



Meridian Presbyterian Church

The Lens & Mirror

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:3 (NIV)

It's hard to believe that the season of Advent is already upon us. In many ways this has been a very difficult year. Our congregation has so much to be thankful for and God has continued to pour out his blessings upon us. Yet, so many in our community are walking through the most difficult and darkest season of their lives.

Advent is this reminder that we live in the tension between already and not yet. First, we celebrate the promise of a messiah fulfilled in the birth of Jesus. This has already happened, and we live in the joy of that realized expectation. However, we know the world is still a dark place, that can often be shockingly bad, and is in desperate need of redemption. This full restoration of creation has yet to take place. Which leads us to the expectant hope that Jesus will come again to make all things new. In Advent, and really at all times, we hold these two things together as Christians. Christ has redeemed our sins on the cross and he is coming again to make all things new.

Bonhoeffer once wrote, "The celebration of Advent is possible only to those who are troubled in soul, who know themselves to be poor and imperfect, and who look forward to something greater to come." In our darkest night we long for the promise of light. That is exactly what Advent is. Even if this season is filled with sorrow and sadness, we can hold on to hope that something greater lies before us. The Lord is not done with us yet. My prayer for this season is the passage above, that as we long for the coming Christ, we would abound in hope, by the power of Holy Spirit.

Merry Christmas,
Pastor Steve

The Light of Meridian

December 2024

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Advent—The Way of the Manger

In the birth of our savior, God changed the course of human history. However, he does it in the most unexpected way. Jesus doesn't arrive as a conquering king from heaven, but a baby laid in a manger. He isn't given the rights and royal duties of the ruling class, but a humble beginning that brings about our redemption. To walk in the way of Jesus is to walk the way of the manger.

December 1st

Title— **At the Right Time**

Focus Passage— Galatians 4:1-7

Secondary Passage— Micah 5:2-4

Synopsis— It can be hard to wait for the Lord's timing. Israel longed for a savior, but for so many years it did not come about. At the right time, God sent his Son, born of a virgin. The way of the manger is a life lived in the patience of the Lord, trusting that he will provide it at the right time.

December 8th

Title— **When Heaven Comes Down**

Focus Passage— Philippians 2:5-13

Secondary Passage— Isaiah 9:6-7

Synopsis— The mystery of this season is that heaven comes to earth. Jesus does not consider equality with God as something to hold on to but lowers himself in the form of a servant. Without the incarnation, our salvation is not possible. The way of the manger is the way of a servant. When we humble ourselves before the Lord, he will lift us up.

December 15th

Title— **God Speaks**

Focus Passage— Hebrews 1

Secondary Passage— Malachi 3:1

Synopsis— In the past the Lord spoke through the prophets, but we have an advantage, "in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son." Jesus is the radiance of God's glory and the representation of his being. When God speaks, we must listen. The way of the manger is to hear the voice of God in our lives.

December 22nd

Title— **When God Interrupts**

Focus Passage— Luke 2:39-56

Secondary Passage— Isaiah 7:14

Synopsis— The way of the manger is the way of walking with God when he interrupts our lives. I'm sure being the mother of the Son of God was not on Mary's to-do list, but the Lord has called, and she must answer. What do we do when God interrupts our plans?

December 24th— Christmas Eve

Title— **They Were Amazed**

Focus Passage— Luke 2:8-20

Synopsis— The shepherds out in the field are visited by the angel of the Lord with the announcement that changes everything. The news of a savior comes to the humble and in that moment the glory of the Lord was around them. May we stand amazed by the glory of the Lord that comes to us this night.

December 29th

Title— **Salvation has Arrived**

Focus Passage— Luke 2:22-23

Secondary Passage— Isaiah 25:9

Synopsis— Simeon has waited at the temple as a priest for many years, but waiting and watching for what? He has been waiting on the Savior. Now that Christmas has come and we have celebrated the long awaited Jesus we are again waiting for Jesus today. Are we too keeping vigilant as we wait, will we recognize his arrival?



Volunteers Needed

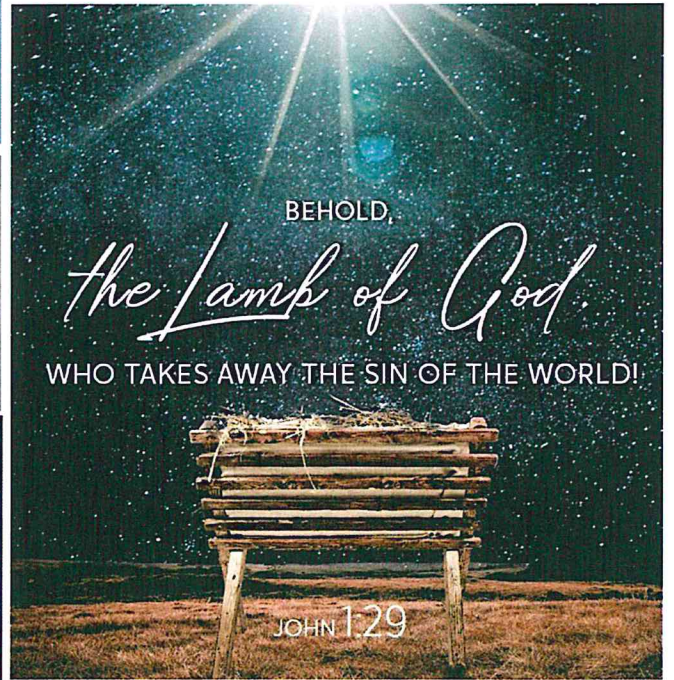
Our next dinner at Fishbone Ministries will be on Sunday, December 29th at 5:30 PM. We need volunteers to help serve dinner and make desserts. There is a signup sheet if you are available to help. Please see Andy Tarr or Pastor Mike for more details.

Notes From Session:

- Approved two services for Christmas Eve at 4:30 & 7 PM.
- Approved new tables for Parker Hall.

**Family Christmas Dinner
Sunday, December 8th at 5:30 PM
Christmas Concert to follow
around 6:15 PM**

New Covenant Partners will be recognized during worship on Sunday, December 15th. Please let the office know if you would like to officially join the church that day if you have already completed the Discovery class.



**Upcoming blood drive on Friday
January 3rd at Meridian Fire
Hall from 12-5 PM.
Signup at redcrossblood.org
if you are able to
donate.**



**American
Red Cross**

Pastor Steve & Meridian Presbyterian Church,

Thank you for the beautiful words, flowers and thank you for the great luncheon. Your expression of sympathy will always be remembered.

Love, The Tack Family

MERIDIAN CHURCH ON MISSION

MISSIONS in Review



November was another month of mission projects for our church!

*** FISHBONE - We did not host a dinner this month, however our women's ministry ran a collection of baby items for two women in the fishbone ministry who are expecting.

*** HANG TOUGH STOCKINGS - After church on November 17th, a group of members teamed up with Sharon Schneider in packing stockings for chemotherapy patients.

*** THANKSGIVING FOOD DRIVE: Our entire congregation collected canned goods, and other food items to be donated to our local food banks following Thanksgiving in order to restock our local food pantries.



OUR TOP MISSION PARTNER IS 2024

Our church has very much enjoyed a new partnership with Fishbone Ministries this year. We served 5 dinners at their weekly Sunday worship services. We also completed a major work week project adding a awning over a door, storm doors, and a fence repair. We also hosted and directed one of their children's program nights. We served dinner, taught Bible studies, and our youth group helped out. Lastly, we did a baby supplies collection for two women expecting who attend the fishbone mission. It has been a busy year and Fishbone has been grateful for this new partnership.

Women's Ministry

What a wonderful time we had at our first Jesse Tree ornament exchange party! I asked 25 different women to put their talents and time into an ornament design for the group and what we ended up with was a kaleidoscope of colors, lots of laughter and new friends. Each ornament was unique and different, but all of them worked together to tell the story of God's people throughout the Bible.

What a beautiful picture of the kingdom of God. Thank you for your effort and dedication to be in fellowship with one another.

We also collected diapers and other baby essentials for two young soon-to-be mother's at Fishbone. Thank you for all who participated and gave. Your generosity is inspiring.

Be on the look out for more women's events in the near future. If you have an idea for a way to minister to one another, please reach out to me!

You can reach Laura Franklin by phone or email: (724) 312-4647
kidsmin@meridianpres.org

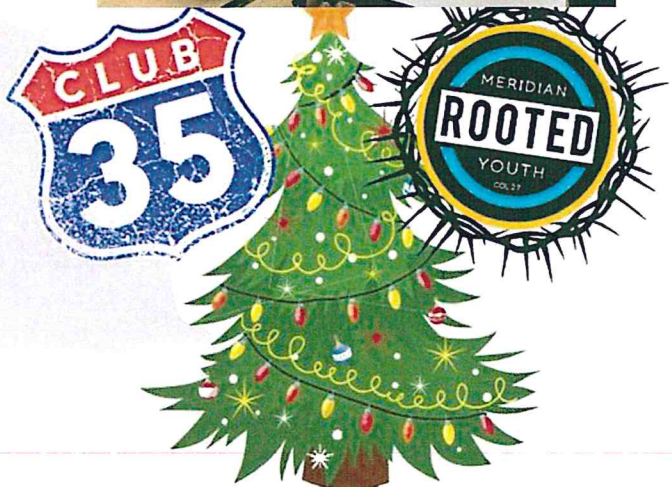


DECEMBER YOUTH NEWSLETTER

November was a great month for our youth ministry program! The youth enjoyed attending the fall retreat with our church family. Pastor Steve led us in a study of Philippians. We had some great food, put together some puzzles, and enjoyed spending time on a hike!

The youth group enjoyed a FRIENDSGIVING at the end of the month. We served turkey sandwiches and they brought friends and a side to share! It was a great night together!

Club 35 enjoyed an afternoon at Altitude trampoline park together in a time of fellowship.



DECEMBER EVENTS!

YOUTH GROUP:

- Dec 1st (Sun): No Youth Group
- Dec 8th (Sun): Family Christmas Dinner 5:30 – 7:30 PM
- Dec. 15th (Sun): Youth Christmas Party 6 PM – 8 PM

CLUB:

- Dec. 15th (Sun) Club 35 Christmas Party 12 PM – 1:30 PM

Meridian Kids

ALL CHURCH RETREAT

What a wonderful weekend full of laughter and fun this year at Camp Crestfield. Diving into the book of Philippians was both encouraging and thought provoking. The intergenerational fellowship is always the best part. Game night was a group favorite with everyone involved.



Monthly Bible Verse:

⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Isaiah 9:6



Advent Booklets for adults, families & youth are on the table right outside of the sanctuary. Get yours before they are gone!



Dates to Remember:

**Sunday, Dec. 8th:*

Christmas Dinner & Musical Performance

**Sunday, Dec. 15th:*

Club 35 Christmas Party (12-2)

**Tuesday, Dec. 24th:*

Christmas Eve Candlelight Services at 4:30 & 7pm



CLUB 35

We were able to JUMP our way into the holidays this year with a trip to Altitude trampoline park.

We really value the time we get to interact and build relationships with this awesome group



December Celebrations

Birthdays!

12/01	Kristen Kwiatkowski	12/11	Annie Woller
12/02	Elaine Angert	12/12	Mike Dickey
	Alice Hibbs		Bob Wells
12/3	Ben Lyons	12/16	Cindi Clark
	Tricia Bailey		Bill Neely
	Emily Wickline	12/20	Donna Esper
12/5	Kevin Hilliard		Carter Preston
	Misty Wrighter	12/21	Irene Fair
12/6	Cooper Preston		Wayne Myers
12/7	Willow Longdon	12/24	Pam Greb
12/8	Jon Palmiero		Nathan Statzer
	Cherie McNulty	12/27	Donna Grimm
12/9	Lori Smith	12/29	Anthony Foringer
12/10	Presley Cihonski	12/30	Marie Basehore

Anniversaries!

12/10	Eric & Missy Shiever
12/13	Danny & Haley Holtgraver
12/14	Christopher & Jennifer McKain

If your birthday or anniversary is missing or incorrect, please call the office (724-482-2630) or email Kala at secretary@meridianpres.org so it can be corrected.



December 2024



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 10 AM Worship & Communion 11 AM Sunday School	2	3 1 Quilt 5:30 PM Deacon Meeting 6:30 PM Trustee Meeting	4 9 AM Coffee & Conversation 6:30 PM Choir	5	6	7
8 10 AM Worship 11 AM Sunday School 5:30 PM Christmas Dinner 6:15 Christmas Concert	9	10 1 PM Quilt 6:30 PM Session Meeting	11 9 AM Coffee & Conversation 6:30 PM Choir	12	13	14 9 AM Men's Breakfast @ Mac's Cafe
15 10 AM Worship 11 AM Sunday School 12-2 PM Club 35 6-8 PM Youth Group	16 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study	17 1 PM Quilt	18 9 AM Coffee & Conversation 6:30 PM Choir	19	20	21
22 10 AM Worship 11 AM Sunday School	23	24 4:30 PM & 7 PM Candle Light Service	25 Merry Christmas 	26	27	28
29 10 AM Worship 5:30 PM Fishbone Dinner	30	31 <i>Happy New Year</i>				

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