



South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.,
Lakeland, FL 33803

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ELDERS

David Anderson
Brian Kenyon
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Tyler Anderson
Jason Hendrix
Rick Kenyon
Stacey Paulin

MINISTER

Joshua Cantrell

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Vince Daugherty

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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.

WEB PAGE

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Joey Treat Pacific Islands
Ted Wheeler Ghana, W.A.

Hills and Valleys

Vince Daugherty

Growing up you may have heard the famous Forrest Gump line, “Life is like a box of chocolates. You never know what you’re gonna get.” Even if you never saw the movie, you may remember those boxes of assorted chocolates that come out just in time for Valentine's Day. When I was young, I did not want to get any of them that had nuts, and especially coconut, in them. When I would make my selection, I would hope for the best, yet never knew until the first bite if I got a good nugget-filled or a nasty nutty-filled kind. The point of the movie line is about life—it is hard to predict what will come. We just have to experience it one bite at a time. We know what mountaintop experiences are and that we never want to come down from them. Also, we know about the lows of life in the valleys. In life, we have our own highs and lows, and the people we love will experience their peaks and valleys. How do we live out this life with our brothers and sisters in Christ? Paul instructs us to “rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep” (Rom. 12:15).

Rejoicing With Those Who Rejoice

I have never been more joyful or proud of my brothers and sisters at SFA than this past week at the FSOP Lectures. Many members helped beforehand to prepare the facilities and grounds for hosting the lectureship. Many participated in multiple workdays and clean up, remodeling in parts of the auditorium, our main entrance, hallways, offices, and setup. We are thankful for new updates to speakers, screens, microphones, computers, and amplified wifi connections. Brian, Jagie, Kathy, and FSOP students I know worked right up till the time of the first lecturer, making sure everything was ready for a good week. Not the least is Brian’s efforts to edit and produce the lectureship book. When one considers this writer’s manuscript had to be submitted for editing along with over thirty others, we get a picture of the task. Yet Brian is exactly in his element, enjoying every minute of it. Paul wrote to Timothy about “elders ... worthy of double honor” (I Tim. 5:17). Brian is to be commended for his efforts.

During the week, our congregation was just getting started. Dottie and Phil Fife worked in the kitchen with Patty, Lou, and Mike Van Allen. They showed up early, stayed late, and worked their tails off all while enjoying themselves. On Wednesday SFA hosted the potluck lunch for the day. Not that it is a competition, but we showed out! Wednesday was easily the best food and the most food served at lunchtime. Anytime George Davis brings in a tin of Jamaican chicken and yellow rice, we know it is a good day. Jeff Stewart, our resident chef, also helped cook taco meat and rice for an alumni dinner. Add to those men, lots of ladies serving up some wonderful casseroles and delicious desserts. The main point is that I think SFA is making the case that we need to have more regular potluck meals together. Jude called these fellowship meals “love feasts” (v. 12). It is never a bad thing to find more reasons to get together with brethren. Josh, Brian, and I each spoke during the hectic week. Stephanie Kenyon also gave a lecture at one of the afternoon ladies class. She also [Continued on page 2]

organized hour-long children's classes each morning and afternoon in which she and others like Rene Bingle and Marrion Beals helped teach. Ladies such as Ruby Lewis, Janis Walden, and Anita Shearer manned the registration tables. Tucker led a prayer before Casey Paulin's lecture. Each night during the singing portion, some of our young men—Judah, Ellis, and Klark helped warm up the congregation by leading and other men led such as David Williams and Andre Medley. Most encouraging was the attendance of many of our members who made conscience efforts to be present, listen, and be enriched by the good lessons each day. I'm not so sure if Ms. Betty did not make every lecture (at 97 years old to boot!). Also, if we need entertainment for a fancy dinner, I know a man who lives next door to the building that plays a mean banjo. I am sure I am not remembering many other individuals and good works, but the Lord knows.

Weeping With Those Who Weep

While I experienced the high of lectureship week, I am very aware of the lows too. Each day of the lectureship we prayed for Sophia Smith. In some ways, it seems like time has just come to a stop since the day of her accident. I cannot imagine what her family goes through on a day-to-day basis. It seems like whenever we get an update there is good news and bad, one step forward, two steps back. However, from the most recent update, we have learned that Sophia has suffered a stroke to her brain stem. We know we ought to pray, but often we do not know what to pray for. So thankful are the saints who have the Spirit who makes intercession for us (Rom. 8:26, 27). When we grasp for answers to some of life's most difficult questions, we must continue to give glory to God in all things, for "we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). It is hard to see the good when life hands us a large helping of suffering. However, we must hold on to our faith, like Job. When tempted to curse God and die, he responded, "The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD" (Job 1:21). We are mindful of those who have suffered a loss recently—Bill and Carlene Long lost their son, Rex; Toney Wilson lost her cousin; and Eve Morelock lost her husband, Curtis. In the end, Curtis was suffering immensely mentally, yet the last conversation he had with me was as lucid as one could get about the power of prayer and the need to pray in Jesus' name. Charles Paulin has been in and out of the hospital. Bobby Simpson has been to the hospital with heart and lung issues. Kathy Nester fell and broke her hip at the beginning of the week. Whether we have members in the hospital, grieving over loved ones, or dealing with other pains and sufferings life as served, we weep with those who weep.

The writer of Ecclesiastes said, "To everything there is a season, A time for every purpose under heaven: A time to be born and a time to die" (3:1, 2). On a gravestone, it shows the year a person was born, a dash, and the date of that person's departure. Maybe it would be more appropriate that the dash be more of a curved line with some ups and downs. It just seems to be more appropriate.

Passages That Sustain When Facing Death

God providentially prepared me for when my wife died of cancer. By the time she was diagnosed, I had taught several FSOP semesters on the Book of Job, ethics (and end-of-life decisions), and several of Paul's epistles that teach about resurrection and afterlife. The Bible verses below were two upon which I often reflected.

First Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it. *God will not allow us to face anything we cannot handle with His help.*

Philippians 1:21-23 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain to depart and be with Christ ... is far better. *Terminal disease in Christians is a win/win; living means serving Christ on earth; dying begins eternal bliss.*

The entire **Book of Job** shows that God has not abandoned us just because we are suffering and/or facing death. There are things God knows we do not. Keep trusting God. Keep loving each other. Keep the faith. ♥ Brian

Welcome!

Brandi Brown has placed membership with us! Let's all get to know her and make her feel welcome at SFA!

PRAYER LIST

Current: Kathy Nester fell and broke her hip last Sunday. Jeanelle Thrower is home with Covid. Ralph and Patricia Rogers have Covid as well.

Continual: Sophia Smith & family (brain trauma recovery); Bob Pratt (health); Brenda Mask (blood pressure issues); Debbie Bush (struggles); Brian Smith (heart health); Antoine & Marcella Swain (health); Wayne Shearer (health); Geny Johnson (health); Bill & Carlene Long (strength); Ron & Judy Ford (health); Bobby Simpson (health); Annett Phillip (health); Janie Wise (health); Charles Paulin (health); Jim Turner (health). Margaret Coone (health).

Shut-ins: Joyce Burbage, Carol Eason, and Kenny & Reba French.

Extended family and Friends: prayer requests are emailed each week and posted on the bulletin board. Please help us keep these lists updated by informing the office of known changes in status.

If you brought food for the lectureship last week, please pick up your dishes in the utility room ! Thank you!

5TH SUNDAY COLLECTION

The next 5th Sunday collection for the Building Fund will be **January 29, 2023.**

If you would like to give additional funds at other times, 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.

Thank you! Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ, How awesome you all are! I have never felt such love, kindness, and support I had during Curt's confinement and demise- your huge hugs, your prayers, your calls, your cards, your visits- were all appreciated with Christ as my anchor and you all kept me afloat. Again Thanks, *Eve Morelock*

Thank you! Thank you all for all your prayers and acts of kindness always. Your great love! God is good! It carries me thru each day! God bless you always, I love you! - *Brenda Mask*

Our food pantry is changing. We will no longer be collecting or keeping food items; instead we will be keeping gas and food cards on hand. We will also keep some bottled water and pop-top cans for anyone needing a quick meal. If you would like to contribute, you can give gas cards, Publix gift cards, or cash towards this work. For questions or further information, please see Rick Kenyon.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

January

Designated Elder - Bobby Sheumaker

Wednesday, January 25, 2023

AnnouncementsFrank Hamby
 Song Leader/prayerAndre Medley
 DevoBrian Kenyon
 Closing PrayerPaul Sweeney

Sunday, January 29, 2023

10:30 A.M.

Rebuilding God's House (Ezra 1:1-3)

Vince Daugherty

6:00 P.M.

Youth Led Service

Those to Serve

10:30 A.M.

Song/prayer before classFrank Hamby
 AnnouncementsRick Kenyon
 A.M. Song LeaderAndre Medley
 Scripture reading/PrayerPaul Sweeney
 Lord's TableNygel St Bernard
 Closing Prayer BrianWilliams
 Open/Close bldg (both).....Brian Kenyon
 GreetersSweeney
 Attendance cards (both)Declan/Ellis
 Sound Booth (both).....Kyle Bingle

6:00 P.M.

P.M. Song LeaderAndre Medley
 Scripture reading/PrayerD. Anderson
 Lord's TableNygel St Bernard
 Closing Prayer.....Rick Kenyon

Wednesday, February 1, 2023

AnnouncementsDavid Anderson
 Song Leader/prayerFrankHamby
 DevoVince Daugherty
 Closing PrayerPaul Sweeney

Upcoming Events 2023

February

11 - Youth Group Valentines Party
 12 - Elders, Deacons, Preachers Meeting
 17-19 - Ladies Retreat (Weeki-Wachee)
 24-26 -Yes Weekend (Forrest Park)
 26 -Fellowship in Service

March

12-15 - SFA Gospel Meeting (Victor Eskew)

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Jan 08.....\$12,824.70
 Jan 15..... \$5,481.00
 Jan 22.....\$6,059.00
 Contribution Average.....\$7,731.18
Weekly budget \$7,410.00

BLESS THIS MESS

Have you ever thought, "I got myself in this mess, so I better get myself out." I'm guilty of thinking those words sometimes. Although I know there's a God of grace, my mind makes me believe His help is available only when I deserve it. That's when I think of Jacob. He spent most of his life changing his destiny. Jacob decided he would do whatever it would take to get his father's blessing. He did succeed, but at the cost of a divided family. It was there when Jacob met God. God showed Jacob he didn't need desperate schemes to be blessed; he already was. His destiny was held securely by the One who never leaves us. No matter how many regrets we carry or how distant God seems, He is still there, and will always be there, gently guiding us out of our mess and into His blessing.

Save the Date:
March 12-15, 2023
Spring Gospel Meeting
Speaker:
Victor Eskew
Theme:
God's Spiritual Family

Lessons from First Timothy: Women Teachers

(1 Timothy 2:11-15)

There are some passages of Scripture that may give people trouble in its proper understanding. First Timothy 2:11-15 can be one of those troubling passages. A couple of things are clear from the text. "Let a woman learn in silence with all submission. And I do not permit a woman to teach or have authority over a man, but be in silence" (v. 11, 12). When it comes to teaching in the assembly of the saints, Paul says that women are not to be the teacher or the one who leads. Paul states why: (1) "Adam was formed first" (v. 13); (2) Eve was deceived; and (3) Adam obeyed his wife (v. 14). Paul's reasoning, led by the Holy Spirit, gives these instructions to help: (1) keep order in the church, and (2) it is binding for the church even to this day. Paul's instructions were not simply for the church that was in Ephesus. One may think this leaves women out of the teaching role entirely, but that is not true. Paul then says, "Nevertheless she will be saved in childbearing if they continue in faith, love, and holiness, with self-control" (v. 15). Women who chose to be mothers have great opportunity, and a role to play in the raising and especially the Biblical teaching of their children. Further, young children are most often taught by women who are dedicated to teaching Bible classes. These women have a great role in serving a local congregation. She is able to teach directly, and also indirectly in the way in which she conducts her in faith, love, holiness, and self-control. -VD

POLISHING THE PULPIT
August 16-24, 2023
Some have expressed interest in chipping-in with other SFA members to rent a cottage in the area and attend. If you are interested, please let the office know so we can start a list.

www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com
Email us: SFA.church@gmail.com

South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST

1807 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

For sermons and podcasts, find us here.



Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.
Ephesians 1:3



If you prefer to receive the bulletin via email, contact us.