



Meridian United Methodist
**Church of the
Warm Heart**

FOOTPRINTS

January 2024

LOVING ALL. CHANGING HEARTS. TRANSFORMING LIVES.

SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:30 a.m.

11:15 a.m.

Both services are broadcast online.

Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study

2:00 p.m. (resumes Jan 9)

SERMON SERIES January 2024

01.07.2024

Meditation

Psalm 119:1-3, 97-106



01.14.2024

Prayer

James 4:1-3, 6-11



01.21.2024

Fasting

Leviticus 23:26-28; Luke 4:1-3



01.28.2024

Study

Romans 12:1-2; John 8:31-32

Thank You For Your Generosity

As always, the Church of the Warm Heart went above and beyond in giving and outreach during the Advent season. First, you contributed 52 boxes to the annual St. Vincent De Paul Thanksgiving Project. In total, the project put together 2,574 food boxes that served 14,273 members of our community. Next, you raised \$2,800 in gift cards plus a few dozen items for local vets served by the Idaho State Veterans Home. Finally, your donations to our Adopt-A-Family program helped provide gifts for 17 children from 6 families in our community. Thank you for your continued dedication to loving our neighbors!



Idaho Street Renovation

Beginning in the second week of January, the City of Meridian will be relocating the Hunter Lateral that goes by our property. This will affect our Idaho Street parking. This project may take a couple of months - please park and walk carefully.

Groundhog Feed

The United Methodist Men invite you to join us for our annual Groundhog Dinner. Stop by the FLC on February 3rd from 4:30 to 7:00 p.m. for a sausage dinner (it's ground hog, get it?). Tickets are \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 12 and under.



The Sandwich Generation



If you are currently raising kids and supporting your aging parents, this group is for you. We will meet on Wednesday evenings starting January 3. For more information, contact Pastor Jen.

Grief Support Group

Grief is a wilderness; we need to reach out to discover comfort and support. A grief support group will be starting soon. It will be a small group to help one another through a very difficult time. If interested, please contact Faye Gabriel or Lisa Miller.



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December

NEW MEMBERS:

DEATHS:

Please pray for the families of...
Shirley O'Neal
Norma Thorsen

BAPTISMS:

FEBRUARY BLOOD DRIVE



Our next blood drive will be held on Monday, February 5th, from 12:00 - 5:00 p.m. in the FLC. Did you know that in the U.S. alone, a blood transfusion is needed approximately every two seconds? To keep up with that demand, we need over 38,000 donations each day. To do your part and schedule a donation, contact Lisa Miller at...

care@meridianumc.com

STAFF

Senior Pastor (ext. 104)
Rev. Mike Benischek pastormike@meridianumc.com

Adult Discipleship/Asst. Pastor (ext. 109)
Jennifer Hunkovic adult.ministry@meridianumc.com

Minister of Congregational Care (ext. 105)
Lisa Miller care@meridianumc.com

Minister of Worship Arts 208-608-2520
Debbie Jones worshiparts@meridianumc.com

Youth Minister 734-316-9517
Nicole Walker youth@meridianumc.com

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Jessie Layton nursery@meridianumc.com

Organist
Kristine Ciulla organist@meridianumc.com

Facility Personnel
Richard Stolle maintenance@meridianumc.com (M - Th)
Don Woods dandvwoods@gmail.com (F - Sun)

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

Administrative Council Chair Dennis Moberly
Staff Pastor Parish Relations Chair Margaret Pridmore
Trustees Chair Ron Pridmore
Systems Administrator Integrity Computer Consultants
Finance Chair Lori Jones
Treasurer Lori Jones
Financial Secretary Diane Brister
Futures Team Chair Lori Jones
United Methodist Men President Ed Emmel
United Women in Faith President Dixie Jacky
Lay Chaplain Coordinator Faye Gabriel
Lay Chaplains Emma Jean Bedsole, Phyllis & Gordon Bouza, Don Brister, Faye Gabriel, Ruth Hayes, Gary Himes, Dixie Jacky, Donna Melville, Lisa Miller, Shirley O'Neal, Carole Ravine, Mary Rich, Carol Rounds, Eloise Stemple
Health and Wellness Co-Coordinators
Lisa Miller, Sue Mattison

CHURCH INFORMATION

MERIDIAN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

240 E. Idaho Ave. Meridian, ID 83642
235 E. Pine Ave. Meridian, ID 83642 - Mailing Address
Phone: 208.888.2245 Fax: 208.888.5741
E-mail: office@meridianumc.com
Website: www.meridianumc.com
Facebook: [Meridian United Methodist Church](https://www.facebook.com/MeridianUnitedMethodistChurch)

Office Hours

Monday - Thursday: 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Friday: 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.

Prayer & Praise Requests - prayer@meridianumc.com

PASTOR MIKE'S MUSINGS

Happy New Year!

I just want to thank you for a wonderful 2023 in the life of the Warm Heart Church. I look back at my calendar with pride to see all of the meaningful ministry that this church offered to Meridian over the past year. From children and youth events, mission trips, fellowship groups, dinners, studies, food collections, veterans support, etc; music, worship, weddings, funerals and baptisms, and on and on and on! We also ended the year with generous giving. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

January is named after the Roman god Janus, a two-faced deity who can see both behind and ahead. He was the god of doors and gates, beginnings and endings. The month is aptly named as January is generally a time when we both reflect on the past and ponder the future.

Here is a scripture for you as you reflect on the past:

"Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. Remember the wonders he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced."

~ 1 Chronicles 16:11-12.

Here is a scripture for you as you ponder the future:

"For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

~ Jeremiah 29:11

From our house to yours, may your 2024 be filled with blessings, peace and love.

See you in church on Sunday!

Pastor Mike

P.S. Here's a little puzzle for you to begin this year.

There are 30 books of the Bible in this paragraph. Can you find them? This is a most remarkable puzzle. It was found by a gentleman in an airplane seat pocket on a flight from Los Angeles to Honolulu, keeping him occupied for hours. He enjoyed it so much, he passed it on to some friends. One friend from Illinois worked on this while fishing from his john boat. Another friend studied it while playing his banjo. Elaine Taylor, a columnist friend, was so intrigued by it she mentioned it in her weekly newspaper column. Another friend judges the job of solving this puzzle so involving, she brews a cup of tea to help her nerves. There will be some names that are really easy to spot. That's a fact. Some people, however, will soon find themselves in a jam, especially since the book names are not necessarily capitalized. Truthfully, from answers we get, we are forced to admit it usually takes a minister or a scholar to see some of them at the worst. Research has shown that something in our genes is responsible for the difficulty we have in seeing the books in this paragraph. During a recent fund raising event, which featured this puzzle, the Alpha Delta Phi lemonade booth set a new record. The local paper, The Chronicle, surveyed over 200 patrons who reported that this puzzle was one of the most difficult they had ever seen. As Daniel Humana humbly puts it, "The books are all right here in plain view hidden from sight." Those able to find all of them will hear great lamentations from those who have to be shown. One revelation that may help is that books like Timothy and Samuel may occur without their numbers. Also, keep in mind, that punctuation and spaces in the middle are normal. A chipper attitude will help you compete really well against those who claim to know the answers. Remember, there is no need for a mad exodus. There really are 30 books of the Bible lurking somewhere in this paragraph waiting to be found. God Bless.

MINISTRIES & NEWS

CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES

Hello Warm Heart Families!

Happy new year! It is hard to believe that 2023 has come to a close. After having the last month off of our normal scheduled programs, I'm excited to be starting back up. We're taking a little break from Parent's Night Out this month for the holidays, but it will return in February. Here's what's coming up:

Pioneer Club

Wednesdays, January 10, 17, and 31

Parent's Night Out

Friday, February 2, 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.; please RSVP

I can't wait to see the kiddos and hear all about how they spent their Christmas breaks.

Take care,

Malia Paz

children@meridianumc.com

P.S. If you are not receiving my monthly parent emails and would like to be added, please send me an email and I'll add you to the mailing list.



Gingerbread Bash!

YOUTH MINISTRIES

Body Body and a Christmas Party and Youth Sunday, oh my! The youth group is jumping into January with excitement after our Winter Break Sleepover at the end of December.

Our Mac and Cheese Christmas Party was scheduled last month, but covid changed our plans. Since we couldn't just skip this epic event, we moved it to January! Bring a \$12 gift for a gift exchange, wear all your funkier Christmas attire, and come hungry for mac and cheese. It'll be a great night!

Also on our calendar this month is our third ice skating trip to Indian Creek Plaza. Whether it's your first time on skates or your hundredth time, you're invited to come slide around the ice ribbon with the youth group – for free! Just bring a few dollars for a snack afterward; there's something about freshly bruised knees that makes you hungry for sugar!

And PLEASE mark your calendars for our January Backpack Program day. The Meridian Food Bank's Backpack Program is feeding over 750 students in the West Ada school district each weekend. This is a vital ministry in our community, and it's a privilege to be part of it!

Sunday, Jan 7 – Body Body Night

6:00 – 8:00 p.m., Sanctuary Building

Tuesday, Jan 9 – Backpack Program

3:30 – 4:30ish p.m., Meridian Food Bank

Wednesdays, starting Jan 10 – Haven and Chimes

6:30 – 8:00 p.m., Youth Room

with Chime Choir practice in the Sanctuary at 6:00 p.m.!

Sunday, Jan 14 – Mac & Cheese Christmas Party

6:00 – 8:00 p.m., FLC

Saturday, Jan 20 – Ice Skating @ Indian Creek Plaza

1:30 – 4:00 p.m., carpooling from the church

Sundays, Jan 21 & 28 – Youth Sunday Planning

6:00 – 8:00 p.m., Youth Room



With joy,

Come try Chime Choir in 2024!

Nicole Walker

youth@meridianumc.com

MINISTRIES & NEWS

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

"Then you and the Levites and the foreigners residing among you shall rejoice in all the good things the Lord your God has given to you and your household."

~ Deuteronomy 26:11

Happy New Year! As I write this newsletter, we have just finished our Blue Christmas service and today is the darkest day of the year, so I am trying to manifest my inner light. I love new beginnings, and the new year is a perfect time for that. So let's GO FOR IT! Let's start fresh and new.

Usually I start the new year like any good public educator with a list of diet and exercise talks: eat more vegetables, exercise more, get more sleep, improve your mental health with meditative prayer, and drink more water. These are all important practices that require a daily action plan. This year I want to use a similar action plan for a goal of "being the light."

If we are on a diet, we map out healthy meal options. If we're trying to drink more water, we plan ahead and get the box of fruit flavored enhancers. If our goal is to "be the light," what will our plan look like? Maybe we start each day with a joyful heart and practice gratitude. Maybe we take an intentional 10-minute break to check our attitudes in the afternoon. Let's think with detailed plan-ahead precision and make a solid plan so that each day we can see the light, be the light, and make a difference!

Lisa Miller
care@meridianumc.com

Ladies Night Out

Wednesday, January 24th



Our LNO group is hitting the blue and orange court to watch the Broncos take on UNLV! The game is January 24th and tickets are just \$10. Please text or email Lisa if you are interested in going so we can reserve the tickets in advance.



Ladies Christmas Party. Thanks for a great evening!

ADULT MINISTRIES

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here!

~ 2 Corinthians 5:17

Greetings Church!

Happy New Year! For many, this is a time of resolutions and intentions. A time to let go of the burdens from the previous year and embrace the possibilities of something new. It is a time of promise and hope. In our Wesleyan tradition, is also a time to renew our covenant with God. Wesley found it meaningful and "a time of remarkable blessing."

Today, I invite you to be a part of this tradition as you look forward to the upcoming year by praying this covenant prayer:

I am no longer my own, but thine.
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.
And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven.
Amen.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Jen
adult.ministry@meridianumc.com

Spiritual Formation Class

Join us Monday mornings at 10 a.m., starting Jan 8, for this special class designed to accompany Pastor Mike's upcoming sermon series, "Celebration of Discipline."



New Ladies Study



Becoming a Woman of Excellence by Cynthia Heald is a study designed to help you discover your identity in Christ and how best to serve him. The study will be held Monday evenings at 6:30 p.m. on Zoom, starting Jan 8. RSVP with Pastor Jen!

MINISTRIES & NEWS

MUSIC MINISTRY

Thank you to all who participated in Advent and Christmas music throughout the season: The Syringa String Quartet, Kimberly Dunford, Susan Hohstadt-Voermans, Riverside Brass, our Angels Alive Choir, Rolling Tones Chime Choir, The Koinonia Handbell Choir, the Celebration Choir, the Triple Trio, and our soloists and ensembles. We are grateful for you sharing your time and talents with our church family.



Rehearsals Resume – Our Koinonia Handbell Choir, Celebration Choir and Warm Heart Worship Team resume rehearsals on January 4. The Rolling Tones and Angels Alive resume practices on Jan. 10. See you there!

Handbell Choir – Do you read music? The Koinonia Handbell Choir (our four-octave handbell choir for adults) is always in need of substitutes who can join in for rehearsals (and sometimes on Sunday mornings) when our ringers are unavailable. We rehearse at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday evenings. If you or someone you know can help, please contact me for more information.

Free Concert – Come support your Koinonia Handbell Choir on Saturday, February 10, for the Snake River Handbell Conference Concert at Central Elementary Gym in Nampa. The concert begins at 6:30 p.m. We hope to see you there!

Celebration Choir – Our Celebration Choir always has room for additional singers; we rehearse on Thursdays at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary. If you would like to join us, let me know!

Blessings,

Debbie Jones
worshiparts@meridianumc.com

FINANCIAL NEWS

I am drafting this article the day after Christmas. As you can see, we began December with a deficit of more than \$75,000. Our estimated monthly expenses for December are about \$65,000, so we were praying for an extraordinary month of gifts to cover our normal expenses and overcome our large deficit. To date we have received \$100,810 in December. Based on those figures and considering the deficit plus any gifts received between now and the last Sunday of 2023, I predict we will fall short between \$25,000 and \$30,000. This was a truly valiant effort. I want to take this opportunity to express my deepest gratitude for the way you have stepped forward this year regarding meeting our finances. A special thanks to those who gave extra in November and December or met the challenge match in July.

For General Operations:	Nov 2023	Year to Date 2023
Given	\$50,199	\$619,388
Need	\$60,680	\$694,984
Outcome	(\$10,481)	(\$76,596)

I also mentioned that the church staff and committees were working on the budget for 2024. I am glad to say that this task has been completed. The Administrative Council approved a 2024 budget that is significantly less than 2023. A special thanks to the church staff, SPPRC, Trustees, Finance Committee, and the Ad Council for accomplishing this tedious, time consuming, and thankless task. I will be presenting the budget figures in the February Footprints as well as making a presentation during both services in late January.

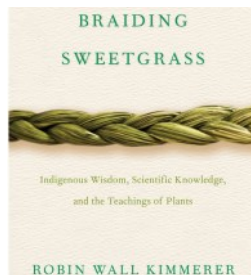
Once again, please continue to pray for our financial situation as we enter 2024. Please also pray for our staff, our elected officials and anyone in our church who is grieving or facing personal challenges. If you have any questions regarding our finances, please don't hesitate to contact Lori Jones, Finance Committee Chair, at lhjones2021@gmail.com, or Don Brister, Stewardship Chair, at maroontycoon63@gmail.com. We will be happy to answer any and all questions.

MINISTRIES & NEWS

THE BOOK NOOK

Claudia Moberly

It's January — a time for new beginnings and making resolutions. Here is one I want to propose for your 2024 reading life: "I resolve to read *Braiding Sweetgrass* this year." This is an amazing book, and one I plan to re-read in 2024. (Life is short; I select my "read a second time" books very carefully!)



Author Robin Wall Kimmerer is a botanist, a member of the Potawatomi Nation, a mother, a professor, and happiest when she is outside. As a scientist, she asks questions of nature that can be answered through scientific study. As a member of the Potawatomi Nation, she looks to plants and animals as the oldest teachers. In this beautiful book, she brings these two approaches together and describes the effects of "civilization" on native habitats and our power to restore and regenerate natural areas, both for the good of native plant and animal life, and also for ourselves as fellow travelers on this Earth. She shows us some of the gifts and lessons other living beings offer us, and teaches us how to listen for those lessons ourselves.

All of God's good creation lives in harmony and reciprocal relationship when we value ALL life. We are a part of the living world, and Kimmerer honors that and teaches us how to be good stewards of the land she loves so deeply.



Christmas fun is for all ages! Dave and Howard were caught looking festive one Sunday morning during Advent, and another church member just had to snag a picture.



Our Christmas Eve candlelight services are a special tradition. Kids and grown-ups alike make memories they'll cherish forever.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

In this new year, the UWFaith will be focusing on a new scripture with the idea of growing in wisdom.

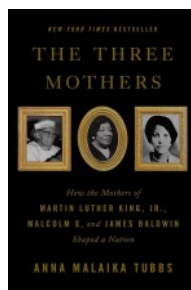
"Does not wisdom call out?
Does not understanding raise her voice?"

Proverbs 8

In January, we will once again be gathering to sew hygiene kits for the Meridian Day For Girls project. We will start at 10 a.m. on Saturday, January 27, to learn about the Day For Girls program, sew until about 12:30, then have a pizza lunch. I hope you can join us! Everyone can help; regardless of your sewing skills, there will be a job you can do! Please call the church office to let us know if you'll be in attendance. More information will be coming out as it gets closer, but we'd like to get it on your calendar now. Darker colored (nonwhite) flannel fabric donations are appreciated.



In February, we have an opportunity to take a "field trip" and join the Boise First UWFaith unit for lunch and to visit the Boise Black History Museum. We can carpool from the Meridian UMC, but please call the church office by January 14 if you will be attending.



In anticipation of the Black History Museum visit, the Warm Heart book club will be reading "The Three Mothers," by Anna Malaika Tubbs. This book tells the story of the mothers of Martin Luther King Jr., Malcolm X, and James Baldwin and how these women ended up shaping a nation. Book club will meet Thursday, January 18, at 12:30 p.m. for a brown bag luncheon and book discussion at 1:00 p.m.

As always, we continue to ask for your support of Mirror Image. Bring your donations of full-sized hygiene items to Lisa's office in the FLC or donate cash that we can turn into most-needed supplies.

**Mirror
Image**

Additionally, your support of NU2U is always appreciated! You can donate clean items in great condition, visit the store and shop, or volunteer to work 3 hours 1-2 times per month.

Blessings to you as we put our faith, hope, and love into action for women and children here and around the world. And don't forget to visit www.meridianumc.com/UWFaith to read our monthly devotional.

Blessings,

Dixie Jacky
United Women in Faith President



**Church of the
Warm Heart**

Meridian United Methodist Church
235 E. Pine Avenue
Meridian, ID 83642

January Events to Celebrate!

Please watch the E-Blast and Facebook for additional church events.

January 1 – Happy New Year!

January 14 – *Youth Group Christmas Party*

January 15 – Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 27 – *Days for Girls, FLC, 10 a.m.*

February 3 – *Groundhog Feed, FLC, 4:30 to 7 p.m.*

February

**NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE:**

**Thursday,
January 25th**

Submissions may be
emailed to Jacob Walker at
cc@meridianumc.com
or brought by the
church office.
Thank you!