



Meridian United Methodist
Church of the
Warm Heart

FOOTPRINTS

May 2025

LOVING ALL. CHANGING HEARTS. TRANSFORMING LIVES.

HIGHLIGHTED HAPPENINGS

SUNDAY WORSHIP

9:30 a.m.

11:15 a.m.

Both services are broadcast online.

Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study

2:00 p.m.



Graduate Sunday

Graduate Sunday is May 18, and we want to make sure to recognize all our graduates! Submit your name, photo, and the name of your school/program to cc@meridianumc.com to be included! We love to celebrate everyone graduating from Kindergarten, High School, and College or Technical Programs.

Boise Hawks Game

Come join your Warm Heart family for an evening at the Ballpark. We'll be watching the Boise Hawks from the third baseline on Wednesday, June 4th. Tickets are just \$10. Talk to Lisa Miller to get yours!



SERMON SERIES May 2025

05.04.2025

Sweet hour of Prayer
Psalm 61



05.11.2025

Guest Preacher: Pete Nelson



05.18.2025

Swing Low, Sweet Chariot
Psalm 68:17-20



05.25.2025

My Country 'Tis of Thee
Psalm 33:12-22



Grief Support Group

Grief is a wilderness; we need to reach out to discover comfort and support. A new grief support group will be meeting Mondays at 2 p.m., beginning on June 9th. Contact Lisa Miller if you would like to participate.

Memorial Hike

In honor of Jeff McClees, we will meet on June 8th, 1:30 p.m., at Camel's Back park (1200 Heron street). Pack a sack lunch and we will all enjoy a time of fellowship and stories. Then following the picnic those that would like to hike will hit the trails at the Hull's Gulch Nature area.



Vacation Bible School

It's hard to believe, but Vacation Bible School is right around the corner! June 2-6 will see the FLC transformed with VBS joy!

Nicole would LOVE volunteers to help this be a success. Please see her for ways to help! Sign up information for the kids coming soon!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 May Sermon Series, Highlighted Happenings
- 2 **Inside Page**
Membership Info, Blood Drive
- 3 **Ministries & News**
Pastor Mike's Musings
- 4 **Ministries & News**
Family Ministries
- 5 **Ministries & News**
Congregational Care, Finance
- 6 **Ministries & News**
Worship Arts
- 7 **Ministries & News**
Book Nook, UWFaith
- 8 **Back Page** May Events Calendar

STAFF

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

Family Minister (Children and Youth) 734-316-9517
Nicole Walker family@meridianumc.com

Office Manager (ext. 102)
Angela Perry office@meridianumc.com

Receptionist (ext. 101)
Lucinda Dyer receptionist@meridianumc.com

Bookkeeper
Maria Akers bookkeeper@meridianumc.com

Communications Coordinator (ext. 103)
Video Production
Jacob Walker cc@meridianumc.com
production@meridianumc.com

Nursery Coordinator
Jessie Layton nursery@meridianumc.com

Organist
Kristine Ciulla organist@meridianumc.com

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

April

NEW MEMBERS:

DEATHS:

Please pray for the families of...
Joan Corum

BAPTISMS:

Heather Race

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, Carole Ravine, Mary Rich, Carol Rounds,
Eloise Stemple
Health and Wellness Co-Coordinators
Lisa Miller, Sue Mattison

JUNE BLOOD DRIVE



Our next blood drive will be held on Monday, June 16, from 12 - 5 p.m. in the FLC. A single blood donation can save up to 3 lives! And every two seconds in the U.S. someone needs blood. To do your part and schedule a donation, contact Lisa Miller at...

care@meridianumc.com

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
Email: 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

Dear Warm Heart Family and Friends:

I remember when my youngest brother was just born. This was in those days when the mother would stay in recovery in a large room with other mothers for several days. I was staying at my aunt's house during this time. About the third day, my aunt asked if I wanted to call mom at the hospital and say hello. Of course I would. She dialed the number and handed me the receiver. I remember a lady picking up the phone and saying, "Maternity Ward". And I, being six, asked the question, "Is my mommy there?". And she replied, "Very funny," and hung up! My aunt died laughing, then redialed and asked for Mrs. Benischek. Apparently in a room full of mothers, Mommy could be anybody.

May is a month when we celebrate motherhood. We show our appreciation and love to the one who loved us. I asked a group of older ladies at a care facility what a mother's main responsibility might be. They said things like unconditional love, nurture, protection, caring, providing, and then one of the ladies said something that I think was very true. Worry. A mother's job is to worry - when the children are out on their own somewhere. With love and care comes worry and fret. You hope that your loved ones are always safe.

Some would say that Jesus' main job on earth was to love. I would disagree. I'm not Jesus, and I'm going out on a limb with this. But I believe that Jesus' main job wasn't to love us; it was to teach us how to love. Jesus gave us the command: love one another. I would argue that this is the basis for the Christian life. How do they know that we are Christians? By our love. Not necessarily by our beliefs, nor our thoughts on certain social issues, nor our politics or affiliations, but by our love. The point of Jesus coming down in the first place was to teach us how to love. Did Jesus love us? Yes. Did Jesus care about us and nurture us? Yes. But his main focus was on teaching us how to love and care and nurture one another. Jesus wasn't always going to be around, so he placed the charge on his disciples: love others as I have loved you. Jesus didn't come down to love us, but to show us how to love.

Mother's Day. Some would say that the main job of a mother is to love her children. I would disagree. I'm not a mother, and I'm going out on a limb with this. I believe that a mother's (and father's) main job isn't to love her children, but to teach her children how to love. A mother's love is unconditional and the hope is that the children emulate that kind of love in the future. Some day the mother will not be around — kids grow up and move away. It would be the success of the mother if they moved away and carried that love with them. Throughout their childhood, the kids need to see love in action. They need to participate in loving acts. Even if they don't want to show love at a particular time or place - they need to do it. I remember my parents basically forcing us to go see a great-grandmother in a nursing home. We didn't want to go; we were going to miss the afternoon cartoons! If our parents loved us, we thought, they would let us do what we want. Instead, they were teaching us how to love. Parents are expected to love their children, but I would say that their number one job is to teach their children how to love. Does this mean a parent has failed if they do not have loving children? Of course not. But even when the kids leave the house, parents are still teaching life lessons. They only fail if they stop loving their child. But give your children examples throughout their lives of how to love.

Thank you, moms!

Pastor Mike

P.S. Last month I shared two volunteer opportunities related to communion, and I liked it so much I thought I'd keep using this space to share ways you can get involved. Here, let's make it look official:

Volunteer Opportunity Spotlight

Ushers - Our ushers are responsible for a lot of important jobs, but I promise none of them are too scary or hard! Ushers are available to provide information and assistance to worshippers on Sunday mornings. You see them at the Sanctuary doors every Sunday morning passing out bulletins and greeting the congregation. They help pass the offering plates during the service, and also help with a few small housekeeping tasks like a quick spot check of the Sanctuary before and after the services.

Worship Leader - I know public speaking isn't everyone's favorite, but if you can read in front of a crowd, you qualify for this job. Our worship leaders share announcements with the congregation, lead us in our affirmation of faith, and read the scripture for the homily. And that's really the whole job! Not too intimidating, right?

If either of these Volunteer opportunities appeal to you, contact the church office!

MINISTRIES & NEWS

FAMILY MINISTRIES

It's MAY! When did that happen?! School is winding down (or going out with a bang, depending on how many final exams you have to study for) and soon it'll be summer break and lazy days and parents going a little nutty. I look forward to celebrating the end of this school year with all our children and youth!

CHILDREN

The Warm Heart Kids have two weeks of Bible Builders in May and one last glorious Parent's Night Out. Of course Sunday School will continue all month, and Vacation Bible School is just around the corner in the first week of June!

Bible Builders and Angels Alive
Wednesdays, May 7 and May 14
6:00—7:30 p.m., Upper Room

On May 14, we'll be celebrating the end of the Bible Builder's year with a party! Weather permitting, we hope to play and party in the park across the street from the Sanctuary.

Parents' Night Out
Friday, May 9
6:00—8:30 p.m., Children's Worship Center
Dinner provided; RSVP by May 8



We had 15 kids for Parent's Night Out in April!



Kids' Egg Hunt fun

YOUTH

May can be a WILD time for middle school and high school students. Between finals, last-minute projects, concerts, recitals, dances, grad parties, and more, I've learned to keep the youth group calendar light. ☺

But I look forward to a few more nights of relaxing fellowship and fun before we all switch gears into summer!

Events for 8-12th grade youth:

Sundays, May 4 and May 11 —Youth Group
6:00 – 8:00 p.m., FLC/Youth Room

Events for 6-7th grade youth:

Wednesdays, May 7, 14, and 21—Inbetweeners
6:00—7:45 p.m., Sanctuary and Youth Room
dinner is included!

Rolling Tones Chime Choir special event:

Monday, May 12—Performance in the Community
6:00 p.m., Spring Gardens Senior Living

Service opportunities for all youth:

Tuesday, May 13—Backpack Program
3:30—4:30ish p.m., Meridian Food Bank



Youth Egg Hunt fun

With joy,

Nicole Walker
family@meridianumc.com



CONGREGATIONAL CARE

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.”
~ *Matthew 11:28*

May is Mental Health Awareness Month, a time for us to reflect, learn, and support one another in our journey toward better mental well-being. We don't always like to acknowledge it, but our mental health is just as important as our physical health. It affects how we think, feel, and act, and plays a crucial role in how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

Everyone experiences challenges to their mental health at some point, and just like physical illnesses, mental health struggles require attention, care, and support. In a world that is constantly evolving, taking care of our mental health has never been more important.

So this month, let's focus on:

- **Breaking the Stigma:** Mental health is still often misunderstood, and stigma can prevent individuals from seeking help. Together, we can make a difference by sharing our stories, listening without judgment, and encouraging open conversations.
- **Self-Care & Coping Strategies:** Whether it's journaling, praying with one another, exercise, or simply talking to someone, everyone has different ways of taking care of their mental well-being. This month, explore new tools and techniques that might help improve your mental health.
- **Seeking Support:** There's no shame in asking for help. Whether you reach out to a friend, a professional, or a trusted person at church, talking to someone about your mental health is an important step toward healing.

Consider also taking this mental health challenge: for the next 30 days, try something new each day to nurture your mental well-being. Whether it's a five-minute meditation or prayer time, a daily gratitude list, or connecting with a friend, small actions add up.

My prayer is that may those wrestling with their mental health find hope in the midst of despair and that we at the Church of the Warm Heart reach out to one another. Let's make mental health a priority, not just this month, but every day.

Blessings and good health,

Lisa Miller
care@meridianumc.com

Resources:

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-8255
Or dial 988 or text 838255
Idaho Careline: Dial 211 or www.211.idaho.gov

Finance

For General Operations:	Mar 2025	2025 YTD
Given	\$53,549	\$177,013
Need	\$63,107	\$193,541
Outcome	(\$9,648)	(\$16,528)

My apologies for not having a finance article last month. I was out of state when I realized that I had missed the deadline. I hope to stay on top of the articles for the rest of the year.

After a very outstanding February, we fell back in a deficit for March which means our year-to-date deficit has increased to \$16,528. We had unanticipated snow removal charges and some electrical issues that had to be repaired, in addition to personnel and regular maintenance costs. Isn't it hard to believe the first quarter of the year has come and gone?

I want to thank all of you who participated in the Trivia Contest that was held last month to raise money for our Youth Mission Trip. They raised over \$1200 with one event! Trivia Night is one of my favorite activities we have each year. Diane and I were involved in a similar activity that started in California in 1996, so it's dear to my heart. It's fun for me to lead, and I know the youth appreciate the money raised and the support of those of us who are closer to being octogenarians than teenagers.

Our gifts are starting to increase as our membership and attendance increase. How wonderful! That being said, we will soon be in the summer season, when giving typically takes a significant hit. I want to remind you that our church expenses do not take a vacation. If at all possible, please arrange to continue your gifts during the summer months. While our staff might seem less busy, they are actively planning and preparing for another year of ministry as well as getting some must-deserved rest.

This has been a short article, since our efforts are still close to our target goal of meeting our needs each month. It is extremely gratifying to see the reports have not hit any huge deficits so far this year, and I would love to report the same happy news each month!

I would ask that you continue to pray for our church staff, those who have suffered a loss in their family, those of us who may have health issues, our elected officials, and of course our church finances. If you have any questions regarding our finances, please feel free to contact me ([Don Briser](mailto:DonBriser@meridianumc.com), maroontycoon63@gmail.com) or Lori Jones (lhjones2021@gmail.com), Finance chair.

MINISTRIES & NEWS

WORSHIP ARTS

Easter Season Gratitude – Thanks to all who assisted with the Easter décor in the sanctuary and to those who filled our church with beautiful music throughout the Easter season! We are blessed by each of you! It truly takes a team to create beautiful, meaningful worship for all.

Sermon on the Mound Thanks – Thank you to everyone who helped with our children's musical last month! Angela Perry helped type in the lyrics and made copies so each child could have their script/solo to practice. Norma Fischer, Kathryn Gillespie, Sue Schultze, and Nicole Walker helped with rehearsals and backstage. Lena Leow was instrumental in creating set pieces. Landyn Ayers, Pastor Mike, Samantha Benischek, and Landon Perry donated their time and acting skills to the production. And Daniel Ciulla, Michael Holt, and Jacob Walker took care of us from the balcony. I am so grateful for each of them! Thank you also to the parents and grandparents who brought their kiddos to Angels Alive Choir on Wednesdays and rehearsals on Sunday afternoons. And finally, thank you to all who attended the worship service in person or on-line to support these children and their families!!!



Learn To Ring Handbell Ensemble – A few of us have been gathering on Tuesday mornings to learn how to ring handbells together. We would love to have another ringer or two join us! If you have an interest in learning how to ring, how to read music, and getting connected with some cool people, contact Debbie Jones for more details.

Koinonia Handbell Choir – The ringers are on the road! This group will be headed to Grace Assisted Living again on Thursday, May 8, to share music with the residents there. It is a joy to take our music into the community to bless lives!

Rolling Tones Chime Choir – Our youth ringers will conclude their season with an offering of music in the May 4 worship service. They'll also be visiting with the residents of Spring Garden Senior Living and sharing their music with them on May 12. This group has done a great job enhancing our worship this year!

Summer Special Music – Do you sing? Play an instrument? Enjoy ringing bells in an ensemble? Then we are looking for YOU! Contact me to offer your talents in our summer worship services!

Blessings,

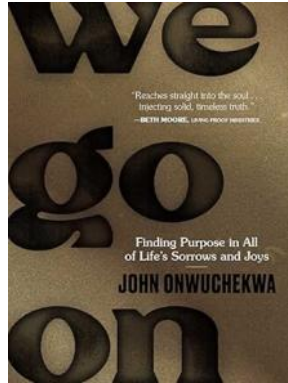
Debbie Jones
worshiparts@meridianumc.com



THE BOOK NOOK

Claudia Moberly

Asking “Why am I here?” is not a new phenomenon. The author of Ecclesiastes, King Solomon, was asking the same question three thousand years ago. Pastor John Onwucheka uses wisdom from Ecclesiastes to find answers to this important question in his book *We Go On*. His personal stories and beautiful black-and-white photos offer powerful reflections on verses from the Book of Wisdom.



We are all constantly being bombarded by advertisers telling us to find meaning in temporary things, yet our hearts yearn to know we have made a difference in the world. We see injustice and wonder why bad things happen to good people. We make plans only to see them changed by life's circumstances. King Solomon saw the same things, and offered up the quote, “Everything is meaningless.” (Ecclesiastes 1:2b)

But despair is not the answer! The answer is a hope-filled life centered on a God who never changes. King Solomon and Pastor Onwucheka show us that. Challenges help us rely on a power greater than ourselves. Looking back helps us see where God's hand was at work even when we hadn't noticed. The beauty of creation, the love of family, and delicious food all show us God's unending love for us and his plans for our happiness.

We Go On reminds us that a deeper purpose is at work, beyond current circumstances, filled with God's abiding presence. It is a book of hope, comfort, and celebration, all contained in twelve short chapters. It is available on the United Women in Faith Book Stand in the Family Life Center, and anyone is welcome to check it out.



UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

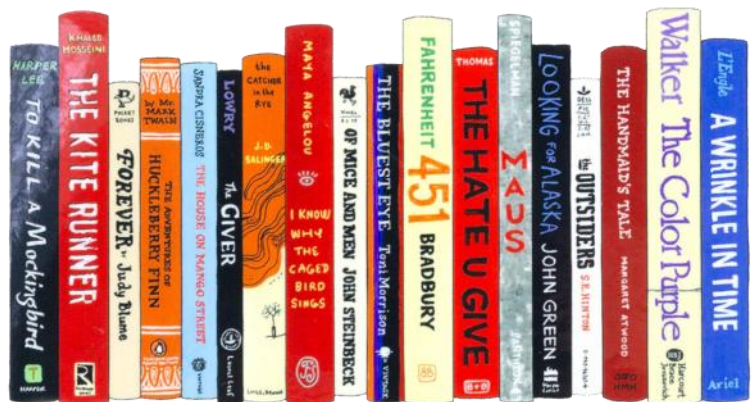
Dixie Jacky

I've got two upcoming events I'd like to highlight:



First up, the UWFaith are hosting on a luncheon on Saturday, May 10, at 11 a.m. You've likely heard a lot in the news about efforts to ban materials from public libraries across the country. We'll be joined by Nick Grove, Director of Meridian Public Libraries, who will give us a presentation on book banning titled “Books are Just the Beginning”.

As we think about the importance of reading to the mission of the United Women in Faith, we invite you to bring a “banned book” to donate to our newly created Banned Bookshelf on the UWFaith Kiosk in the FLC. Not sure you have a book to contribute? You might be surprised to learn just which books have been censored in the past. Here are just a few:



Please RSVP with the church office so we can have enough seating and food.



Secondly, Mission U 2025 is approaching, and we will have two sessions available this year. The first, on July 11-12, will be held in-person at Hillview United Methodist Church, and the second, July 25-26, will be held virtually through Zoom.

Our program this year is titled “Building a Bridge of Kinship with our Indigenous Neighbors.” This study is designed to help participants understand the unsettling truths of our country's history with Native Americans, and to learn how we as Christians can work to build bridges of kinship, healing and wholeness with our Indigenous neighbors.

If you'd like to participate, you can find a registration form with additional information on our website at...

www.meridianumc.com/uwfaith



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

May Events to Celebrate!

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

May 4 – *Native American Ministries Sunday*

May 9 – *Parent’s Night Out*

May 11 – *Mother’s Day*

May 18 – *Graduate Sunday*

May 26 – *Memorial Day*

June

**NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE:**

**Friday,
May 23rd**

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