



Merriam Christian Church Disciples of Christ

Vol. LV
No. 25 2019
December 7, 2019

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

Organist and Pianist
Emily Yeh

Secretary
Patty Harper

SERVICES:
SUNDAYS:
8:30 a.m.
10:45 a.m.
SUNDAY SCHOOL:
9:30 a.m.
9401 Johnson Dr.

Merriam, KS 66203

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

E-mail

merriamchristian@gmail.com
www.merriamcc.org

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.

Dear Friends,

Thank you. As I write this, I am sitting in my office on my birthday. I have been inundated with calls, texts and Facebook messages wishing me a Happy Birthday from many of you. Just a couple weeks ago we celebrated my tenth anniversary as Pastor here. And now we are blazing through the Advent season, adopting families for Christmas and gathering to celebrate and fellowship as the year comes to a close. And I am struck by an overwhelming feeling of gratitude. Thank you. Thank you for your support. Thank you for your commitment. Thank you for seeking to grow your faith here, in this place. Thank you for everything you do for this church, for this community, and for each other as Disciples of Christ.

At this time of year I like to look back over the previous twelve months and see what we have accomplished. What good did we do? What grace did we share? What role did we play in bringing about a piece of the Kingdom of God to this world? Church, as I examine this past year - you did good work. You fed hungry families, through the Johnson County Food Ministry, through Meals-on-Wheels, through the Backpack and Snackpack programs with Merriam-Park Elementary, through the Cornucopia (I am informed we collected more food this year than ever before!), and through many other opportunities to help. You collected money for blankets, supported our kid's programs, and

helped strangers in need.

Just this past week, we were called by a Disciple's pastor in Alaska looking for help for his adult son traveling across the US to get home to Washington. The son had a seizure and had been taken off the Amtrack here in KC without his wallet, and not knowing a soul. This Pastor reached out to our Regional Office for help, and they said, "you should talk to Pastor Mark and Merriam Christian Church." We organized, and through phone calls as I traveled to Texas, on the phone with a worried father in Alaska; Carole, Rick, Allen, and Jackie were able to get the young man a place to stay, food to eat, and a ride to his departure with Amtrack the next Monday. I am always impressed at how quickly we can react and help when presented with a need. But I was also proud as your pastor, when the Regional office heard of this need and pointed to us as a graceful solution. You work very hard, Church, to be grace-filled and gracious and generous - and your reputation precedes you.

It has been a very good year. Thank you. You have been overwhelmingly kind and gracious to me as your pastor. Thank you. You have touched and changed lives through the grace of Christ. Thank you. May the last days of this year be a blessing unto you, and may God have even more in store for our 2020.

God Bless-
Mark

ONE WORSHIP SUNDAYS

December 29th - Holidays

NOTE: On December 22nd we will have our regular services at their regular times.



“THE BREAD OF LIFE”

I suppose that the greatest time of the year, is for most of us, the Christmas Season. But that is not so in the world itself, for there are millions and millions of people who will be sad. The reason? It is because of the haves and the have-nots, etc. But the more I read my Bible, the more I realize that Love is God’s greatest attribute, and so many do not know Him. Behind every dealing God has with us is His perfect Love. For example, it was Love that made Him create us, and it was Love that caused Him to send His One and Only Son to redeem us. His Love pursues us to Himself, and His love will some day take His children into His Presence forever.....

As with other aspects of His nature, we have a difficult time fully understanding God’s Love. For one thing, the word “Love” has come to mean almost anything today. We say we “love” ice cream or the color of a car, or we say we “love” an entertainer or celebrity (although we’ve never met, and never will). But God’s Love is far deeper than this. His Love is not a passing fancy or superficial emotion; it is a profound and unshakable commitment that seeks what is best for us. Human love may change or fade, but God’s Love never will. He says to us, “I have loved you with an everlasting Love; I have drawn you with unfailing kindness” (Jeremiah 31:3 NJV).

We are not to sentimentalize God’s Love, however. God’s Love isn’t a warm fuzzy feeling that ignores or shuns judgement. God’s Holiness that ignores sin or shuns judgment. God’s Holiness demands sin to be punished, but God’s Love has provided the Way of redemption through Christ. If it weren’t for God’s Love we could have no Hope, either in this life or the Life to come.....

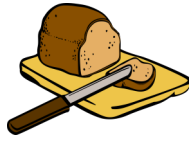
But God’s Word makes it plain that there is HOPE! That’s because He loves us, you and me, and anyone else because:

“FOR GOD SO LOVE THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH BUT HAVE ETERNAL LIFE. FOR GOD SENT THE SON INTO THE WORLD, NOT TO CONDEMN

THE WORLD, BUT THAT THE WORLD MIGHT BE SAVED THROUGH HIM.”

Remember: “The Bread of God never becomes stale when you eat it.”

Remember: God loves you and so do we
Rex & Irene



Thank You!

Many thanks to Betty Bohn, Donna McEndree, Carole Prentice, Dixie Wheaton, Rick Ferguson, and Bob Pape, for decorating the Sanctuary, and to Emily and Wayne Hooker and Joyce Luke for decorating the Chapel. Also, thanks to Lynne Beaver for decorating the Christmas tree in Fellowship Hall.

And, to all the participants who made our Advent Sunday a beautiful experience.

God Bless!
Pat Reed, Chairman

CHILDREN'S HOLIDAY WORKSHOP

Saturday, December 14
12:30 - 3:00 pm

Children will enjoy hearing Mark tell them the Christmas story and making ornaments to hang on the Church tree, as well as, their home tree.

Christmas cookies and hot chocolate will be served to all the special kiddos. All children of the church or MCC member relatives are welcome to participate. (sign-up sheet is located outside the Church Office). Deadline for sign-up is Sunday, December 1st. We’re looking forward to sharing holiday joy with the children.

MCC Elves



ADOPT A FAMILY

It's that time of year again! We have 9 families to be adopted for Christmas.

If you and your Sunday School class, or family, would like to help a family this year, please contact Carole Prentice or a member of the Outreach Committee.



SEND A CARD!

This month, let's send a Christmas card to Paul Jorgenson. Paul was a long-time attendee of the Early Service, but isn't able to come regularly anymore.

Reach out this holiday season with a Christmas card, and let Paul know you are thinking of him and love him.

Paul's address is:
7401 W. 55th
Overland Park, KS 66202



CHAMPSS

A DINING OPPORTUNITY FOR JOHNSON COUNTY SENIORS

A Partnership of JoCo Government and Hy-Vee
Enjoy a Breakfast, Lunch or Dinner
7 days a week, 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.
For a suggested donation of
\$4.00 per meal

Select a **CHAMPSS** entrée, vegetable and fruit, plus bread and milk to complete your meal

For more information or to register for the CHAMPSS program: Call 913-715-8894 or visit our website at www.jocogov.org/hsd

***Must be 60 years or older to participate*

ELDER/DEACON DINNER

The Elder/Deacon Christmas Dinner will be December 15th at 5:30 pm. All Elders and Deacons and their spouses are encouraged to attend. This includes any new Elders/Deacons that are coming on in 2020.

A sign-up sheet will be on the table downstairs. Please sign up this Sunday, December 8th or call Bob Pape or Betty Bohn.

This will be a covered dish with Mark furnishing the meat.



CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE

Our Christmas Eve Candlelight Service will be Tuesday December 24th at 5PM.

Invite family and friends. This one hour service is a delightfully sacred way to enter into this holiday. Come sing Christmas songs, hear the Christmas scripture again and rejoice in the gift of God to all. Children are welcome. See you there!



Watch for the next Newsletter the week of December 21, 2019. *Submissions for publication may be edited for size, clarity, and tone.*



MEALS ON WHEELS

Dec 10: Francis & Wendy Shafer

Dec 17: Glen & Dixie Wheaton





Inviting individuals, families and groups to see
Nativities From Around The World
Dec. 13, 14 and 15th at
Overland Park Christian Church
Located: 7600 W 75th St, Overland Park, KS 66204

Save the following Dates
Dec 13 – 15, 2019

Dates/Times
Dec. 13th 1pm-7pm
Dec. 14th 9am-5pm
Dec. 15th 12pm-4pm

[Click Here to check out the website!!](#)

**Dec. 13, 14, 15: Overland
Park Christian Church**


Nativitiesfromaroundtheworld.com
Over 600 nativity scenes: free will offering appreciated
Rev. Margi Colerick

Prayer List



Those Needing Prayers: Joe Myers, Opal Seals, Flo Biehl, Josh Ramsey, Zeke Schwenk, New Song Christian Church, Leroy & Mary Wisner

Requests for Family and Friends:

Susie Arnold's friend, Chris Pieschl
Patti Beaver's brother-in-law, Vinnie Vielia
Bob Pape's sister, Beverly
Marge Willard's son, Jewell
Joyce Campbell's brother, Louis Schiebel
Barry Davis' cousin, Ron Roebuck
Jon Beaver's friend, Robin Gregg
Susie Arnold's & Joan Tarwater's cousin, Joe Washka
Katie Schwenk's friend, Becky
Heather Waite's co-worker, Brett Mitchell
Patty Harper's co-worker, Michelle & her mother
Polly

Praises:

Joyce Luke's daughter, Barbara Kelly, passed Boards for her Master's Degree in Nursing
Jennifer Abbott has a new great-nephew, Landon Dean
Marilyn Near has a new great-grandbaby (3rd one!)
Irene & Rex's son Ernie, new job
Jarrett & Carly Boesche on their marriage.
Bev McDonald's nephew playing in concert with Manheim Steamroller @ Kauffman

Those in Grief:

Family of Sharon Conley on her passing
Family of Peggy Crawford on her passing
Family of Sherry Howe on her passing

++++

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.



Calendar

Sunday - December 8
8:30 Early Service
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 Worship
2:00-6:00 Luke-CH
Monday - December 9
9:00-12:00 Finance-LIB
9:00-11:00 Regional O&S-SD Room
Tuesday - December 10
7:00 Board Meeting
Wednesday - December 11
4:00-6:00 Visitation-Sherry Howe @ MCC
6:00 Funeral @ MCC
Thursday - December 12
4:45-5:45 DS Bus Lines-CH
Friday - December 13
9:15-10:15 DS Bus Lines-CH
12:30-1:30 DS Bus Lines-CH
Saturday - December 14
Kid's Christmas-CH
12:00 January Calendar Items Due
Sunday - December 15
8:30 Early Service
9:30 Sunday School
10:45 Worship
5:30 Elder/Deacon Christmas Dinner-CH
Monday - December 16
9:00-12:00 Finance-LIB
6:15 Regional Board-CH
6:30 Sarah
Tuesday - December 17
12:30 Esther
Wednesday - December 18
1:30 Regional B&F-LIB
Friday - December 20
12:00 Newsletter Deadline

CHRISTMAS BONUSES FOR STAFF

Sunday, December 8th is the last Sunday to contribute toward Christmas bonuses for our staff at Merriam Christian Church.

If you want to contribute, mark your check or envelope for "Christmas bonus" and the money will be divided among our good staff people for the holidays.

Thank you for your generosity and kindness!

