

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



Dear Friends,

Lent is upon us once again. Lent begins Wednesday February 17th with Ash Wednesday and constitutes a 40-day-journey through Easter Sunday, April 4th. It seems like a very long time since we went through Lent together, as a year ago in March is when we shut down for the first time in response to rising concerns with Covid-19. That shut down lasted until June, so we missed much of Lent and Easter together.

One year later we are still needing to maintain rigorous safety protocols and precautions, but we are trying to implement more of the Lenten season together. In this newsletter you will find information about Sunday school class, a lenten study, an Ash Wednesday service, a daily Lenten devotional, and Easter lilies. I sincerely hope you will take the opportunities presented here that you are safely able to take, and make this Lenten season special.

Even as it is different in many ways, it is still Lent, a 2000-year old practice of prayer and preparation for Jesus' death and resurrection. For Christians this time of year is a time to refocus ourselves on Christ and Christ's life, recommit ourselves to following

him, and re-emerge ourselves in Christ's grace and glory.

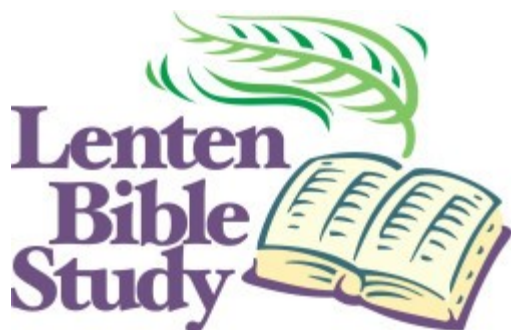
For the Disciples two-millennia ago, this journey was a serious time of reflection and learning. They did not fully understand what was happening, where they were going, or what was about to happen. In 2021, I think we can definitely relate to those overwhelming feelings as we continue the journey they started. Take time this year to turn your face to Jerusalem and turn your spirits back to God as we walk together through the Lenten season. God Bless and Stay Safe-Mark

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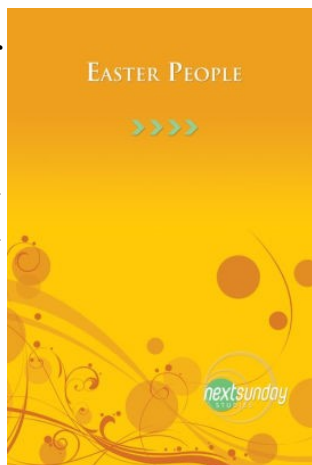
## **In-Person and Online Worship Available**

The building is open for in-person worship on Sundays at 10am. Please wear a mask 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!

# The Journey of Lent



Pastor Mark will be leading a study, both in-person and via Zoom, on Wednesday evenings 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. Please let Mark know if you wish to participate.**

## ASH WEDNESDAY

We will offer a short Ash Wednesday prayer service on **Wed, February 17th at 6PM** in the sanctuary to begin the Lenten journey. In-Person attendance is welcome, please wear your mask and keep appropriate distance. We will also live stream the service for those at home.



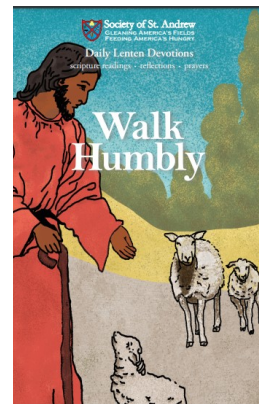
## Lenten Devotional

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](https://endhunger.org/docs_church/lent/Lenten_Devotions_Booklet.pdf)

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

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





# SUNDAY SCHOOL

## SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASS

Jim Owens is interested in starting up a temporary Sunday school class for those interested. He is proposing the following:

1. Restart Sunday school class .
  - A. **Restart beginning March 7th.**
    - (1) Due to Pandemic there would be one Adult Class.
      - a. Hold class in Fellowship Hall as our classrooms do not provide for spacing.
      - b. Combine zoom with class for those wanting a class but not come to church.
      - c. Begin class at 9 a.m. until 9:45 a.m. and then go to church at 10:00 a.m.
      - d. Several teachers could rotate i.e. teach 3-4 Sundays and then trade off.

2. March 1st would give time to order teaching and student books.

- (1) We would need to use one selection of materials and need time to assess this with students and teachers.
  - a. Offer your suggestion for type of lesson desired, i.e. Standard Bible Study, Discussion Type, topical, etc.
  - b. Those volunteering to teach would make final decisions on material. If you are interested in teaching but need to stay home, we could arrange teaching via zoom, just let us know.

3. Mark Willis and Allen Watts have indicated they would assist with Zoom set-up, etc.

4. Everyone interested please call Jim Owens (913-888-6977) indicating your interest and also ideas or suggestions re: time, location, materials to be used, etc.

**Please Call No Later Than Fri. Feb 20th!**

**THANK YOU JIM FOR OFFERING TO ARRANGE THIS OPPORTUNITY!**

## EASTER LILIES

If you would like to order an Easter Lily for \$12 for our Easter Worship service, please let Pastor Mark know by FEBRUARY 15TH! Lilies may be purchased in honor or memory of a loved one.

The cost is \$12 per lily. We need your order by Feb 15, but payment isn't due until March 28th.



**Your payment can be sent in, made out to MCC, with "Easter Lily" in memo or on envelope.**

## CWF/DWM NEWS

Hi Ladies and Gents,

Long time no see, hear, hug. Due to Covid, I am running late. (Joke, I am not sick.) **We usually start in Jan. collecting money for "Blankets"**. But we can do it in Feb. too. Only \$10.00 will purchase one blanket for Church World Service. This really cold weather makes it even more important to donate to this worthwhile charity. You can make your check out to the Church, but remember to mark "Blankets" on the memo line of your check. Dixie will see to it that CWF/DWM gets the money that I will then send it on. Thank you in advance.



Joyce Luke  
Treasurer/Service

# Pastor Mark's Message

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

Jan 31st, "Feeling Pretty Puffy!!"

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

Feb 7th, "I Need a Time Out"

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F\\_NdPU8hRVY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F_NdPU8hRVY)

## Children's Worship and Wonder by Christina Stokes



Jan 31st "Jesus in the Wilderness"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9vMayCJlNo>

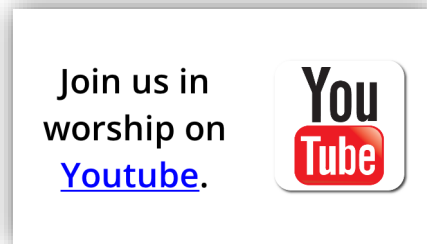
Feb 7th "Parables: The Leaven"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04IiVoXKsqU>



## MCC VIDEO LIBRARY

For all of Mark's video sermon messages and children messages & Christina's Worship and Wonder videos please click this button



DON'T FORGET TO SHARE study sessions and Sunday Services with someone.



[Who Is In Control](#)

[Answering the Call](#)





Pastor Mark's  
***Prayerful Meditation***  
mid-week video (2/11)

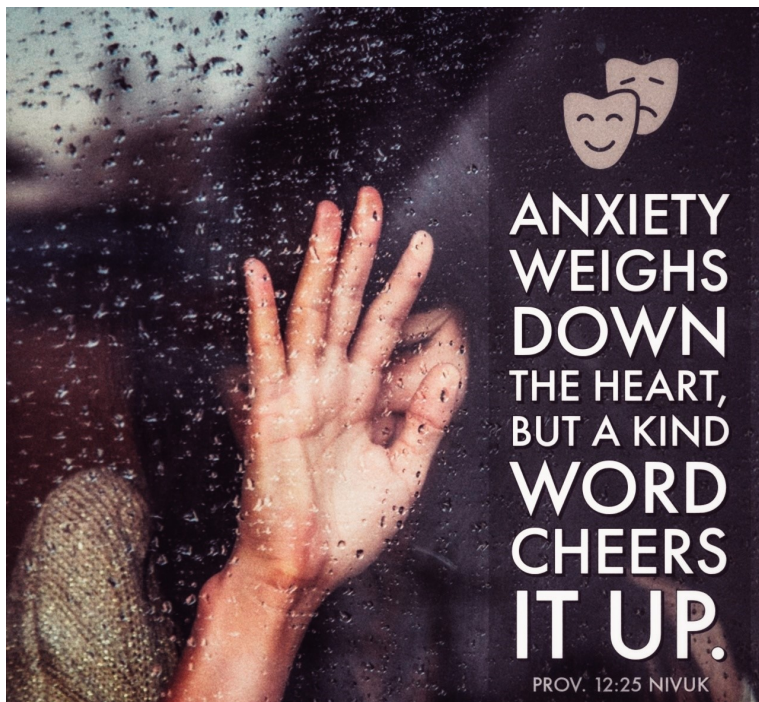
Use this short meditation to bring a moment of God's Word to your journey. Use this time to remind yourself of God's presence and love.

This week's meditation comes from [Psalm 9](#)



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



When you have a minute or two, call a friend or drop a card in the mail—let them know you are thinking of them and how much it means to you for them to be in your life.

Calendar

**Sunday - Feb 14th**  
10:00 Worship, Serving Team 2  
**Liturgist Jackie Watts**

**Sunday - Feb 21st**  
10:00 Worship, Serving Team 3  
**Liturgist Susan Neill**

**Thursday– Feb 25th**  
**Newsletter article submission deadline**

**Sunday - Feb 28th**  
10:00 Worship, Serving Team 4  
**Liturgist Jennifer Spiegel**

**Sunday - March 7th**  
10:00 Worship, Serving Team 1  
**Liturgist Jim Owens**

**Thursday– March 11th**  
**Newsletter article submission deadline**

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

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



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

To all my church family, a BIG thank you for the wonderful Christmas package delivered by the Membership committee! I really appreciate all the goodies!  
 Marilyn

*Thank You*

We received a thank you note from Marilyn Near the 1st week of January. We apologize for the delay in sharing Marilyn's card, it was misplaced and missed getting in the January newsletters.

**A Valentine From God**

For God so loved the world,  
 That He gave  
 his only  
 Begotten  
 Son  
 That whosoever  
 Believeth in Him  
 Should not perish,  
 But have everlasting life.

John 3:16

Sent in by Donna Rankin

**From our friends at the Dialogue Institute.**

This is an online lecture presented by the Dialogue Institute. It is February 24th at 7PM on Youtube. Please register if you are interested - registration is FREE, but it gives them an idea how many will be present online that day. It looks like a very interesting subject, especially during Lent.

**ISLAM'S JESUS**

Guest Speaker:  
**Zeki Saritoprak, PhD**  
 Professor, Department of Theology and Religious Studies  
 Bogazici University, Istanbul  
 Author of numerous works on Islamic theology in English, Turkish, and Arabic

Sponsored by  
 DIALOGUE INSTITUTE  
 RAINDROP FOUNDATION

Wednesday  
 February 24  
 7pm - 8pm (CT)

**WATCH LIVE on YouTube**  
[youtu.be/AqTTVosweS8](https://youtu.be/AqTTVosweS8)

**Click on the image above to register**





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 Prayers

- **Lucy Walker** got to come home from rehab. Continue to pray for her as she works on building her strength up.
- **Bob Owens** has moved to Brookdale at Rosehill. His room #109, 913-962-7600. He would appreciate a call from his church family to raise his spirits.

## Requests for Family and Friends:

- **Bob Pape's sister-in-law Deanna Pape** is in hospital battling cancer.
- **Jeanne Bryant's son** is having an eye surgery to save his vision. If surgery is not successful it will be a cornea transplant.
- **Donna Rankin's brothers** could use prayers. **Gerry** needs heart surgery and has been cleared for surgery at the Mayo clinic. **Danny's** non-Hodgkin's lymphoma has returned after 13 years.
- **Donna Rankin's** sister JoAnn Herzberg passed away from Covid. Please keep Donna and her family in your prayers.
- **Jan Pankey's nephew Tyler Pankey** headed to Mayo clinic in Florida - continuing tests to find out what is causing his health struggle
- **Jennifer Spiegel's parents, Debbie and Bernie Conlon,** have Covid and could use prayers.
- **Emily Hooker's sister Linda Collins** continues to need rehab to get stronger after her bout with Covid.
- **Joyce Luke's neighbor Vita Hunsucker** has Covid.
- **Pastor Mark performed a funeral for Jason Taylor,** who was only 51. Please keep the Taylor family in your prayers as they grieve.
- **Pastor Mark's Aunt Sherrie and Uncle Dennis** both have Covid. Dennis was moved to a rehab facility and continues to need oxygen.
- **Leroy Wisner passed away.** Please keep Mary and the family in your prayers.
- **Carol Vann's mother-in-law Loretta Vann** passed away. Please keep Carol and her family in your prayers.
- **Amy Decoursey's grandmother, Violet Brownrigg,** passed away. Please keep Amy and her family in your prayers.

## PRAISE:

- **Nancy Hines' granddaughter** earned her Eagle Scout

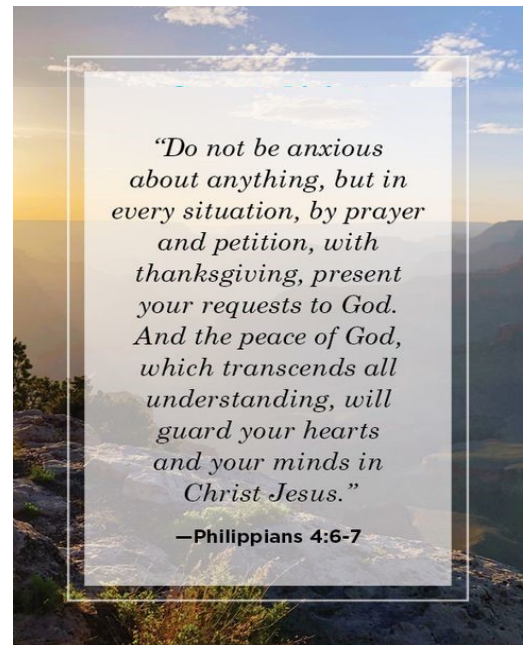
**We pray for all those who are sick, or are afraid they will get sick. We pray for all those without adequate health insurance who live in fear of injury or disease. We pray for all those on the front lines, healthcare professionals putting their lives at risk to serve. We pray for all the scientists working to find answers and a vaccine. May God's healing spirit be upon our world during this pandemic.**

**For all those whose employment is being affected, changed, and hampered by the current crisis. Let them not walk alone in this scary time, but let them feel the prayers and support of the great cloud of witnesses surrounding them as they traverse this difficult path.**

**For our churches. Help us to find our way forward to be the serving living embodiment of the Body of Christ in difficult and trying times.**

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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.



*“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

—Philippians 4:6-7



Click NOW  
For More Info!

## Currently being vaccinated

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

# COVID-19 VACCINE NEWS Updated Feb. 10, 2021

## [How do I get a vaccine? CLICK HERE](#)

### **Vaccination plans for the week of Feb. 8:**

**Health care workers** – JCDHE reached out to 6,891 people whose second doses are due for appointments this week. Appointments are being scheduled via a unique link. We will be reaching out to those due for their second doses after Feb. 12 soon.

**80+ population** - The county will continue vaccinating persons in this category. The majority of those contacted are being vaccinated at clinics next week on Wednesday and Thursday. [Please complete the interest form](#). Those who have successfully completed the county's interest form and have not been vaccinated will receive a follow-up email or phone call from the county on how to book an appointment. We are regularly monitoring our data to ensure that everyone who takes this survey is being contacted when they are eligible for an appointment.

**65+ population** - Johnson County hospital systems – AdventHealth, Menorah Medical Center, Overland Park Regional, Olathe Health, KU Med, St. Luke's Hospital are beginning vaccinations. Go to their websites for more information.

**K-12 public and private school staff and daycare providers** will be vaccinated through Children's Mercy at various locations. Eligible staff should receive information from their school or district administration. Saturday, Feb. 13 will be a clinic for daycare center staff and home child care providers who completed the [county's interest survey](#).

**First responders (fire, police and Sheriff's Office) – The last clinic for this group was held on Monday.**

Anyone in the Tier 1 categories who missed their dose – These individuals can make an appointment at any available vaccination clinic.

At vaccination clinics, we continue to have warming buses, parking lot transportation and a front door drop off area for those who feel comfortable coming to a clinic in the inclement weather. However, if you and your family chose not to venture out, you may reschedule or cancel you appointment through a link in the confirmation email you received when you completed our survey. If you choose to cancel or reschedule and new appointments aren't yet available, please check the link later this week or next week.

**Please visit this page to confirm your phase:** Kansas Department of Health and Environment COVID-19 Vaccine Prioritization Plan. If you're a Johnson County resident/worker eligible in Phase 2 and you haven't taken the vaccine interest survey, [fill out our interest form](#) or call 913-715-2819.