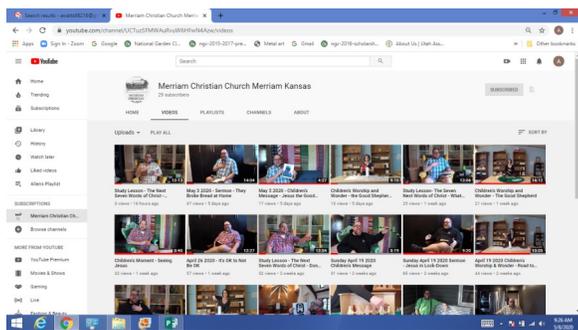
For all of Mark's video sermon messages and children messages

And

Christina's Worship and Wonder videos

please click <https://www.youtube.com/channel/>

[UCTuzSFMWAuRvuW6HFwN4Azw/videos](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTuzSFMWAuRvuW6HFwN4Azw/videos)



DON'T FORGET TO SHARE WITH FRIENDS AND FAMILY

Children's Message from Pastor Mark

May 3 2020 - Children's Message - Jesus the Good Shepherd

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YbHQBQpK194>

April 26, 2020—Children's Moment - Seeing Jesus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HqsiLl40-9w>

Children's Worship and Wonder by Christina Stokes

May 3, 2020—the Good Shepherd Part II

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oXG6Q4wR--4&t=15s>

April 26, 2020—The Good Shepherd Part I

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SiUyU3rl5mY>



**June Regional DWM Dinner
Thursday, June 25**

Registration 6:00 PM \$6.00

**Olathe First Christian Church
200 E. Loula St.**

Olathe, Kansas 66061

Speaker Rev. Dr. Roger Beason

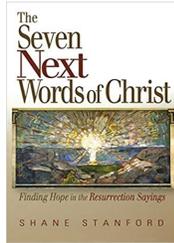
*****Please stay tuned on future important notifications or updates*****

Watch for the next Newsletter the week of May 23, 2020. *Submissions for publication may be edited for size, clarity, and tone.*



Weekly Study Group with Pastor Mark

Mark has started a new study group series titled "Next" seven words of Christ, a look at the first seven things Jesus said after the resurrection. We will be using Shane Stanford's book, "The Seven Next Words of Christ: Finding Hope in the Resurrection Sayings".



Week One— “Who are you looking for”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KrQ0fdEC2kM>

Week Two—“ Don't Be Afraid ”
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AID_9oluekI

Week Three—“ What are you so concerned about? ”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dTkA43LZC1k>

Week Four—“ Peace be with you ”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pvRjec2X840>

DWM NEWS

Hi Ladies. Sure do miss you all. Not much to report. Our service for May/June would have been Snack pack Items for our outreach program. However, we do not expect any of you to shop for bargains since you are supposed to be staying home and staying safe. I am not sure what the situation is on delivering food to the hungry. It may be that donations of money will be the way to go when we all get back to Church.

I am still waiting to send in the “Blessing Box” money collected in Feb. in case anyone did not get their blessing money turned in. We are in good shape as of April 30, 2020 with a balance of \$3,020.55. As your treasurer, I continue to submit our budgeted support of our Disciples Mission Fund with a monthly check of \$50.00. After I send the May check, we will have \$2,970.55. The next time Esther and Sarah can meet, your “Least Coin” donations for Church World United will be due. Pennies add up and every little bit helps.

Over and out, but not out and about.

Joyce Luke

Treasurer/Service

Don't forget and share these study sessions with someone - forward this email, share our Facebook message on your Facebook page, like our YouTube page.



NEED AN ERRAND RUN to the Grocery Store, Pharmacy, Post Office, Hardware Store

**We have volunteers ready to give a HELPING HAND
Call Mark—816-616-9746
Allen—913-634-8437**



CHURCH CARAVAN PARADE April 25, 2020

On a beautiful Saturday afternoon 10 members of the congregation gathered at the church parking lot (using appropriate social distancing) to prepare a car parade! OUR PLAN, divide into two separate caravans to visit a 18 members of our church family at their homes!!



**What
FUN!!!**

**NOT SURE WHO
ENJOYED the event MORE?
The members or those of us in the cars honking our
horns & waving signs and yelling
“Hi We Miss YOU”!!!**

This past week the Membership team got together and assembled MCC Yard Signs for everyone in the congregation. They will be delivered by Saturday 5/9!!!





Those Needing Prayers

Nancy Hines, fell and broke her wrist. **Walt Bohn** had a pacemaker put in Monday, April 27th. He is home now and doing well. He goes back in ten days for a check up. **Flo Biehl, Susan Neill, Dorothy Kroh** (she fell and broke 3 ribs but is now back at Sunrise rehab in quarantine)

Requests for Family and Friends:

- Ally Bauer, a friend of Wayne and Emily Hooker's granddaughter Emma, 15 years old, passed away from cancer. We have had Ally on our prayer list many times. Please keep her mother and father, the Bauer family in your prayers. They attend St Andrews CC.
- Connie Hennigh's son-in-law Garland Johnson had surgery. Had gone home but had to go back in to hospital. Has had to have two more surgeries.
- Donna McEndree's granddaughter's husband, Brandon Armstrong, was deployed to New York with his Army unit.
- Anita Minshew's friend's son Tom Gryska was diagnosed with Covid-19 but is doing much better.
- Jackie & Allen Watts' daughter-in-law who suffers from pancreatitis was back in the hospital this week but is now back at home.
- Ya Larson—I spoke with Gilbert this week and asked if Ya had experienced any harassment and he said that she had encountered some. This is based on her being Chinese. There are ugly, stupid people in this world and unfortunately Ya is having to deal with some of them. Please pray for God to give her strength, and peace, and to watch over her and protect her during these unsettling time.
- Tim & Susie Arnold's godson Cris has been diagnosed with stage 4 cancer. Needs surgery but considered nonessential due to COVID-19
- Connie Hennigh's friend, Sheila Blume has breast cancer.
- Residents of Lakeview Village - 10 residents diagnosed with Covid-19, 3 have passed. Jim Owens, Ann Dickerson, and Anita Collins all live there and are OK, but knew some of those who passed.

- Patti and Joel Beaver have a family member Morgan, who works in health care. She has been diagnosed with Covid-19 symptoms and is in hospital.
- Marge Willard's son, Jewell
- Lucy & Jim Walker's daughter, Lucy Cox
- Nancy Hines's grandson Kenny Hines got his right hand burned in a small cooking fire.

Those in Grief:

David Campbell (youngest son of Lenore Moffett)'s wife of over 65 years, Barbara, passed away. They are related to the Roebuck family. David is 90 and in quarantine during this time. Please keep David Campbell and his children in your prayers.

Nancy Hines friend Lou Ann passed away.

- Anita Minshew has 5 family members who must keep going into work during this time.
- Nick Hennigh, Scott Stokes, Jon Beaver, Joel Beaver, Bonnie Bohn, and all the others still going in to work during this time, considered essential, we give thanks and pray for their protection and for all who are still working outside of their home.
- Medical Professionals, doctors, nurses, nurses aides, ambulance drivers, hospital janitors on the front lines of this pandemic. Wayne and Emily Hooker's daughter Monica, is a nurse at Children's Mercy downtown, and Joyce Luke's daughter, Barbara, is a nurse at St. Luke's South. Connie Hennigh's adopted granddaughter, Nikki Miller is an RN at Ascension Via Christi in Wichita.
- Firefighters and first responders
- School bus workers off work, teacher aides/staff off work
- Grocery store clerks, fast food drive-thru workers, gas station attendants, delivery drivers, pharmacy workers - all going to work and keeping open essential businesses for all of us.
- Carpenters, car mechanics, plumbers, construction workers, electricians, and all skilled craftsmen going in to work during this time.

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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.



Pray for medical professionals, caregivers, and researchers responsible for fighting the new coronavirus.

God, healthcare workers and first responders are working longer hours with fewer supplies and with more risk of contracting the new coronavirus themselves. Sustain them on the long shifts they are working. Give them renewed energy to continue fighting the battle. Bring your protection upon them as they work with patients. Multiply their supplies so they have the protective items needed to stay safe on the job.

Inspire and invigorate the research doctors developing better tests to diagnose the virus, create vaccines to prevent it, and identify ways to eliminate the disease's spread.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

Psalm 23:4 (NIV)

MEALS ON WHEELS

Meals on Wheels service has been reduced to Monday delivery only. We will let everyone know when regular service has been restarted



OUR GANG

Next Meeting:
To be determined



Calendar

Sunday - May 10th - Services Online

8:30 Early Service
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 Worship

Sunday - May 17th Services Online

8:30 Early Service
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 Worship

Friday - May 22nd

12:00 Newsletter Deadline

ONE WORSHIP SERVICES FOR 2020

July 5 – Independence day weekend
September 6 – Labor day Weekend
October 18 or 25 for Congregational Meeting
November 29 – Thanksgiving Weekend/
Hanging of the Greens
December 27 – Christmas weekend

Directory Update

Changes to info are underlined

Mary & LeRoy Wisner
12802 Johnson Dr
Bldg B, room 222
Shawnee, KS 66215
913-248-7254



If you have a Facebook page, please like the one for Merriam Christian Church. We are trying to keep you updated and share words of faith, inspiration and encouragement. Invite your friends and family to join us. God bless!! Connie Hennigh



Your options of how you may give your tithes and offerings during the “Stay-at-Home” Order.

Merriam Christian Church now provides a number of ways to give.

Write a check. Since we are not able to place CHECKS in the offering plate during worship at this time you can still mail it the church or DROP-BY the church and place it in the mail box.

Have funds **automatically withdrawn** from your bank check or savings account or one-time special donations can be made. Go to: <http://www.easytithes.com/merriamcc> to set up your account. Or go to the church website and click on the new giving buttons: With the “auto giving” option you will be able to designate the amount and the timing of your giving – a specific date each month, weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, twice a month, quarterly and annually. You can also designate a credit or debit card versus a checking or savings account.



Text giving: 913-444-6397 through your smart phones

Merriam Christian Church’s (SMS) Text Giving Account has been set up. Our account Number is: 913-444-6397. Members of the congregation or visitors can simply text an amount to that number to get started. The first time you give by this method there is a quick form to fill out on line. Any subsequent giving actions will not require the form to be filled out again.

Download the easyTithes app on your smart phone and make a donation, using your debit or credit card, by selecting Merriam Christian Church from the drop down list.