

MCBC Profile

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Our Church Contact Information

Merlin Community Baptist Church
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Please visit our web page for additional information: Merlinchurch.org

Search Committee Chairperson
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Our Community Information

Merlin Community Baptist Church is located in Merlin, Oregon. Merlin is an unincorporated city with a population of approximately 2,200, located 5 miles north of Grants Pass, Oregon. Grants Pass has a population of 38,000. Merlin is located in the North Valley area. The North Valley is rural, with small acreages ranging from 2.5 to 10 acres with some larger properties. Most of the population of the North Valley is in addition to the population of Merlin. The population is a mix primarily of working class families, professionals and retirees. This same population mix is well represented in our church. The North Valley schools include an elementary school, a middle school and a high school. Most services, including shopping, medical, and professional services, etc., are located in Grants Pass. There are a number of churches of various denominations in the North Valley.

Merlin's history is based primarily on sawmills and mining; however there is only one active mill remaining in Merlin. There is still some active gold mining in the area, but it is no longer a dominant industry.

Merlin is the gateway to the Wild and Scenic section of the Rogue River. As such, it is a desirable place to live for river access. Rafting and fishing are both very popular local river activities. Because of Merlin's location, we have a considerable amount of summertime traffic to and from the river. Merlin is also home to a number of raft/boat rental companies and river guide services.

Merlin tends to have a fairly constant population with relatively low turnover. Because of land use restrictions, there is little opportunity for significant population growth.

Southern Oregon tends to be fairly conservative politically. That tendency is even more pronounced in our church body. While, as a general rule, we are not political activists, we are fairly open with our conservative political leanings.

The greater Grants Pass area, including Merlin and the North Valley, has a considerable retirement population. Our climate and proximity to California make this area an attractive option for retirement.

More information concerning Grants Pass can be found on the following website.

<http://www.city-data.com/city/Grants-Pass-Oregon.html>

Our Story, Our Ministries

Merlin Community Baptist Church was founded in 1892 to study the Bible and share the good news of the gospel within the Merlin community. We continue to share in the desire to reach the community through the teaching of God's authoritative Word and we welcome everyone from the surrounding communities as well. For many years, our senior pastor has led the church in sound biblical teaching while having a love and compassion for the body of believers. As the Lord blessed our church, we saw the need for the expansion of our ministries. Starting with the addition of a part-time youth pastor over 20 years ago, we currently have a full time Youth Pastor now. Our ministry today gives testimony to our church history with an emphasis on worship, instruction, fellowship, and evangelism. At Merlin Community Baptist Church we're not just a church, we are a family, a family of believers striving together to grow in our relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

Recent History

In July of 2015, our long term pastor of 29 years retired and our former youth pastor, Mike Friend, was selected to be our interim pastor. Seth Wiltermood assumed duties as our Youth leader and continues today as Youth and Children's Pastor.

The pastoral search committee unanimously recommended to the congregation in March 2016, that Pastor Josh Seibert be called as our Senior Pastor. The congregation unanimously voted to approve this recommendation and Pastor Josh Seibert began shepherding our church on June 20, 2016. Pastor Seibert was a young 37 year old man with a wife and two sons, all of whom were accepted and loved by our church.

Pastor Mike Friend was unanimously asked to stay on as an associate pastor. He and Pastor Josh worked well together and shared the joys of leading our church. By late 2016, Pastor Mike let it be known that he wanted to retire to spend more time with his grandkids and asked that we begin looking for another person to fill the associate pastor's position. This did not happen due to the following developments.

In the fall of 2016, Pastor Josh was diagnosed with Myelodysplastic Syndrome (MDS) which is a bone marrow disease. After considerable medical testing and much prayer, Pastor Josh was admitted to Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) for a bone marrow transplant in March 2017. Then after what looked like a likely recovery, Pastor Josh passed away suddenly to be with our Lord on May 4, 2017. Needless to say our hearts were broken with our loss of the promising young pastor we had come to love.

When Pastor Josh entered the hospital, Pastor Mike assumed full duties leading our church. When Pastor Josh died, the elders asked Pastor Mike if he would once again become our interim pastor. He accepted. The elders re-established the pastoral search committee which began our new search for our next senior pastor.

In December 2017, our search committee recommended that Pastor Thomas Bridgmon be called to be our Senior Pastor. On January 7, 2018 the congregation overwhelmingly voted to call Pastor Bridgmon as Senior Pastor, who with his wife and four children arrived from Texas in February 2018. Interim Pastor Mike Friend was finally able to retire. We've enjoyed the Bridgmon family very much as we watched two of the children grow into adults and start their own lives. During his tenure here, he led the congregation through an unusual period of pandemic requiring the closing of the church facilities for a period and the many adjustments that followed. He oversaw the development of our on-line church for people to watch services from home which is still used to a degree today. Then in May 2022, Pastor Thomas announced that he felt called to return to Texas to preach at a church there. The elders re-established the pastoral search committee which began our new search for our next senior pastor.

Current ministries

- Children – Summer Fun Activities, VBS community outreach, youth camps & rafting
- Home groups, Mens study, Ladies study
- Thanksgiving outreach
- Christmas baskets
- Shoeboxes, world mission support for children through Samaritans Purse
- Serving Merlin through a yearly service project
- Pregnancy Care Center
- Missionaries, Gideons, local, and international
- Classic Car Show – outreach
- Outreach to community women
- Emergency funds, food vouchers
- Gospel Rescue Mission support
- Faith House support
- AA, NA

Future opportunities of ministry

- Single parent ministry
- Youth music ministry
- Home group ministry expansion
- Enhancement of facilities to help attract younger families

Potential areas of growth

- Attracting additional youth
- Attracting young families
- Reaching our community through new programs and outreach
- Providing facilities for youth and community outreach
- Encouraging home groups community service projects
- Providing Intern opportunities for young people interested in the ministry

Our Church Life

Worship Services

Two Sunday worship services are conducted: 9am - 10:15am and 10:30 – 12:00 noon.

The earlier service is more traditional with hymns and primarily piano accompaniment. It attracts an older group of worshipers. We usually sing three hymns; opening music can be either praise or a hymn led by one to four person teams. There is a music special by a soloist, an instrumentalist, or small ensemble.

The second service focuses on contemporary praise music with a worship leader and includes drums, guitars, and vocalists.

The pastor preaches the same message in both services focusing on a Bible verse as the core and then expanding to a message on a Bible passage. He is adept in the use of examples and humor to focus attention and make sermons relevant. A sermon outline with blanks to be filled in by the congregation is included in the bulletin.

The church uses two large screen TVs as aids to follow along the sermon and the corresponding outline. Occasionally a brief video is shown relating to the message.

We have communion in each service on the first Sunday of the month.

Sunday Schools

Adult classes are held at 9:15am and 10:30am for 45 minutes each.

Children's Sunday School and nursery is provided during second service.

High School / College Ladies – IF Jesus, Then What? meets at 2:30pm at the Dutch House.

Middle School / High School Guys – Got Jesus, Bro? meets at 2:30pm at Baskin Robbins.

Fellowship

Worshipers are seen as providing a friendly congregation. We use a greeting time near the beginning of each service and we strive to warmly welcome all visitors.

Every Sunday we offer coffee and donuts in the fellowship room before and after both services.

Wednesday Evening Fellowship Dinner, Study and Youth Activities

Wednesday evening from 5:30 – 6:30pm the church holds a potluck dinner in the fellowship hall. This is usually something light, and precedes the pastor-led Prayer time & Adult Bible study from 6:30 – 7:30pm. The dinner is discontinued thru the summer months, but the Bible study

continues all year. The dinner and Bible study had grown to a regular attendance of over 45 adults, prior to the COVID years, but we are increasing again.

Wednesday evening 6:30 to 7:30pm is the youth Wednesday Night Wonder for 5th grade and younger in the Sanctuary.

Other Ministry Activities

Wednesday 3:00 – 5:30PM for After School Awesome! is for kindergarten through 5th grade.

Friday Night Light 4:00 – 7:00PM for Middle School & High School Students

Men's breakfast is one Saturday per month in the fellowship hall.

Women's ministry holds approximately one event per month. One ladies' Bible study group meets weekly. They also have a yearly retreat.

Pastor dedicates time each week for hospital/recovery visits.

Approximately three home groups meet weekly in members' homes.

Special events include an excellent Vacation Bible School, Thanksgiving dinner, Thanksgiving outreach, Christmas Eve candle light service, June community picnic, community outreach car show, Serve our Savior Community Service Project in Merlin, September church picnic, and more.

Additional Church Characteristics

The Merlin Community Baptist Church's (MCBC) vision is to reach the lost for Christ and to nourish and support the believers in our church. We currently have a group of mature believers in their faith that attend the church to hear the word, provide essential support, and encourage each other. We provide both a traditional and more contemporary worship experience to reach different groups. The congregation is a friendly group that greets each other and visitors. We strive to be a good witness to our neighbors in the community.

Strengths

Some strengths of our church are good biblical preaching, solid Bible study, a strong prayer ministry, small home groups meeting in homes, Bible studies, men's and women's ministries, youth ministry, vacation Bible school, benevolent assistance, missionary support, and more. The church congregation responds well, caring for one another. We are a giving church and faithful stewards. The church has a small but solid youth program. A special strength is the willingness of individuals to step in and assume roles as needed.

Unique Characteristic

A unique characteristic of our church is that we attract many people who feel left out and forgotten in some other churches. We don't want any to be left out. This is one of the reasons that we have two different styles of Sunday morning worship services. This is a reason why we still use hymnals to sing our songs in the traditional service. We appreciate, honor, and respect not only the younger generation, but the older one too. We all love the Lord.

Vision, Growth, Dreams, Expansion

Our vision is to expand our reach into this community to attract more people, young, old, children, single adults, and families to have a saving faith in Jesus Christ and then join us in our ministry to spread the good news. We specifically desire to reach more of the youth in our community with attractive programs as well as more young people and a larger group of young families. Our dream is to increase our witness by our efforts and outreach programs to respond to the opportunities in our community. We have hopes of expanding our facilities to support this growth with new classrooms and multipurpose activity area.

Our Beliefs

Purpose – Why We Exist

Our purpose comes from two scriptures given by our Lord Jesus Christ called the “Great Commandment” (Matthew 22:37-40) and the “Great Commission” (Matthew 28:18-20).

We believe each person was created by God to fulfill five purposes.

- We were planned for God’s pleasure (worship) – Revelation 4:11
- We were formed for God’s family (fellowship) – Romans 12:5
- We were created to become like Christ (discipleship) – Romans 8:29
- We were shaped to serve God (ministry) – 1 Peter 4:10
- We were made for a mission (evangelism) – John 17:18

We believe we best fulfill those five purposes for our lives in a community of people called the Church.

Our Statement of Faith - Doctrine

As a body of New Testament believers, we affirm our belief in the inspired authority of the scriptures; in the virgin birth and essential deity of our Lord; in His atoning death and bodily resurrection; in His ascension into Heaven and the promised indwelling of the Holy Spirit; in His personal, visible return; and His ultimate and undisputed Kingdom and reign.

Church Covenant

- Believing Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, I have accepted Him as my personal Savior, and acknowledged Him as my master and Lord. I affirm the New Testament teaching as stated in our Doctrine.
- With the New Testament as my guide, I will seek to lead a consistent Christian life, honoring Christ in all my relationships.
- I will strive to be faithful in my Church worship service attendance.
- I will endeavor to render some form of Christian service.
- I will give regularly to the support of the Church and its benevolences.
- I will pray regularly for myself and for my Church.

Our Mission Statement

"We preach Jesus Christ: crucified, risen, and coming again."

God: God is the Creator and ruler of the universe. He has eternally existed in three persons: The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The three are co-equal in power, in nature, and in eternity, and are one God.

Jesus Christ: Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the promised Old Testament Messiah who was virgin-born of a human mother Mary by the Holy Spirit. He was fully human and fully God, co-equal with God the Father. He lived a sinless human life and offers Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on the cross. His bodily resurrection from death on the third day demonstrated His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven where He

continually makes intercession for believers. One day He will return to earth to ransom His bride, the church, to eternal glory, to judge the earth and Satan, and to establish His eternal kingdom, that He might reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

The Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is co-equal with God the Father and God the Son. He is present in the world to bring people to an awareness of their sin and need for a savior. He also lives spiritually in all believers from the moment of their salvation. He provides the Christian with power for living and for witnessing; for understanding spiritual truth; and for guidance in doing what is right and pleasing to God. He gives every believer spiritual gifts for serving Jesus Christ and building up other believers in their faith. As Christians we seek to live under the control of the Holy Spirit daily.

The Bible: The Bible is God's revelation to us, written by human authors under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. It is the faithful, inspired, infallible, inerrant record of what God wishes us to know about Himself, the world in which we live, how we are to live, and our ultimate destiny. We believe the Bible teaches that marriage is between one man and one woman. We believe in a literal interpretation of Genesis affirming a six day creation in the recent past. We affirm a historical Adam.

Salvation: The Bible tells us that all have sinned and are in need of a Savior. Only by trusting in Jesus Christ as our Savior, can we receive God's forgiveness and be saved from the penalty of our sin, which is spiritual death. Salvation is God's free gift of grace to us, but we must accept it by faith, having repented for our sin.

Baptism: We practice "believers' baptism by immersion." In the New Testament we have the record of those who committed their lives personally to Jesus Christ, professing their faith in Him, and then being baptized. The Biblical model of baptism is immersion. Baptism does not confer salvation — it is merely a symbol and a public confession of what has already taken place in a believer's heart, and that is repentance and regeneration by the Holy Spirit through the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

The Lord's Supper: Along with baptism, the Lord's Supper (communion) is an ordinance Christ gave to His church. It, too, is symbolic — the bread and cup symbolize the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ given for the remission of our sins. In the act of celebration, we commemorate the Lord's death for us, as we look forward to His promised return for His church at the end of the age. We celebrate the Lord's Supper monthly.

Our Lead Pastor

The Pastor, an ordained minister, has the primary role as the teaching shepherd of the church. He shall feed the flock, equip the saints, protect the church from false teachers, and love the family of God. The pastor and the elders provide overall leadership to the church body. The laity shall serve in all roles of the church as called. They will staff senior positions of responsibilities (elders) as well as the responsibilities of deacons, singers, prayer warriors, Sunday school leaders, children ministry leaders, ministry leaders and workers, and many more positions.

Lead Pastor Primary Emphases

- Preach a biblical message that is true to the Bible that encourages and teaches the congregation in an uplifting manner.
- Interpreting the faith – communicate a comprehensive understanding of the Bible and Christian theology in terms relevant to people’s lives.
- Leadership – attempt to turn vision into reality and to sustain it in the church.
- Nurturing fellowships – maintain a friendly warm and welcoming atmosphere so that people feel accepted, included and cared for.
- Pastoral care – encouragement at times of need and joy (visit members in hospital or recovery homes).
- Counseling – provide counseling as needed for individuals, couples, and family to enter a healing relationship.
- Leadership development – recognize and call potential persons as leaders with training and growth.
- Conflict management – resolve conflicts as they arise.

Additional Emphases

- Provide overall guidance and leadership with the elders for the church’s operation.
- Support, encourage, and participate in Vacation Bible School.
- Communications - keep individuals and congregation informed.
- Teach and lead Wednesday night Bible study.
- Encourage men’s ministry with leadership.

Our Youth Pastor

MCBC's full time youth / children's pastor, Seth Wiltermood, is responsible for all children's activities.

Youth Pastor Primary Emphases

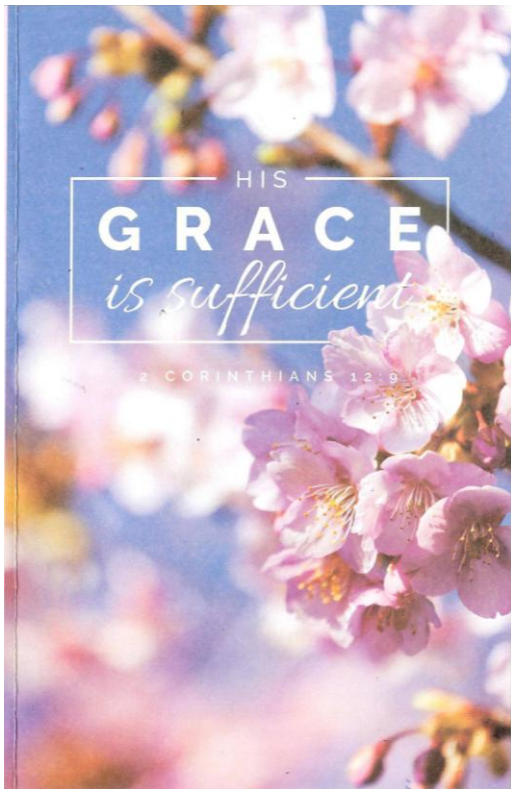
- Coordinates kids church on Sunday morning and teaches middle and high school students.
- Coordinates evening program for elementary and middle school students and teaches the middle school students.
- Coordinates a large team of volunteers for Vacation Bible School k- 6th grade which is our largest outreach program for the local community.
- Hosts middle school students and high school students separately at his house to play games, eat, hang-out and study the Word.
- Plans and leads various day trips for middle school and high school students.
- Takes middle school and high school students rafting on the Rogue River once a week from June through August finishing with devotions.
- Plans and executes a summer camp event for the middle and high school students.
- Mentors high school and young adults.
- Availability to the students and parents at any time.
- Coordinates and leads a mission trip for high school students each summer.

Additional emphases

- Filling the pulpit as needed.
- Having responsibility for the building and property maintenance.
- Assisting with many other church events such as the annual car show.

Our Church Pictures





Today's Sermon: Superman
1 John 3:16-18
Pastor Thomas Bridgmon

This Week

Today	12:15 pm	Orehid Club (<i>Indian Mary Park</i>)
Wednesday	10:00 am	Women's Bible Study (<i>Fellowship Hall</i>)
Wednesday	10:00 am	Men's Bible Study (<i>Lower Deck House</i>)
Wednesday	3:00 pm	Afterschool Awesome (<i>Fellowship Hall</i>)
Wednesday	5:30 pm	Wednesday Potluck (<i>Fellowship Hall</i>)
Wednesday	6:00 pm	Wednesday Night Wonder (<i>5th Grade & younger</i>)
Wednesday	6:00 pm	Prayer Time (<i>Fellowship Hall</i>)
Wednesday	6:30 pm	Adult Bible Study (<i>Fellowship Hall</i>)
Friday	4:00 pm	Friday Night Light (<i>MCBC</i>)

Wednesday

After School Awesome! 3:00 – 5:30pm
Kindergarten through 5th grade
Come get help with homework.
We will also have Bible stories and a snack.

Wednesday
Wednesday Night Wonder 6:00 – 7:30pm
(5th Grade and younger)
Bible Stories, Crafts, Games and Adventure!

Friday Night Light 4:00 – 7:00 pm
Middle School & High School Students
* * * * *

Teapot on Wheels
All women are invited to high tea on Saturday, May 7th at 11am
at "The Teapot on Wheels" 1754 Rogue River Hwy.,
Gold Hill (Exit 45A) The cost is \$30 per person, \$37 per person for
Vegetarian or Gluten Friendly.

Today is the last Sunday to purchase tickets.
Seating is limited! Please call the church office with any
questions. *They cannot promise the food is Gluten Free because
they have one kitchen - but they do their best!

Welcome to Merlin Community Baptist Church

Sunday Morning Worship Celebration
Traditional Hymn Service (9:00 a.m.)

Call to Worship
I Will Bless Thee, O Lord
This Is My Father's World

Welcome Announcements

Hymn #417 - A New Name in Glory
Hymn #150 - I'll Live for Him
Hymn #406 - O Say, But I'm Glad

Our Worship through Giving
Offertory Music by Colleen Kirkland

Message

Closing Hymn #468 - Are You Washed in the Blood?

† April 24, 2022 †

Contemporary Praise Celebration (10:30 a.m.)
(Kindergarten through 4th grade,
5th through 12th grade: Sweet Sunday Morning
Classes available during Contemporary Worship Service)
* * * * *

If you desire to express your commitment to Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, desire to be baptized, join the life of fellowship, or need support and encouragement of this church family in a spiritual decision or prayer, please speak with one of the ushers or fill out the bulletin comment tear off sheet and put it in the offering basket and we will contact you.
* * * * *

Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. John 13:14

Merlin Community Baptist Church
ANNUAL CHARITY GOLF TOURNAMENT
Saturday, May 21, 2022
DUTCHER CREEK GOLF COURSE
8:30am CHECK-IN & 9:00am SHOTGUN START
*4-PERSON TEAMS
*Play 9 holes / lunch & raffle,
Continue to play the last 9 holes if you want
*MULLIGANS (\$5 EACH)
*RAFFLE PRIZES - (Tickets \$1 each or 6 tickets for \$5)
*COST: \$50.00 (Cart & Hot Dog Lunch Included)
Make check out to MCBC with Golf on the memo line
(you do not pay the golf course)
***PROCEEDS TO SUPPORT THE 2022 VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL**
SIGN-UP AT THE CHURCH OR CALL THE CHURCH
QUESTIONS: Call the Church Office 541-476-3901

Sunday Morning Schedule:
9:00 am – 10:15 am Traditional Worship Service
9:15 am – 10:15 am – Early Adult Sunday School (Lower Little House)
10:30 am - 11:15 am – Adult Sunday School (Fellowship Hall)
10:30 am - 12:00 pm – Contemporary Worship Service
(Kindergarten through 4th grade,
5th through 12th grade: Sweet Sunday Morning
Classes available during Contemporary Worship Service)
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Website: www.merlinchurch.org
Senior Pastor: Thomas Bridgmon
Youth & Childrens Pastor: Seth Wiltermood