

Church Council Member Biographies

Dan Bridenbaugh - Church Council Vice Chair

Dan is in sales in the computer software industry. His work relocated him to Indiana where he met his wife, Katie. Dan and Katie purchased a fixer-upper in Meridian Kessler and soon became strong supporters of MSUMC. Dan and Katie have a 2.5+ year old daughter and are expecting their second child in March.

Annie Crafton

Annie is married to Clinton Crafton, and they have a two-year-old boy, Isaiah, and are expecting a baby girl this February. Annie is a second grade teacher at Park Tudor School, where she has taught for the past ten years. Clint and Annie were drawn to the church through the outstanding ministry of John Wantz. Annie joined MSUMC in 2001 by letter of transfer from the Presbyterian Church of Sewickley, Pennsylvania.

James Cumming (Jim) – Church Council Chair

Jim is married to Susie, and they have two children, John (Ruthie) and Jim (Megan), and six grandchildren, all of whom attend MSUMC. Jim is a pediatrician in private practice. Jim and Susie have been members of MSUMC for more than thirty years. After completing medical school, they looked for a church home, and after visiting several churches, they came to Meridian Street, where they felt immediately at home.

Phyllis Geeslin

Phyllis grew up in the MSUMC neighborhood but belonged to North Methodist Church. She joined Meridian Street and was married in the sanctuary in January of 1961. Phyllis' three children, David, Susan and Christopher, attended Sunday School and participated in youth activities as they grew up. Phyllis organized the Deaf School project for the Methodist Church in Indianapolis in which many Meridian Street members participated. She has served on numerous church committees through her years of membership. She is currently employed as the Executive Director at the President Benjamin Harrison Home.

Robert Greising (Bob)

Bob is married to Midge, and their daughters are Emily (finishing graduate school in social work/global studies at Boston College) and Tori (a senior studio art major at DePauw University). His mother-in-law is Beth Kissling. Bob and Midge joined MSUMC in 1982, after trying a couple of other churches. Though Bob was raised in the Lutheran tradition, Midge is a 7th generation Methodist - her forefathers having established Center United Methodist Church in Southport. They chose MSUMC for its Methodist tradition and location and were drawn here by Dick Lancaster. Bob has served as Chair of the Finance Committee since the early 1990's. He also served as Chair of Stewardship the year before. Previously, he served as Chair of the Council on Ministries (now called the Servant Leadership Team). Bob's first leadership position at MSUMC was on World Mission with Dr. Dick Nay. He has also been active in youth ministry. He has been on several youth service trips, including the 2002 trip to Zimbabwe. Bob has taught Sunday school for more than 10 years, starting with pre-school and extending to Senior High. He has also taught confirmation class. Bob is a business lawyer with Krieg DeVault LLP.

Nancy Gunderson

Nancy is married to Chris, and they have been members at Meridian Street for approximately 10 years. They have three children; Will (9), Jay (7), Kate (5). Nancy works part-time at

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Boatman Geller (A fine paper and stationery wholesaler). She also enjoys spending time with her family, reading, and playing tennis at Butler University with an adult woman's league. She is honored to have been asked to serve on the Church Council for Meridian Street United Methodist Church.

Phil McAlister

Phil first began attending Meridian Street in the early '70's, appreciating the open environment in which he could explore, question, and struggle with many faith-related questions. He eventually became involved with the singles group - where he first met his wife Mary Sue - and ushering, along with various committees. He has tried to be involved with many of his sons' school & church activities, including coaching, scouts, and mission trips. For the past couple decades, he has sold repair & manufacturing services for jet engine components.

James Null (Jim)

Jim became a member of Meridian Street with his wife, Christy, shortly after they were married in 1991. They wanted more of a traditional church that shared the same values and beliefs where they would be able to feel comfortable with their children. He and his wife grew up on the north side of Indianapolis, and they have lived there most of their lives - with the exception of attending undergraduate and law school at Indiana University. Jim's wife performs volunteer work at school and in the community and stays busy with the many activities of their three children - Hannah (13), Grace (10) and Alex (6). Jim works at an insurance agency that his grandfather started over 75 years ago, H.J. Spier Co., where his father, one of his brothers, and his uncle also work. Outside of spending time with his family and coaching their various sports, Jim enjoys many outdoor activities, especially golf.

Judy Otto

Judy joined MSUMC 40 years ago when she married David Otto, a life-long member of this church. For ten summers, 1967-77, David and Judy managed the church camp, Camp Otto, named to honor David's parents for their 40 years of leadership of the MYF. For over 30 years, she worked in non-profits in the areas of public relations, fundraising, marketing and special events. Judy retired in December 2005 after 18 years as Vice President of Resource Development of Easter Seals Crossroads. In retirement, she is working part time as Executive Director of the Indianapolis Arts Chorale.

Scott Peterson

Scott grew up at Meridian Street and he and his lovely wife, Nancy, have raised their children Trevor, Seth and Amanda here. Scott is co-owner and Vice President of SCS Construction Services, a general contracting firm that specializes in building schools. Scott has served on many Boards and committees at Meridian Street as well as volunteering his time to help many of our outreach projects such as Neighbor to Neighbor and Habitat for Humanity. Scott currently serves as the Chair of our Board of Trustees.

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Gaye Rardon

Gaye's family (husband John, "kids" Clay, Blakely, and Kelsey) became members about 21 years ago because Meridian St. had very good recommendations. After visiting for several months, they liked what they saw and heard, and it was within walking distance of their house (which became very handy as the kids grew up and became active at church). Gaye retired from teaching kindergarten this past June. She has been busy with house type "projects", exercising and dance classes, visiting with out-of-town kids (Philadelphia and Santa Barbara), eventually traveling to places where she and her husband have no relatives, enjoying a daytime Bible study, AND not getting up at 5:00a.m.!

Stacy Schroeder

She has attended MSUMC all of her life and was baptized and confirmed at MSUMC. She became an active member during her college years at Butler University. During the week, she works for St. Vincent Health in Finance as an Accountant/Project Manager supporting the various financial systems used throughout the ministry.

Glenn Scolnik

Glenn is married to Donna Hamilton Scolnik (since 1974), and they have two children: Doug, 25, and Whitney, 23. They both joined MSUMC in 1981 and were drawn to the church because of Dr. Lancaster, the senior minister at MSUMC in 1981. Glenn grew up attending Woodmar Methodist Church in Hammond IN where Dr. Lancaster had been the senior pastor in the 1950s and had in fact baptized Glenn. Glenn practiced law for 15 years, and then in 1993 joined HKW Capital Partners, a private equity firm which acquires companies for investment. He serves as President and CEO.

Nicole Sheetz - Church Council Secretary

Nicole is married to Matt Sheetz, and they have four children, Becca (17), Maggie (16), Teddy (12), and Sadie (1 ½). Nicole joined MSUMC in 2003 and was drawn to the church through Matt and his children, as well as through John Wantz' thought-provoking sermons. Nicole is a doctor of pharmacy and a licensed pharmacist in Indiana. She is employed in clinical research by Eli Lilly and Company, but is currently on family leave.

Barbara H. Thurman

When Barbara's family moved back to Indiana from Atlanta, GA several years ago, they attended services at a number of Methodist churches on the north side of Indianapolis. They knew immediately upon attending a service at Meridian Street that their search was over; they had found their church home. Barbara is a former Vice President of Operations for a national telecommunications firm and is currently a partner in a small business in Carmel that builds custom radio controlled boats. She and her husband Mike (of 26 years) have 2 sons (Clint is 25 and Sam is 20) and a grandson, Michael Clay, born in August. She is honored to be on the Church Council and is excited about the future of Meridian Street UMC.