



THE CHRISTIAN MESSENGER

First Christian Church, Maryville, MO

fccmaryvillemo.com

February 19, 2026

*Behind
the
Veil:*

**A Journey
From
Hidden
to
Risen**

Journey through the stories of Esther and Jesus

Discover what it means to prepare for a life of Resurrection as Pastor Gina begins a new series that will lead us from the beginnings of the wilderness to the culmination of living resurrected.

This Sunday
10:30 am
in-person
or
livestream on
Facebook

Pastor's Pen

A message from my heart to yours



Not everyone observes Lent, and I understand that. For some, it feels like an old tradition and is limited to a season of fasting, giving something up, or something rooted in a different stream of Christianity that feels disconnected to modern day. But as for me? Lent has always been sacred to me even though I was never formally introduced to it through a church or my Catholic family. I have just been drawn to that process of withdrawing to the wilderness to turn inward for growth, release, remembrance, and reclamation. This is not something I do as an obligatory part of my faith. This is a sacred piece of my unfoldment. And as of yesterday, February 18, 2026, we stepped into it.

Lent begins in the wilderness. Before Jesus ever preached a sermon, healed a body, or gathered disciples, he went into the wilderness. The wilderness wasn't punishment. It was preparation. It was a time in which clarity came forth. It was the stripping away of every false voice that tried to tell him who he was. Hunger spoke. Temptation whispered. Identity was questioned. "If you are the Son of God..." Wow, what a journey and how did he respond? By staying the course. He prayed, fasted, and listened. Ultimately, He remembered and embodied the truth of who He is. I've come to realize that most of us don't avoid the wilderness because it's frightening. Sometimes we avoid it because it's quiet. And quiet exposes the noise we've grown comfortable living with. But there's another reason we often avoid it. Sometimes we don't enter the wilderness because we don't even recognize there is one to enter. We adapt so well to routine, to inherited structures, to the broken record tune that says, "this is just how life is," that we stop asking whether there is more. Our days are managed full of responsibilities and many obligations we have falsely taken on. We do what is expected and overtime, we become deaf and blind to what else is out there and that's when growth begins to feel optional. Complacency can be subtle, even unnoticeable and yet...something inside of us still calls for more. Can we slow down enough to hear it or seclude ourselves to find it. Life has piled on so much in the realm of expectations, routines, obligations so that somewhere along the way we forget what was original and what was within us as we came into this experience of life. I have said this before...sometimes the world isn't loud, it's our own minds talking and repeating un-serving thoughts and suggestions. Over time, the truest parts of us can feel buried. This is when our joy gets muted and our purpose feels distant even out of reach. If we aren't careful we start to believe that our connection with God has been affected. But the truth is you have never been separate from the divine presence within you. Lent is not about becoming someone new. It is about remembering who you've always been. The presence of God has never been far from you and your purpose has never been absent. Your soul has simply been waiting for you to slow down long enough to listen. Now, we step into the wilderness with Jesus. This is not to punish ourselves and not to perform religion and obligation better but to peel back the layers that have covered our light. To sit long enough in the quiet that false identities fall away. Remember the baptism before the Wilderness...God's voice saying, "This is my son..." You do remember the rest, don't you? Resurrection does not begin at the empty tomb. It begins in the wilderness. There's a "Gina" phrase I often share when teaching about remembrance..."It's the journey without distance to the place you never left." That's the Wilderness...that's Lent.

Journeying Through the Wilderness,

Gina ♥

Welcome Home



FCC
MARYVILLE, MO
You belong here.

Sunday Mornings

9 a.m.
Sunday School Classes

10:30 a.m.
Service in the Sanctuary

Wednesday Evenings

6 p.m.
The Table, dinner service

Sunday Worship Attendance

Jan. 25 service	Feb. 8	30
cancelled	Feb. 15.....	27
Feb. 1		30

Attendance at The Table

Jan. 28.....	17	Feb. 11.....	13
Feb. 4	24	Feb. 18.....	15

The Christian Messenger is published bi-weekly. Information is due in by noon the Tuesday before publication.

The next issue is
March 5, 2025

**First Christian Church
Disciples of Christ**
201 West Third, Maryville, MO
660.214.3414
Text 833.374.9501

www.fccmaryvillemo.com
fccmaryvillemo@gmail.com



Keeping in touch with our church families

Praises...

Ohmi Johnson received "Outstanding Performer" award

John & Sue Schenkel were Valentine King and Queen at Oak Pointe

Our Community Prayer List...

Jacob Walter
Dorothea Johnson

Rylyn Minear and family
Bob Colville

Thank you...

The Ministry Center of Maryville thanks you for your support of our Food Pantry and Clothing Room. We serve the people of Nodaway County with food at the Food Pantry and donated clothing and other household items at our Clothing Room. Both the Food Pantry and Clothing Room service are greatly needed for our community and much appreciated by our clients. The success of our operation depends on the support of caring persons and organizations, like you, in our community. Thank you for your continued support and assistance for the Ministry Center.

Tim Deen, Food Pantry Coordinator
Rachel Golightly, Clothing Room Coordinator

I am writing to gratefully acknowledge the generosity of your congregation to Reconciliation Ministry in 2025. Your gift helped us continue to move beyond brokenness to build beloved community in the General Ministries, Regions, Congregations, and Communities where we serve.

In 2025, through our annual granting program, we were able to provide support for the Center for Theology and Justice at Brite Divinity School and for the Be The Neighbor Justice service-learning trip program. Your support also enabled over 20 regional and congregational educational events.

On behalf of the Reconciliation Ministry Commission, thank you for your generous gift and faithful ministry in partnership with God's reconciling spirit during a historic year of transition and transformation.

Rev. Yvonne Gilmore,
Interim Executive Director, Ministry of Reconciliation

Our Staff

Gina Johnson
Senior Pastor

Peggy Dowis
Custodian

Virginia Ripple
Office Administrator

Kendric Santos-Briggs
Audio Lead

Anita Dew
Organist

Chloe Petersen
Live Stream Lead

The Bulletin Board

Following the Progress of FCC's Leaders

The following is a brief report of the Feb. 9 Board meeting. A full copy of the minutes are available upon request.

Office/Finance Administrator Virginia Ripple reported that Property Team Member Marcia Jordan **requested a correction for who we purchased the new front exterior lights from: Coenen Electric, not American Electric.**

Finance Reports: Finance Chair Coby Lamb reported finances were as expected. Salaries still seem to be wrong on the budget, which brought about a discussion of how many pay periods are in 2026 and how that affects our budget. Because the budgeted salaries may not be correct, it is possible we'll be ahead for the entire year on salary. The net loss for January was \$9,500 instead of the budgeted \$16,500, with contributions being \$9,900 versus \$6,700.

Revision of Funds Usage Policy:

Pastor Gina explained that Board Chair Bob Ferguson, Trustee Chair Linda Baker, Finance Chair Coby Lamb, Treasurer Donna Rickman, and Trustee Deena Poynter, with Finance/Office Administrator Virginia Ripple and Pastor Gina in attendance, met several times to revise the numerous financial policy documents retained from various years and combine them into one cohesive Funds Usage Policy to be adopted by First Christian Church, Maryville, with all previous documents being archived and no longer used going forward.

Board Moderator Bob Ferguson outlined the newly revised Funds Usage Policy that included flowcharts, stating that FCC will begin operating with two General Fund accounts: a General Fund Checking and a General Fund Savings. The money in the Chalice Fund Checking, Future Ministries Checking, Chalice Fund CD, and Future Ministries CD will go into the new General Fund Savings, which could be used by Trustee authorization to cover operating expenses as needed. The new Funds Usage Policy would make our funds more manageable and clear on how funds are to be used and what the money is to be spent. All designated funds were left untouched, including Memorial Funds. Any movement or use of funds not included in the new policy would need Board approval.

The Board voted on and approved the new Funds Usage Policy and flowcharts at the Feb. 9 meeting.

Trustees Report: Trustee Chair Linda Baker reported the three Edward Jones CDs came due February 4 and were cashed out. The checks were being mailed and should arrive within the week. All money will be deposited according to the new Funds Usage Policy.

Team Reports:

Property: Property Team Chair Pat Immel reported that, after the last big snow, American Electric's parking lot was plowed and a large amount of snow was left in the handicap parking space in front of the church building, leaving the space unusable. Pat contacted American Electric and requested they not allow that to happen in the future and they were agreeable to that. The Property Team will meet February 23 at 6 pm.

Worship: Worship Chair Guy Ebersole reported they are getting ready for Easter. Christian Life Chair Marsha Meyers thanked Guy for addressing the issue of communion shortage during Sunday morning worship.

Outreach/Evangelism: Pastor Gina reported that The Table is coming up on the end of its 3-month trial. It has been averaging \$63 per meal with attendance usually around 20. Pastor Gina made packets available at the last Chamber Soup Luncheon gathering of local non-profit organizations inviting groups to sponsor a meal in exchange for five minutes to speak about their organization to those gathered. Several totes of things from The Giving Tree are to be taken to a place in St. Joseph for donation. Caring & Sharing was down for January, with very few people requesting help with bills, which was a surprise for the new year.

Christian Life: Christian Life Chair Marsha Meyers reported that the potluck for Elena Huegel from Global Ministries on February 8 went well. The next potluck is scheduled for March 29 and there will not be a breakfast or meal for Easter Sunday. There will also be a kitchen reorganization occurring at some point because there is an excess of stuff that is not needed.

Continued on next page

Minister's Report: Pastor Gina requested everyone as leaders consider participating in the Caring & Connecting congregational care visitation teams along with the Elders and Deacons. She explained the teams would be in addition to regular pastoral visits by her. Currently the number of people who would be visited is about ten. Additionally, she requested the leaders consider participating in a rotation to serve as worship leaders at Oak Pointe, otherwise that ministry will not be happening anymore. She will also be meeting with Property to inform them of projects she would like to work on and update them on any projects that are still in progress from last year.

FCC Leadership

Board Moderator: Bob Ferguson
Stewardship/Finance: Coby Lamb
Property: Pat Immel
Worship/Elders: Guy Ebersole

Christian Life: Marsha Meyers
Treasurer: Donna Rickman
Trustee Chair: Linda Baker



March



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:00 – 9:00 AM Sanctuary Open 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:30 – 11:30 AM Worship	2 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM Circle of Joy 7:00 – 9:00 PM Nodaway Chorale	3 4:00 – 6:00 PM Youth choir 6:30 – 7:30 PM Garden Club	4 6:00 – 7:00 PM Girl Scout Troop 3385	5	6	7 9:00 – 11:30 AM PEO
8 Daylight Saving Time starts 8:00 – 9:00 AM Sanctuary Open 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:30 – 11:30 AM Worship	9 6:00 – 7:00 PM Team Planning & Board Meeting 7:00 – 9:00 PM Nodaway Chorale	10 4:00 – 6:00 PM Youth choir 6:00 – 8:00 PM Girl Scout Leader meeting	11	12 5:15 – 6:15 PM Girl Scout Troop 5720 6:00 – 7:00 PM Girl Scout Troop 2942	13	14
15 8:00 – 9:00 AM Sanctuary Open 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School 10:30 – 11:30 AM Worship	16 7:00 – 9:00 PM Nodaway Chorale	17 St. Patrick's Day 7:00 – 8:00 AM Optimist Board meeting	18 6:00 – 7:00 PM Girl Scout Troop 3385	19 6:00 – 7:00 PM Girl Scout Troop 3376 6:30 – 8:30 PM Optimist Club & Board	20	21
22 8:00 – 9:00 AM Sanctuary Open 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School	23 7:00 – 9:00 PM Nodaway Chorale	24 4:30 – 7:00 PM Youth choir	25	26 5:15 – 6:15 PM Girl Scout Troop 5720 6:00 – 7:00 PM Girl Scout Troop 2942	27 Garden Club set-up	28 8:00 AM – 2:00 PM Garden Club
29 Palm Sunday 8:00 – 9:00 AM Sanctuary Open 9:00 – 10:00 AM Sunday School 11:30 AM – 12:30 PM 5th Sunday Potluck	30 Holy Week 7:00 – 9:00 PM Nodaway Chorale	31 Holy Week	1 Holy Week	2 Holy Week	3 Holy Week	4 Holy Week



FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH
201 WEST THIRD STREET
MARYVILLE MO 64468
Return Service Requested

Is your info up-to-date?

Have you moved or changed your phone number in the last year? Do you have a new favorite picture of yourself?

If you answered yes to any of these, it's probably time to update your information in our directory. It's easy and only takes a few minutes. You can call or email to update your information or you can update it in the member app or on the member website.

Need some help
figuring it out?
Contact Virginia in
the office at 660-
214-3414.



Find us on
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Looking Ahead...

Feb. 25: The Table, 6 pm

Mar. 8: Daylight Savings Time begins

Mar. 9: Board meeting, 6 pm

Mar. 29: Palm Sunday

Mar. 29: 5th Sunday Potluck

Apr. 1: Easter Sunday



Miss Sunday's message?
Never fear! We're on YouTube!

YouTube

Find us at
[youtube.com/@firstchristianmaryvillemo](https://www.youtube.com/@firstchristianmaryvillemo)

Remember to Comment, Like, & Subscribe today!