



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

FOOTPRINTS

May 2026

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.

HIGHLIGHTED HAPPENINGS

Let's Go Camping!



The Oregon-Idaho Camp and Retreat Ministries' 2026 camping season is open for registration! Families, children, seniors — whoever you are, there's a camping option for you! Visit gocamping.org to register. Scholarships are available! Applications can be found in the Narthex. Contact Nicole Walker at family@meridianumc.com for more info.

SERMON SERIES

May 2026

05.03.2026

Heir of all Things

Hebrews 1:1-5



05.10.2026

Not Yet Seen

Hebrews 11:1-16



05.17.2026

Endurance

Hebrews 12:1-4



05.24.2026

Unawares!

Hebrews 13:1-8



05.31.2026

Guest Preacher: DS Karen Hernandez

Graduate Sunday

Graduate Sunday is May 17, and we want to make sure to recognize all our graduates! Submit your name, photo, and the name of your school/program to production@meridianumc.com to be included! We love to celebrate everyone graduating from Kindergarten, high school, and college or technical programs.



Pentecost Sunday



Pentecost Sunday commemorates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles and others assembled in Jerusalem. It marks the beginning of the Christian church and the proclamation of its message throughout the world and it's often referred to as the birthday of the church. Join us in celebrating Pentecost on Sunday, May 24th, by wearing red!

Vacation Bible School

It's hard to believe, but Vacation Bible School is right around the corner! June 8-12 will see the church transformed with VBS joy!

Nicole needs volunteers to make this week a success. Talk with her about volunteering and register your kids through our website!



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May Events Calendar

April

NEW MEMBERS:

DEATHS:

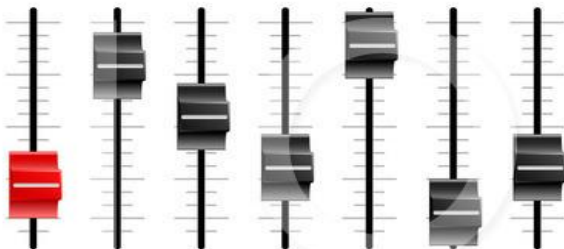
Please pray for the families of...

BAPTISMS:

JOIN THE TECH TEAM!

The tech team is looking for help running sound and video during Sunday services. No experience necessary – we'll train you! Recent volunteers have described it as "way easier than I thought". For more info, contact Debbie Jones:

worshiparts@meridianumc.com



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)

CHURCH LEADERSHIP

- Administrative Council Chair** Nancy Rountree
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 Joyce Bailey, Emma Jean Bedsole, Don Brister, Lynda Cavanagh Sherry Clark, Cassie Collins, Faye Gabriel, Ben Madsen, Lisa Miller, Mary Rich, Cyndi Trimmel
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**
 Email: office@meridianumc.com
 Website: www.meridianumc.com
 Facebook: **Meridian United Methodist Church**

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

“There is a place of quiet rest,
Near to the heart of God;
A place where sin cannot molest,
Near to the heart of God.”

Near to the Heart of God, by Cleland Boyd McAfee

Dear Warm Heart Friends and Family,

When something goes wrong with an electronic device, what is the first thing an I.T. expert will suggest? Unplug it, then plug it back in again. It's not that way with non-computerized electrical items like lamps, toasters, or fans, so why does this approach so often work with “smart” devices?

Well, it's one of the great ideas from the early days of computer design. Things were programmed so that when you power up a device, the first thing it does is run a thorough diagnosis of all its essential functions. Then it fixes itself. Yes, it fixes itself! In a way, so do we.

God designed us to do this same thing, long before computer programmers came along. We regularly need to unplug, disconnect, and lay low. Then, when we re-enter the world of work, we have a greater ability for productivity and creativity and we're just easier to be around!

In the lingo of the computer programmer, rest is not a bug, it's a feature. Too many of us treat down time like it's a flaw to overcome, a weakness to defeat, or a sin to avoid. It's none of those. God rested. And he commanded that we follow his example.

Most of us are exhausted from constant thought and activity, sleeping less than we should, praying less than we'd like, and living inside a digital space for more hours than is healthy. This makes us incapable of the honest self-evaluation required to assess our needs, let alone be a blessing to others.

As Anne Lamott said, “Almost everything will work again if you unplug it for a few minutes, including you.”

So, I'm taking Anne's advice. And my District Superintendent's. And my own. And, mostly, God's. I'm unplugging for a while. Every six or seven years, Methodist pastors are allowed a renewal leave. After 28 years of ministry, I've never taken one. Until this year.

Beginning on Memorial Day, I'll be out of the office on a short-term renewal leave. Meridian UMC will be blessed with 8 Sundays of guest preachers and speakers. I'll be back in the pulpit on Sunday, July 26th. No, that day's sermon will NOT be a slideshow of my time away...

Over this leave, I'll be traveling all across our country. From Hawaii to Boston, D.C. to Austin, Seattle to Lincoln, Branson to Denver. I'll be visiting churches along the way, worshiping in places like Church of the Resurrection (largest UMC in the US), the National Cathedral, and other churches in-between.

Our capable ministry team, support staff, and church committees will handle the day-to-day operations and care of members and the church building. Ministers associated with our church will be on hand for weddings, funerals, baptisms, and Bible Studies. Our District Superintendent will also be around to preach one Sunday and assist if needed. Thank you to our staff, volunteers, and Staff-Pastor-Parish Relations Committee who made this leave possible.

I'm still here for the first four Sundays of May, and look forward to worshipping with you.

God is Good!

Pastor Mike

MINISTRIES & NEWS

FAMILY MINISTRIES

May is graduation season and the start of summer break! My kids think it's ridiculous that "summer break" starts firmly in the spring and "back to school" happens during the hottest month of the year, but we don't always get to pick the lingo! Families ministries programming winds down with the school year, and from May to June we make the switch to summer break mode along with our families. May's event calendars are not very full, but VBS and our 2026 Mission Trip are both happening in June, so more adventure is on its way!

CHILDREN

Bible Builders meets twice in May, wrapping up on May 13th with our traditional party at the park (weather permitting). We also have our last Parent's Night Out this month (don't worry—it'll be back again in September!).

Sunday School will continue through May AND the summer months. Thank you for our teachers who are still willing to teach around their own summer travels!

Bible Builders & Angels Alive

Wednesdays, May 6 and 13, 6:00—7:30 p.m.

Parents Night Out

Friday, May 8, 6:00—8:30 p.m.

If you missed our Faith News musical last month—or you're a kid just missing the songs—remember that we post recordings of our church services on our website! It was amazing to watch the kids perform live, and their triumph will remain online for your review for at least several months. Spending time with a far-away grandparent this summer? Consider watching Faith News with them as a fun way to connect them with your school-year church activities!



Our Bible Builders kids LOVE an opportunity to play outside!

YOUTH

Final projects, proms, end of course exams, graduations and grad parties—it's all here, folks! And of course we want to prioritize time with our moms on Mother's Day! But don't think a light youth group calendar means a restful month for our youth. They all have lots going on, and it's a privilege for us to be even a small part of it.

Youth Group EOY Gathering

Sunday, May 17, 6:00—8:00 p.m.

Youth Room

Ice cream, silly games, laughter with friends—it's just what you need before finals week!

Rolling Tones at Spring Gardens

Monday, May 18, 6:00

Spring Gardens Senior Living

VBS Prep & Body Body

Sunday, May 31, 6:00—8:00 p.m.

Sanctuary Building

Work hard getting things ready for VBS, and enjoy pizza and Body Body as a reward (it's a bribe, but we can call it a reward, right?). This night makes a HUGE difference for Nicole and all our VBS-bound kids!



Big kids love parks, too! (pictures from the youth group Picnic and Park Night)



With joy,

Nicole Walker
family@meridianumc.com

MINISTRIES & NEWS

CONGREGATIONAL CARE

In honor of my daughters graduation as an audiologist and May being “Better Hearing and Speech” month, I have a few things for you to ponder. Healthy hearing is connected to positive benefits in brain functioning and memory retention. At all life stages, communication and good hearing health connect us to each other, our communities, and our world. And the inverse is true as well! Hearing loss can bring hidden struggles:

- People with hearing loss are 47% more likely to experience symptoms of depression.
- Hearing loss can speed the rate of cognitive decline as your brain works overtime to interpret the world around you.
- The quality of your sleep is affected by your hearing, too!

If you are over age 60, work in a noisy environment, or have frequent exposure to loud noises, an annual hearing check is advised. On average, people wait four years to get their hearing checked after noticing a hearing loss. Keep hearing checks as part of your routine health maintenance to remain connected. Treating your hearing loss is an investment in your future well-being. A hearing professional can work with you on a solution that suits your lifestyle and specific needs. Turn up the volume on your life!

And don't forget that we have a new hearing assistance system available in our Sanctuary! Just speak with myself or an usher and we'll get you a receiver and headphones so you can hear the service clearly. The receivers will even transmit directly to T-Coil compatible hearing aids! We are very happy to offer this accessibility option for all who may struggle to hear, whether they be young or old, weekly attenders, or new visitors. You can participate better in worship when you can hear what's going on!

Blessings & good health,

Lisa Miller
care@meridianumc.com

WORSHIP ARTS

Thank you to the Angels Alive Choir and Warm Heart Children for presenting the musical “Faith News” at the end of April! We are so grateful to your parents and grandparents for getting you to rehearsals, encouraging you, and supporting you as you shared the gospel with our church family. These musicals take a LOT of hard work, and there are many amazing behinds-the-scenes people who helped make set pieces, handle props, and keep things moving. Check out some photos on the next page!

Special thanks to the Koinonia Handbell Choir, Triple Trio, and Celebration Choir for all the music they provided in worship during the 2025-2026 season! We are so grateful for the time and talents you shared with your church family!

An end of the season potluck is scheduled for May 3 at 12:30 p.m. in the FLC for anyone who has participated in the Triple Trio, Koinonia Handbell Choir, Celebration Choir, or Worship Team this year. It's a great opportunity for fellowship with other musicians as we gather together for a meal in celebration of another year of music.

The Grace Notes Ministry kicked off in April! We are looking for folks willing to share 30 minutes of music with the residents of the Memory Care unit at Grace Assisted Living. Can you sing? Ring a bell? Play an instrument? We'd love to have you come join us for this volunteer opportunity! Contact Debbie Jones (worshiparts@meridianumc.com).

Summer Special Music – It's that time again! Time for scheduling special music for our summer services. If you have something you would like to share with your church family, please contact me to get scheduled! We are so blessed here at Church of the Warm Heart with so much talent. Don't keep yours in a box gathering dust; pull it out and let it be a blessing to all of us!

Blessings,

Debbie Jones
worshiparts@meridianumc.com

MINISTRIES & NEWS

CHILDREN'S MUSICAL CELEBRATION



Twenty-seven angelic kids participated in this year's Children's Musical, "Faith News." Roving angel reporters Sara Fim and Chera Bim interviewed Noah and Mrs. Noah, Queen Esther, Joshua, Moses, and Abraham and Sarah—all people of great faith throughout the ages! Will you believe God's promises and make it in the heavenly headlines today?

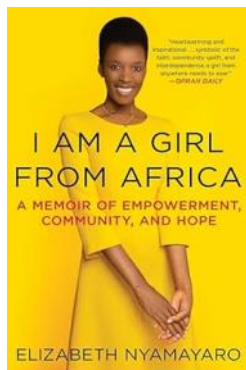


MINISTRIES & NEWS

THE BOOK NOOK

Claudia Moberly

Sometimes the world seems to have too many problems, and it is easy to feel helpless. If you are looking for a book to lift your spirits and give you hope, I have a suggestion. *I Am A Girl from Africa*, by Elizabeth Nyamayaro, is the author's story of rising from material poverty to a Senior Advisor to the UN. Throughout her life, she has lived by the African concept of ubuntu: "I am because we are, and because we are, you are."



From her earliest life lessons from her beloved grandmother Gogo through decades of work around the world, Nyamayaro understood that lasting change only happens when all parties see the need for better systems and everyone benefits from the change. She has worked to fight global inequalities, create social justice for vulnerable communities, and champion human rights by engaging all stakeholders in finding solutions to difficult problems.

Nyamayaro knows that change brought about through the spirit of ubuntu requires shinga — never, ever, ever giving up, even when things seem impossible. Her faith, the lessons from her Gogo, and the sacrifices others made to give her an education carried her through difficult days, setbacks, and detours. She is fully and proudly a child of the African soil, and fortunately for the world, she has shared who she is across the globe.

UNITED WOMEN IN FAITH

Dixie Jacky

Our Reading Program book for April was *Highway of Tears: True Stories of Racism, Indifference, and the Pursuit of Justice for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women*. It was a difficult topic to read about, but there is hope! United Women in Faith believe that through faith, hope, and love in action we can change the world.

Rochelle Kilette will be coming as our speaker for our May 9 spring luncheon and sharing ways we offer hope for these women and their families. In addition to hearing from Rochelle, we will be taking an offering designated for our UWFaith National Mission Institution, the AK Child and Family Service, in Anchorage, Alaska. This National Mission Institution provides community-based treatment, psychiatric residential treatment programs, and spiritual life training for Alaskan children, youth, and families.

The luncheon begins at noon. Guests are welcome. Please be sure to call the church office to RSVP or register your attendance.



We greatly appreciate your continued support of one of our local mission projects, Mirror Image. This program provides hygiene items for area youth. Please bring your items to Lisa's office in the FLC or you can give via cash/check to Meridian UMC, "Mirror Image" in the memo line.

FINANCIAL NEWS

For the first quarter ending March 31, 2026, we are again blessed to have continuing positive results! Thanks to your financial support, we are able to provide for our staff, maintain our buildings (which are owned free and clear), pay our utilities, pay our portion of the Conference ministries, and very importantly to provide for our own local ministries. WE THANK ALL OF YOU FOR THE CONTINUED BLESSINGS OF YOUR PRAYERS, YOUR MONETARY RESOURCES, AND YOUR VALUABLE TIME!

For General Operations:	Mar 2026	2026 YTD
Given	\$84,130	\$222,021
Need	\$58,102	\$186,728
Outcome	\$26,028	\$35,293

This month we wanted to share a bit about our Legacy Funds. The Legacy Funds of the Meridian United Methodist Church are a group of Endowed Funds that have been established over the years. Endowed Funds are a set of investments that are held in perpetuity. The funds are invested, with a portion of the earnings paid out annually to support various missions of our church.

Currently, we have seven Endowed Funds: one for general needs, one for capital improvements, three for scholarships, one for youth missions, and one for camp scholarships. As of March 31st, there was a **total of about \$316,000 in these funds**. In February this year—based on some complicated math that you're welcome to ask about if you're into this kind of thing—we were able to **distribute a total of about \$11,000 to support the various missions for which these funds were established**.

If you wish to donate to any of these Endowment Funds, you may indicate it on your check or on your online donation. If you have any questions, contact Gerry Mattison, Legacy Committee Chair, or Lori Jones, Finance Committee Chair.



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 8 – Parent’s Night Out**
- May 10 – Mother’s Day**
- May 13 – Bible Builders Party**
- May 17 – Graduate Sunday**
- May 24 – Pentecost Sunday**
- May 25 – Memorial Day**

June

NEWSLETTER

DEADLINE:

**Tuesday,
May 26th**

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

Thank you!