

# 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. 73 No. 3 01-21-2020

## ELDERS

David Anderson  
Kenny French  
Bobby Sheumaker

## DEACONS

John McShane  
Stacey Paulin  
Jimmy Sweeney

## MINISTER

Hiram Kemp

## ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Vince Daugherty

## SECRETARIES

Dee Parramore

## 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  
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.

## EMAIL

[SFA.church@gmail.com](mailto:SFA.church@gmail.com)

## WEB PAGE

[www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com](http://www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com)

## YOUTUBE.com

[SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist](http://SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist)



Sundays @ 7:00 a.m. Ch. 18  
7:30 a.m. on Ch. 4

## What About Withdrawing Fellowship?

Brian R. Kenyon

Withdrawing fellowship is probably one of the most neglected of God's congregational requirements. This preacher saw a show of three hands (and two were married to each other) when the members of an assembly of about 150, most of whom were visitors from all over the USA, were asked, "How many of you have been in a congregation where the elders or faithful men withdrew fellowship from a wayward church member?" Although it is sometimes difficult, local churches must be willing to withdraw fellowship from those persisting in sin, if those churches are to remain strong. Let us consider Paul's instructions to the Thessalonians concerning this vital topic.

### The Standard of Fellowship

Paul wrote, "But we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us" (2 Thes. 3:6). This command is not merely Paul's opinion, but it is God's instruction. The word translated "withdraw" (*stello*) means to keep away, to stand aloof from someone. Thayer says when this word is followed by "from" with the construction as the verse here, it means "to abstain from familiar intercourse [interaction] with one" (587). "Withdraw" is not an absolute ban from any contact whatsoever (such as Roman Catholic or Mormon excommunication), but is a withdrawal of fellowship for the purpose of restoring the erring brother (2 Thes. 3:14-15 cf. 1 Cor. 5:5).

The brothers from whom they are to "withdraw" are those who "walk disorderly." Aside from its literal meaning, "walk" carries the idea of a continuing, habitual practice (cf. Eph. 2:2; 1 Jn. 1:6-7). "Disorderly" (from an adverb, *ataktos*, that literally means "out of line") describes the "sense of insufficient inclination to disciplined work in a disorderly or an irresponsible manner" (Bauer 119). As this context reveals, "disorderly" refers to the disposition of not wanting to support one's self, thus becoming idle, or lazy (2 Thes. 3:10-11 cf. 1 Thes. 5:14). Note the standard by which they are judged to be out of line: "the tradition ... received from us." Tradition simply refers to "that which is handed down," and, as used here, refers to the apostles' written and oral instructions (Wegenast 774). Therefore, part of what the apostles learned from the Lord and "handed down" was that each Christian was to support himself and his family. To violate the teachings passed down from the apostles was to violate the "true teachings of God, and any other walk was, therefore, disorderly" (Lipscomb 108).

## Being Taught Truth But Refusing to Accept It

The Thessalonians were informed two ways on how they should support themselves: by example and by verbal instruction. Concerning the former, Paul wrote, “For you yourselves know how you ought to follow us, for we were not disorderly among you; <sup>8</sup>nor did we eat anyone’s bread free of charge, but worked with labor and toil night and day, that we might not be a burden to any of you, <sup>9</sup>not because we do not have authority, but to make ourselves an example of how you should follow us” (2 Thes. 3:7-9). The term “you yourselves know” or similar is found frequently in the Thessalonian epistles (1 Thes. 1:5; 2:1, 2, 5, 11; 3:3, 4; 4:2; 5:2; 2 Thes. 2:6). Paul spent a three Sabbath days’ length of time teaching them before persecution ran him off (Acts 17:1-2), and since the Thessalonian epistles were written shortly after his visit, these truths were still fresh on their minds. The word translated “follow [imitate, ASV]” is from the same word we get “mimic.” Here, it is being used as an example. Paul and his coworkers were far from being “disorderly” while they were in Thessalonica (cf. 1 Thes. 2:9). In fact, they did not accept any food without paying for it (2 Thes. 3:8). In contrast with taking food freely, as the idlers would gladly do, Paul and his coworkers labored exceedingly hard so they could pay their own way. One purpose explicitly expressed for this practice of paying for their food was to avoid being burdensome to any of the Thessalonians. A second reason was to set an example for the Thessalonian Christians (2 Thes. 3:9). Paul made clear that he had every right to receive compensation from the Thessalonians (cf. 1 Cor. 9:4, 7-12). This example was especially needed in this Greek-dominated culture, which looked down on manual labor.

Concerning the second way the Thessalonians were informed on how they should support themselves, Paul wrote, “For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat” (2 Thes. 3:10). Again, Paul was not giving them any new information, but reminding them of what he previously taught. “Anyone [who] will not work” does not refer to orphans, the needy, or those recently laid-off (cf. Jas. 1:27; Gal. 6:10), but to those who are able, but not willing to work. There were those in Thessalonica (as there are today) who thought the church “owed” them a living. By the imperative “neither let them eat,” Paul made clear that these people were not to be supported. A primary duty of the church is to be respected by the community. Therefore, Paul not only exhorted the individual members to make their own living, but he laid down the principle that no “economic parasite” was to be tolerated in the church of Christ (Lipscomb 110). “The neglect of this stern but necessary rule makes charity demoralizing” (Findlay 208). This instruction may be a Jewish proverb based upon Genesis 3:19, or it may come from a “bit of good old workshop morality” (Barclay 218), but one thing for sure: it is God’s instruction!

## The Withdrawn Are Not Enemies

Paul closed this section about withdrawing fellowship by writing, “And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. <sup>15</sup>Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother” (2 Thes. 3:14-15). Paul reminded them again of their obligation to those who were not obedient. Although the wording in verses 14-15 is broad enough to include disobedience of any kind, the context indicates that Paul was still referring to the idle, or lazy. The verb “note [take special note, NAS]” means to mark, take special notice of; marking out for blame. The term “do not keep company with” (cf. 1 Cor. 5:9, 11) refers to the refusal of allowing fellowship with the individuals described. The purpose of this “disfellowship” is to give the guilty an opportunity to recognize his or her sin, repent, and return to the Lord. Paul stressed the manner in which the discipline was to be carried out, with tenderness and love. Again, those from whom the church has withdrawn are not, all of sudden, enemies to the church members. They should not be shunned from any contact. Rather, when seen, these withdrawn from members should be spoken to and encouraged to resolve the reason why fellowship was withdrawn so it can be restored. Withdrawing fellowship is to be “medicine for curing, not poison for killing” (McGarvey 47).

## Conclusion

What the Bible teaches, God expects for His people to do! Church discipline to the point of withdrawing fellowship is not always the most popular doctrine, but it is necessary when situations require it. If as in Thessalonians, laziness among members reached the point of required withdrawing fellowship, what about more blatant sins such as denying the humanity of Jesus or binding what God has not bound? Let us continue praying that those from whom we have withdrawn fellowship will repent. *AE Brian* (Works Cited are on bottom of page 4)

# SFA FAMILY MATTERS

## Prayer List

**Our Members:** Tonya Anderson; Bobby Sheumaker; Melody Baxter; Carol Pace; Ginny Hamby; Cierra Edwards; Margaret Coone; Ellen Shearer; Bob Pratt; Ray Naschick; Ron Ford; Chuck & Evelyn Wyatt; Debbie Bush; Geny Johnson; Brian Smith; Sharon Washington.

**Shut In Members:** Faith West, Carol Eason, Virginia Plumlee, Joyce Burbage and Cheryl Barker.

**Others:** Andre & Nasheka Medley and baby Nya; Kate, baby Nya's NICU nurse; Tonya Mathis (hospice care); Keith Cozart (former member); Larry Laster; Chrissi Fuesner; Chip Bolding; Tony Seibert; Neil Entwistle Sr.; Tanya Irizarry; Trevor & Sandy Hutchins; Patricia Hewitt (member of church in Georgia undergoing cancer surgery); Derick Jordan; Peggy Nabors (Kim Faneuf's mother); Keijuan Callaway (Sharon Washington's son); Anna Bess (Margaret Coone's mother); Janet Moore; Jerry Green; Mary Ankroum; Bruce Coleman (Rosalind's husband); Gayle Daugherty (Vince's mother).

## Upcoming Events

**Sunday, January 20-23rd:** Florida School of Preaching Lectureship.

**Saturday, January 25th:** Youth group devo & service project, 10:00 am at the Daugherty's home. Please bring a package of your favorite treat, individually wrapped.

**Sunday, January 26th:** Parents & Youth lunch/meeting after morning service.

**Tuesday, January 28th:** Senior Saints meeting, 9:30 a.m. Please check bulletin board for supplies for the blessings bags. Emily Foster will give a presentation on Lakeland's Historic District.

**January 28th:** H.A.P.P.Y. dinner at the Kemps. Please add your name on the bulletin board.

**Saturday, February 1st:** Ladies' Day at Sebring, last day to RSVP is Jan. 25.

**Friday, February 14th:** Sweetheart Banquet, 6:00 pm in the fellowship hall. Sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board.

**Tuesday, February 18th:** Senior Saints Meeting, 9:30 am

**February 21-23th:** YES weekend in Valdosta, GA. Last day to sign up is Feb. 2nd. For more details, see bulletin board or Vince.

## Thank You

A thank you note is on the bulletin board from Brenda Mask.

We want to thank you for the cards, gifts, and food during Tanner's birth.  
Josh & Marissa Estridge

## Visitors

Chris Kidwell, John Ellwood, Jerry Western, Barbara Harris, Brooks & Laura Boyd, Joe & Val Myers, Emanuel & Marcia White, Scout Carter, T'Jean Tomlinson, Ron & Mary Weisenstine, Butch & Arlene Carr, Will, Autumn, Mac & Avery Vann, Scott & Kristal Markowitz, Andre & Nasheka Medley, Janet Moore, Jerry Green, Sherman Williams, Eric Bunch.

### Communion to Shut-Ins

January 26th ..... Youth Group  
February 2nd ..... Deal  
February 9th..... Van Allen

Watch . . .



In Search of the Lord's Way

## SCHEDULED TO SERVE

### January

**Designated Elder During Services** - Bobby Sheumaker  
**Open/Close Building** - Jason Hendrix

John McShane ..... **Table** ..... Fred Strickland  
David Williams ..... **Assist** ..... Charles Paulin

### Sunday, January 26, 2020 9:30 A.M.

**Song at Bible Class** ..... Kyle Bingle  
**Prayer** ..... Tyler Anderson  
**Sound Booth** ..... Tucker Sweeney  
**Announcements** ..... Wayne Shearer  
**Song Leader** ..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer** ..... Alex Parramore  
**Sermon** ..... Vince Daugherty  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Ken Walker  
**Greeters** ..... Bingle/Sweeney  
**Cards** ..... Klark/Willcut

### 6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader**..... Tucker Sweeney  
**Opening Prayer**..... David Anderson  
**Sermon**..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer**..... Phil Fife

### Wednesday, January 29, 2020

**Song Leader**..... Frank Hamby  
**Opening Prayer**..... Gavin Williams  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Edward Atkins

*If you cannot serve, please let the office or Stacey Paulin know ASAP so a replacement may serve in your place.*

### Sunday, February 2, 2020 9:30 A.M.

**Song at Bible Class/Prayer** ..... Jonathan Singh  
**Sound Booth** ..... Tucker Sweeney  
**Announcements** ..... Frank Hamby  
**Song Leader** ..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer** ..... Wesley Brunson  
**Sermon** ..... Vince Daugherty  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Jim Edmonson  
**Greeters...before:** ..... D.Williams  
**Greeters...after:** ..... Dix  
**Cards** ..... Kevontre/Colby

### 6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader/Prayer** ..... Kyle Williams  
**Sermon** ..... Vince Daugherty  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Alex Parramore

### Wednesday, February 5, 2020

**Song Leader/Prayer** ..... Ian Enamorado  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Rick Kenyon

## ~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Dec. 29 ..... \$8,243.93  
Jan. 05 ..... \$7,177.77  
Jan. 12 ..... \$7,999.01  
Jan. 19 ..... \$7,489.00  
Contribution Average ..... \$7,555.26



## Special Thanks

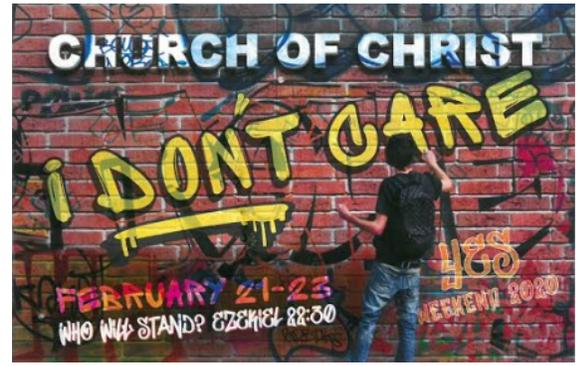
to the SFA congregation for all the help before, during, and after the lectureship! It was a huge success thanks to God and your hard work!



## MISSION TRIP PERU

We are gearing up with prayer and planning for a YES II mission trip to Ica, Peru, on July 17-25, 2020. This was the date that best fit the most members. If you have gone in the past and want to go again, please register online as in the past. If you are new, see Brian for how to register. We appreciate our eldership for seeing the value of involving our young people in evangelism!

**Young People Make Plans to Attend**



**YES Weekend** hosted by the Forrest Park church of Christ in Valdosta, Georgia. Lord willing, we will meet at the fellowship hall Friday, Feb. 21, eat lunch, load up the vehicles, and go to Georgia. We will return Sunday afternoon, Feb. 23. Let Vince know if you would like to go!



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

Return Service Requested

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



**Save the Date**  
March 8 – 11, 2020



**Let Us Sow the Gospel Seed** everywhere we go by inviting others to church services, church events, the FSOP lectureship, and/or personal Bible studies!

## What About Withdrawing Fellowship? (continued from page 2) Works Cited

- Barclay, William. *The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*. Rev. ed. 1975.
- Bauer, Walter. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 2nd rev. ed. 1979.
- Findlay, George G. *Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Thessalonians*. 1982.
- Lipscomb, David. *Commentary on the New Testament Epistles: Thessalonians, I & II Timothy, Titus and Philemon*. 1942.
- McGarvey, J. W. *Commentary on Thessalonians, Corinthians, Galatians, Romans*. n.d.
- Thayer, J. H. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. 1889.
- Wegenast, Klaus. "Teach, Instruct, Tradition, Education, Discipline." *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Vol. 3. Ed. Colin Brown. 1967. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1986.