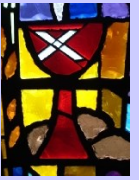


# MERRIAM CHRISTIAN CHURCH

## 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.

**IN-PERSON & ONLINE**  
10:45 a.m. Suspended

### **SUNDAY SCHOOL:**

9:00 a.m.  
In-person & On-Line

9401 Johnson Dr.  
Merriam, KS 66203

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

### **E-mail**

[merriamchristian@gmail.com](mailto:merriamchristian@gmail.com)  
[www.merriamcc.org](http://www.merriamcc.org)

### **Newsletters**

[jethowe@gmail.com](mailto:jethowe@gmail.com)



Dear Friends,  
The Advent Season is upon us! Thank-giving is done! Christmas is coming!! What an excit-

ing time of year. Even amidst news of variants and turmoil, and chaos and shipping delays, and struggles and stressors - we can still rejoice, because Christmas is coming!

As we traverse this monthly celebration with blinking lights and decorated trees and tinsel galore, let us prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ once again. Let's open our hearts to God's love, open our eyes to God's spirit, and open our lives to God's purpose. This month brings so many wonderful ways to serve in God's love. From dropping change in Salvation Army buckets (which goes directly to help people in this community) to volunteering to be a shopper with the Johnson County Christmas Bureau (which helps 15,000 Johnson County residents) to providing gift cards for families in need this season from Merriam-Park elementary school. Opportunities to be someone's "Santa" are all around us in December. Take advantage of these chances to change someone's world this Christmas. There are also many opportunities to worship and praise God - from special worship services like the Christmas Eve Candlelight service to driving through

decorated neighborhoods admiring light displays to doing daily devotionals from the Advent Devotional we shared last month.

Advent and Christmas are a special time of year, when we are all a little kinder, all a little more compassionate, all a little more grace-filled: in other words, all a little more Christ-like. Don't let these special opportunities slip away. Make plans right now to engage in the spirit of this season, but hurry! Christmas is coming!

God Bless and Merry Christmas!

Mark



## *Christmas Eve Candlelight Service*

December 24th at 5PM - Make plans to attend this special service as we gather at the manger with the Christ-child. The scripture and songs of Christmas abound as the Word is made flesh in Bethlehem.

## Pastor Mark's Message

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



**November 7th, "Accept the Compliment with Thanksgiving"**

**November 28th, "The Hanging of the Greens"**

## DWM NEWS

Hi Ladies,

I am happy to report that 21 signed up to attend our luncheon at the Olive Garden near 95th and Metcalf on Dec. 16th. We had said 1:00 pm, but we can have the space at 12:30. This will give us time to arrive and chat. Anyone needing a ride should call me.

A check for \$150.00 was donated to Make a Difference to go toward gift cards for families this Christmas. Our current balance is \$2,300.03. Also, 16 hats, mostly homemade, and 22 pairs of gloves/mittens, were delivered to the Christmas Bureau. They send their thanks for our donation.

Keep saving those pill bottles. The animal rescue in Mission says thanks. This is the easiest service project we have ever done.

That's all folks.

Joyce Luke  
Treasurer & Service

### STAFF CHRISTMAS GIFTS

It's that time of year again! We will be collecting for staff gifts until December 10th. Please make checks payable to the church, (Memo line Staff gifts.) Checks or cash may be given to either Carole Prentice or Mike Nichols.

## The Longest Night (Blue Christmas) Service

We are planning a special worship service for Sunday, December 26th at 10AM. A Longest Night (or Blue Christmas) service recognizes those loved ones we have lost, especially in the past year, and the impact their passing has on the holidays. Instead of ignoring these painful feelings of loss and grief, we are going to recognize and name them, and spend time remembering those we love who are not here any longer. Bring loved ones who have experienced this hurt that we might worship and heal a little together.

### CHRISTMAS GIFT CARDS

We are collecting gift cards for families from Merriam Park School that have requested help for their children for Christmas gifts. We are helping 8 families for a total of 27 children. We need gift cards for Walmart, Kohl's, Target, Price Chopper, HyVee, or Mastercard and Visa.

This allows parents to make choices for clothing needs as well as food for the family. Deadline is December 17th.

Any questions, contact Carole Prentice,

## Children's Worship and Wonder by Christina Stokes



**November 21st "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego"**

**November 28th "First Sunday in Advent"**



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.

## Those Needing Prayer:

- **Jim Walker** tested positive for Covid. His symptoms are improving as he recovers at home.
- **Connie Harshner** has surgery for her wrists scheduled.
- **Nancy Hines** fell and broke her pelvis - she is at Brookdale to do rehab for several months.
- **Alpha Wickham** is at home but unable to get out. She would love to hear from church friends, give her a call 913-631-9223

## Requests for Family and Friends:

- **Joan Tarwater and Susie Arnold's sister Linda Firth** is in Adventis Hospital, she has been diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer, and a brain tumor. They don't know yet whether they will try treatment or palliative care.
- **Casey Meyer's mother's** cancer has spread from her lungs to her brain. Please keep her in your prayers, as well as Mike and Casey and the girls.
- **Barry Davis' brother Dean and his family** had an outbreak of Covid at their Thanksgiving gathering. Several have tested positive, though symptoms have been mild.
- **Joyce Campbell's neighbor Suzanne Helmsley**, has congestive heart failure and is not doing well. She has two older dogs she is trying to find a home for in case her health gets worse, and this is adding to her stress and worry.
- **Del Sherwood**, friend of the congregation, passed away. Please keep his wife Bev and her family in your prayers.
- **Jim Owen's friend Richard Schroeder** passed away from Covid.

- **Barry Davis' sister Beverly** has lung cancer again.
- **Heather Waite's niece** has appendicitis.
- **Barry Davis' friend Tyler Rain and his new wife** are expecting their first child December 25th! Tyler used to attend services with Barry.
- **Marge Willard's son Jewell** is dealing with a resurgence of his cancer and could use prayers.
- **Connie Hennigh asked for prayers for her granddaughter and her husband, Chelsea and Noah Molder**, as they foster three young boys and are hoping to adopt them.
- **Joe Myers' brother Mark Myers** was diagnosed with leukemia.

We pray for all those who have received the vaccine, and for all those who want to get it but haven't yet. We especially pray for those who could get it but are hesitant or resistant. May their hearts be softened with grace and inspired by Christ to serve one another. May we come together to get vaccinated, and begin healing from this long struggle.

We pray for our church, as we hopefully begin to gather again, may we always respond first with grace and love and hope. May we be a light in dark times, bread and cup to hungry people. May we outdo one another in serving others as we strive to do more together as able.

++++

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.



Don't forget the upcoming Blood Drive at Merriam Christian Church December 6th from 3-7. Contact Pat Reed at 913-631-0699 so I can put down a time for you.

Thanks and God Bless!  
Pat Reed



## REMINDERS

This Sunday, December 5th, is the LAST day to order a poinsettia. The cost is \$10 and they can be bought in honor or memory of someone. They will be in worship on December 19th and you are welcome to take yours home after that service.

Outreach is collecting gift cards to Target, Wal-Mart, Price-Chopper, and Kohls for Christmas blessings for families at Merriam-Park Elementary School in need. If you would like to donate, you can donate funds to Merriam Christian Church (Make-a-Difference) or you can purchase the gift cards yourself and give them to Carole Prentice. They are due December 15th.

Blood Drive - Monday December 6th from 3PM-7PM at the church in the Fellowship Hall. Come by and donate!

thank you!

Many thanks to Betty Bohn, Rick Ferguson, Alice Goff, Joyce

Luke, Bob Pape, and Dixie Wheaton for their help in decorating the Sanctuary for the Hanging of the Greens.

Change of Address:

Nona Davis  
11691 South Ridgeview Road #244  
Olathe, Kansas 66061

## SUNDAY SCHOOL

### ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Our Sunday School class meets from 9:00 -9:45 each Sunday. Following our class time we have a 15 minute break to prepare for Morning Worship at 10:00. We have a nice group and if you haven't started back now would be a good time as we are beginning our Fall Quarterly. Hopefully you will also find this a good support group in many areas.

### JOHNSON COUNTY FOOD MINISTRY

We will be preparing 150 take out boxes of food on December 30 and will need cookies to be included for dessert. Signup sheet will be outside of church office or call Carole Prentice, 913 485 6950 or Pam Boyd, 913 515 5863 if you can furnish cookies.

### *Multiple options of how you may give your tithes and offerings*

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

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



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

