

## Meridian Baptist Church

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ITEMS FOR EVANGEL DEADLINE: MONDAY NOON

### Meridian Prayer Line

865-579-6632

CALL IN YOUR PRAYER REQUEST

### WORKERS FOR SUNDAY

April 5, 2026

#### DEACONS OF THE WEEK

Ray Whitson \* Tommy Leavelle

#### NURSERY WORKERS DURING WORSHIP

Emily Frei Scott Frei

#### SAFETY TEAM — TEAM FOUR

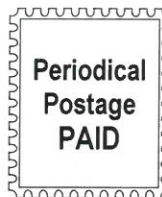
Johnny Lewis David McLemore  
Jeff Hinkle Ray Whitson Chrissy Johnson

#### VAN DRIVER

Scott Frei

### PRAYERS: IN THE HOSPITAL

Mary Hurst, Ft. Sanders



OR CURRENT OCCUPANT

## THIS WEEK'S ACTIVITIES

### SATURDAY, APRIL 4

11:00am—Children's Easter Egg Hunt

### SUNDAY, APRIL 5

7:15am—Sunrise Service

9:30am—Sunday School

10:50am—Morning Worship

### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 8

5:00pm—Meal

6:00pm—TeamKid


6:00pm—Students "The Upper Room"

6:15pm—Prayer Meeting/Bible Study

7:15pm—Choir Practice

### SATURDAY, APRIL 11

6:00pm—Youth MS Girls Spring Tea



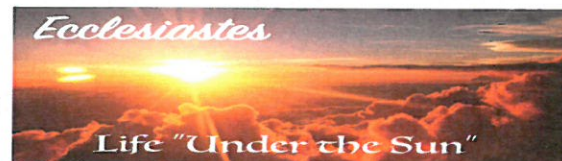
# The Evangel

Meridian Baptist Church  
6513 Chapman Highway  
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Michael Martin, Pastor

VOLUME 72, NO. 13

April 3, 2026



Sermon Series on the  
Book of Ecclesiastes



Wednesday Night Verse by Verse Bible  
Study On the Book of Ephesians

Women on Mission April Project  
Collect snacks for I.C.U. Lounges  
Place items in box located near office

Wednesday Meal, April 8 at 5:00  
Chicken Casserole, Green Beans, Mashed  
Potatoes, Rolls, Banana Pudding  
Cost: \$6 Adults/\$4 Children  
Sign up by Monday, April 6.

Senior Adults Travel  
The Dogwood Trail  
Thursday April 16

Leaving at 10am.  
Lunch to follow at Shoney's.  
Call the office if you plan to attend.



Children's Easter  
Egg Hunt  
Saturday, April 4, 11am  
Lunch provided!



Easter Sunrise Service  
Sunday, April 5th,  
7:15 am at the  
Meridian Cemetery



Ladies "Spring Tea"  
Saturday, April 25  
11am-1pm  
in the fellowship hall.  
Linda Francis will be our guest speaker.  
Please RSVP by April 20 to  
the church office.

## NXTGEN | CYA

The reality is sobering. Young adults are the largest group leaving the church in the United States today. Recent data gathered by LifeWay indicates that approximately 64% to 66% of young adults in the U.S. who regularly attended a Protestant church as teenagers drop out for at least a year between the ages of 18 and 22. While some later return, studies show a 69% chance they will remain disengaged once they drop out in these years. Many of them were once active in student ministry. They showed up, participated, and were engaged. But after graduation, that connection often fades. In many churches, especially in Baptist life, there is a noticeable gap during these years. Strong ministries exist for children, students, and families but fewer are intentionally focused on walking with young adults through this critical stage.

Scripture reminds us how important this season truly is. In Ecclesiastes 12:1, we read, "Remember also your Creator in the days of your youth..." These are the years when faith becomes personal. It is when beliefs are no longer inherited but chosen, shaped, and lived out. This is why the College & Young Adult Ministry matters so deeply to me. It provides a place where young adults can be known and supported. It gives them space to ask real questions and be grounded in the truth of God's Word. It helps them move from a faith they grew up around to a faith they truly own.

We see a model for this kind of investment in Paul's relationship with Timothy. In 2 Timothy 2:2, Paul writes, "and what you have heard from me... entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also." Paul walked closely with Timothy, helping him grow and preparing him to lead. That same kind of intentional discipleship is what young adults need today.

If we want to see the next generation remain rooted in their faith, we cannot overlook this season. It is my deep belief that the College & Young Adult Ministry is such a necessary ministry for the growth of not only Meridian Baptist Church, but for the western church at large. My prayer is that God will move in the hearts of members at MBC to find themselves moved to take part in the ministry and help reach such a vital and fleeting group at this critical stage in their lives.

If you are interested in seeing how you could fit into the work that is being done at MBC for this age range, please do not hesitate to reach out to me (865) 279-3836.

Grace be with you,  
Christopher S. Milligan

## Attendance

### March 29 - Sunday School

Preschool	4
Children	8
Youth	12
Adults	85
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>109</b>
Visitors	3

### Worship Service: 131

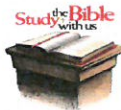
Contacts for the week of 3/23-3/29 Total: 90  
4 & 5 Years—22 Adult 3—20 Adult 4—48

## Giving

### Giving For March 29

General Budget Fund	\$ 3,799.00
Non-Budget Designated	50.00
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ 3,849.00</b>
Online Giving	\$ 160.00
Monthly Budget Requirement	\$51,083.00
March Budget Giving	\$38,784.31

### Senior Adult Bible Study April 28 at 10:30



Quarterly Sunday School  
Teachers & Assistants Meeting  
April 26 at 8am in the Fellowship Hall  
Breakfast will be provided.

### From the Cemetery Committee

Mowing season is approaching. If you have items on graves you would like to keep, please pick those items up soon. Silk flowers & plants that are placed on gravestones are fine & do not have to be picked up; no glass containers, please.



### Youth Middle School Girls

You are invited to a Spring Tea to  
be held Saturday, April 11 at 6pm  
in the youth room (4th floor).

## Noteworthy News

A WAY OF LIFE...That's what serving at Meridian has been for Deborah and me. Our partnership with Meridian began on October 30, 2000. (Anybody remember Y2K?). That's 9,288 days or 25 years, 5 months, 6 days. That adds up to planning and leading 2,127 Sunday worship services (AM & PM). Needless to say we have gotten used to each other. For us, Meridian has been a little taste of heaven.

A NEW WAY...This Sunday, April 5 will be my last service as your worship leader. It is time, now, to turn a page and begin a new chapter of music ministry at Meridian. I am anxious to see what that will be like. I am confident that you will be as kind and supportive to Bro. Mark Branson as you have been to me.

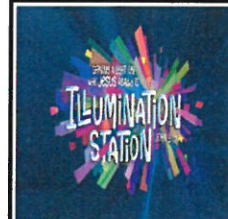
NO WORDS...could begin to express my gratitude for the experience of serving our Lord together with you. We will still serve together, but in a new phase of our relationship. I pray that God will continue to bless us and deepen our relationship even more in the years to come.

With the greatest affection and gratitude,

*Bro. Dennis*

### CHURCH TEXTS

To receive texts from MBC for prayer requests, special announcements, etc., text: mbcnews to 865-822-8635.



**VBS 2026**  
**"Illumination Station"**  
**Shine bright in a dark world!**  
**July 12-16**

**Sunday-Thursday**  
**Time: 6:00-8:30**

**Family Fun Night: Friday, July 17**

## FROM THE PASTOR'S DESK

I am blessed with the opportunity to serve as a mentor for a seminary student through a program of New Orleans Seminary. Part of the program involves me answering questions about serving as a pastor. I am using my Evangel article to share with you some of my responses to some of the questions I have been asked.

*Question: What are your thoughts on the topic of church growth?*

*Response: The first thing that comes to mind is the fact that God is the one who grows the church. In Acts 2, it was the Lord who added to the church daily (Acts 2:47). This is important to remember. Oftentimes, church members incorrectly assume they are the ones who grow the church. But we don't. God does.*

*Secondly, a healthy church will experience slow and steady growth rather than overnight rapid growth. God wants the church to grow like an oak tree rather than an overnight mushroom. The process of church growth should function more like a crock pot, not a microwave.*

*Third, church members must understand that church growth is not just about numbers. The most important growth in the church is spiritual growth. I would prefer spiritual growth any day over numerical growth. However, genuine spiritual growth will always lead to numerical growth.*

*Fourth, I don't want people to join for the sake of joining. I want the right people to join. The truth is (and sometimes we don't want to admit this) not everyone is a fit for Meridian Baptist. I don't want people to join Meridian if they do not plan to assimilate into the body of believers and help us collectively implement the Great Commission. Nor do I want people to join if they disagree on how we do church.*

*Finally, Southern Baptists are really bad about obsessing over "programs." Ever since I can remember, the SBC always has some new gimmicky program. But I would rather follow the gospel of God rather than the "gospel of Lifeway." We would do better to peer into the pages of Acts and implement their growth plan – the church devoted themselves to the Scriptures (Acts 2:42) prayer (Acts 2:42) and fellowship (Acts 2:42)...and they left the growth to God (Acts 2:47).*

In Christ, Pastor Michael