



## Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor

July 21, 1939 - May 27, 2026

Beloved Pastor, Psalmist, and Servant of God Enters Eternal Rest

With hearts both heavy and grateful, we announce the passing of Reverend John L. Gibson, esteemed Senior Pastor of Rising Sun Christian Church. Reverend Gibson transitioned peacefully at his home into glory on May 27, 2026, at the age of 86.

Born on July 21, 1939, in Leland, Mississippi, to the late Reverend Spencer and Alberta Gibson Sr., he was destined for a life of faith, leadership, and service. Rev. Gibson answered the call to ministry early, pursuing theological training at the Illinois Missionary Baptist Institute & Seminary, equipping him for a lifetime of devoted service to God's people.

For 48 remarkable years, Reverend Gibson faithfully shepherded Rising Sun Missionary Baptist Church—later renaming it Rising Sun Christian Church to reflect a broader spirit of inclusivity and unity among all Christians. His leadership was marked by vision, compassion, and unwavering devotion.

Gifted with both Word and song, Reverend Gibson was not only a powerful preacher but an anointed psalmist whose voice stirred the soul. His heartfelt rendering of "I Won't Complain" became his signature testimony of faith and perseverance, resonating through sanctuaries and leaving an indelible mark

on all who heard him. Whether ministering in song during altar calls or bringing comfort at homegoing services, his voice did more than echo—it healed, uplifted, and strengthened.

Under his faithful and visionary leadership, Rising Sun broke ground in 1991 at 4310 W. Charter Oak Road, where an 850-seat edifice was constructed. This monumental achievement was crowned in 2011 with the triumphant burning of the church mortgage—an enduring testament to his steadfast leadership, tireless dedication, and unwavering faith.

Beyond the pulpit, Reverend Gibson was a mentor, counselor, and pillar within the community. He championed youth empowerment, advocated for social justice, and fostered healing across generations. His legacy lives on in the countless lives he touched through his ministry of prayer, preaching, and song.

#### Awards and Recognition.

In recognition of his extraordinary service and lasting impact, Reverend Gibson received numerous honors. Among them, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Award in 2001, recognizing his outstanding leadership and commitment to ministry and community. In 2006, he was inducted into Metropolitan Who's Who, a prestigious acknowledgment of his influence, excellence, and enduring contributions to both the spiritual and civic community. These honors stand as a testament to a life lived in faithful service and uncommon dedication.

Reverend Gibson also shared his musical gifts beyond the sanctuary as a lead singer and bass player for The Midwest Singers, a group known for delivering powerful and soul-stirring gospel music throughout the region. In 1971, the group recorded a vinyl 45 under Golden Voices Records, featuring

notable selections including “Something On My Mind” and “He’s All Right.”

Reverend Gibson was preceded in death by his beloved first wife, Victory A. Jackson-Gibson; his sons, Kerry Cornell Gibson, Karl Lester Gibson, and Kevin John Gibson; his stepson, Bruce Cockfield Jr.; and his grandson, Jamanni M. Gibson.

Reverend Gibson leaves to cherish his memory his devoted and loving wife, Gigi M. Hamilton-Gibson; his beloved children, Kimberly Warr and Kayretha Parker; his cherished stepchildren, Andriea A. Cockfield, Natasha R. Cockfield, and Nicole (DeMarcus) McNeil; loving brothers: Roosevelt (Sandra) Gibson of Milwaukee, WI, Clarence (Terry) Gibson of Jacksonville, FL, Spencer (Rita) Gibson Jr, and Bobby (Jewel) Spencer both of Peoria; loving sisters: Darlene Gibson of Sandford, FL and Victoria (Bishop R.E.) Walker of Decatur, GA; along with a host of grandchildren, great-grandchildren, extended family, church members, and spiritual sons and daughters who will carry forward his teachings, his music, and his legacy of faith.

“I’ve had some good days, I’ve had some hills to climb... but when I look around and think things over, all of my good days outweigh my bad days—I won’t complain.”

“His Master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.’” — Matthew 25:23

A Celebration of Life Service will be held on Friday June 5, 2026, at Rising Sun Christian Church (4310 W. Charter Oak Rd. Peoria, IL 61615) at 11:00 a.m. with a visitation commencing a hour prior at 10:00 a.m. Pastor Patrick Polland of New Bethel Baptist Church of Peoria and Pastor Ed Johnson Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church of Peoria will be Masters of Ceremony

and Reverend Andrew Latchison Jr. of Well Spring of Life Ministries in Florissant, MO will present the Eulogy.

Pastor John L. Gibson will be laid to rest at Swan Lake Memorial Gardens (4601 W. War Memorial Peoria, IL 61615).

Arrangements were made especially for the “Gibson” family and professionally directed by T.W. Parks Colonial Chapel. Live streaming can be viewed by clicking the link for TW Parks Facebook page at: [https://www.facebook.com/tw\\_parkscolonialchapel](https://www.facebook.com/tw_parkscolonialchapel).

# Cemetery Details

## Swan Lake

4601 W War Memorial Drive  
Peoria, IL 61615

# Upcoming Events

## Visitation

JUN 5. 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM (CT)

Rising Sun Christian Church  
4310 W Charter Oak Rd  
Peoria, IL 61615-3213  
(309) 692-2786

## Celebration of Life

JUN 5. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (CT)

Rising Sun Christian Church  
4310 W Charter Oak Rd  
Peoria, IL 61615-3213  
(309) 692-2786

# Tribute Wall

CF

“ *Crystal and Family purchased the Sentiments of Serenity Spray for the family of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor.*



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**Crystal and Family** - 54 minutes ago

ML

“ *To the Gibson Family...I have known Pastor Gibson for as long as I can remember. He was always an encourager...from my Little League days at State Park, to my walking into my manhood. He knew ALL my family, and made sure to remind me of that - in the way that an older UNCLE would do. On my trips to visit Peoria over the past 49 years, whenever I ran into him, he ALWAYS gave me a word of encouragement, knowing that being 2200 miles away from my Hometown could be challenging. I am ever grateful to have known him, and to be one that he BELIEVED could make it. #BLESSED!*

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**Mark E Lampkin** - Yesterday at 08:32 PM

DM

“ *Derrick, Juwana Massey lit a candle in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor*



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**Derrick, Juwana Massey** - Yesterday at 04:05 PM

VJ

“ To Lady G; in memory of Lady V; (no disrespect); to all of his children, grandchildren, children he raised in and out of church; to Rising Sun Church Family there is no easy way to say so long to Pastor Gibson. He has been more than just a Pastor, a friend of soloist a mentor a confidant I mean like there's nothing bad you can say about him. He has done his best to give to every person he's been around. I grew up with Kathy and Kevin and not ever. Did I hear him speak badly of his children no matter what they were going through no matter what he might've felt like they took him through and to no longer have him around it's going to be heartbreaking his brother, his brothers and sisters their children have being so kind and good to the community and to the churches I mean, like always be in there for you you know, whenever you need a pick up when you just need someone to talk to he would just open his little heart and talk to you no matter where he was that he didn't care he was in the store. He didn't care if he was in a food place. He is going to hold a conversation with you and let you know that God is still in control. Everything was OK and if he thought you were lying to him, he was gonna make he was gonna find a way to make you tell the truth and give him the real deal. I can remember talking to him a couple different times when I was out and just seeing him you know like I say restaurants even even at church he stopped me little girl. How are you doing? What you been up to almost like harassment but you couldn't call a harassment because he'd be so funny with it and he would make you laugh no matter what in church. He was always comical but smooth but gentle. He had a little bit of everything in them when it came to preaching, but he would always make you feel wanted comfortable, and that you were a necessity, no matter if it was in church or out of church, his immediate family along with his church family will hurt for a long time. He has been a long time Pastor in Peoria, Illinois, and we will forever be grateful for all the contributions that he's given to our community to Lady G you know I got you every time we wanted to just stay and have a little short conversation we end up having a little longer, but we never had our



*lunch so me and you we were due to have our lunch once you know once you get the feeling better and you get a little rest this is hard. I say it as a wife who went through the process my husband was a deacon and I went through the same process. It gets easier, but trust me at times you will fall apart when you don't want to when you don't even know why when you don't even understand why but trust the process guys got us you will not find another love that's greater than the one that you have that long-term friendship relationship with and y'all have those you know connections I will not be able to attend the service unfortunately I'm working and I'm just coming off of a little minor procedure myself but know that the Gibson's and rising Sun church family you guys are in my prayers most definitely always, and I'm glad I've had the opportunity to share those good and some bad times you know with the church family and with the Gibson family love you all don't cry too long. He wouldn't want us to cry. He will want us to be happy and be cheerful!*

Love,

*Michelle Jones-Douglas*

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**V Michelle Jones-Douglas** - Yesterday at 03:01 PM

AF

“*Rest in heaven sir, say hello to your friend James Watson (my daddy) for me. The two of you were best of friends. Praying for the entire Gibson family.*



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**Anita Brown and the Watson Family** - Yesterday at 02:29 PM

MB

“ Mildred Baldon lit a candle in memory of  
Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



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Mildred Baldon - June 01 at 10:04 PM

AM

“ New Home Missionary Baptist Church  
433 east first street  
Galesburg il 61401  
309-345-0209                      Email: newhomebaptistchurch433@gmail.com  
ail.com  
Pastor Kemp Jones, Sr.

June 1, 2026

To the family of Pastor John L. Gibson,  
Once again we find ourselves bowed down in humble submission to  
the divine will of almighty God. Be assured that the passing of  
your loved one was his will and that all things done by him are not to  
be doubted even though we don't understand. We hope that these  
few words will comfort you in the tomorrows to come.

There is promise in each sunrise. There is hope for each new  
day. There's a sunbeam for each raindrop. There is help along  
the way. There is faith for all life's problems. There is strength for  
the trials you face. There is mercy and compassion. Even in life's  
darkest place. That makes all life's sorrows dim. When you place  
your hand in God's hand, And walk life's path with him.

We, the Pastor, Officers, and Members know that he will be missed.

Respectfully Submitted

Pastor Kemp Jones

Annette Cato    Church Clerk

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annette cato morrison - June 01 at 08:14 PM

VD

“ Vanessa Decristo lit a candle in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



Vanessa Decristo - June 01 at 05:59 PM

JA

“ Jerry, Sue, Bart, and Kelly Alexander purchased the Cherished Memories for the family of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor.



Jerry, Sue, Bart, and Kelly Alexander - June 01 at 04:43 PM

SW

“ Sherry Walker lit a candle in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



Sherry Walker - June 01 at 03:15 PM

JH

“ Jackie Horbrook purchased the Peaceful White Lies Basket for the family of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor.



Jackie Horbrook - May 31 at 10:35 PM

JH

“ Jackie Horbrook planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Pastor John L. Gibson.

Jackie Horbrook - May 31 at 10:35 PM

CH

“ We had so many memories of laboring together. You opened so many doors in ministry for me...you gave me the space to share my giftings. You allowed me to grow where I was planted and for that I give God glory. The Heath's owe a great deal to the Rising Sun family. We love you all. We miss you all. We love you family...

Craig and Peggy Heath - May 31 at 06:02 PM

PG

“ To the entire family of Pastor Gibson I send my sincere heartfelt condolences. Pastor Gibson was a great MAN OF GOD. I remember he and my dad sending messages back and forth between me and one of my brothers. One thing I can say is all of them are good people. Fly high Pastor. Now you can tell my dad yourself. Youll be missed.



Pam Gaston - May 31 at 04:52 PM

RS

“ My condolences to the Gibson family on the loss of their loved one . I grew up with John in the Taft home’s community many years ago . We sang in competing singing groups back in the Doo Wop era . John was a great singer back then and he took that great talent to singing and preaching the gospel for the Lord . He will be sorely missed as one of this community’s original reverends who knew how to rile up a congregation for the Lord with his singing and fervent preaching style . His old school Pastoral presence will be sorely missed by all of the Risen Sun old and new congregations who know what I’m talking about . Keep singing Gip, you’re in the right place now .

*Raymond and Mary Smith*

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**Raymond Smith** - May 31 at 01:55 PM



“ *Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor.*



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May 31 at 01:03 AM

KA

“ *Karen Ashby sent a virtual gift in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor*



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**Karen Ashby** - May 30 at 11:59 PM

DW

“ Debra Watkins sent a virtual gift in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



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**Debra Watkins** - May 30 at 11:22 PM

JG

“ Joanne Gray lit a candle in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



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**Joanne Gray** - May 30 at 08:08 PM

VK

“ To the Family of: Pastor John L. Gibson - I am extending my heartfelt condolences to you. There truly are no words to convey the extent and magnitude of his ministry through song throughout the Christian community. The whole family was gifted. I feel blessed to have known all of them, as a former resident of Taft Homes. I'm sure he's going to tell the Father "ta ta"!



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**Vickie Kingcade-King** - May 30 at 04:54 PM

EL

“ Finally, Rev. John L. Gibson is experiencing one of his favorite gospel songs, “Walk Around Heaven All Day”. Sending my thoughts of love and prayers to the entire Gibson family.



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**Ella Lee** - May 30 at 03:45 PM

MW

“ Prayers and heartfelt condolences.



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**Ms Patricia Ward** - May 30 at 03:37 PM

SW

“ Sonya Wade sent a virtual gift in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



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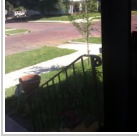
**Sonya Wade** - May 30 at 02:48 PM

TE

“ He will never ever be forgotten. Prayers to his Wife, children, siblings, the entire Gibson family and Rising Sun Church.  
Well Done PASTOR GIBSON WELL DONE!

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**Tammi Evans** - May 30 at 12:51 PM



“ John and I sang together as teens, later we shared the gospel together-preaching. John always the same, never changing. Thanks John we will miss you. Melvin McAfee and family.

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**Melvin M. McAfee** - May 30 at 11:46 AM

RM

“ Racquel Moore lit a candle in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



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**Racquel Moore** - May 30 at 09:51 AM

TF

“ May our Heavenly Father shower the entire family with comfort and peace 💜



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**Tracy Fondren-Lusk** - May 29 at 07:25 PM

MC

“ Love to here him sing Omg!Pastor Gibson will be sing up younger and the Angels will be rejoicing job well done...prayers to the Family you will definitely be missed

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**Maxine Clash** - May 29 at 05:35 PM

CB

“ GG I'M SORRY ABOUT THE LOSS OF YOUR PASTOR AND HUSBAND! YOU TRULY HAVE MY HEART FELT SYMPATHY AND CONDOLENCES, TRUST THAT GOD IS GOING TO DO WHAT HE DOES BEST, KEEPS US LOVE ❤️ YOU GG BE STRONG IN THE LORD AND THE POWER OF HIS MIGHT!!!

Cynthia Ann Barnes - May 29 at 02:55 PM

LJ

“ Amazing Pastor!! ,Amazing Voice!! RIP!



Lisa Jones - May 29 at 02:37 PM

LJ

“ Almost Pastor, Amazing Voice RIP!!



Lisa Jones - May 29 at 02:36 PM



“ Sharing wonderful memories of Pastor John Gibson ❤️praying, singing, preaching and teaching the Word of God. Our hearts go out to the family, friends and church family. Fly high and may our Lord and Savior be with you.



Linda Hardy - May 29 at 01:08 PM

RW

“ Richard And Theresa Walker sent a virtual gift in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



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**Richard and Theresa Walker** - May 29 at 12:56 PM

JW

“ Pastor & Gigi Gibson have been my neighbors and fellow-laborers in the Lord. We often greet each other in passing by. I teased him about changing Rising Sun’s name from Baptist to Christian. He said, “Is there something wrong with being a Christian?” I said “You’ve got me there!” He was a good friend.  
God bless you, from Joey & Suzie Watt

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**joey Watt** - May 29 at 10:57 AM

BC

“ Brenda D Cayson lit a candle in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



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**Brenda D Cayson** - May 29 at 10:21 AM

TB

“ Toni Brown lit a candle in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



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**Toni Brown** - May 29 at 10:16 AM

BC

“ My prayers goes out to sister Gigi and the rest of the families and friends. Pastor Gibson was my Paster for many years, when I left Peoria I would stop by the church and I love to hear him preach. He will be missed Brenda Cattledge



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**Brenda Cattledge** - May 29 at 09:57 AM

RC

"When you hear of my Home going don't worry about me," is how I think of this bereavement time for the Gibson family , Rising Sun Church family and the entire Peoria community. Pastor John L. Gibson was known through the community as a man of God who shared his faith , friendship and humor with everyone he came in contact with. He was blessed to have a wonderful voice to sing as well as preach Word. He sung with such sincerity that the song became alive , especially "I want to be in that number when all the saints come " ,. Praise God Pastor Gibson for all your dedication , love, songs and sermons you shared with your family and the Peoria community.

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**Rosie Cole** - May 29 at 11:32 AM

DJ

“ Darlene Jackson sent a virtual gift in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



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**Darlene Jackson** - May 29 at 09:48 AM

SW

“ Shirley Williams sent a virtual gift in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



Shirley Williams - May 29 at 08:28 AM

SW

“ Shirley Williams lit a candle in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



Shirley Williams - May 29 at 08:26 AM

DB

“ The Man... The Myth...The Legend!!!!!!



Dorothea Banks-Burse - May 29 at 08:26 AM

PH

“ Phillip E. Hickman sent a virtual gift in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor



Phillip E. Hickman - May 29 at 08:11 AM

JR

“ *Jeanelle Rasberry sent a virtual gift in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor*



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**Jeanelle Rasberry** - May 29 at 04:36 AM

JR

“ *Jeanelle Rasberry lit a candle in memory of Reverend John L. Gibson, Pastor*



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**Jeanelle Rasberry** - May 29 at 04:35 AM