

## UPCOMING

- Graduation celebration for Decker McKenzie May 3 following worship service
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## Prayer List

Pray for all those with ongoing health ailments.

- Renee Cumberland (cancer)
- Ora Barrett
- Connie Montgomery
- Emily Linton
- Andy Duncan (Liver transplant)
- Wayne Rigdon

## Communion Preparation

2026 preparation list is in foyer  
March - Rowell  
April - Potts  
May -

## Birthday / Anniversary

Axel Murphy - 2nd  
Steve Mabry - 22nd  
Cathy Reeves - 23rd  
Lennon Joiner - 27th  
John & Cathy Reeves - 15th

04 / 05 / 2026

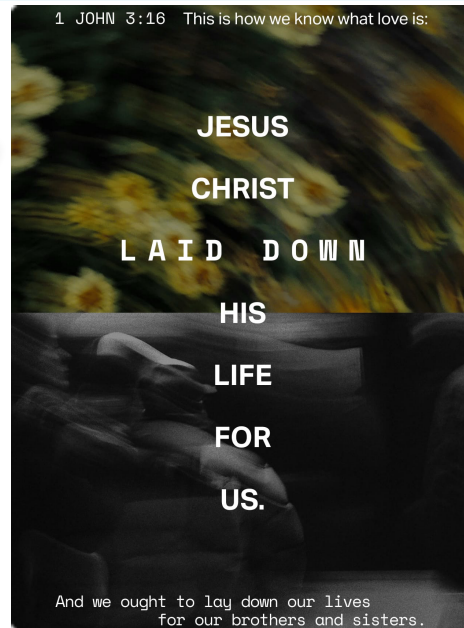
# WELCOME

We are a body of believers whose soul intention is to glorify and serve the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the head of His church. Our desire is to reflect that of our God--that all be saved. Anyone who is willing to humble himself before the mighty hand of God can be saved.

## WEEKLY SERVICES & MEETINGS

## Men to Serve

- Announcements - Larry Montgomery
- Scripture Reading - John 20:24 - 31
- Lead Singing - Chuck Rowell
- Head of Lord's Table - Rick Carlberg
- Assist on Lord's Table - James Johnson
- Scripture Reading - Matthew 27:62 - 28:6
- Closing Prayer - Corey Murphy



## SUNDAY

Bible Study //  
9:30 am  
Worship Service //  
10:30 am

## WEDNESDAY

Bible Study //  
7:00 pm

**NORTHSIDE CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
4217 Highway 39 N // Meridian, MS 39301  
**PHONE:** (601)483-2726 **WEB:** [www.nscocmeridian.com](http://www.nscocmeridian.com)  
Join us via live stream for our worship service!  
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# SERMON NOTES

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## Praying Through the Darkness

By Gary Henry

“Out of the depths I have cried to You, O Lord” (Psalm 130:1).

When you are passing through a “dark night of the soul,” how does that affect your prayer life? I hope no one has taught you that it is wrong to pray when your faith is weak, for it is never more important to pray than when we are discouraged and doubtful. If the times are dark, that is no reason to stop praying. At such times, rather than backing away from prayer or looking for a detour around the darkness, we need to pray through the darkness.

In the Parable of the Persistent Widow, Jesus’ point was that “men always ought to pray and not lose heart” (Luke 18:1). When we have prayed for God to do something and He has not done it, that fact alone shouldn’t cause us to quit praying. However, we need to be equally persistent when we are discouraged and God seems so far away that prayer feels like a pointless exercise. To give up and allow the darkness to defeat us would please no one but the devil.

Think for a moment about the time when Jesus was teaching about doing good to others, even our enemies. He said, “If you love those who love you, what reward have

you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?” (Matthew 5:46). I believe He would also say, “If you pray only when you’re in the mood, what do you do more than others? It doesn’t take a very mature person to do that.”

In prayer, as well as everything else, there will be times when steadfastness is the virtue we need the most. Winston Churchill wasn’t talking about prayer when he said, “It is the courage to continue that counts,” but the point is certainly applicable. When the devil has wrapped a cloud of darkness around us so thick it feels like God was never anything more than a foolish dream we had, we will either keep praying despite the darkness . . . or the devil will have us.

The truth is, God is laboring mightily to solve every problem we’ve ever prayed to Him about. Loving us more than any earthly father ever loved his child, He tells us what He told Paul, “My strength is made perfect in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9). So let’s plant our flag on the battlefield and stand with David, who prayed, “If I say, ‘Surely the darkness will hide me, and the light around me will be night’ – even the darkness is not dark to you. The night shines like the day; darkness and light are alike to you” (Psalms 139:11,12 CSB).

“In the dark night of the soul, bright flows the river of God” (John of the Cross).

## Gossip, Contention, and Strife

By unknown

“For lack of wood the fire goes out, And where there is no whisperer, contention quiets down. Like charcoal to hot embers and wood to fire, so is a contentious man to kindle strife” (Proverbs 26:20, 21).

A gossip is to strife, quarrels, and contention as wood is to fire. Both gossip and wood are fuels. By sealing our ears and sewing our lips shut, we can smother the burning fires of gossip.

The unity of a church may be destroyed by gossip. Because of gossip, love in a marriage may be replaced by suspicion and jealousy. It can divide a nation and separate brothers and best friends. Doubt and distrust reign and rule when gossip takes its political campaign from lying lips to listening ears.

Not all gossip is a lie. Some of it may be the truth. The context and intent of its telling may make it injurious and sinful. Before a thing is told, one should consider the benefit and impact of it. Will the telling of it do good? Will it be helpful or harmful? Because I know it, does it need to be made known to others? “Wisdom rests in the heart of one who has understanding, But in the bosom of fools it is made known” (Proverbs 14:33). “The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, But the mouth of fools spouts folly” (Proverbs 15:2). “A fool’s vexation is known at once, But a prudent man conceals dishonor” (Proverbs 12:16).

“The weapons of our warfare,” said Paul, “are not carnal;” that is, they are not of this world (2 Corinthians 10:3-5). Spiritual weapons are not material darts and daggers. They are

not sinful instruments of the hand, pen, or tongue. Gossip is not of the Spirit but of the flesh. It is earthly, sensual, satanic. Godly men do not use gossip to advance the gospel nor to prosecute error. It is the weapon of choice among spiteful, envious men who seek to undermine the influence of others while feigning love for truth and righteousness.

Gossip establishes nothing of virtue and honor. It builds nothing to be admired and cherished. It provides no nourishment and sustenance for the soul. Gossip does not increase understanding and enlightenment. It does not support and strengthen the weak. It enhances neither courage nor determination.

Do not assist gossip. Listening to gossip arms and enables it. Repeating it makes one an accessory to sin and spreads the poison. Turn a deaf ear to gossip lest it stain your mind and arouse distrust and resentment toward another. Gossip is presented as a dainty morsel, as dessert to the ear. However, it is trash that seeks to make your heart its garbage can.

Gossip is addictive, both to the hearing and the telling faculties of man. Like strong drink and gambling, one can become “hooked” on it, unable to shake its devilish allure. “Now all the Athenians and the strangers visiting there used to spend their time in nothing other than telling or hearing something new” (Acts 17:21). It is the entertainment of the idle and the cheer of the fool. Avoid it. Pass it by.