



# South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.,  
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 77 No. 7 February 14, 2023

## ELDERS

David Anderson  
Brian Kenyon  
Bobby Sheumaker

## DEACONS

Tyler Anderson  
Jason Hendrix  
Rick Kenyon  
Stacey Paulin

## MINISTER

Joshua Cantrell

## ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Vince Daugherty

## OFFICE PHONE

(863) 682-4702

## EMAIL

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

## 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

[SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com](http://SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com)

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## HOME OF

*Florida School of Preaching*  
since 1969

**Missionary - Huron, SD**  
*Casey & Emily Paulin*

## MISSION FIELDS

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

## **Do You Believe There Is Something Better Than This Life?**

Joshua Cantrell

Death is the common denominator for all mankind, but Christians do not sorrow as those who have no hope (1 Thessalonians 4:13-14). We believe that this life is not our home; we are just passing through. We look forward to the day when we can be with our God for all eternity. Our faith in God allows us to trust God. The Bible speaks a great deal about having faith in God. We trust him because we know his character. The Hebrews writer declares, "But without faith, it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). Our faith allows us to see what our physical eyes can not see (2 Corinthians 5:7). Our faith is not some blind leap in the dark. Our faith is based on the evidence we read in God's word, and what we see in our own lives. The saints in the first century believed that there was something better after this life. They believed in the promises God had given to them (John 14:1-3).

As the Hebrews writer continues his thoughts on faith, he gives examples of those who were faithful to God despite the circumstances in their lives (Hebrews 11). We often look to God to change our circumstances, but God wants our circumstances to change us. As the Hebrews writer pens this chapter he reminds us of many faithful servants who had gone on before us. He declares, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them and embraced them, that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. But now they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly country: Wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (Hebrews 11:13-16).

They looked for a city where the foundations were not man-made. Through the ingenuity of mankind, we have been able to create many great things. Only our Father in heaven could create something as beautiful as heaven. This city is an everlasting city, one that never goes away. It is a city that is awaiting those faithful when our Lord returns for his bride, the church. To think there is something better than this life is to understand that God has a plan for us. Many have built their hopes and dreams only by planning for this life. Paul writes, "For which cause we faint not; but though the outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (2 Corinthians 4:16-17).

(cont.)

When asked the question, “Do you believe that there is something better than this life?” Christians can say with full assurance, YES! Not only do we believe there is something better than this life, we know. Paul struggled with wanting to stay here or going to be with Jesus. He writes, “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better” (Philippians 1:21-23). Paul understood that this world was only temporary. We can look death in the face and have the same confidence as Paul.

## **Building Our Hope**

As we look at hope we can understand that the Biblical definition of hope and that of the world is not the same. Typically we use the word “hope” as in wishful thinking. We “hope” we are going to heaven. Christian hope is an expectation, trusting God and knowing that he will deliver what he promised. Paul records, “who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, so shall thy seed be. And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about a hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara’s womb. He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able to perform” (Romans 4:18-21).

Our hope is not connected with the promises of the world. This world will pass away. Jesus would say, “my words shall not pass away” (Matthew 24:35). As Christians, we build our hope on that which is eternal. Paul records, “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). Our Faith and hope are tied to the word of God. As we grow in our relationship with God, so does our faith and hope. Peter would say, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for you” (1 Peter 1:3-4).

We all have had reservations and plans canceled on us. This is a reservation that will not be canceled. God keeps his promises and does not cancel plans. His word is his bond. The Hebrews writer records, “But without faith, it is impossible to please him, for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Hebrews 11:6). By building our faith in God, we build our hope and expectation for heaven. In Hebrews 11, the Hebrews writer gives us a great chapter about faith and hope. This chapter takes us back to the Old Testament and reminds us that faith and hope are connected. Paul would say, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope” (Romans 15:4). We can look back at the Old Testament, and encourage ourselves for today.

When tragedy strikes our lives, we look to God. The people of God suffered greatly through the period of wilderness wanderings, the conquest of Canaan, the judges, the kings, and throughout the prophets. They all found their purpose and the proper response to those problems. Looking to God as their only solution. Paul records, “For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (2 Timothy 4:12).

**PRAYER LIST**

**Current:** Kathy Nester is home now. , David Anderson had hand surgery on Monday, Brandi Brown has had the flu, Dani Cantrell has Covid , Bernetta Green is in LRH with Covid and she fell **Continual:** Bob Pratt (health); Brenda Mask (blood pressure issues); Debbie Bush (struggles); Brian Smith (heart health); Antoine & Marcella Swain (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

**Men's Breakfast**

will be hosted by SFA on February 18th at 9:00 am.  
Please see Phil Fife if you can help in the kitchen.

**POTLUCK LUNCHEON** - Join us on Sunday, Feb. 26th after morning worship as we fellowship together. We will be honoring the Cantrell family as they will be leaving us to begin their new work in Georgia. Please bring enough food for your family and some to share!  
**Team 3** will be the team that helps in the kitchen.

*Response: Skyler Ingram requested prayer last Sunday and wants to rededicate his life to the Lord. Let us continue to encourage him and keep him in our prayers*



The SFA church directory is now available on the **Instant Church Directory App**. Privacy and safety is an absolute factor! To access the app, your email address **must** be registered with the office to verify identity. If the office does not have your email, access to the directory will be **denied**. If you need assistance or more information about it, please see Rick Kenyon.

**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.

**Save the Date:**  
March 12-15, 2023  
Spring Gospel Meeting

**Speaker:**  
Victor Eskew

**Theme:**  
God's Spiritual Family

**SCHEDULED TO SERVE**

**February**

Designated Elder - David Anderson

**Wednesday, February 15, 2023**

Announcements ..... Stacey Paulin  
Song Leader/prayer ..... V. Daugherty  
Devo.... ..... Rick Kenyon  
Prayer ..... Brian Kenyon

**Sunday, February 19, 2023**

**10:30 A.M.**

Leading From Your Knees (Neh. 1)  
V. Daugherty

**6:00 P.M.**

The Book of Numbers- V. Daugherty

**Those to Serve**

**10:30 A.M.**

Song/prayer before class ..... Frank Hamby  
Announcements ..... Jimmy Sweeney  
A.M. Song Leader ..... Tucker Sweeney  
Scripture reading/Prayer ..... Paul Sweeney  
Lord's Table (both)..... Rick Kenyon  
Closing Prayer ..... David Deal  
Open/Close bldg (both)..... B. Sheumaker  
Greeters ..... Olivia/Ingrid  
Attendance cards (both) ..... Declan/Camron  
Sound Booth (both)..... Brian Williams

P.M. Song Leader ..... Landon Wilcutt  
Scripture reading/Prayer ..... Josh Potvin  
Closing Prayer ..... Tyler Anderson  
Greeters PM..... Fifes

**Wednesday, February 22, 2023**

Announcements ..... Frank Hamby  
Song Leader/prayer.... Tucker Sweeney  
Devo.... ..... Bobby Sheumaker  
Prayer ..... Terrance Dindy

**Upcoming Events 2023**

**February**

- 18- Men's Breakfast SFA 9:00
- 23- Ladies Night Out 7:00 Mimi's Italian Ice
- 24-26 YES Weekend
- 24 Sing at Orange Street church of Christ 7:00 pm
- 26 Potluck luncheon at SFA for Cantrell's
- 26-Mar 2- Gospel meeting at North Lkld

**~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~**

Jan 29.....	\$7,819.00
Feb 5 .....	\$5,522.00
Feb. 12.....	\$9,913.00
Contribution Average.....	\$7,739.81
<b>Weekly budget .....</b>	<b>\$7,410.00</b>

Our Perfect Author and Finisher

God has no eraser. As He knows the story we are writing, He doesn't have to waste time scribbling out lines or brushing off eraser scraps. Our God is spending extra time on the details of our story. Some of the chapters we write (intentionally or not) are sad. These chapters make us want to close the book and scream. Some chapters are filled with so much joy it brings tears to our eyes, and we wish we could go back and reread them over and over. Despite the ups and downs of our story God is with us. He knows our story and knows our struggles. Isaiah 43:2 says, "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you." Not only does He know our story (because He knows everything about us), He feels compassion when we go through the lows of our story even though He knows the outcome. Our God is a God of compassion. He is not just waiting for us at the end of our story ready to catch us as we make it through all the highs and lows; He is with us the whole way. He has our hand while we are reading.

Youth Section

**Lessons from I Timothy**  
**Deacon = Servant**

The best way I can think of deacons is by illustrations. 1) Deacons are bridge builders. They connect people as best they can in whatever way possible to bridge the gap a Christian or potential Christian has to Christ. 2) Deacons are bulldozers. They smooth out as best they can any obstacles in the way of a Christian or potential Christian getting closer to Christ. 3) Deacons are servants. A deacon in the church is a servant who works tirelessly for God and for the church. The original words that come together are "dia" meaning thoroughly; and "konis" meaning dust. A deacon is one who serves with such zeal that dust is raised up because of the speed at which he serves. How did Paul and the Lord view those who serve well? "Those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 3:13). How well do you serve others? Is the dust flying up because you are so ready to serve?- V.D.

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

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For sermons and podcasts, find us here.



**South Florida Avenue  
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1807 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

*"Now may the Lord of peace himself give  
you peace at all times and in every way.*

*The Lord be with all of you."*

*11 Thessalonians 3:16*



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