



COALVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Rev. Len McRaney
12298 Shorecrest Rd.
Biloxi, MS 39532



April 2026 Newsletter



From the Pen of Bro. Len:

An Empty Tomb Tells the Story

Deep down, we long to settle the question: “What’s the point of our human existence?” It is the ultimate questions that give meaning to each moment of life. That’s what I find so wonderful about Easter; It’s a celebration of God’s ultimate answer to our lives. Not that God hasn’t revealed himself throughout human existence. We certainly see God’s power in creation; a creation that can fill our souls with wonder and awe as well as a sense that there is a personal God to whom we belong. Certainly, we see in the entire life and ministry of Christ, God’s power and love to come close, to heal and set free. But, perhaps nowhere is God’s ultimate word of response more settled and summed up than at the empty tomb we celebrate this month.

Did you know that tombs have often been known to tell us a lot about a person. Tombstones themselves are often said to be a summation of one’s life. Perhaps the greatest tomb known to human kind was one discovered a little over 100 years ago in Egypt. King Tut’s tomb is that tomb. He ruled around 1344 BC at the age of 9. From the items found within the tomb, we learn of his values, his life, his wealth. It took 7 weeks to get the treasures out! (7 model boats...chairs...thrones...chests all laden with gold...solid gold masks...gold shrines and much more.)

Consider by contrast the simple tomb of Jesus that changed the world. **THROUGH AN EMPTY TOMB, GOD TELLS THE STORY...**First, He tells us:

1. HIS POWER IS ULTIMATE ...The pyramids of Egypt are famous because they contained the mummified bodies of ancient Egyptian Kings. Westminster Abbey in London is revered, because in it rests the bodies of English nobles and notables. Mohammed’s tomb is noted for the stone coffin and the bones it contains. Arlington cemetery in Washington, D.C. is revered for it is the honored resting place of many outstanding Americans. **But the Garden Tomb of Jesus is famous because it is empty.** There is the ultimate demonstration of God’s power in Christ. It was the final fulfillment of countless prophecies regarding the coming of the Messiah, God’s remedy for humanity’s sin; including not only how he’d be born but how he would die...be buried...his grave...and his resurrection. It was the definitive demonstration of power over all of life. It transformed fearful lives, infusing them with courage and hope to change the world.

Although some doubt, the evidence still stands of an empty tomb and a risen Savior. **Some suggest JESUS WASN’T REALLY DEAD.** Well, let’s consider some facts: Jesus was beaten until unable to stand, nailed to a cross, pierced with a spear. The law required Four experts sign death certificate. His body was prepared for burial with 100 lbs of spices and wrapped in garments covered with gummy wrap. A Stone rock weighing some 1 ½ -2 tons was rolled down a channel, Extra Guards were placed around the tomb and a Roman seal was placed on the rock covering the entrance to the tomb. The evidence is clear, Jesus was dead!

Others have suggested the **DISCIPLES STOLE JESUS FROM THE GRAVE...** Well, Let’s consider some fact: We would be asked to believe

THESE fearful disciples who fled so they wouldn't even be associated with him by the Roman authorities, who would have had to overcome the patrol of guards and then remove the stone came and stole the body of Jesus from the tomb. If we read that these disciples were so afraid that they were trying to stay out of the public eye, hiding in an upper room, What then transformed them into persons of relentless courage and resolve so that all but one were martyred for the risen Lord?

The truth is Peter could stand 40 days later and proclaim undisputed that Jesus rose from the grave! How could this be, if Peter and others didn't know from personal experience that Jesus rose from the dead? The apostle Paul later could speak of Jesus appearance to over 500--most of whom were still alive--as he went about preaching Christ Resurrected! If each only testified for six minutes you would have 50 hours of first-hand eyewitness testimony!

The empty tomb tells us of God's ultimate power. A power that points to an ultimate purpose.

Throughout his suffering, many times Jesus was told to show his power to escape his suffering and his death, but he knew that beyond all demonstrations of power and miracles, it was the ultimate power over death which had to be revealed. **GOD SHOWED HIS ULTIMATE POWER FOR AN ULTIMATE PURPOSE.**

2. HIS PRIORITY IS PEOPLE....For as Jesus said (**Luke 19:10**) "The Son of man came to seek and save what was lost!" He described the King of Hosts as that of a shepherd leaving 99 until he finds that one lost sheep, and when found, all heaven rejoices. Perhaps that's a value that is shared for us to see in ourself. A gem dealer was strolling the aisles at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show when he noticed a blue-violet stone the size and shape of a potato. He looked it over, then, as calmly as possible, asked the vendor, "You want \$15 for this?" The seller, realizing the rock wasn't as pretty as others in the bin, lowered the price to \$10. The stone has since been certified as a 1,905-carat natural star sapphire, about 800 carats larger than the largest stone of its kind. It was appraised at \$2.28 million. It took a lover of stones to recognize the sapphire's worth. It took the Lover of Souls to recognize the true value of ordinary looking people like us. As fellow human beings we see that which

is frail and flawed. As a father, God sees his child. That is why Jesus was born into obscurity, touched the lepers, the poor, the sinners. Jesus loves us and his death demonstrates his great love for us. **THE EMPTY TOMB REMINDS US We MATTER TO GOD.**

3. HIS PEACE IS BEYOND

CIRCUMSTANCES....The first words of our risen Lord to his disciples? "**PEACE BE WITH YOU.**" A peace like no other, for it is a peace that speaks to the fullness of our lives and experience. It's been said, that "the great tragedy of our lives is that we live between the shame of our failures and the fear of our future." Here stands the risen Christ. Jesus sets us free from our failures, from our past. On the cross Jesus bore all the weight of our sin and separation from God and to all who receive him there is no more sacrifice to be made, no more shame to endure. Jesus died to set us free and with that freedom, Jesus sends us forward into a future in which he has defeated death and the fear of death so that we might be and become His witnesses and messengers of HOPE!

4. HIS PRESENCE IS HERE...Killing Jesus was like trying to destroy a dandelion by blowing on its white furry seeds. Death could not hold him! When Jesus arose from the dead, He conquered death and hell and the Devil. His resurrection reminds us--- **HE IS HERE AMONG US!**

Consider the discovery of Tut's tomb in Egypt. Howard Carter, November 4, 1922 finds the first step. He had taken 10 years of digging to find this tomb ½ million 1922 dollars. All his team is gathered together as Carter dug along the steps to the door and then puts a light inside. They said, "What do you see?" He said, "Marvelous things." Carter then went to the top of the steps, put his head in his hands and cried. When asked if he was ok, he said, "10 years ago I dug 18 inches from that step and missed the tomb. For 10 years I've searched for something 10 inches away. 10 years of his life spent looking because he missed what was so close. Don't miss Jesus this morning. When asked, "are you the Son of God?" Jesus replied, YES. If you have been looking for answers regarding eternity, look no more. The empty tomb tells the story...



Brothers and Sisters

We praise and thank Father God for the changes He has made in our lives during the season of Lent. We welcome the season of Spring and the changes that take place on earth. The soil is prepared and fertilized for seeds to be planted. Our calendars are marked in hopes of harvest and flowers to beautify the earth.

The same is true with our soul. We just finished preparing our soul by pulling out the weeds of unforgiveness, neglect, and other weeds. Every word of our Father is a seed that needs to be planted. We must mark our calendar for planting (read and study) and pray for His Holy Spirit to work the messages into our heart and soul.

As our spiritual garden is growing there will be times of pruning and restoring to be done, but the end result is a garden that God can use to reveal His love, compassion, faith, hope, grace, mercy, encouragement, provisions, and trust in Him, our Almighty God and Savior.

May our garden be a garden of 'grace' that God extends to us and we share with others.

April 6 - 10 We are grateful that God's power and grace is evident in our weakness. 2 Cor. 12:9

April 13-17 Believe with confidence that God will meet our needs. Heb. 4:16

April 20- 24 Forgive everyone as God has forgiven us. Eph. 4:32

April 27 - May 1 Honor God showing His grace as we help others. Prov. 19:17

Grace is an undeserved gift that we should treasure and never forget.

Hello from Cornerstone. Welcome to April!

We wish you all a HAPPY EASTER! This month we will be having our Spring Sunday Sidewalk Service. This year we will be changing things up and having it in the evening, combined with youth and young adult time. Michael Roberts will be bringing the message! There will still be an outdoor worship service and a meal provided. We would love for you to join us and bring your family and friends. **SUNDAY APRIL 26 at 5PM outside the CLC.** Indoors if rain.

April marks the beginning of our 14th year as Coalville's Contemporary Praise Band. We appreciate so much all the love and support we have received for the past 13 years and pray that God has many more years instore for us all.

In an article written by Zac Hicks, he writes about the difference between worshipping God versus worshiping worship. "God intends everything that happens in worship to be transparent. The goal is to draw all of creation back into the joyful bliss of his glory through union and communion with him." He states that worship should be clear glass, not stained glass. Even though we sure love and appreciate our beautiful stained-glass windows, the light that shines through them only illuminates the window itself. A clear window on the other hand allows light to go through so that we can see things more clearly. He goes on to state, "it's dangerous when the vehicles for worship become objects of worship. We hope our people in worship are not placing importance on the beautiful building, the technology, the delivery of the preacher, the choir's anthem or the band music. Ultimately, if the elements of our worship services are transparent, (shining light on our Savior), people will be exclaiming, 'Isn't Jesus beautiful? Hallelujah, what a Savior!'" And that's what Cornerstone prays for every Sunday, a worshipful service where everyone sees God illuminated and nothing else.

Easter Blessings



MISSIONS TEAM

FISH FRY, Saturday, April 18th
11:30 AM until we run out. The
proceeds will go to the Trustees
for the “Matching Goal” of
\$3,000.

Phone #s: (228) 392 – 5970 (office)
(601) 938 – 7967 (Bro. Len)

Office Hours: Tues. – Thur., 8 AM – 12 PM

Email: coalvilleumc@outlook.com

Web: www.coalvilleumc.org

The Gulf Pines District newsletter email
gulfpines@mississippi-umc.org

The Circuit Rider newsletter website Mississippi
news@mississippi-umc.org

Coalville will be having a new church directory made! Portraits will be taken May 15 and 16. Please mark your calendars and sign up for a time slot. Everyone gets a free 8x10 and directory. Lots of members have grown their families since the last directory. There are also new faces in our congregation. We want everyone represented. Even if you are not a full member, but attend regularly. See Phyllis Trochesset for more information and to sign up for your time slot now. 228-392-5970/228-596-1049

****If you have any events to be placed on the 2026 church calendar, please e-mail or call the office. Coalvilleumc@outlook.com***

228-392-5970

~~~If you need to advertise anything in the church monthly newsletter. PLEASE notify the church secretary by the 3rd week of the month prior to the event. Also, bulletin announcements need to be received by Wednesday before the Sunday to be advertised. Thank you, this will help tremendously.~~~

~~~~~YOUTH~~~~~

The youth and young adults had an amazing night of worship at The Celebration of Hope with Will Graham. The music and the message were awesome and really glorified God.

The Youth plan on having a car wash on May 3rd. Tickets will be available the month of April. For a donation to our youth fund you get a ticket to get your car washed. The money raised goes to fund our annual summer spiritual retreat weekend. Thanks to all who support us!

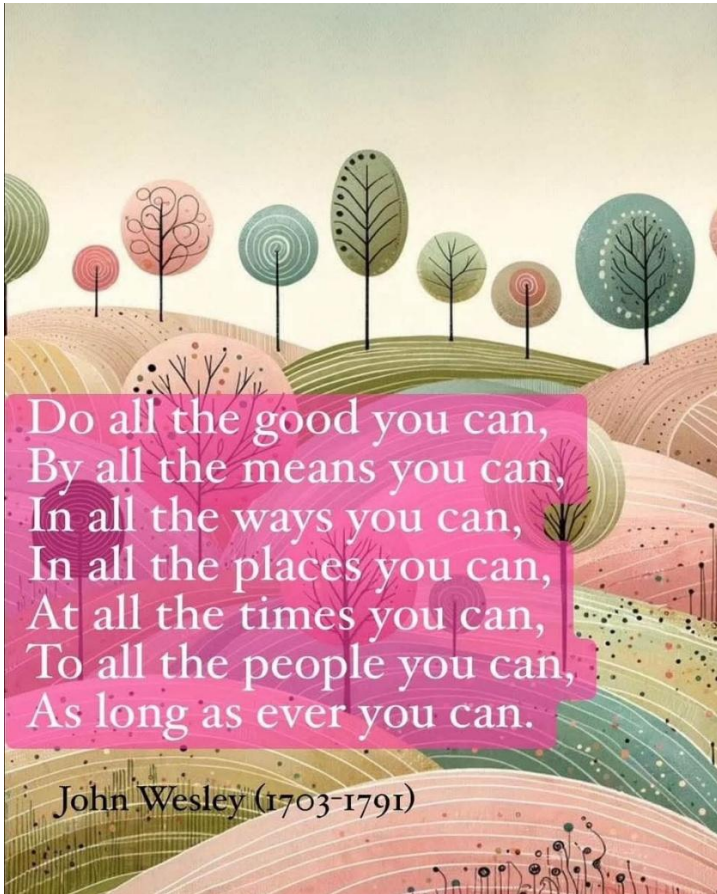
We are beginning to have our VBS work nights. We are super excited about this year's theme: Stompers & Chompers, Building Dino sized Faith in God's big plan.

There are many ways to help. Some examples are: help with decorations, donate money for supplies, provide meals and/or snacks for work nights, spread the word about VBS, and of course pray for VBS. Contact Jan or Timothy for more info.

VBS SAVE THE DATE
June 24th thru June 28th



STILL RELEVANT



Bottled Water Donations

[Seashore Mission](#) is committed to serving individuals in our homeless community who rely on us for daily support, compassion, and essential resources. As we continue our outreach, one of our most urgent and ongoing needs is bottled water. Whether a few cases or a larger contribution, every donation will make a meaningful difference in the lives of those who depend on Seashore Mission for basic necessities. Every donation directly supports our mission and helps ensure that no one in our community goes without this essential resource. If you are able to contribute, or if you would like more information, please feel free to contact me. Your generosity strengthens our community and provides comfort and dignity to those who need it most. Thank you for considering this request and for supporting Seashore Mission's work on the Gulf Coast.

Reverend Elijah Mitchell
Executive Director, Seashore Mission, Inc.
(228)-234-2814

Gulf Pines Disaster Response

North Mississippi Disaster Response Need

Our friends in North Mississippi need our help as they recover from the ice storm. Many people are dealing with damaged and fallen trees and limbs. Volunteers and chainsaws are urgently needed. If you are interested and able to be part of a team to help with the clean-up in North Mississippi, please contact Rev. David Huffman as soon as possible at 662-416-5948.

Anniversaries

Birthday

Monthly Events

Scheduled Meetings

Weekly Events

CLC – Christian Life Center

FH – Fellowship Hall

S – Sanctuary

CW – Contemporary Worship

TW – Traditional Worship

AB – Administrative Board

BG – BUNCO Group

CB – Cornerstone Band

CC – Cemetery Committee

DT – Daisy Troop

FISH – Young Adults

JAM – Children’s Ministry

MT – Mission Team

SL – Senior Luncheon

UMYF - Youth

April 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Wednesday of Holy Week Daniel Mitchell, BD Passover begins at sundown	2 Thursday of Holy Week/Maundy Thursday MAUNDY THURSDAY SERVICE 6PM	3 Friday of Holy Week/Good Friday (Breakfast Service at Woolmarket Baptist 7AM) 7 PM, AA, FH	4 Holy Saturday/ Easter Eve
5 EASTER 7 AM, SonRise Service, S Breakfast, CLC 10 AM, Easter Service, S Bruce Garner, BD Jan Garner, BD	6	7 11:30 AM, SL, FH 5 PM, Yoga, CLC 6:30 PM, CB, S	8	9 Scarlett Ortiz, BD 12 – 3 PM, BG, FH	10 Garry Mason, BD 7 PM, AA, FH	11 CLC RESERVED ALL DAY Wedding Shower Non-Member
12 9 AM, SS, FH 10 AM, W, S Colston Dearman, BD Janice Faye Laut, BD 4:30 PM, JAM, CLC 6 PM, UMYF, CLC FISH, CLC	13 Max Cobar, BD 6 PM, AB, FH	14 Edie H. Rushing, BD Jasper Bahm, BD 5 PM, Yoga, CLC 6 PM, DT, CLC 6:30 PM, CB, S	15 TAX DAY	16	17 CHURCH VAN RESERVED 7 PM, AA, FH	18 FELLOWSHIP HALL RESERVED ALL DAY Shelli Weston CLC FISH FRY 11:30 until
19 9 AM, SS, FH 10 AM, W, S Missions Team Banana Pudding Contest 11 AM 4:30 PM, JAM, CLC 6 PM, UMYF, CLC FISH, CLC	20	21 Branson Trip 5 PM, Yoga, CLC 6:30 PM, CB, S	22 Branson Trip	23 Branson Trip Charles Ian Bahm, BD	24 Branson Trip 7 PM, AA, FH	25 Branson Trip Wayne Claude, BD
26 9 AM, SS, FH 10 AM, W, S Cornerstone SIDEWALK SERVICE 5PM	27	28 5 PM, Yoga, CLC 6 PM, DT, CLC 6:30 PM, CB, S	29 Don Jones, BD Dustin Ray, BD Richard Winsor, BD	30 Donald Gum, BD	Backpack Blessings: 04/05 Ramen Noodles 04/12 Ravioli 04/19 Tuna 04/26 Mac&Cheese	