

21 DAYS OF PRAYER

For the Gospel. For Generations.

As our church enters this 21 Days of Prayer, are you ready to pray? The Bible says, "*Search me, O God, and know my heart. Test me, and know my anxious thoughts. Point out anything in me that offends You, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.*" Psalm 139: 22-23

You are ready to pray when you can truly answer yes to the following questions:

Are all sins confessed?

(Isa. 50: 1-2; Ps. 66:18; 1 John 1:10)

Are all relationships with others made right?

(Matt 6: 14-15)

Are you seeking God's will in all things?

(1 John 5: 14-15)

Are you seeking to glorify God above all things?

(John 14: 13-14)

Are you depending on the Holy Spirit's guidance?

(Rom 8:26-27)

Are you trusting God in spite of what seems to be?

(Prov 3:5-6)

Will you praise God no matter what?

(1 The 5: 16-18)

The great prayer warrior, Andrew Murray, wrote "Little of the Word with little prayer is death to the spiritual life. Much of the Word with little prayer gives a sickly life. Much prayer with little of the Word gives more life, but without steadfastness. A full measure of the Word and prayer each day gives a healthy and powerful life."

In his classic work, "With Christ in the School of Prayer, Andrew Murray pointedly writes, "Moses never gave a command or regulation with regard to prayer; even the prophets say little directly about the duty of prayer. It is Christ who teaches us to pray." The fact that Jesus is our tutor and example in all things is nowhere more clear than in our prayer life. Jesus never taught His disciples how to preach, only how to pray. Jesus did not speak much of what was needed to preach well, but much of praying well. To know how to speak to God is more important than knowing how to speak with men, but power with God is the first thing. Jesus loves to teach us how to pray."

I frequently joined these men in prayer in the woods near our home. We would meet at a "Rock Altar." Each time we met to pray, each person would place a new rock on the altar. They taught me that praying God's Word was how I would learn to live my life for the glory of God. They encouraged me to have a daily "Quiet Time" every morning before breakfast to pray and read the Bible.

2 Peter 1: 2-4 states, "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord, as His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of Him who called us by glory and virtue, by which have been given to us exceeding great and precious promises, and through these you may be partakers of the divines nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." How do we access God's exceeding great and precious promises to become partakers of His divine nature? By praying God's Word!

The following "Warriors Prayer" (Eph 6: 10-17) is an outstanding example of praying God's Word! The precision of this prayer will help you to put on each piece of spiritual armor with purpose and to start each day in communion with God. When we remain persistent and focused in prayer, our eyes begin to open to the power of Christ in our lives, and we become armed for victory!

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore, put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

As you walk through this 21-day prayer devotional guide, please hear the heart and prayers of the individuals who wrote the daily devotionals and pray surrendering your will to God's perfect will for your life. Remember the words of Christ! "But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you." (Matt 6:33)

I love you in the Lord and pray that you are daily surrendering your will to God's will! It is in God's will that we find peace and wisdom to know the right thing to do.

Your Brother In Christ,
Alan Kuykendall





September 13

God Does More Than We Can Imagine

"Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us..."

EPHESIANS 3:20

Thirty-three years ago, North Shelby Baptist Church began with a simple but powerful thing: a handful of people who believed God had something more in store. We didn't have a building, any amenities and very few resources. We met in a basement for our first service and later in a shopping center. What we had was faith, prayer, and a desire to see God use us for His purpose and plan.

We saw a small beginning. God saw the future. We saw a basement room. God saw lives that would be changed. We saw a handful of people. God saw generations of families who would come to know Him. As we look toward the future, we remember the same truth that carried us from the beginning: God is faithful. The God who worked in that basement is the same God who is working today. The God who answered so many prayers three decades ago is the same God who is answering prayers now. The God who led us this far is the God who will lead us into whatever He has planned next. He is writing a story we cannot yet see. The greatest chapters of our story were never written by our ability—they were written by God's faithfulness.

DORA CHATAM

✝ Lord, thank You for our humble beginnings that remind us that great things often start small in Your hands. Thank You for every person who prayed, served, gave, and believed. Help us to continue to trust You, knowing that Your plans are always bigger and better than ours. May everything we do bring glory to the name of Jesus, for it is in His name we pray. Amen.

September 14

Working Together with One Mind and Purpose

"Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from His love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose."

PHILIPPIANS 2: 1-2

I was welcomed into the North Shelby family in 2020. From that time to now my faith continually is renewed and strengthened through the weekly preaching of God's word from the pulpit, the love, friendships and insights shared through small group Bible studies, the joy and privilege of serving on church committees, the prayers, encouragement and support through times of sickness and so much more. To be part of a loving and caring church family, to be led by dedicated staff ministering together in one accord. To see the growth in our membership, the addition of families. The laughter and excitement of children learning about Jesus. I am excited for the future of North Shelby. I am excited for plans that include larger and more welcoming spaces to minister to our members and guests. I look forward to stepping forward into this next chapter of faith together with "one mind and purpose" together.

KATHY SEIFRIED

 Heavenly Father, guide our hearts together, bind us in Christian love, and grant us a shared vision with one mind and purpose as we pray for this capital campaign and the future of North Shelby. Amen.



September 15

Be Faithful in Prayer

"For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous, and His ears are open to their prayer."

1 PETER 3:12

Have you ever wondered why God doesn't always answer our prayers when or how we want things to turn out? The story of how God placed Hannah in our family is proof of our amazing God working things out in His perfect timing. In the fall of 2022, I remember asking God what He wanted to do with my life, and I told Him I was at peace with whatever plan He had but the desire of my heart was to be a mother.

I had prayed similar prayers over the years, but in hindsight God's silence was refining Steven and I to seek His will and to be at peace with Him being in control. Little did I know as I prayed that fall day that God was finally going to answer our prayers. We don't always get to see the fruit of our prayers, but after Hannah was born, God allowed us to see how He was at work through prayer. Have you ever felt a nudging to randomly pray for someone, or someone who you haven't seen or talked to in a long time pops into your head? Be assured that it isn't random, but rather the work of the Holy Spirit to pray for that person.

This is just a small glimpse of some of the people we learned about after Hannah was born who felt led to pray for Steven and me. A few weeks after my prayer in the fall of 2022, a friend from church called Steven and "randomly" asked if we had ever wanted children and that he felt led to pray for us about that. A friend who had recently memorized the entire book of Galatians felt led to pray Galatians 4 over me as she would recite it. Another friend from church felt led to pray for me and Steven every day on the way to work as she passed by the road that leads to our house. A friend who I had recently reconnected with, felt led to pray for me around the time Hannah was born. All of these were silent prayers, but God was still working out His plan for Hannah to be a part of our lives through adoption. Even though you may not see the fruit of your prayers, be faithful in prayer knowing that God will answer in His perfect timing and His will which are all ultimately for His glory!

STEVEN AND LYDIA RIGGINS



Dear Lord, help me to be joyful in hope, patient in times of suffering, and faithful in prayer each day. In Jesus Name, Amen.

September 16

Persistent Prayer Changes Things

"And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ – to the glory and praise of God."

PHILIPPIANS 1:9-11

Paul's prayer to the Philippian church in Philippians 1:9-11 is a perfect picture of what our prayer life should be. It brings out the fact that prayer is not static. It unfolds the roadmap where Christ shows us how to live our daily lives. Paul tells us that our prayers should center around love, knowledge and insight into what we should do each day, the main objective being to glorify and praise God. We have seen great things happen through prayer in many aspects of our lives. One specific area is the tremendous mercy that God has shown our nephew. He was diagnosed with severe cancer many years ago. The doctors did what they could, but he was not responding to their actions.

Unending prayers went up for him from many people who knew and loved him. God answered those prayers and the cancerous growths shrunk dramatically. He gives all the credit to God. There are still flareups occasionally, but he is still alive and enjoying the love of God and his family. All this is because people loved and prayed, God answered, and he gave God all the credit.

We need prayer every day for God to give us the right way to go and the right decisions to make. We need God to give us discernment to make the best decisions in everything we do. He is all-knowing and we need to let Him lead our paths. The way to do that is through prayer, submission to His will and love.

DALE AND LINDA JOHNSON



Dear Lord, we praise you for your goodness and mercies new every morning. Lead and guide us every day and direct our paths.

Thank you for your love and fill us with your love for others. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



September 17

North Shelby Baptist Church, A Shining Light on a Hill

"You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden."

MATTHEW 5:14

Cindy and I have gone through two major church construction projects. The first, at our home church when we were kids... a new sanctuary and educational building. The second, at our last church, when we were in our 30's. The result of both building campaigns was the salvation of and spiritual growth of countless individuals, and the calling out to full-time ministry of nearly 20+ individuals. And specifically, for ourselves, words cannot begin to describe the Bible learning and spiritual growth that came to us and our children because of having those projects completed years ago. We certainly had those learned and spiritual individuals that taught us, but the teaching that was done was certainly enhanced because there was ample space and physical facilities in which to learn and grow.

As North Shelby embarks upon a Capital Campaign for building a new sanctuary, considerable thought and prayer are needed! Building a \$12+ million sanctuary complex is important and is needed in our community. We are reminded in Ezra and Nehemiah of the importance of rebuilding the wall surrounding Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of that city. It represented more than just a "wall" around a city. It represented identity... identity of God and His purposes.

The same here for North Shelby. Construction of a larger sanctuary is not just the construction of a larger "auditorium", but it represents an identity of God's purposes for North Shelby as it sits on top of this hill... as a beacon and shining light of God's glorious redemptive plan of salvation to all. There are many prayers written in the Bible. We are reminded of the prayer by Solomon, the asking for wisdom. But others, too, have asked for God's wisdom and guidance regarding decisions that must be made. We find in Psalm 25:4-5 David's prayer for help and guidance, "Make me to know your ways, O Lord; teach me your paths; Lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long." So we have a basis upon which to pray for wisdom and guidance from God.

But also, Paul prayed in Philippians 1: 9-11, "...it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent..." Thus, not only am I praying for myself to make MY right decision regarding the capital campaign (as David prayed for discernment for himself), but I would also pray for OTHERS (at North Shelby) to pray and make decisions that are "excellent" in the eyes of the Lord. Scripture is plain that we should pray for things for ourselves, but we should also pray for others. Prayer is powerful... and though some topics and actions in the life of our church community may not seem major to us, but to God... it is major. It is a big deal!

Therefore, we pray. We pray with all earnestness and honesty in our prayer. Do we really want that wisdom and discernment, or is our prayer just a vain voice, simply amplifying our own prejudice and desires? Serious prayer, honest and humble prayer before the Lord, can be powerful!

MIKE & CINDY CULPEPPER



Heavenly Father, your Word encourages us to pray and our prayer at North Shelby Baptist Church is that you guide and lead us to do Your will in the coming days ahead. Amen.



September 18

What North Shelby Baptist Church Means to Us

"And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose."

ROMANS 8:28

We began attending North Shelby in 2015, after our youngest son went off to college. Before this we had gone to a small Baptist church in Childersburg, mainly for our youngest son, due to the youth group which consisted of his high school friends. So many of the youth graduated the year Logan did, and we found ourselves yearning for something different with more opportunities to learn and serve. We began to visit several churches in our little town and spread out from there. I might mention we are not from Childersburg, but rather "transplants", moving there when our son was a junior. We continued to pray and seek where the Lord would lead us.

One of Logan's soccer teammates from Coosa Valley was killed during a burglary while he was attending college less than a year after high school graduation. This young man had family who attended North Shelby. We went to his memorial service and were very impressed with the care and compassion shown toward that family. A short time later, we visited there and got to meet the pastor, Allan Murphy. What a great godly pastor, who never forgot a face and who truly loved people. This was the beginning of a precious friendship with Brother Allan and his wife, Mary. We began attending North Shelby.

I was working during all this time as a nurse, first for St. Vincent's and then as a traveling nurse. Mark worked for the paper mill. During my 4 years of traveling, I was staying away, out of state, for months at a time. I would always visit churches while away on my Sundays off. Even traveling, I found opportunities to serve at North Shelby. In 2018 and 2019 I went with North Shelby to New York City as a part of SpreadTruth, a multi-church evangelistic outreach ministry to the people of the Big Apple. So many lost souls and so many hungry to hear the gospel! The first year I went, my bed mate (4 women to a room with 2 queen beds!) was Kelly Gilliland. One of the things we talked about was our experience with special needs members of our family. We had a grandson, 4 years old at the time, who was autistic. He was our first and he was so special to us! Kelly and I talked a lot about our hopes and concerns for them. Then, on October 5, 2018, a few short months later, we had tragic news. Our precious Stephen had drowned in his great grandmother's pool. You can only imagine our grief and shock. I shared the news with my good friend and Sunday School teacher at the time, Marsha, asking for prayer. We were put on the church's prayer list - so many phone calls, cards, people sharing their own stories. We felt the church wrapped their arms around us during this time. So many special people were there for us.

During Covid I worked in an ICU Covid Unit. I had other nurse friends at North Shelby, and many prayers went up for the patients and healthcare workers. A crazy time where so many lost their lives yet so many sailed through - our lives and liberties were changed. One ministry I was able to do shortly before and during this time centered around teaching at North Shelby's School for Performing Arts, a community outreach program. I had prayed for a way for the Lord to use my musical background, and the church advertised for teachers. It was an answer to prayer! Those 1-1/2 years of working with my 6 students, the relationships built and the gospel conversations were very meaningful.

Other things that have encouraged Mark and I in our spiritual walk and relationships with the body of believers at North Shelby Baptist Church has been our Sunday School teachers who go above and beyond – Marsha Coggins, Mary Murphy, Wendell Sheffield, and a big shout to our current teacher, Joey Carter, who puts so much into our lessons and discussions! We have also been blessed with opportunities to serve on mission trips with Builders for Christ and one trip to Curacao (Mark). I have served on the Missions Committee, and it has really opened my eyes to all the needs and opportunities for gospel ministry in our area and around the world. And our pastor has such a heart for sharing the gospel, church growth and planting. Mark and I feel the Lord is doing great things in the life and ministries of our church, and we look forward to seeing what will be in the days ahead!

PAM AND MARK ANDREWS



Lord, thank you that You are a God who is present, working all things out for Your glory and my good as I trust and seek to follow You through all of life's ups and downs. God, please let others see Jesus in me and let me not get in the way of that!

September 19

Our Call to Prayer

"Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by My Father in heaven."

MATTHEW 18:19

What can any of us possibly remember from 3 years ago? For me, it was my granddaddy. It was a special Sunday when my baby doll and I were sitting next to him in big church. The preacher asked us to bow our heads for prayer. I bowed my head but my granddaddy was doing something different. I knew because I was peeking. I watched as he leaned way over, put his elbows on his knees and his folded hands on his forehead. He was busy whispering his own prayer to God.

I thought maybe one day I could be God's friend and whisper things to God, and if I ask, He will whisper something back to me. Granddaddy never knew that short audiovisual of prayer would stay with me for the rest of my life.

Last fall, as we were starting our three month "Call to Prayer" for an expansion of our church, Pastor Gordon prayed the Holy Spirit would move in and out of the rows and among the aisles and touch our hearts. Through the beauty of the music, the holiness of worship, and the compelling sermon by Pastor Jared, the Holy Spirit began to work in my heart. He seemed to whisper to me, as he did for my granddaddy, that we needed to continue our prayers for our staff and our outreach to many lost and unchurched in our community. Thus, a ladies prayer group was born.

We meet on Tuesdays from 11:15-12:00 in the church library. God has blessed us by showing us prayers to pray and needs we can meet and He is growing us in our faith. If God whispers to you to join us, starting again Sept. 8th, we would love to have you. Praise God for answered prayers that we know will continue.

BARBARA HERRING



Dear Heavenly Father, honor the promise of Your Son. Answer our prayers for the lost and our commitment to our building program because two or more of us agree. As Christ promised, Amen.

September 20

The Truth Shall Make You Free

"Jesus said: If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know truth, and the truth shall set you free."

JOHN 8:31-32

I was raised as a Jehovah's Witness and just before my 16th birthday, out of desperation, I cried out to God to help me live long enough to get out of my parents' house. I felt trapped and unloved. He heard and answered my cry! I was telling him that my parents didn't love me, and I was trying to be a good daughter. No drugs, drinking or immoral behavior, and it didn't seem to be enough. God told me HE loved me. He had created me and gifted me to my parents. He said follow Him and He would guide, love and protect me. I didn't understand that by turning my life over to Him that I was "saved". I knew that something had to change in me and the weight had been lifted. I asked an elder at the Kingdom Hall to baptize me. They said I wasn't good enough. They said I needed to read a few books and answer 60 questions from the elders. I told them that I had not read the entire Bible, but I knew that I didn't have to take a test to turn my life over to Christ. At 21, with a two-year-old and a five-month-old daughter, God was calling me to worship with other believers. One weekend, I argued with God out loud about not going to church that weekend, my husband was out of town, I didn't know anyone at the church he used to attend, and it was raining cats and dogs that weekend. My daughter kept asking me who I was talking to, I told her God! She asked where He was, and I told her He is everywhere!

I got up that morning, still trying to convince myself and God why I couldn't go. My babies, my husband not home, and it was raining! The rain stopped! I went, and halfway there the rain started coming down in buckets! I told God, "That's not funny!" As I drove past the side of the church looking for a place to park, I saw an older man standing in the rain without an umbrella or a raincoat. He flagged me down and told me where there was visitor parking. He ran through the church and met me in the parking lot and helped me get the kids to the nursery and me to a Sunday School class. I turned and asked him why he was standing on the side of the church without an umbrella or raincoat and he looked at me and said, "God said that somebody needed visitor parking!"

MARSHA COGGINS

 Father, thank You for Your direction with Your Word where you said, "If you abide in My Word, you are my disciples indeed." Thank You that we can know You and that Your truth sets us free. Please open the eyes of those following false religions to know the truth of Your Word and help us to be a witness of Your truth to others as we share the Gospel.

September 21

The City Without a Church

"And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven..." REV 21:2

"And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it." REV 21:22

Dr. Henry Drummond, (1851-1897), a Scottish Minister and Professor, wrote an essay on the subject of a "City Without a Church." In it he compares the city we will see in heaven to the city we live in today. The heavenly city has no Church for the Lord God, and the Lamb are the Church and it is perfect. The last words of Christ to His Disciples are found in the Book of Matthew, Chapter 28: 19-20. The Bible calls it, **The Great Commission**. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen. Matthew 28: 19-20

When we give back to God, knowing through our gifts, we will continue the role as a "Church on a Hill" that provides the message of Evangelism, Brotherly love, Christian education and Bible study. We are answering God's call to prepare for the growth in our community. Then I think we will be known as active Church people living in an active, "Church in a City, Our City," instead of being known as people living in a "City without a Church."

DR. RON AND JEAN FRIDAY



Lord, help us to heed the Great Commission and use the gifts you have given us to serve You well in this "Church on a Hill".

September 22

God's Faithfulness

"Do not be afraid or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go."

JOSHUA 1:9

At the age of 17, I felt the call of God to become a missionary, but I was TERRIFIED of public speaking! As I wrestled with God in prayer and read my Bible, He gave me this verse. I did become a missionary, along with my husband, "Brother Allan." The Lord led us to Curacao in the Netherlands Antilles where we served for 8 years.

Thankfully, the Lord performed a miracle and delivered me from my phobia of public speaking!

He has been with me always, and in every place that I have gone, to guide, comfort and bless me in more ways than I can possibly recount! Even in 2020 when Allan died of a sudden heart attack, the Lord was CLOSE, holding me up and giving me peace in the midst of my grief. He is truly a Husband for the widow!

How I thank Him for all His blessings and for teaching me to TRUST HIM! Indeed, He is always faithful to keep his promises in His Word!

MARY MURPHY



Lord, you are always faithful. Help us to always be faithful to You in whatever You call us to do. In Jesus' Name, Amen.



September 23

Looking Through the Rear-View Mirror

"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching." HEBREWS 10:25

As I think about our church and the excitement of a new building program, I'm reminded of the importance the church and prayer have been in my life, regardless of the era I was in at the time. The first priority in relocating to a new area was to find a good church.

To share a little of my life and testimony, my childhood church experience played a big part in forming the foundation of my faith. Though we lived in the country and had no means of transportation at the time, my Christian mother wanted her five little girls to be brought up in church, even if it meant walking. Thankfully, a small country church was within walking distance of our house. Though not my mother's denomination of choice, it was a "church," and had a good pastor. I learned so much during my years at that little church. I've always thought of it as "My Little White Church in the Wildwood." Thanks to our mother, we five little girls (now in our 80's) are still active in our churches.

Then, as the years passed, I was a member of several other great churches, each impacting my life in many ways. The last move was to North Shelby in 2000. It was an easy decision to make, as I knew the church's history, pastor, and many of the members. Being such a caring, friendly church, it didn't take long for it to become "home". Through the good times and the bad times in my life since then, it has been a blessing to me. I remember our pastor of many years, Bro. Allan Murphy (now in Heaven), being such a man of prayer, too. His response to any need shared with him was, "Let's pray about it" and on the spot, he prayed. Certainly, prayer has always been an important emphasis of the church since its beginning, whether it was for dirt, children or whatever the need or focus at the time.

Now in my senior years, I treasure the many good memories from my years at North Shelby. It continues to be a growing, thriving church and my prayer is that the vision it had in the beginning will continue, as it launches a new building program. I look forward to seeing what the future holds for our great church! What might God do through us?

ELAINE COX



Dear Lord, even as You have blessed our church in the past, we seek your blessings as we move forward. Might we always be faithful in attendance, prayer, giving and ministry. Amen.

September 24

What Led Us to North Shelby Baptist Church

"I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and find out knowledge and discretion."

PROVERBS 8:12

We were at a time and season and place when many things in our lives felt like they were out of our control. But God was in control. He always is. We left a church where we had been members for 15 years, and we were looking for our next church home. We had heard about North Shelby Baptist Church, and friends also recommended the church. From the first time we entered the sanctuary, we felt God's presence and we were welcomed by so many members. The genuine caring and loving nature of the members was amazing, and the love of God was very evident. We wanted to serve, and that opportunity was open and available and met at North Shelby. North Shelby was going through a dramatic change just like us. We needed them and they needed us. We're so thankful for our Pastors, our church family and our church home.

BLAINE & SANDY CARROLL

 Father God, we ask for your wisdom, prudence, guidance and direction for our church leaders and members as we go through this season of change. Proverbs 8:12 tells us that "I, wisdom, dwell with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion." We pray that we will use good judgment and careful management of our resources with your guidance. Let us act with care and look ahead to the opportunities and challenges we will face. Father, we pray that we will work together with openness and that the changes that we are considering, if they are in your will, will be pleasing and acceptable to you. In Jesus' holy and precious name, we pray, Amen.

September 25

Our Prayers Honor God as we Abide in Jesus

"I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in me, he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples."

JOHN 15:1-8

Jan and I are members at North Shelby because the preaching and teaching at North Shelby always points us in this direction. Our daily prayer life honors God as we abide in Jesus! The following prayer is an example of Scripture-Based prayer. We encourage you to pray this way daily!

ALAN & JAN KUYKENDALL

✝ Father, I commit my day to you. I trust also in You and You shall bring it to pass. **(Psalm 37:5)**

Father, You will instruct me and teach me in the way I should go. You will guide me with Your eye **(Psalm 32:8)**. You will give me the desires of my heart, because I have delighted myself in You. **(Psalm 37:4)**

Father, I will be kept in perfect peace today, for I have chosen to let my mind be "stayed" on You **(Isaiah 26:3)**. Make it a reality in my life as I trust You.

Father, I will walk in good health and strength as my day demands **(Deut. 33:25)**. I take authority over Satan. He will not steal or rob or destroy me anymore **(Luke 15:17-19)**. Satan will not harass me, for I am the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ, my Lord and Savior **(2 Cor. 5:21)**.

Father, I thank You for sending angels to prepare the way for me **(Ex 23:20)**. I thank You for favor for each hour's appointment. I thank You that I can choose LIFE and LOVE and not death and sin **(Josh 24:15)**. I thank you for the armor I have on to protect me **(Eph. 6:10-14)**, and I thank You that I am covered by the blood **(1 John 1:7)**.

Father, I thank You that I walk in newness of life this day **(Rom 6:4)**, Amen.

September 26

Seek and Ye Shall Find

"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him!"

MATTHEW 7: 7-11

Recently, I was asked to write about why I came to North Shelby. The better question might be, "why did I choose to stay." The church I was going to was changing from a traditional service to a more modern service, so we started looking for another church. Some of the Sunday school members recommended North Shelby. We tried it and it felt like home. Everyone was friendly and the word of God was preached there. One of the main reasons is we fell in love with the Sunday school class. I have never felt as much love and kindness before. They care and pray for you, and they put legs on their prayers. They not only say, but they also do. This is why I am a member of North Shelby Baptist Church.

GERALD CAIN

 Heavenly Father, the witness of this testimony is an example of the power of Your word. Thank you for the direction given in Your word. Jesus said, "For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened." Jane and I asked, sought, and knocked, seeking guidance for a new church home. Thank you leading us to North Shelby Baptist Church. Amen.

September 27

God Knew the Why

"Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. Love your neighbor just as you love yourself."

MARK 12:30,31

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

JOHN 13: 34,35

Bob and I moved to Chelsea in 2020 from Valdosta, Georgia. We had just celebrated our 50th wedding anniversary with many of our church family celebrating with us. COVID-19 was in full swing. We had made a good life in Valdosta and weren't really talking about moving. But God had plans for us... we moved to Chelsea, Alabama. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. I will be found by you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back from captivity. I will gather you from all the nations and places where I have banished you," declares the LORD, "and will bring you back to the place from which I carried you into exile." Jeremiah 29:11-14

Why? We have a daughter and family here, so we moved to be closer to them. That was just one part of our journey that God knew about. He knew the why(s). We would find out, too.

God brought us to North Shelby 4 years ago. He used our daughter and a group of NSBC women. Our daughter, Jodie Frye, was a guest speaker at one of the Women's Ministry functions. She invited me to go with her. It was there on that day that I met the sweetest group of women, one of those being Kathy Smith, who invited me to a worship service. Bob and I visited and were so blessed, our hearts were overflowing and we soon became members. Kathy and Allan Smith became like family. We were in need of Christian, loving friends. God used this couple in a mighty way to minister to us. They are still doing so. "One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother." Proverbs 18:24

North Shelby is meeting the varied needs of so many through our Pastor who preaches the truth from God's Word, equipping us to share God's plan of salvation. He leads by example, demonstrating strong leadership. North Shelby has a wonderful music ministry, and a congregation that loves each other.

Thank you, North Shelby, for reaching out to us and for ministry opportunities to be involved in.

BOB & JOANNE HOLLENBECK

 Father, thank you for the direction of your word in our life. The Bible says, "Your Word is a lamp unto our feet, and it directs our path. Thank you for the opportunity to daily confess our love for you and your son, Jesus Christ, our promised Lord and Savior! Father, I love you my mind, soul and strength. Thank you for teaching me to love my neighbor as myself. Amen.



September 28

The Power of Prayer

"Yes, my soul, find rest in God; my hope comes from him." PSALMS 62:5

"Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord. And you forgave the guilt of my sin.'" PSALMS 32:5

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

"God delights in exceeding the expectations of men." This is a statement we often heard from Hannah's dad, who pastored for many years before being called home to heaven. Many of us can attest to seeing God exceed our expectations as we've walked through life. As we meditated on this truth, we recalled a specific time early in our life together in which God did just that.

Hannah's college bill was due toward the end of her fall semester of junior year. The office informed her that if no payment was made, she would have to leave school with a semester unfinished. This news weighed heavily on our hearts.

We, and several of our close family members and friends, prayed in earnest that if God willed it, He would meet this need. The day the bill was due, Hannah received a call from her dad. A friend of his, another pastor, had reached out to him. God had prompted he and his wife to write a check that would not only cover the semester, but the next one as well. God had provided more than the amount prayed for. He greatly exceeded our earthly expectations.

Life is full of great needs and times of testing. We see repeatedly in Scripture the encouragement to look to the Lord to meet those needs. Psalm 62 is a testimony of David's rest and trust in God. Specifically, verse 5 says, "Rest in God alone, my soul, for my hope comes from Him." David, who had plenty of reason to worry, found comfort in resting in the one person who knows all things.

Psalm 32:5 says, "Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him, and He will act." David understood how important the path of life is, for he wrote about it often the Psalms. Committing to and trusting in the Lord are two actions that go together. We can't have one without the other. "Commit" in the Hebrew literally means "to roll your burden." As we trust the Lord, we give to Him the burden of knowing and planning the path of our life.

The second part of that verse says, "and He will act." We can trust our heavenly Father to work as we rest in Him and strive to serve Him faithfully. Philippians 4 gives us further encouragement, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And the peace that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." We can and should bring our requests to God. He will meet our needs. And what if God does not do what we pray and plan for? We still commit and trust. The "it" He brings to pass is His will, not ours.

North Shelby has been a place of growth for our family. God has been using the faithful preaching and biblical teaching in our lives and the lives of our children. We believe that it's God desire to grow His church. He has given us the privilege to serve Him with this time in prayer. Remember, "And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:19

JAKE & HANNAH FELLMETH



Thank you, Father, for the evidence of answered prayer in Your Holy Word and in our lives. Thank You for Your promise that You will supply our every need according to Your riches in glory in Christ Jesus. May these 21 days of prayer be a time focused NOT on what we can do, but on what you can do in and through us to accomplish Your plan for North Shelby Baptist Church. Amen.

September 29

Love One Another

"By this shall all men know that ye are My disciples: if ye have love one for another.

PSALM 34: 4

My wife, Cindy, and I joined North Shelby Baptist Church in 2013. These following 13 years have validated that decision ... reassurance that God led us here.

Our objectives were basic. We were looking for a church home, a traditional fellowship, anchored in missions, joyful in music, family-oriented congregation and leadership. From our first worship service attendance, followed by a home visit from Brother Allen, Jim Morris and Mike Hardy, it was obvious to us that God was directing our path.

I have had the privilege to lead several international mission teams to former Soviet Union countries. I have been blessed to sing in our music program under the leadership of Randy Tingle and Dr. John Boozer. Cindy has worked with the Shelby County Baptist Association in several roles and we have both been involved with the Operation Christmas Child ministry.

And, importantly North Shelby Baptist has proven itself to be a caring family fellowship. Through the illness and death of Cindy's mother, who was also a North Shelby member, and through my ongoing challenge from Stage 4 cancer and Type 1 diabetes, the prayers, support and love have been invaluable.

As we enter this MULTIPLY campaign, under the leadership of Pastor Jared and our talented and devoted staff, we are blessed with the opportunity to contribute to this effort. If these things are among the trademarks that you are looking for in a church, we hope that you will prayerfully consider North Shelby, a beacon on a hill. Loving God, Loving One Another and Sharing Jesus with the World.

LYN SCARBROUGH



Father, give us the desire to share Your truth to the world around us, and see Your clear hand of provision in each of our lives.

September 30

Take it to the Lord in Prayer

"I sought the Lord and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."

PSALM 34: 4

Have you ever had a burden for someone because of the path they were choosing that troubled you and brought you to your knees in prayer? It could be a bad decision, financial choice, spiritual issue, or many other things that tug at your heart over and over again. Your mind shifts to fear and leads to sleepless nights. Instead of finding peace in trusting the Lord with your concerns, you pick the burden back up and fail to leave it at the throne with Him.

One season when I experienced this, I was reading through the Psalms daily and came across this verse: Psalm 34: 4, "I sought the Lord and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." It stopped me cold and I cried out to God to deliver me from my fears and worries. From that day forward He gave me peace and I slept through the night again. Shortly thereafter Sonja Bennett gave me a framed verse: Psalm 34:4, "I sought the Lord and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." This confirmed again for me God's promise of His faithfulness. In the near future I saw God's answer to my prayers. He continues to teach me about prayer and His steadfast love and faithfulness.

ELIZABETH SHEFFIELD



Lord, help us to remember to bring our burdens to You first and lay them at Your feet. Thank You for the promises we have in Your Word.



October 1

Carried by Prayer

"I am the Lord who heals you."

EXODUS 15:26B

"Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

We came to North Shelby shortly before the move to this location, in search of a church with a traditional style of worship. We found a family of Bible believers committed to missions, full of faithful prayer warriors.

Two distinct times, we have been faced with challenges that were potentially life threatening and seemed insurmountable. In 2009, Patti got an infection and became septic. She was placed on a ventilator and remained on it for 23 days. During that time, she experienced two episodes that looked like she might not survive. Both times, the members of North Shelby and other faithful believers rallied around us and prayed that God would protect her and bring her through safely, and He did. God answered those prayers allowed her to make a full recovery.

In 2023, doctors found a large mass in my liver, which turned out to be bile duct cancer. The oncologist made it clear that this type of cancer was treatable with chemotherapy, immunotherapy, and radiation, but could only be cured by surgical removal of the tumor. At the time, the surgical oncologist said that the tumor was too large to remove. It could only be removed if they could get it to shrink a great deal, and it was in the right position for safe removal. The process was slow and required different therapies, but we kept praying, along with our church family and friends that God would shrink the tumor and allow it to be removed. Again, God blessed us and answered our prayers. The surgeon was able to successfully remove all the cancer.

God has greatly blessed us with these two miracles and the support of a wonderful church family. Without that friendship and prayer support, we would have felt so alone.

We don't have a large family, so this church family has meant so much to us over the years. Your prayers, presence during surgery, and genuine care mean more to us than you can know.

JOHN BROWNING



Dear Lord, thank You that You are Jehovah Rapha, "the Lord who heals". Thank you that we don't face life's challenges alone, but we have the comfort of the Holy Spirit and the support and encouragement of our church family, especially when we walk through difficult seasons. Amen.

October 2

Feasting on His Word

*"Your words were found, and I ate them, and your words became to me a joy and the delight of my heart,
for I am called by your name, O LORD, God of hosts."*

JEREMIAH 15:16

In 2019 North Shelby started a discipleship program on Sunday nights using the book Foundations, A 260 Day Bible Reading Plan for Busy Believers. I was a believer and I was definitely busy, so I joined a small group. This reading plan was different from other "read the Bible in a year" plans where you read a chapter or two and then check off a box. In the F260 workbook, we used the acronym HEAR. HEAR stands for highlight, explain, apply and respond. The purpose was to read in order to understand and respond to God's Word daily. Each of these steps was to create an atmosphere to hear God speak.

Up until this time, my Bible reading consisted of the Bible studies I was doing. I read about the faith of the patriarchs, the heart of David, the courage of Esther, stepping up in the Psalms and even how to believe God. They were great Bible studies, but when you start reading the Bible every day you see how all these "stories" come together to give us the big picture of God's story. The Bible is God's revelation of Himself to the world. In it we find the way to salvation and sanctification. Reading God's Word every day changed me! I can say, too, with the psalmist, "if your law had not been my delight, I would have perished in my affliction." (Psalm 119:92) God knew in His sovereignty that I would need His word to sustain me in the coming years through some tough challenges. He did not fail to keep His promises.

A former pastor of mine once said we should ask ourselves frequently if we can see spiritual growth in our lives. If you are not growing, try changing your fertilizer to reading God's word every day. You'll bloom. After all, our purpose is to shine so others see Jesus.

KELLY GILLILAND



Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word. Thank You that Your Word endures forever.
May we find Your words and feast daily at Your table. Amen.

October 3

Dot Matrix Printer Paper

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."

1 Peter 4:10

One of the tasks assigned to our recent Alaska mission team was organizing a large children's resource room at the church where we were staying. One clue to how long it had been since the room had been used was the stack of old dot matrix printing paper we discovered. While we were working at the church, most of the men were busy with a construction project that turned out to be more involved than expected. Even so, they accomplished a great deal, bringing two apartments much closer to being ready to house individuals and families in need, located next to the church we were there to support. For the remainder of the week, in addition to the ongoing construction work, many of us served at a free vision clinic held at a nearby community center. One of our team members had the idea of bringing the old dot matrix paper from the church for the children to draw on while they waited for their parents. That simple idea worked beautifully and led to us taking colorful paper, coloring books and crayons on later days, giving the children fun activities and creating opportunities to connect with their families. Many meaningful conversations arose to encourage people, and prayers were had with those who came for eye exams as well as those waiting on them.

What we hadn't expected was to discover that Anchorage is such a melting pot of nationalities, with people from around the world calling it home. God gave us opportunities to demonstrate the love of Christ to those who came, regardless of language or cultural barriers. Watching our team – people of different ages, personalities and gifts – serve, pray, laugh, adapt, eat, rest and worship together was inspiring. We went to Alaska hoping to be a blessing to others, but we returned having received an even greater blessing ourselves. Missions has been part of North Shelby Baptist's DNA since the church began. Whether serving locally through the Shelby Baptist Association, participating in mission trips across the US and around the world, or sharing the Gospel through Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes, we have sought to fulfill Christ's command to take the Good News to all people. In God's hands, even outdated dot matrix printer paper became a tool for ministry. Whatever unique gifts, talents and opportunities God has given to you, be intentional about using them for His glory. Even if your contribution seems small or ordinary, God delights in using faithful obedience to accomplish extraordinary things that reveals the love of Christ to others.

SONJA BENNETT



Heavenly Father, help us to use what you've placed in our hands so that the next generation will continue following the example of those who have gone before us sharing Jesus with the world. Amen.

October 4

Whatever You Ask, Lord

"Speak, for your servant hears."

1 SAMUEL 3:10

For the last 21 days, we have prayed together. We have remembered the stories God's faithfulness to this church. We have thanked Him for and honored those who came before us and sacrificed. We have prayed for our church, our community, our children, our grandchildren, and for people whose names we do not yet know.

And now we are left with one question:

Lord, what would You have me do?

Are we ready to listen to what God might say to us through that question?

As we ask this, I am reminded of the story of the Old Testament prophet, Samuel. When God was calling out to him, Samuel finally realized it was the Lord who was calling him in the night. His response was simple but profound: "Speak, for your servant hears."

In other words, Lord, I'm listening. Whatever You say, I am Yours. My life, everything I have, is a blank check for you. **What will you have me do?**

That is the posture I pray we have today collectively as a church.

After 21 days of prayer, the most important thing is not the number written on your commitment card. The most important thing is whether you have genuinely come before the Lord and said, "Speak, Lord. I am listening. What do you want me to do?"

God has blessed each of us differently. We cannot all give equal gifts, but we can all make equal sacrifices. Faithfulness will look different in every home. But it will take all of us together to accomplish what is before us. We should never wonder, "What is everyone else doing?" All that really matter is, "Lord, what are You asking of me?"

Thirty-three years ago, a small group of people could not have imagined everything God would do through North Shelby Baptist Church. They could not see us. They did not know our names. They could not picture the children who would fill these hallways, the missionaries who would be sent, the believers who would be baptized, or the families who would find a church home here.

They simply had their moment to be faithful. It came at great costs and sacrifice. It took a step of faith believing that God would do something they could not see. However, if God was calling them, then it would be worth it. It is now our moment to be faithful.

If the Lord tarries, another generation will worship here. Children who have not yet been born will hear the Gospel. People we have never met will walk through these doors. Some will come carrying broken hearts. Some will come searching for answers. Some will hear about Jesus and believe. Some may be called from this church to carry the Gospel to the nations.

They may never know our names, but this was never about making our names known. It is about making the name of Jesus known. Every generation before us at North Shelby has left this church better than they found it. Now it's our turn. Is the Lord asking us to invest our time, talents, and treasures so future generations can know Jesus and the blessing of this church like we do?

Speak, Lord. Your servants are listening.

And whatever You ask of us, give us the faith to say yes.

PASTOR JARED CORNUTT

 Father, You have been faithful to North Shelby through every generation, and we trust You with the generations still to come. We have spent these days asking what You would have us do. Now give us hearts willing to listen and faith willing to obey. Keep us from comparison, fear, and selfishness. Everything we have belongs to You, and we belong to You. Speak, Lord, Your servants are listening. Whatever You ask of us, help us to say yes. In Jesus' name, Amen.

