

The South Florida Avenue MESSENGER

A Friendly Church With a Vital Message Proclaiming the Unsearchable Riches of the Lord Jesus.
The Messenger is published weekly by the South Florida Ave. Church of Christ meeting at 1807 South Florida Ave - Lakeland, FL 33803 Vol. 70 No. 03 01-17-17

ELDERS

David Anderson
Kenny French
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Jeff Bingle
Jimmy Sweeney
Chuck Wyatt

MINISTER

Hiram Kemp
(386) 405-5372

ASSOCIATE MINISTERS

Brian Kenyon
(863) 944-8565

Robert McAnally
(863) 606-5664

SECRETARY

Michelle Paulin

OFFICE PHONE

(863) 682-4702

SUNDAY SERVICES

Bible Study.....9:30 a.m.
Worship.....10:30 a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Ladies Class.....10:00 a.m.
Bible Study.....7:00 p.m.

HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching

MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill.....Russia
Don Iverson.....India
Marc Veary.....Malawi, Africa
Graham McDonald..Scotland
J. Paguaga.....Honduras, C.A.
Joey Treat.....Pacific Islands
Ted Wheeler.....Ghana, W.A.

EMAIL

SFA.church@gmail.com

WEB PAGE

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

Sundays @ 8:30 a.m. Check local listings

WATER: WE MUST HAVE IT!

Brian R. Kenyon

Water is essential to life. Physically, no living thing can survive without water. Although some creatures are better equipped to survive desert conditions than others, all will eventually perish if they are without water for long enough. For this reason, the earliest settlements in human history were near rivers or other significant sources of water. As mankind reaches for settlements in outer space or on other planets, one of the first concerns is water. From where will come an ample supply of water? "Water" is also an important Biblical concern.

VALUE OF WATER IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

Before settling into the Promised Land, the ancient Hebrews wandered in areas where water was scarce. Therefore, the successful digging of a deep well was reason to rejoice (Num. 21:16-20), and for this same reason the dispute over ownership of a well was often hotly contested (Gen. 26:15-22).

From the beginning of the Old Testament, water was recognized as the beneficent gift of God. This was evident by the creation of water as part of this world (Gen. 1:6-13). This was also evident by the gracious blessings brought by rivers of water that flowed from the Garden of Eden (Gen. 2:10-14). Drinking water was recognized as a necessity for people that resulted in life and vigor (Ex. 23:25; 1 Sam. 30:11-12; 1 Kgs. 18:4, 13), as well as a necessity for the survival and flourishing of livestock (Gen. 24:11-20; 30:38).

That God was to be acknowledged as the provider and sustainer of water is evident by covenant stipulations. If Israel were to "diligently obey the voice of the LORD your God, to observe carefully all His commandments" (Deut. 28:1), then "The LORD will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season" (Deut. 28:12). At times, the Lord would chastise His people by withholding water, which was to encourage their repentance (Amos 4:7; Joel 1:10-12; Hag. 1:10-11).

SPIRITUAL WATER OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

Spiritually, "water" is also essential to life. Because of the reality of physical water's necessity to life, the term "water" used spiritually is a forceful image. Jesus' discussion with the Samaritan woman illustrates this point. Because Jesus was physically weary, he went to Jacob's well. While there, a spiritually weary Samaritan woman came to the well to fill her container (Jn. 4:4-8). Jesus requested of her, "Give Me a drink" (Jn. 4:7). She was surprised that Jesus spoke to her because she was a Samaritan,

He was a Jew, and “the Jews have no dealings with Samaritans” (Jn. 4:9). However, the Lord said to her, “If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water” (Jn. 4:10). The Samaritan woman, thinking only of physical water, observed that Jesus had no way of drawing water from the well and then called his attention to the greatness of Jacob who “gave us the well” (Jn. 4:11-12). Jesus responded, “Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life” (Jn. 4:13-14).

Still only thinking of the physical, “The woman said to Him, ‘Sir, give me this water, that I may not thirst, nor come here to draw’” (Jn. 4:15)! Of course, the water Jesus had in mind was spiritual. Later in John’s Gospel, “Jesus stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water” (Jn. 7:37-38). The point is that just as physical water is necessary to physical life, so spiritual water is necessary to spiritual life. Jesus is the ultimate spiritual water, the only source that can quench our spiritual needs.

THE NEED FOR CONTINUED NOURISHMENT OF SPIRITUAL WATER

One goal for which each child of God must strive is to “be conformed to the image of His Son” (Rom. 8:29). This requires each Christian to “grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 3:18). Each person who becomes a Christian does so by being born again (Jn. 3:1-5; 1 Pet. 1:23). For a time, all new converts are “babes in Christ.” However, tragedy results when converts stay “babes in Christ,” well after the time they should have matured (1 Cor. 3:1-3; Heb. 5:12-13). Even more tragic is when new converts fall away, and go back to the world (2 Pet. 2:20-22). Why do some new converts stay “babes in Christ” all their lives? Why do some new converts fall away? While each individual is responsible for his or her own sins (Ezk. 18:20; 33:7-9), one major reason why new converts stay babes and/or fall away completely is because they do not continue to receive the spiritual “water” (i.e., nourishment) after conversion that is necessary for sustained spiritual life.

Undeniably, church growth results only when Christians, especially new converts, are constantly watered with the word of God. Planting the Gospel seed and establishing new congregations is important, but what good will it do if that which is planted is not watered and nourished. Physically, a gardener would never think of planting a tender plant in the ground and then abandoning it to fend for itself. Rather, the gardener will water and take special care of that plant until it is firmly rooted.

CONCLUSION

Water is necessary for the body and spiritual “water” is necessary for the soul. Jesus said, “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled” (Mt. 5:6). How thirsty are we for the Water of Life? Will we answer the invitation: “the Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely” (Rev. 22:17).

How Does Water and Obedience in Noah’s Time Connect with People Today?



“For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, ²⁰who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²²who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him” (1 Pet. 3:18-22).

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Jim Turner has had a good doctor's report, his P.S.A. level is down and his infection is gone at this time. Tucker Sweeney, Hannah and June Hendrix were all home sick. Vicki Rapley is in L.R.M.C. with pneumonia. Carol Eason is having surgery on Jan. 31st. Also, keep Ginny Hamby, Jacqueline Dopwell, Joe Dopwell, Carlene Long, JoAnne Mitchell, Kenny French, JoAnn Hoback, Elizabeth Tubbs and Margaret Coone in prayer.

Relatives: Wayne Hendrix, Tonya Mathis, Dee Moore, Margie Bolding, Blanche Dopwell, Sarah Blevins, Willie Williams, Owen Lewis and Dayne Romine.

Shut In Members: Virginia Plumlee, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Don Starks, Sharon Edler and Duane Nelson.

Others: Joyce Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Kim Gustafson, daughter of a friend, of Sharon Egolf and Carmen Carro, friend of Elizabeth Tubbs, who is in critical condition after a hit and run accident.

Upcoming Events

January 20th: Memorial for Jackie Stearsman at the Orange St. Church of Christ in Auburndale at 11:00 a.m. Please let the office at S.F.A. know if you plan to attend.

January 20th & 22nd: Meeting at Orange St. Church of Christ in Auburndale. Melvin Otey will be the speaker. See bulletin board for times of meeting.

January 21st: Men's breakfast at Central Church of Christ in Haines City at 8:00 a.m.

January 24th: Ladies's Spring classes at F.S.O.P. will resume at 7:00 p.m. See the flyer for future dates.

February 4th: Ladies Day at Sebring Parkway Church of Christ. See bulletin board for more information.

February 5th: Fellowship In Service after evening services.

Visitors

Mary Moore, Ty Ryhmes, Keith & Cheryl Cozort, Bruce Dolores, Will & Autumn Vann, Mac and Avery, Mark Tomilinson, Virginia Rupert, Ron & Mary Ann Weisenstine, Mark Barber, Terry & Betty McCormack, Jane Jessee, Kimberly Kemp, and Tiffany Hash, Megan and Sam.



Tune into AM 1330 (station WWAB) with your friends and neighbors every Monday from 5:00-5:30 p.m. for the "Way of Truth" program. This is a joint effort to evangelize involving Terrance Brownlow-Dindy (6th Street) and Hiram Kemp. Let's point our community to the Bible!

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

January

Kenny French **Table** Fred Strickland
Ken Walker **Assist** Bobby Simpson

Sunday, January 22, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Ken Walker
Prayer C. J. Grimes

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Ken Walker
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tucker Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Stacey Paulin
Opening Prayer Steve Hunley
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Greeters The Longfellow's
Att. Cards Paul & Ian
Closing Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Open & Close Building Jason Hendrix

Wed. January 25, 2017

Song Leader Bill Long
Opening Prayer Jeff Bingle
Closing Prayer Tucker Sweeney

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Chuck Wyatt so he can get a replacement - 859-5231 or 602-9005

Sunday, January 29, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class David Williams
Prayer Josh Estridge

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Bobby Shuemaker
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer C.J. Grimes
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Kyle Williams

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Stacey Paulin
Opening Prayer Tucker Sweeney
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Greeters The Grimes
Att. Cards Antonio & Quadarius
Closing Prayer Chuck Wyatt
Open & Close Building Jason Hendrix

Wed. February 1, 2017

Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer David Anderson
Closing Prayer Kenny French

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Dec. 25.....	\$5,822.73
Jan. 01	\$5,697.85
Jan. 08.....	\$4,834.30
Jan. 15.....	\$5,002.50
Contribution Average	\$5,178.22
2016 Weekly Budget	\$4,422.60

What Are We to Do About a New President?



Whether or not we voted for the new President, if we are Americans, he is our President. We are very blessed to be a country whose change of leadership is (relatively) peaceful. In many countries, violence and bloodshed occur when one leader and/or political party is replaced by another. Externally, the transition may be smooth, but what do we do individually if this president is not the one for whom we voted? The answer is as it has always been. First, Christians must pray for civil government. Paul told Timothy, “Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority” (1 Timothy 2:1-2a). Although first century Christians faced severe persecution because of decisions these rulers made, Paul knew the only way for them to make better decisions was to be better informed in God’s salvation (cf. Ezra 7:27-28; 9:6-9). Thus, prayers for civil leaders had a very practical purpose for the first century church as they do for the church today! God’s people are to pray so “that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence” (1 Timothy 2:2b). This refers to both an inward and outward security to practice God’s will. To a large extent, civil government can provide the framework were this is possible. Second, Christians are to submit to the civil government (Romans 13:1-2), except when its laws violate God’s will (Acts 5:29). Civil government is to hold up good and tear down evil (Romans 13:3-4). Although there *(continued below)*



South Florida Avenue
CHURCH OF CHRIST
 1807 South Florida Avenue
 Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Non Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Lakeland, FL
 Permit No. 254



Return Service Requested

The End of Your Search for a Friendly Church . . .

MARK YOUR CALANDER: FEBRUARY 24-26

YES Weekend

Feb. 24-26, 2017

See Brian if you would like to attend this uplifting event!

We are planning again for a YES II mission trip to Penonome, Panama, July 1-9, 2017. If you want to go, please see Brian ASAP. If you would like to contribute funds, please see one of our elders. Please pray for us!



are abuses of civil authority, as a general, rule if one does good, he should have no reason to be afraid! Civil government is also God’s “minister” (Romans 13:4). A “minister” is one who carries out the commands of another, which in this case is God. As God’s servant, civil government “does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil” (Romans 13:4). Christians must submit to civil government not only to avoid the wrath of God, but also to live in good conscience before God (Romans 13:5-7). Again, whether we voted for the President or not, he is still America’s President. It is to our advantage, short and long term, to pray for him and our civil government and to submit to government’s laws as long as they do not violate God’s law! May we constantly pray for our country, submit to its laws, and be wise to use its freedoms to spread the Gospel! ❤️ Brian