



The South Florida Avenue church of Christ



MESSENGER

1807 S. Florida Ave., Lakeland, FL 33803

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ELDERS

David Anderson
Kenny French
Brian Kenyon
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Tyler Anderson
Jason Hendrix
Stacey Paulin
Jimmy Sweeney

MINISTER

Hiram Kemp

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Vince Daugherty

SECRETARY

Dee Parramore

OFFICE PHONE

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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.

EMAIL

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WEB PAGE

SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

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SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist

HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching
since 1969

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.

What We Should Expect From Preaching

Hiram Kemp

Few things are as misunderstood as preaching. Some view preaching as the “main event” in the worship service each week. Others view it as the preacher’s attempt to keep the congregation awake for thirty to forty minutes. The truth is that preaching is neither entertainment nor a spiritual pep-rally where the preacher tries his best to keep the congregation interested in the things of God. Biblical preaching is not boring preaching. However, many people today often listen to preaching expecting things the Bible never promises to deliver. Others have their expectations too low when it comes to preaching. They are content to hear a few stories, several jokes, and very little if any Scripture expounded at all. God chose to communicate His will through preaching (1 Cor. 1:21; Titus 1:3). Preaching is important to God, and therefore, it should be important to us. Those who preach will be held to a higher account by God and should be sure they remember to do what pleases God (James 3:1). What should we expect from preaching? Let us be sure our expectations are God-centered and not man-made (1 Thess. 2:13).

Expect to Hear the Truth

Preaching is supposed to communicate the truth of God’s Word (John 17:17). Paul told Timothy to preach the Word which contained the truth from God (2 Tim. 4:2). Many times, we focus on style and personal preference, which are not bad in and of themselves, that we forget to consider whether we heard the truth or not. When someone stands up to preach, those who are listening should be following along in their own Bibles and making sure that what is being said aligns with the Scriptures (1 Thess. 5:21-22; 1 John 4:1). This does not simply mean that the preacher’s words are found in the Bible. He may quote Scripture and refer to passages and still not preach the truth (Matt. 4:5-7). This does not mean every preacher should be held in suspicion or that we should not give anyone the benefit of the doubt, but it does mean we should be discerning as listeners. That being said, we should expect to hear the Bible quoted and expounded. Preaching cannot be true if it is devoid of Scripture. I realize there is no “divine quota” of verses used in a sermon to make it scriptural, but we should not try to see how little of the Bible we can preach. It is impressive to read Peter’s sermon in Acts 2 (the first gospel sermon) and notice that more than half of his words are direct quotations from the Old Testament.

The most important question at the end of a sermon is not, “Did I like what the preacher said?” or “Was he funny or interesting?” The most important question is, “Did he share the truth of God’s Word?” The truth is not always pleasant initially, but it must always be spoken. Jesus promised that continuing in the truth of His word would make men free (John 8:31-32). It must not be made to mean “hearing what we have always heard in the way we have always heard it.” Truth is the entirety of God’s Word taught clearly, even when it involves things we have not been taught before or things we have neglected (Acts 20:26-27).

The truth must be spoken in love so that it can build up those who hear it (Eph. 4:15). We must not use truth as a cloak for our rude or un-Christlike behavior (2 Tim. 2:24-26). People should not leave the sermon wondering what the preacher believes. Regardless of the subject of the sermon, those listening should expect to hear the truth from God’s Word proclaimed.

Expect to Be Encouraged

Preaching will not always make people feel good, but neither should it always make people feel bad. Paul did say that preaching should exhort, and exhortation involves encouragement (2 Tim. 4:2). Those who hear a steady diet of all that they are doing wrong and a God who cannot be pleased will soon become hardened legalists or possibly give up altogether (cf. Matt. 23:15).

A preacher is not soft or unsound because he encourages. A preacher is unsound if he never encourages; the key is to be biblically balanced.

The gospel is good news, and we must not forget that. We should not comfort those in sin or make those who are lost feel as if they are saved. Still, those who are saved must not leave the assembly thinking that they are lost. Biblical encouragement is not to be equated with the “health and wealth” gospel or a mere “feel-good message.” Preaching that encourages its listeners is preaching that reminds listeners of all that God has done for us in Christ, God’s longsuffering, and God’s awareness of our efforts to walk in the light. Christians are supposed to encourage each other daily, and this must not be forgotten in preaching (Heb. 3:13).

Expect to Be Challenged and Corrected

Every preacher has heard the famous post-sermon remark, “You stepped on my toes.” We should expect to be challenged in Christianity. Jesus challenged those who heard Him to take up their cross daily (Luke 9:23). Maybe preaching today is not demanding too much from Christians but rather not enough. While encouragement is necessary, we must not expect to be coddled and told that we are doing everything right (Psa. 141:5). We should expect deep preaching that helps hearers graduate to the meat of the Word and not the same elementary things that leave congregations on the milk (Heb. 5:11-14). First principle lessons are good and can be preached deeply and engagingly, but we need to be sure to grow into spiritual maturity (Heb. 6:1).

If we hate correction, we will not make it far in any area of life. This is true in Christianity as well (Prov. 15:10). Timothy was to “reprove and rebuke” with all the patience he could because correction had to be given (2 Tim. 4:2). Those who do not want the preacher to preach on social drinking, immodest apparel, jesting, covetousness, racism, prejudice, abortion, or any other topic that offends them misunderstand preaching. False teachers are often popular because they tell people what they want to hear or they avoid saying things that people need to hear (Gal. 4:16; 2 Tim. 4:3-4). King Ahab hated Micaiah (the Lord’s prophet) because Micaiah did not tell him what he wanted to hear (1 Kings 22:8). Ahab, like many today, did not understand that preachers do not originate the truth; they simply

echo the truth God has given (1 Kings 22:18). Preaching should correct us where we are wrong, and we should welcome it as we desire to be the people God would have us to be. The preacher should be correcting himself as he preaches, too, knowing that he is not above sin or weakness (1 John 1:8,10). Let’s not water down preaching to the point that we are afraid to call out sin for what it is for fear of offending anyone. God intends for preaching to be challenging so that it can get to the heart of the listeners where His Word can produce the necessary change (Acts 2:36-37).

Expect to Hear Christ Magnified

You cannot read the sermons recorded in the book of Acts and find sermons that fail to exalt Jesus. Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection are the focus of the messages proclaimed by the apostles and preachers throughout the first-century church. Paul’s main goal in preaching was “Jesus Christ and Him crucified” (1 Cor. 2:3). Preaching should point people to Jesus. This does not mean one cannot preach from the Old Testament, but remember that the Old Testament properly handled gets people to Jesus (Luke 24:44). Those who listen to sermons should leave hearing more about Jesus than about sports teams, politics, the latest controversy in the news, or the preacher’s favorite movie (2 Cor. 4:5).

Preaching that is done without Jesus being the focus is not true biblical preaching. If it is simply “do more and try harder” without little to no focus on Jesus’ finished work on the cross, it misses the heart of the New Testament. We should expect to hear a preacher lift Christ up and point people to Him (John 12:32). Christ must not merely be mentioned or tagged on to the end of the sermon for invitation purposes, but instead He should be the central theme in the message because He is the central theme of the entire Bible (John 5:39-40). Expect to hear Christ magnified, and hold those who preach to you accountable for doing so.

Preaching changed the world in the first century, and it still does the same thing today. We sometimes are disappointed with preaching because we want the wrong things from it. We must not desire to have our ears tickled but instead have our hearts stirred. Preaching is God’s weapon of choice in getting the gospel into people’s hearts. Let us expect nothing more and nothing less than God does.

Senior Saints

by John McShane

As senior citizens, we know that what we see today is not what we grew up with. The age of technology has brought a lot of changes that have improved a lot of things in our lives. Technology has also made changes that have proven to be a disadvantage when used in ways that were not thought about when they were introduced to this world. We need to keep in mind that even with all the technology available to us and everything that is going on, God is still in charge. Prayer has always been with us. As Hiram so well explained Sunday night, we need to use it constantly as we go through our daily life. Instead of quoting a Bible passage this week, I suggest that all of us read the second chapter of 2nd Peter. It seems to really fit into our world today.

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16

Our Members:

Bob Pratt	Brenda Mask	Carol Edmonson
Chuck Wyatt	Linda McShane	Wayne Shearer
Adeline Hine	Bernetta Green	Ingrid Stewart
Bill & Carlene Long	Bobby Simpson	Melody Baxter
Cieara Edwards	Brian Smith	Geny Johnson
Kathy Nester	Jim Turner	Margaret Coone
Sharon M. Washington	Annette Phillip	George Davis
Joyce Williams	Ron & Judy Ford	Ray Nashick
Antoine & Marcella Swain		

(Please update the office of any changes)

The **EXTENDED FAMILY** and **FRIENDS** prayer requests are emailed every week.

REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS

Faith West Joyce Burbage Carol Eason
Ellen Shearer Chuck Wyatt

Phone numbers are in the directory. Let's call to let them know we miss them and love them.

RESPONSES

Ingrid Stewart requests prayers to be a stronger and better Christian.

Woody Khoury requests prayers for help to change his ways and to be a better Christian.

Cieara Edwards requests prayers for strength as she faces difficulties.

Marcella Swain repents of sin; requests prayers for an upcoming procedure; requests prayers for her husband

5TH SUNDAY COLLECTION

The next 5th Sunday collection for the Building Fund will be January 13, 2021.

If you would like to give additional funds at other times of the month, please mail or bring them to the office. Be sure to designate the contribution as part of the Building Fund.

It will be collected by the elders.

~ Remember our Newlyweds ~

Gift cards for
Casey & Emily Paulin
are being collected by
Michelle Paulin
(registry is on bulletin board)

A table for gifts for
Jerry & Samantha Pollard
is set up in the north-side
foyer

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING.

1 THESSALONIANS 5:17

The recent newsletters from our missionaries are on the bulletin board. If you would like to read their previous issues, you can find them hanging on the Missionary Bulletin Board located by the classrooms.

PRAYER LIST

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

January

Designated Elder - David Anderson

Wednesday, January 20, 2021

FSOP LECTURESHP 2021

Sunday, January 24, 2021

10:30 A.M.

Sermon Vince Daugherty
"Commanded to Give with a Cheerful Heart"

6:00 P.M.

Sermon Vince Daugherty
"Just the Scraps"
Matthew 15:21-28

10:30 A.M.

Open/Close bldg (both services) Jimmy Sweeney
Greeters Bingle
Song/prayer before class Kyle Bingle
Announcements David Anderson
A.M. Song Leader Rick Kenyon
Scripture reading/Prayer Allen Grimes
Lord's Table Jeff Stewart
Closing Prayer Jeff Bingle

6:00 P.M.

Greeters Fife
P.M. Song Leader Tucker Sweeney
Scripture reading/Prayer Wesley Brunson
Lord's Table Jeff Stewart
Closing Prayer Nigel St. Bernard

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Song Leader/Prayer Tucker Sweeney
Devo David Anderson
Closing Prayer Bobby Sheumaker

ASSEMBLING UPDATE

We still encourage those who do not feel well and those who consider themselves high-risk to stay at home.

To side with caution, we are still requiring masks to be worn upon entering the building as we have since July 2.

We will continue live-streaming the services on YouTube as we have since March 22.
Thank you for your cooperation. - Elders

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Jan. 3	\$6,235.00
Jan. 10	\$7,749.69
Jan. 17	\$7,387.00
Contribution Average	\$7,123.90

Why are you seeking Jesus? – Mark 8:11; John 6:24; John 18:7
 Is it because you want Him to do something great for you? – John 6:2; Juke 9:11
 Is it because you want financial blessings? – Malachi 3:10; Leviticus 25:21
 Is it because you want to be healed physically? – Matthew 4:23-24; Luke 4:40

SEEK JESUS FOR THESE REASONS:

Because He died for you – Romans 5:8; 1 Corinthians 15:3
 Because you love Him – Deuteronomy 6:5; Mark 12:30
 To receive the forgiveness of sins – 2 Chronicles 7:14; Acts 5:30-31
 For eternal life – (Matthew 19:16-17; John 3:16)

When you have found Him, be willing to show your gratitude for all that He has done by obeying His commands (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38), spend your life serving Him (John 12:26), be willing to be a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1), when you fall, be quick to repent and get back on the right track (Revelation 2:5), and live faithfully until death (Revelation 2:10).

by Vince Daugherty

YOUTH GROUP

Do you like singing hymns? Most people enjoy music in some form or fashion, but God's people love to sing hymns. A hymn is a religious song of praise to God. On the night Jesus was betrayed, after He and the disciples ate the Lord's supper, Matthew says, "And when they sung a hymn, they went out..." We do not know what the words of the hymn they sang but Jesus took the time to sing with His disciples. Each day we should set aside time to practice singing hymns with our family. Learning tunes is fun. Even better, we can learn the lyrics of hymns that should help to internalize Bible truths. Many times song lyrics are easier to get stuck in our memory than Scripture. Best of all, singing can be described as giving to God, "the fruit of our lips" which is well-pleasing to God. Jesus is an example that we should follow. The Psalmist put it this way, "Oh come, let us sing to the Lord! Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before His presence with thanksgiving; Let us shout joyfully to Him with psalms." (Psalm 95:1-2)

Dates to remember

- January 18-21** - FSOP Lectureship. Topics and speakers, go to fsop.net
- January 23** - Sisters Sending Sonshine Reveal Day at Rene's home, 10:30 am
- January 29** - Youth Group devo at the Daughertys' home, 6:00 pm
- January 31** - Fifth Sunday Building Fund
- February 1** - 1Peter class, 7:00 pm
- February 7** - Fellowship In-service before evening worship

www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

Email us: SFA.church@gmail.com

Find us on social media



**South Florida Avenue
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1807 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

"AS IT IS WRITTEN, HOW BEAUTIFUL ARE THE FEET OF THEM THAT PREACH THE GOSPEL OF PEACE, AND BRING GLAD TIDINGS OF GOOD THINGS!"

ROMANS 10:15