



The South Florida Avenue church of Christ

MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave., Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 74 No. 5 February 2, 2021

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
(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.

EMAIL

SFA.church@gmail.com

WEB PAGE

SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

YOUTUBE.com

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.

ACTIVE CHRISTIANITY

Rick Kenyon

There is no doubt that each of us would like to be remembered as an “active Christian.” Sadly, just because someone is in Christ, it does not mean that he or she is automatically considered “active” or “faithful.” Somehow within our culture, we have created various styles of Christianity where an “active” Christian means something different than simply saying “Christian.” The Lord never intended any of His followers to be inactive, thus it should always be our goal to pursue an active Christianity.

First, Christians must be active because our God is always active. “But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, ‘Be holy, for I am holy.’” (1 Peter 1:15-16. NKJV). Consider how each part of the Godhead is currently active (working even right now). “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Keeping watch on the evil and the good” (Prov. 15:3). God is the “living Father” (cf. Jn. 6:57) who is the “Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort” (cf. 2 Cor 1:3). God is the “Spirit of the living God” (cf. 2 Cor. 3:3) who “helps in our weaknesses” and “makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (cf. Rom. 8:26). God is Christ Jesus, “the Son of the living God” (cf. Jn. 6:69), who promised, “I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (cf. Matt. 28:20). There has never been a moment when God has not been at work for us. We have a glorious privilege to pursue an active life of faith in God. One of the greatest results of pursuing that life is that every godly effort produces fruit (whether we see it or not). “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58).

Second, active Christianity strengthens the church. Perhaps this point is self-evident, yet it does deserve notice. The only way to strengthen the church is for its members to be active. When the apostle Paul referred to the church as a “body” he explained that we are “joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:16). Simply put, the more spiritually active an individual becomes, the more active and stronger the church as a whole becomes. The strengthening of the whole church also benefits its leadership. When an individual chooses to be active in their faith, the leadership is both edified and enlightened. They are edified by your sincere faith and will echo the words of John, “I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth” (3 Jn 4). Your active display of Christian light shines a unique ray of hope into their own efforts to guide and lead the congregation. And, to top all it all off, whenever we practice active Christianity, we enrich the positive influence of the local congregation.

Third, active Christianity will look different for every person. We must avoid falling into the pit of Matthew 7:1-6. It is easy (and even tempting at times) to point out the “specks” that others should be doing while ignoring (or avoiding) the “beams” that we won’t touch. Remember that Jesus condemned the Pharisees because “they bind heavy burdens, hard to bear, and lay them on men’s shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers” (Matt. 23:4). To assume that our “level of faithfulness” is the standard for someone else is overstepping our role as our brother’s keeper. Likewise, to assume that we know how much work someone else should be doing and how they are to be doing it is also a dangerous path to tread. If we pursue an active Christianity with sincere faith towards God and genuine love for our brethren, then we can let God take care of the rest.

An active Christianity looks different for each person because “the body is not one member but many” (1 Cor. 12:14). God has designed us uniquely different: “But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased” (1 Cor. 12: 18). This means that an active Christian may display their faith in a public way or in a private way. One man may stand before the congregation to lead publicly, while another may work tirelessly behind the scenes. One is not more or less active than the other. One woman may seek to write cards, make calls, prepare meals, and another may spend time in prayers, visit sick and shut-in, and provide counsel to younger women. Our goal in active Christianity is not to show people around us how bright our Christian light is, rather it is to show God how much we love him, thereby exposing our faith to those who encounter us. “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matt. 5:16).

Fourth, you can be active no matter your circumstance. Whether you are young in the faith or a mature, seasoned Christian, you can be active. Whether you are single, married, married with children, married with grown children, widowed, or someone in between, you can exercise active Christianity. For

YOUTH GROUP by Vince Daugherty

What Would Jesus Do?

The acronym WWJD became very popular during the 1990s and early 2000s. I remember growing up seeing kids wearing bracelets with the letters WWJD. The idea is a good one as long as we keep two things straight.

What did Jesus do? To do what Jesus did, we must be sure we know what Jesus did when He lived on the earth. 1 Peter 2:21 says that He has left us an example, and, “you should follow His steps.” I cannot walk in the same path as someone with whom I am not familiar. Therefore, we must study and read our Bible to know what Jesus did before we can ask WWJD.

What did Jesus do to prepare? To do what Jesus did, I cannot run into trials and temptations without preparation, only holding a bracelet. If I come to a trial or temptation and only then ask the question WWJD, it will be too late. Jesus was great at always doing what was pleasing to His Father because He prepared for success. A study of Jesus's life shows He often woke up early to pray in preparation for difficult decisions He had to make. I must ask myself have I prepared like Jesus to ask WWJD?

To own the acronym WWJD is a high calling. It is for people who are committed to truly knowing how Jesus did it, and those who are truly committed to doing life exactly like Jesus in every part of their lives.

those who are learning the ways of Christ, being active may mean focusing on overcoming learned, worldly behaviors. Your fight and constant battle to achieve the “basics of Christianity” is not to be taken lightly. In Christ, there is no such thing as a small victory. If you are familiar with the “principles of Christianity,” an active faith may be the pursuit of deeper study or applying the truths of God’s word to your life’s current circumstance. Sometimes the most active faiths are displayed at times where we merely survive. Job was a man that never did any great act of faith other than endure suffering. “...But when you do good and suffer, if you take it patiently, this is commendable before God. For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps” (1 Pet. 2:20-21).

There is no way around this simple truth: Active Christianity is nothing more than being faithful. Each one of us can bear the name of Christ with boldness and truth if we are willing to acknowledge the truth of God’s word and allow God to use us in His kingdom. Pray for yourself and each other that each of us may fulfill a life defined by “active Christianity.” “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Eph 2:10).

Senior Saints

by John McShane

The world around us today seems to have a lot of us full of anger over things that we have very little control over. I feel that this pandemic has brought about many changes to the lives of us senior citizens. I know that it has put me in a world that I have not faced before, and I assume that many of you face the same changes that I do. Being restricted to where we can go has given us a lot more time to listen to or watch others on various social media platforms. We are hearing and seeing things that do not make sense to us and can cause many emotions and thoughts in our minds that lead to anger. I recently came across this saying, “The more anger towards the past you carry in your heart, the less capable you are of loving in the present.” Try to keep in mind that those were yesterday’s feelings and that today is a new day that God has made. God’s word has much to say about anger, and if we are wise, we will pay attention and put anger aside. Proverbs 14:29 reads, ***“He who is slow to anger has great understanding and profits from his self-control, But he who is quick-tempered exposes and exalts his foolishness for all to see.”*** In Ephesians 4:31, ***“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice.”*** Keep in mind that a lot of what we hear and see is someone’s opinion and may or may not be fully truthful.

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

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

Our Members:

PRAYER LIST

Bob Pratt
Chuck Wyatt
Adeline Hine
Bill & Carlene Long
Cieara Edwards
Kathy Nester
Sharon M. Washington
Joyce Williams
Sharon Roy
Jeanelle Thrower

Brenda Mask
Linda McShane
Bernetta Green
Bobby Simpson
Brian Smith
Jim Turner
Annette Phillip
Ron & Judy Ford
Geny Johnson
Antoine & Marcella Swain

Carol Edmonson
Wayne Shearer
Ingrid Stewart
Melody Baxter
Geny Johnson
Margaret Coone
George Davis
Ray Nashick
Jim Edmonson

(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.

UPDATES & PRAYER REQUESTS

Adeline Hine is scheduled for kidney surgery on Tuesday, February 2

Jim Edmonson is in hospital with pneumonia. He cannot have visitors but would love phone calls.

Geny Johnson is scheduled for hernia surgery on Thursday.

Jeanelle Thrower is home sick. She does not have the Covid virus.

Sharon Washington is in the hospital with a leg infection.

Annette Phillip had an allergic reaction and was in the hospital but is doing better now.

Sharon Roy was in the hospital but is now in rehab. She hopes to come home soon.

RESPONSES

Jeff Stewart is having medical tests and requests prayers for good results.

Gavin Williams request prayers for seasoned speech and humility to win souls for Christ.

Eric Bowman requests prayers for strength.

LADIES' CLASS

Tuesday, February 16, 2021 at 7pm

Facebook Group: FSOP Ladies Class.

This month's topic:

Have you left your first love?

Revelation 2:4

Teacher: Shenia Brownlow-Dinday



SCHEDULED TO SERVE

January

Designated Elder - Bobby Sheumaker

Wednesday, February 3, 2021

Song Leader/prayer Nigel St. Bernard
Devo Paul Sweeney
Closing Prayer Mike Van Allen

Sunday, February 7, 2021

10:30 A.M.

Sermon Vince Daugherty
"Covenants Old and New"
Hebrews 8:7-13

6:00 P.M.

Sermon Vince Daugherty
"The Way of Cain"
Genesis 4

10:30 A.M.

Open/Close bldg (both services) Jason Hendrix
Greeters E & C Smith
Song/prayer before class Johnny Singh
Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
A.M. Song Leader David Williams
Scripture reading/Prayer Nigel St. Bernard
Lord's Table Wesley Brunson
Closing Prayer Josh Potvin

6:00 P.M.

Greeters Bingle
P.M. Song Leader David Williams
Scripture reading/Prayer Matt Webb
Lord's Table Wesley Brunson
Closing Prayer Tyler Anderson

Wednesday, February 10, 2021

Song Leader/Prayer Rick Kenyon
Devo Ian Enamorado
Closing Prayer Brian Kenyon

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. 17 | \$7,387.00 |
| Jan. 24 | \$7,417.00 |
| Jan. 31 (building fund) | \$8,562.00 |
| Contribution Average | \$7,197.17 |

When life throws us off track, we can easily forget Psalm 46:10, "Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth!" Because of our daily struggles, it can be easy to be emotional if we don't put the Lord in the center of our lives. First Chronicles 16:11 says, "Seek the Lord and His strength; Seek His face evermore!"

Sometimes it is easy to talk about our issues. Sometimes it is not. Therefore, we need to stay in prayer constantly so we can handle what daily life throws at us. Remember the Lord's words on those days that we cannot get our hair to look right or when nothing fits like it once did or when everything seems to go wrong, and we want to crawl back into bed in our PJs and eat chocolate cake. The more difficult days may be easier to handle when His words live in us.

Let us not only pray but also get deeper into the Lord's words. Psalm 119:105 reads, "Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." I personally do not think anything is complete within myself without the Lord. Matthew 4:4 reads, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God." I would like to say all the educated and inspirational words to make everyone's day better, but when it comes down to it, no one in this world can make us as complete as the Lord's words can. We must have faith, remembering that "whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this, we know that we are in Him" (1 John 2:5).

Why Jesus Came to Earth

Seek and save the lost
Luke 19:10

Fulfill prophecy
Matthew 1:21-25

Reveal God to us
John 14:8-10

To preach the gospel
Mark 1:38

To die for our sins
Matthew 26:28

To bear witness to the truth
John 18:38

Christians must be ready:

- to defend our faith
(1 Peter 3:15)
- to die and be judged
(2 Timothy 4:6)
- for every good work
(Titus 3:1)
- to preach the gospel
(Romans 1:15)
- for the return of Jesus
(Luke 12:40)

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

**TO THE ONLY WISE
GOD OUR SAVIOR, BE
GLORY AND MAJESTY,
DOMINION AND POWER,
BOTH NOW AND EVER.
AMEN.**

JUDE 1:25