



Continue Going to God's Garden

By Steve Conger • sconger@meridianstreet.org

I know I am probably a little biased, but I thought that Holy Week was one of the best that I have ever had the privilege of being a part of. The anxiety of Maundy Thursday carried over into the heartbreak of Good Friday. The dialog that Matt and I shared at the end of the Good Friday service was one of the most powerful pieces of Scripture I have ever come across. I wish I could take credit for putting it together, but someone far wiser than me created the blending of the two stories. Reading it out loud left me with chills. The Easter Vigil service may have had only 14 people at it, but for those of us who were there I think we all experienced Easter in a new and powerful way. And Easter Sunday, WOW, what an amazing day. The music was outstanding and I hope that my image of God inviting us into the garden resonated with you.



As we plan for the summer and fall seasons the goal is to help encourage and empower you to go into God's garden and help tend it. We certainly did that last Sunday as 170

or so went to 14 locations to bring God's love and to help in some tangible ways. The stories that you have shared have been amazing, and my brief stop at two of the sites was enlightening (and exhausting). Thanks be to God that we can make a difference throughout Indianapolis, and the world.

We are continually striving to find ways we can make a difference. One of the areas that you identified to me was the Sunday morning schedule. After much prayer, discernment and holy discomfort the Church Council this week affirmed that starting June 11, we

will begin holding two services; 9:30 a.m. in the chapel and 10:30 a.m. in the sanctuary. The 9:30 a.m. service will continue to feature our Jazz musicians along with Raina helping on the hymns. We probably will also have special musical groups participate every now and again. The service will remain about 45 minutes long and remain (as I like to call it) informally traditional. The 10:30 a.m. service will remain the same.

Why are we making this change? The main reason is one of selfishness on my part. After being with you for almost a year there are many of you that I have not gotten to know. Sunday morning, when you are here, I am busy running from one service to the next with no chance to chat and get to know you. By creating a small window between the services, Matt and I will be able to spend more time with you, plus you will have a better opportunity to meet the rest of the Meridian Street family that attends the opposite service from you.

Is this change perfect? Heck no, but it is a movement in a better direction and will allow us to be grow into an even closer family.

Sunday, June 4 will be our annual JuneFest celebration. This is going to be an amazing day as we gather together to celebrate our love for Meridian Street, our country and each other. During the service that morning we will bless those who are involved in our mission trips this summer, we will receive new members and we will celebrate Jody's 30 year anniversary working at Meridian Street. Following the worship service we will have a delicious lunch catered by Jug's and a concert on the lawn. It is going to be a great day to be at Meridian Street.

Easter Sunday may be over, but the proclamation we made that day - That Jesus Christ is Risen! - continues. I pray that your experience of the risen lord has drawn you closer to God as you continue to work in his garden.

Getting dirty with you,
Steve



One Year at Butler!

By Dani Campbell •

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This spring semester has been one for the books with United Methodist Student Movement, our Butler University Campus Ministry. Not only did we hit a great milestone (ONE YEAR AT BUTLER!), we also had a fun time meeting new people, strengthening the connection between the students and Meridian Street, and deepening our faith and our relationships with Christ and each other.

We had 2 events at Meridian Street this semester that invited any and all Butler students to join us for a meal and some games. These events were held on Sunday nights at 5 p.m. and all of the food prepared was from members of Meridian Street. The Butler students in our organization showed up with their roommates for great conversation, cheering on the Butler Bulldogs Men's Basketball team, and some delicious food with plenty of leftovers to go around! I loved these events because they encompass to me what Meridian Street strives to be for students, a home away from home.

During our weekly bible studies we discussed Ephesians and what it means to be a Christian and how to be the light of Christ in our society today, which is harder than we think sometimes and so simple other times. Our group laughed and learned together and really dug into scriptures and pulled it apart to make sense of it in our world. My heart was always overjoyed with how these students, who a year ago did not know each other that well, would have such deep discussions and agree and disagree so kindly. This is what our world needs more of!

In the fall 2017 semester we have big plans to hit the ground running! We are so FORTUNATE to have some fantastic student leaders, all whom are returning next year. We will continue to have weekly bible studies and of course they are always encouraged and invited to worship with us on Sunday mornings. The students have dreams of helping with reading programs at School 43 and volunteering their time with our community youth as well as helping with other service projects such as Soup's On and Fletcher Place throughout the year.

Our leaders loved the time they spent with Meridian Street members at those monthly meals and have come up with an amazing idea to bring in new students. On the last Wednesday of each month we will host a meal and a

speaker/discussion and call it Faith & "Field of the Month"! We meet in the Center for Faith and Vocation. Our goal is to bring vocation into the same light as our faith. However too often we think of our jobs and our beliefs in Christ to contradict or have nothing to do with each other. Our vision is to have members of Meridian Street speak about their positions in our community and how their faith helps guide their vocation. We want to focus on the big areas that Butler covers such as Pharmacy and Health Sciences, Education, Liberal Arts and Sciences, Business, Communication, and Arts. Yes, these are the schools offered at Butler, but how cool would it be to let students in every aspect of campus life know that what they believe and what they do with their future careers can coincide! If you are interested in being a part of this wonderfully exciting program please contact me, I would love to talk to you more about the possibilities!

We are so fortunate to have such a wonderful university such as Butler in our backyard. I promise that I am working tirelessly to show those students what Meridian Street is and how it can be a great impact in their lives. Meridian Street has so much love for the community and I can't wait to watch it embrace Butler just a little bit more.

In Light and Love,
Dani





Every hand helps with Family Promise

By Matt Landry, Associate Pastor
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This April marked our return to hosting families in the Family Promise program through the Interfaith Hospitality Network, continuing a 23 year tradition of serving families experiencing homelessness in Indianapolis. Indianapolis families and children experience homelessness at a high rate, contributing to the 2.5 million children in the U.S. that will experience homelessness this year. Congregations like ours provide shelter and food, so that families have a place to stay together and stay safe. Family Promise has helped about 50 families a year to find jobs and homes, break the cycle of homelessness and move into independence.

Over 60 volunteers from Meridian Street, 8 of who were new, helped during the week of April 2. The group logged over 240 hours of time cooking, driving, playing, and working with the families who stayed with us. This group had the largest family we have ever hosted, including half a dozen very young children! Highlights included: making up the beds in the welcoming third floor space, welcome signs from Faith Friends, every delicious dinner that our church provided, a visit from the Paws ministry (and meeting 3 dogs) and working on homework for children newly enrolled in school.

Every person contributed to make this possible – it was truly uplifting to see how each volunteer contributed their talents and time.

What's next?

- Walk for Dreams! This event is a main fundraiser for Family Promise – which helps fund transportation to jobs and interviews, school supplies, and other needs – is in the form of a walk. R.J. and Allyson Talyor and their family are captains of our team again this year – the Meridian Street Marchers!
- Families and dogs are welcome to join. Check-in on May 21 is from 1:00 - 1:45 p.m. The meeting location is downtown Indianapolis at Buggs Temple (11th St. and Senate Ave.), and the route is a paved 2 mile loop on the canal.

- If we raise the most (at least \$1000) we will win drivers and overnight hosts for our week of hosting! This is an amazing gift that helps our efforts.
- Leadership Opportunities with IHN: We are in the process of looking for two new leaders of our IHN Ministry at Meridian Street. The new leaders would work together to make sure everything is in place when we host families. If you are interested or would like to learn more, please contact Pastor Matt, mldry@meridianstreet.org
- Sign up in July! Our next turn to host starts July 30 – mark your calendars now to help prepare our space, drive our guests, or share a meal.

Interfaith Hospitality Network Meeting

We need your input for the future of Family Promise. Please come to a meeting on Sunday May 7, 11:45 a.m.-12:45 p.m., Library. Come and brainstorm how the leadership can transition to Emily and a new team as Carolyn retires after the July rotation. Don't be intimidated by the word "coordinator" because a team will be created of which you can be a player. For more information, please contact the coordinators, Carolyn Kingen at cskingen@sbcglobal.net; Emily Webber at emcwebber@gmail.com; or contact Pastor Matt at mldry@meridianstreet.org



Children's Day In Art show May 11-15

By Christy Whaley, Director of Children's Day In
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The 4 year old preschoolers of Children's Day In here at Meridian Street have spent the entire school year creating fabulous pieces of original art for your viewing pleasure. They have studied and created works based on several different artists including Jackson Pollock, Claude Monet and Pablo Picasso (to name just a few). They've used a variety of techniques to create about a dozen pieces of art each as well as several collaborative pieces. The children will host the gallery opening on Thursday, May 11 for their parents and would like to invite you to come to see their creations anytime between May 11 and May 15. Be prepared to be amazed! The art will be displayed in our new welcome center. For more information about our programs contact: cwhaley@meridianstreet.org.



Serve Indy Thank You

By Matt Landry, Associate Pastor
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Thank you to everyone who served on Sunday, April 23rd for our 2nd Annual Serve Indy! We had 170 people serve with 15 different organizations around the City of Indianapolis. While the numbers are important to share, the stories and work accomplished is important too. Here's some of what we accomplished:

- The families and staff of the Ronald McDonald House were blessed with sweet treats!
- East 10th Street United Methodist Children and Youth Center appreciated the lawn care and outdoor cleanup work around their facility. A family who lives nearby noticed the crew working and was so appreciative of the crew, they offered to buy them ice cream.
- The warehouse of Exodus Refugee which is full of donations was sorted by our team. They also put together kits for refugees who are arriving in Indianapolis in the coming weeks.
- Fletcher Place Community Center greatly appreciated the cleaning and sorting of donations accomplished by our team.
- The Family Promise/ Interfaith Hospitality Network Day Center staff was so pleased to arrive on Monday morning to see that the offices were repainted. A new coat of paint can really brighten up a space!
- The team that went to Joy's House worked with love as they cleaned the facility used by many people every single day.
- Over 150 cards were written to members of our congregation who are homebound or sick. They will be reminded of our love and care for them through this card ministry!
- A new space was created for the Martin Luther King Community Center that will be a new office space for a staff person.
- The Neighbor to Neighbor team painted and helped clean a basement of an elderly resident of our neighborhood.
- Thanks to the cooking skills of our team that went to the Ronald McDonald House, five meals were made and frozen for future use for families who are staying there.

- Several families and staff were served lunch at the Ronald McDonald House at Riley Children's Hospital on Sunday.
- School #43 greatly appreciated the yard work and the moving of garden boxes that was accomplished.
- Our team at Soup's On at Robert Park UMC served over 200 people a delicious lunch meal.
- Wheeler Mission has a longer term residential home on the Southside of Indianapolis. Our team painted the carport, which was a big help to the facilities manager and staff of Wheeler.
- Our neighborhood, Butler University, and our church were prayed over by those who went on a prayer walk.
- Several families helped pick up and clean the playground, equipment, and toys enjoyed by the children of our church and Children's Day In (CDI).

This is an amazing list! We accomplished so much on Serve Indy Sunday thanks to your hard work. I know that people from within our congregation got to know each other more and those who served learned more about the organizations they served with as well. It is my hope and prayer that this Sunday of service will encourage you to get involved in one of our partner organizations. If you would like more information or talk more about how God might be calling you to service, please contact me, mlandry@meridianstreet.org.

Thank you again for serving! What a wonderful Serve Indy Sunday it was. I'm looking forward to the 3rd Annual Serve Indy coming in April of 2018.

Pastor Matt



Just a few of the pictures from Serve Indy – April 23, 2017. If you have pictures you'd like to share, send them to Mary Sue McAlister at mmcalister@meridianstreet.org.



Explore Meridian: New Members Classes – Change of Date

We originally scheduled two sessions for our next Explore Meridian classes for April 30 and May 7. These dates have been changed. We will meet for one session with lunch on Sunday, May 21 from Noon to 2 p.m. Anyone who is interested in knowing more about this church or considering membership is invited. If you have any questions or are in need of child care for the sessions, please don't hesitate to contact Pastors Steve or Matt. We will welcome new members on Sunday, June 4.

VBS Spotlight

- June 19-23, 9 a.m.-Noon Grades K-5
- June 20-22, 9 a.m. -Noon Preschool 3s and 4s
- Details and registration information at meridianstreet.org

Donations:

- Grab a gear from the buckets at either door to the sanctuary. Your donation could supply 10 craft kits, snacks for kids, take home music CDs.
- Please donate your empty clean cans – any size and with no sharp edges, and toilet paper rolls. Collection bins are located throughout the building.

Contact Elisa Deer at edeer@meridianstreet.org for more details on how you can help.

JuneFest – June 4, 2017

Join us for JuneFest! We'll worship together at one service in the Sanctuary at 10:30 a.m. Then we'll enjoy a fried chicken lunch catered by Jugs, games and the music of Bluegrazz Junction outside on the front lawn. Casual attire is most appropriate for this relaxed day of worship and fun. Lunch will be provided but donations are welcome. No need to bring a thing except for yourself and enjoy a day celebrating Meridian Street!

Bell News

What do handbells sound like when 440 ringers are playing together? A giant pipe organ! Twelve members of Chancel



Bells traveled to Lansing, Michigan on April 28 & 29 to attend a handbell festival conference. We filled up the back of a minivan with our handbells, choir chimes, music, mallets, foam pads, and other equipment! Some of the classes we attended were: high bell techniques, bass bell techniques, sight-reading music, rhythm, bells in worship, and even how to tie dye your white bell gloves! During the two days, we rehearsed for 5 hours to prepare for the final concert in which all the ringers play the same pieces together. It was truly an awesome experience! We learned a lot and had a lot of fun!

Children's Ministry Listening Session

If you are the parent(s) of children in sixth grade and below, you are invited to a listening session on the future of our family ministry at Meridian Street. The pastors greatly value the input of our members and want to hear from you. Join them on Wednesday, May 10 at 7 p.m. to provide your feedback, thoughts, and ideas regarding the future of this vital ministry. The meeting will be at the church, with a specific location to be determined. Please let us know you are coming and if you need childcare by contacting Mary Sue McAlister at the church office at 317.253.3237 or mmcalister@meridianstreet.org.

Race Day – May 28 – Worship Schedule

On Sunday, May 28 we will have one worship service only at 9 a.m. in the Chapel.

Youth News

We are prepping for our Youth Sunday service and we hope you can join us for worship on May 14 as we congratulate our seniors and welcome our Confirmation Class of 2017 as new members!

This summer we have lots of fun planned and if you are a current 5th and 6th grader, get excited because starting June 7 you are now a YOUTH!!! We hope you can join us on Wednesday nights at 6 p.m. for youth ministry programming. You can find our whole schedule on our [webpage](#)! Be sure to follow us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook](#) so you don't miss a thing. Also, be looking in the mail for your invite. If you are not a part of our youth ministry program yet but want to receive all of the information please contact [Dani Campbell](#) so she can be sure to include you in future emails and mailings.

Mission Trips

Our Justice and Service Mission Trip to Washington DC is almost here! Please keep us in your thoughts and prayers as we travel to DC June 18-23 to learn more about poverty, homelessness and how our faith intersects.

Our high school mission trip to North Carolina is still open! We will be traveling to Asheville, NC on Sunday, July 9 and we will return Saturday, July 15. It is a blast and we hope you can make it. You can find more info on our [website](#) or by [contacting Dani](#).

Finance FAQs

Each month, our financial secretary Keisha Boger will answer your questions about the church budget and finances. If you have a question you'd like to have answered, email Keisha at kboger@meridianstreet.org.

How do I obtain church financial information?

Feel free to contact Keisha at kboger@meridianstreet.org or 317.253.3237 x113 at any time. Keisha can send you the monthly financial statements that are presented to finance committee and church council at their regular meetings.

Discipleship Dollars & Sense is published each quarter (April, July, October, and January) and provides an overview of YTD financial information and a few articles highlighting recent programs or areas that spent significant funds. This newsletter is posted on the church website and a link is sent to everyone signed up via email. Hard copies can be mailed upon request.

Member Spotlight

This month our spotlight is shining on Jean Weinheimer. Jean has been a member of Meridian Street since shortly after the move to 5500 N. Meridian Street. Jean



was married to Al for over 60 years at the time of his death in 2012. Their two children, Anne and Rick, also grew up at Meridian Street and were active in the youth programs. Jean remembers working in the church office a few days a week and with the Children's Day In program. At the age of 50 she went back to school and earned

her Masters degree in Social Work, working in that field for 17 years before retiring.

Some of her fondest memories are of the times she was a lifeguard at Camp Otto when the 5th and 6th graders would go out there for a week instead of doing Vacation Bible School. When asked about changes she has seen over the years, she immediately said "the building!" From coming here shortly after it opened, to the 1988 Aldersgate Addition, and the current construction project, there have been a lot of changes to observe over the years! Al actually came to Meridian Street first – at the invitation of one of his students. He told Jean "I think you'll like it" and she did!



MERIDIAN STREET

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First Class Postage



Save the Date

Be sure to put these dates on your calendar now and look for details in the coming weeks.

Thursday, May 11	Children's Day In Art Show
Sunday, May 14	Youth and Confirmation Sunday
Sunday, May 28	One service only at 9 a.m. in the Chapel
Sunday, June 4	JuneFest
June 18-24	Intergenerational mission trip to Washington D.C. – Spots are still available.
June 19 – 23	Vacation Bible School
July 4	Tables reserved at Concert on the Canal (Indiana Historical Society)
July 9 – 15	Senior High Youth mission trip to North Carolina
July 30	Christmas in July
July 30 – August 6	Interfaith Hospitality Network at Meridian Street