

THE LIGHT OF MERIDIAN  
SEPTEMBER 2025

# *Meridian Presbyterian Church*

4150 Highland Ave Butler, PA 16001

[www.MeridianPres.org](http://www.MeridianPres.org)

724.482.2630

*3 Eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.  
Ephesians 4:3-6 (ESV)*

*Last week one of our twins asked me if he could have a sugary snack. Given that I was making dinner, I said no, not now. About a minute later I could hear him asking his mom in the other room the same question. This is a classic kid move. If one parent says no, maybe the other one will say yes. I yelled from the kitchen, "Asked, and answered!" We have a rule in our house. If one parent gives an answer, both parents have given that answer. Yet, our kids are constantly trying to pit one against another. If they can divide, they can get what they want.*

*The Greek word for Devil can be translated as "to divide." The Devil loves chaos. It is his primary weapon against the church. We always seem to think that our greatest threat lies outside the church, that we have to protect ourselves from the world. However, in reality, our greatest threat is from the divider who makes his way into the church. If we're occupied complaining about the church, our brothers and sisters in Christ, or decisions that are being made, then we can be divided. That isn't to say people can't disagree, but we cannot allow that disagreement to separate us from our mission to serve the Kingdom.*

*I'm grateful for the unity of the Spirit in our church. I'm grateful for a body who cares for one another. However, we must keep watch not to fall for the work of the Splitter in our midst. As we navigate this season of growth and change, let us refrain from anger, frustration, and judgement. Instead, let's be "eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Let's keep our eyes and hearts focused on the one "who is over all and through all and in all."*

*In Christ,  
Pastor Steve*

Pastor

Rev. Dr. Stephen Franklin  
[pastorsteve@meridianpres.org](mailto:pastorsteve@meridianpres.org)

Dir. of Youth & Family Min.  
Mike Barton  
[mbarton@meridianpres.org](mailto:mbarton@meridianpres.org)

Children's Discipleship Dir.  
Laura Franklin  
[kidsmin@meridianpres.org](mailto:kidsmin@meridianpres.org)

Director of Care  
Tim Rausch  
[care@meridianpres.org](mailto:care@meridianpres.org)

Secretary  
Kala Siefker  
[secretary@meridianpres.org](mailto:secretary@meridianpres.org)

Treasurer  
Honey Royer  
[treasurer@meridianpres.org](mailto:treasurer@meridianpres.org)

Musician & Choir Director  
Debbe Picerno

Custodian  
Tom Perschke

Nursery Coordinator  
Sarah Murtha





## **Series: Jesus is Greater**

### **A study on the book of Hebrews**

Hebrews is one of the most challenging, but beautifully crafted books in the Bible. This book is filled with deep theology, mixed with practical understanding of who Jesus really is. As we dive deep into this letter we will find a powerful message for today's church, one that is simple: Jesus is greater.

#### **September 7th**

**Title- Do You Love Me?**

**Focus Passage- John 21:15-19**

**Secondary Passage- Jeremiah 31:3**

**Synopsis- We are left with this final question that Jesus places before Peter before the Ascension: Do you love me? The Christian life boils down to this. If we say we love Jesus, we have responsibility to do his work in the world and take care of his flock.**

#### **September 21st**

**Title- He Became Like Us**

**Focus Passage- Hebrews 2:5-18**

**Secondary Passage- Psalm 8**

**Synopsis- We are made in the image and likeness of God, both male and female. Sin has marred the human condition, and Jesus has come to rescue us. God becomes man, that we might fully live into his good creation. It is the humanity of Jesus that redeems all of humanity.**

#### **September 14th**

**Title- Mission Drift**

**Focus Passage- Hebrews 2:1-4**

**Secondary Passage- 1 Kings 11:9-13**

**Synopsis- Hebrews encourages us to pay close attention to what we have heard and what is happening around us, so that we do not drift. It's easy for people and organizations to get comfortable, lose focus on our vision, and drift away. Solomon with all his wisdom and splendor, drifted from the Lord. What happens when we drift from God?**

#### **September 28th**

**Title- Hold On**

**Focus Passage- Hebrews 3:1-19**

**Secondary Passage- Psalm 95:6-11**

**Synopsis- Jesus is greater than Moses. That's not to downplay the important role that Moses plays in God's grand story of redemption. Moses received the law of grace and shared it with God's people. Now the fulfillment of that law has arrived. As followers of Jesus we need to hold on to Christ.**







## *Welcome Tim Rausch to our staff!*

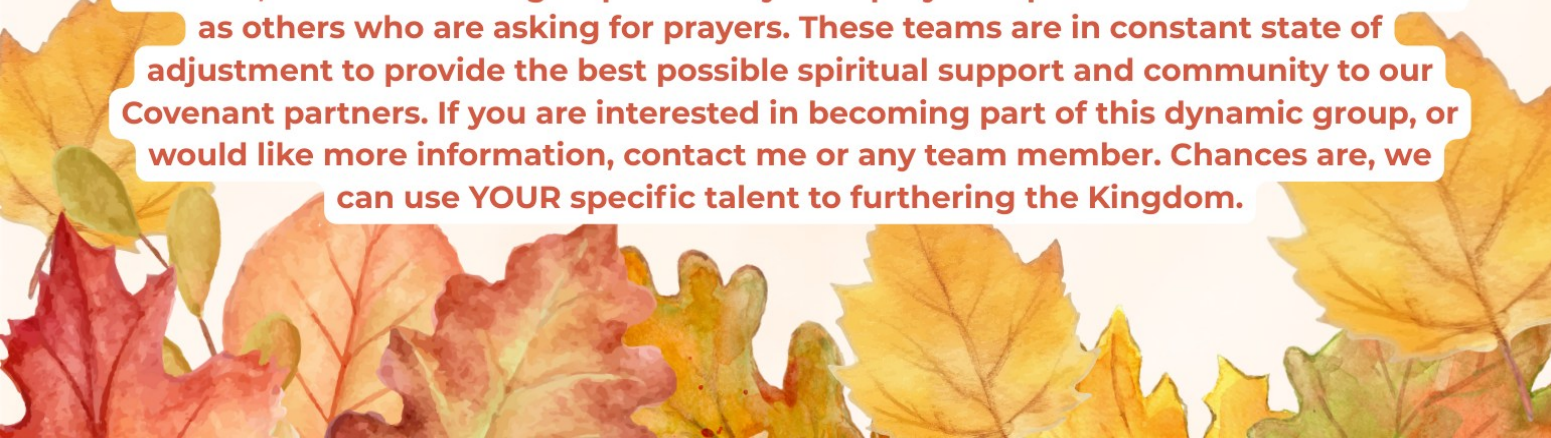


We welcome to our staff, Tim Rausch, as your new director of care. Tim will work closely with our Care Team in managing visitation and needs of our covenant partners. Pastor Steve will continue in his role with pastoral care, as Tim and the Care Team come alongside him in caring for our covenant partners who are homebound, in nursing facilities, and in the hospital. Tim's position is limited to 10 hours a week and he will primarily be in the office on Tuesdays. You can contact him at his new email [care@meridianpres.org](mailto:care@meridianpres.org).

## *Meridian Care Team*

If you are not part of the Meridian Care Team, you most likely have heard about it.

Let me take this opportunity to introduce it and the people who are such a blessing and make it such a valuable tool. The team consists of four sections, the facility visitation team, the hospital visitation team, and the special care team and the home visitation team whose members are Harriet Sanderson, Vicki White, B.J McKean, Debbe Picerno, Kathy Kriebel, Carolyn Street, and Rhonda Sproat. This team organizes visitation for our Covenant Partners who are isolated or homebound either long-term or temporarily. They offer a variety of services that are individualized to each person. They spend time in prayer, scripture readings, and shopping, to keep them held close to the heart of the congregation. They, also, put together a Christmas basket of items that is delivered to each person. In addition, Harriet sends a group text daily with prayer requests for members as well as others who are asking for prayers. These teams are in constant state of adjustment to provide the best possible spiritual support and community to our Covenant partners. If you are interested in becoming part of this dynamic group, or would like more information, contact me or any team member. Chances are, we can use YOUR specific talent to furthering the Kingdom.





# MISSION OPPORTUNITY

## HYGIENE KITS

We will collecting items to pack  
kits on World Communion

Sunday, Oct 5th

- toothbrushes
- toothpaste
- hand towels
- soap
- shampoo/conditioner
- combs
- deodorant

Men's Breakfast @ Mac's Cafe  
9 AM Saturday, September 13th

## *Faith & Finances*

July 2025

Giving \$35,730.11

YTD Actual \$305,976.57

YTD Budget \$229,652.50

Over (Under) \$76,324.07

## *Notes From Session:*

- Session will resume regular meetings on Tuesday, September 9<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM.
- The nominating committee is beginning their work for 2026 officer nominations.
- The 2026 budgeting process in underway.

## Grief Fellowship Hour

10 AM Saturday September 13<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>  
in the Library, all are welcome!



## Women's Ministry

### **Let's Get Into It!!**

Our new study is in the book of Habakkuk! I can't wait to work through this old testament book with you ladies! We'd love for you to join this new study on Thursday nights (6:00pm) or Friday mornings (10:00am), every other week beginning September 11th or 12th. There will be a sign up sheet available. We are also looking for a volunteer to provide child care on Friday mornings. See you soon!

For any questions, please see Laura Franklin  
(724) 312-4647 ~ [kidsmin@meridianpres.org](mailto:kidsmin@meridianpres.org)



# MISSION

UPDATE

FINDING WAYS TO LOVE GOD  
AND LOVE OTHERS

## MISSION PARTNER UPDATE:

August Mission Update

August was a wonderful month to connect with several of our mission partners and hear how God is at work through their ministries!

### FISHBONE

This month I made a quick stop at Fishbone to drop off school supplies and cleaning items collected during our VBS program. While there, I was able to see a visiting youth group working on new projects and bringing fresh energy to the site. Anna and I also discussed ongoing needs that Hearts and Hammers may be able to help with in the future. Our next Fishbone Dinner is scheduled for November—mark your calendars to lend a hand as we close out 2025 with this special evening of serving together.

### YoungLife Butler

I met with Mike Ambuske from YoungLife Butler, who is preparing for a busy fall of ministry. He's recruiting students from Slippery Rock University to help with YoungLife's high school and middle school programs. Mike and I continue to partner in creating opportunities for teens to encounter the gospel—whether through attending Butler School District ministerium meetings or exploring new ways to connect with youth on their school campuses.

### Caleb and Summer Shocklie – Scotland

Our mission partners in Scotland, Caleb and Summer Shocklie, are preparing for an upcoming visit to Meridian! While Caleb and his family will join us in Atlanta for the National Gathering in early February, Caleb will also be making a special trip to Meridian Presbyterian Church, February 28–March 3. During his time here, he will take part in Bible studies, worship, and other aspects of our ministry life. We look forward to welcoming him and being encouraged by what God is doing in Scotland.

### Adult Mission Trip 2026

The dates are set—February 22–28, 2026—for our next Adult Mission Trip! We are excited to be partnering with Samaritan's Purse Disaster Relief. Planning is already underway, and we expect to share full details by October. We hope many of you will prayerfully consider joining us in serving those in need.



**HEARTS AND HAMMERS UPDATE:**  
THIS MONTH WE MET WITH HOSANNA INDUSTRIES, WHICH DOES HANDYMAN JOBS FOR THOSE IN NEED. WE WANTED TO ASK QUESTIONS AND LEARN FROM OTHERS WHO HAVE BEEN DOING THIS TYPE OF MINISTRY FOR DECADES. WE ALSO MET WITH OUR INSURANCE CARRIER AS WE PREPARE TO KICK OFF THIS MINISTRY IN JANUARY!



# MERIDIAN YOUTH MINISTRIES

## LAKE DAY AND SUMMER WIND DOWN

THE YOUTH MINISTRY PROGRAM FINISHED OFF OUR BIG SUMMER PROGRAMS WITH OUR ANNUAL LAKE DAY AT MORaine STATE PARK. WE HAD 15 YOUTH AND 7 ADULTS FOR A MORNING ON THE WATER IN PONTOON BOATS! WE HAD A GREAT PICNIC LUNCH TOGETHER, THEN FINISHED OFF THE DAY SWIMMING AT THE BEACH ON THE NORTH SHORE. DID I MENTION IT WAS THE COOLEST DAY OF THE SUMMER AT ONLY 73 DEGREES WITH A BREEZE! IT WAS WARMER IN THE WATER THAN IT WAS ON THE SHORE. IT'S THESE KINDS OF FELLOWSHIP ACTIVITIES THAT BUILD THE RELATIONSHIPS THAT JOIN OUR GROUP TOGETHER.



THE FINAL SUMMER PROGRAM FOR OUR YOUTH MINISTRY IS A NIGHT OF ICE CREAM AT KING KONES, FOLLOWED BY SOME TIME IN GOD'S WORD. WE TOOK A LOOK AT WHAT GOD MIGHT HAVE IN STORE FOR THIS SCHOOL YEAR COMING UP AND HOW WE AREN'T TO WORRY OR TO FEAR WHAT MIGHT BE COMING, BUT INSTEAD TO LEAN INTO GOD AND ALLOW HIM TO LEAD US!



September:

- SEPT 7<sup>TH</sup>: YOUTH GROUP KICK OFF! 6 - 8 PM  
FOOD, SLIP'N SLIDE, KICKBALL, & MORE!
- SEPT 14<sup>TH</sup>: COMMUNITY YOUTH GROUP NIGHT! 6-8 PM  
HOSTED BY A FAMILY, OR CHURCH MEMBER!
- SEPT 21<sup>ST</sup>: YOUTH GROUP 6-8 PM
- SEPT 28<sup>TH</sup>: YOUTH MISSION NIGHT 6 - 8 PM  
COME HELP GET OUR TOOL TRAILER ORGANIZED!
-



# Meridian Kids

## Monthly Bible Verse:

**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.  
Against such things there is no law.**

**Galatians 5:22-23**



## COMMUNION CLASS

Every other year we hold a special class to teach our young people the importance of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. It will take place throughout the month and will begin September 7th in Parker Hall in the basement following worship at 11:15. It is for 2nd graders and above. Sign up today!



## SUNDAY SCHOOL

**Begins at 11:10 for all ages every Sunday beginning September 7th! We can't wait to teach you!**



## FALL NEEDS

It's fall and our children's programming is ramping up. We are in need of some new helpers in the following areas:

**Junior Church Helper**

**Sunday School Teacher**

**Sunday School Aid**

**Nursery Helper**

It's so important to invest in our families. We have different age groups and we need YOU!

All curriculum is provided. See Laura if you are able and willing.

Email: [kidsmin@meridianpres.org](mailto:kidsmin@meridianpres.org)

## *Thank You Everyone*

*We've had an awesome summer of events. Thank you to everyone for joining in and providing help in so many ways. You make this church a special place.*







## *Birthdays*

9/01 Conor Holtgraver  
Vada Holtgraver

9/02 Evan Palmiero

9/04 MaryAnn Kaminsky

9/05 David Barton  
James Preston  
Kristen Wickline

9/06 Susan Mossgrove

9/07 Russell Kummer  
Gage Sumansky  
MacKenna Wickline

9/08 Barbra Karner  
Tommy Grieb

9/09 George Cygan  
Michelle Douth  
Kristen McClean

9/10 John Toniolo

9/11 Quinn Rishor

9/13 Alaina Shiever

9/14 Sarah Preston

9/17 Roger Wolfe

9/19 Rhonda Sproat

9/20 Jackie Wells

9/21 Logan Graham  
Merritt Schultz

9/22 Michael Mlikan  
John Oesterling  
Penny Kummer

9/23 Janet Rupp

9/24 Bob Orsborn  
Linda Smith  
Kiley Zalar

9/27 Tina Geis

9/29 Mark Monnie  
Kurt Rishor

## *Anniversaries*

9/01 Paul & Tonya Reynolds

9/05 Matthew & Casey Barnett

9/07 Todd & Katie Schultz

9/09 Dennis & Lori Campbell


9/12 Cole & Kala Siefker

9/17 Kurt & Elizabeth Rishor  
Doug & Joy Zalar

9/21 Bill & Gail Raley  
Clint & Chelsea Werth

9/22 Phil & Laura Mason

9/27 Mark & Ann Monnie





# September 2025

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	<b>1</b> 	<b>2</b> 1 PM Quilt 5:30 PM Deacons 6:30 PM Trustee Meeting	<b>3</b> 9 AM Coffee & Conversation 6:30 PM Choir	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> 10 AM Women's Bible Study	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b> 10 AM Worship & Communion 11 AM Sunday School 6-8 PM Youth Grp	<b>8</b> 6:30 PM Men's Bible	<b>9</b> 1 PM Quilt 6:30 PM Session Meeting	<b>10</b> 9 AM Coffee & Conversation 6:30 PM Choir	<b>11</b> 6 PM Women's Bible Study	<b>12</b> 10 AM Women's Bible Study	<b>13</b> 9 AM Men's Breakfast @ Mac's Café 10 AM Grief Fellowship Hour
<b>14</b> 10 AM Worship 11 AM Sunday School & Home Vis. Care Team Meeting 12 PM Pack Community Lunch 6-8 PM Youth Grp	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b> 1 PM Quilt	<b>17</b> 9 AM Coffee & Conversation 6:30 PM Choir	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>21</b> 10 AM Worship 11 AM Sunday School 6-8 PM Youth Grp	<b>22</b> 6:30 PM Men's Bible	<b>23</b> 1 PM Quilt	<b>24</b> 9 AM Coffee & Conversation 6:30 PM Choir	<b>25</b> 6 PM Women's Bible Study	<b>26</b> 10 AM Women's Bible Study	<b>27</b> 10 AM Grief Fellowship Hour
<b>28</b> 10 AM Worship 11 AM Sunday School 6-8 PM Youth Grp 12-2 PM Club 35	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b> 1 PM Quilt				



Meridian Presbyterian Church  
4150 Highland Avenue  
Butler, PA 16001

**JOIN US**

**Worship with us Sundays at 10 AM  
Sunday School at 11 AM**