



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

(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.

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SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

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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.

Patterns in Genesis

Hiram Kemp

The Book of Genesis is the book of beginnings. As we launch into the Bible, Moses teaches us how the world came into existence, how sin entered the world, and how God loved His people through all of their ups and downs. Genesis is familiar to many because several of the Bible's main characters are introduced to us in this book. As you read Genesis, you will begin to pick up on patterns and repeated themes that reoccur throughout its pages. Noticing these themes helps us to see that there is nothing new under the sun. Furthermore, we learn that we sometimes fail to learn from the mistakes of others as we should. There are also positive patterns in Genesis. There are promises made and fulfilled, grace is extended and received, and blessings are bestowed. God teaches through patterns to help His people cement certain things in their minds. We should note these patterns and then pattern ourselves after the good and reject the recurring evil.

A Legacy of Lies

We are introduced to lying in the third chapter of Genesis. The serpent lies to the woman as he misrepresents God and twists His words about the forbidden fruit (Gen. 3:1-4). The woman gives in to the serpent's deception, then she and her husband eat the fruit and are banished from God's garden (Gen. 3:6-24). What Eve might have viewed as an innocent lie carried grave consequences. The lying continues as Cain kills his brother, Abel, and then lies to God about knowing where his brother was (Gen. 4:8-9). Cain had blood on his hands and dishonesty in his heart because he could not cope with the fact that his brother's sacrifice was accepted and his was rejected (Gen. 4:5-7). Rather than face the truth and do the right thing, Cain preferred to murder and then practice dishonesty.

Genesis documents the lies of the otherwise righteous individuals like Abraham and Isaac, who both lied about their relationship to their wives (Gen. 12:10-20, 20:1-18, 26:6-16). There is the dishonesty practiced by Rebekah and Jacob, as they deceive the aged and partially blind Isaac (Gen. 27:6-29). Jacob is later deceived on several different occasions by Laban when Laban gives Jacob "a dose of his own medicine" (Gen. 29: 21-30). Jacob's sons lie to him about their selling Joseph into the hand of foreigners, and they pretend as if Joseph had been killed by a wild animal (Gen. 37:29-36). Genesis shows us how deeply engrained lying can become in the human heart. Christians are told to put away lying and hold to the truth (Eph. 4:25; Col 3:9). The truth is what sets us free (John 8:31-32). All liars will ultimately be separated from God (Rev. 21:8). As we see the legacy of lying presented in Genesis, let us be those who want to sustain a track record of truth.

Struggles Among Siblings

While every family is unique, some similarities are present in every family. The Book of Genesis depicts families having turmoil and strife among them as a result of the fall of man in the garden. It begins with Cain killing his brother Abel (Gen. 4:1-8) and continues with Isaac and Ishmael failing to get along in their mixed family dynamic (Gen. 21:9-11). Esau is described as hating his brother and wanting to kill him because he had been hustled out of this birthright (Gen. 27:41-42). Rachel and Leah engaged in fierce competition over who could give the most children to Jacob while their sibling rivalry and hatred consumed them (Gen. 29:31-30:24). Joseph's brothers hated him so much that they could not speak kindly to him (Gen. 37:4) and hated him because of his dreams (Gen. 37:5-8). The Bible commands us to love God, but we must also love our neighbors (Lev. 19:18; Deut. 6:4-5). It is easy to forget that our loved ones are our neighbors, too.

We need to learn how to love one another as Jesus taught us (John 13:34-35). Though we are centuries removed from the sibling strife in the Book of Genesis, we still struggle with the same problems. In the family of God, we are to love our brethren because if we fail to love them, then we do not truly love God (1 John 3:14-18, 4:17-21). Let us learn from the families in Genesis that all families have problems, but those problems can be solved, and we can enjoy peace and unity. It should be noted that in some of the strained relationships between families in Genesis, there was reconciliation and forgiveness. Esau and Jacob reunited and embraced each other in peace (Gen. 33:1-17). Joseph forgave his brothers and provided for them while in Egypt (Gen. 50:15-21). We should also notice that in some cases, reconciliation was not possible (Gen. 4:8, 4:10). Let us make the most of our relationships with our physical families and our spiritual family in Christ so that we will not be filled with regrets when our time runs out (Psa. 90:12).

The Goodness of God

God is good (Psa. 136:1; Nah. 1:7). The opening chapter of the Bible details that God created the world and made everything good (Gen. 1:4, 1:10, 1:12, 1:18, 1:21, 1:25). The creation account climaxes with God's work being described as very good (Gen. 1:31). What God originally made was good and superb because everything good comes from God's benevolent hand (James 1:17). He gave mankind the necessary provisions that were good for food (Gen. 2:9). The gold of the land was also described as good (Gen. 2:12). Even when God saw something that He described as "not good," for example, man being alone, He fixed it. In His goodness, He provided man with a helpmeet (Gen. 2:18-25).

God's goodness followed His people when Abraham died in a "good old age" (Gen. 25:8) and also when Jacob recounted the good that God promised to extend to his offspring (Gen. 32:12). Genesis is bookended with the idea of God's goodness. Everything God made was "very good" (Gen. 1:31) even when men try to do evil, God can use it for good (Gen. 50:20). These passages show us that amidst the wickedness and corruption caused by sin,

~ YOUTH GROUP NEWS ~

The B-I-B-L-E

We can stand firmly on the Bible. God has preserved in one great book 66 smaller books, written by about 40 men on three different continents with one great story weaved throughout - God's great love for us! No book is more widely known, no book has sold more copies, no book can compare to its great stories. And, no book can speak to the human spirit like the Bible can. That is because God inspired it (II Timothy 3:16). The Creator of the Universe and everything that is in it made sure to preserve the Book that would instruct us on how to live and how to find our way back to Him. Now that is the book for me!

God's people can take solace knowing that "goodness and mercy" will follow us all the days of our lives (Psalm 23:6) because we serve a good God (Psalm 25:8).

Hints of Heaven's Plan

Genesis not only introduces us to man's sin and downfall but also heaven's solution. The plan of salvation was in the mind of God from eternity's past, but He begins revealing details about the scheme of redemption to humanity very early on (2 Tim. 1:9). God tells the serpent that his head would be crushed by the Seed of woman, and he would bruise the heel of the One crushing him (Gen. 3:15). Though this may not be immediately obvious to readers, the rest of the Bible shows that this is a reference to Jesus coming from woman and defeating the devil and his forces through His own painful death (Matt. 1:18-25; Rom. 16:20; Heb. 2:14-15). God promised Abraham that through his seed, all families of the earth will be blessed (Gen. 12:1-3). Paul informs us that this was the gospel preached to Abraham (Gal. 3:8-9, 26-29).

Finally, as Jacob blessed his sons, a passage speaks of Judah having a symbol of kingship and bringing peace (Gen. 49:9-10). Jesus, the King of the universe, sprang from the tribe of Judah and serves as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Matt. 1:1-17; Rev. 19:16). Genesis does not simply speak to us of the ruin of the world through sin but also of the rescuing of the world through our Savior. As we make our way through this book, it prepares us to look for further hints and prophecies about the One who is coming to undo all that we have done in our sin (Matt. 1:21).

***Senior Saints* by John McShane**

As I sit around pondering about all the turmoil this world seems to be going through at this time, it seems as if every day brings something new. Some things that we seniors have experienced all our lives are seeming to really irritate the younger generation. Statues that are part of our history are now viewed as racist. The Doctor Seuss books that we grew up with are no longer fit to be read. Political parties have turned into "us versus them" instead of doing the job they were elected to do. And on top of all that, we have the covid to worry about. Today, I came across this tidbit that may help to explain what this world needs. Said the robin to the sparrow, "I would surely like to know why these anxious human beings fret about and worry so!" Said the sparrow to the robin, "I imagine it must be that they have no heavenly Father such as cares for you and me." We do have a Heavenly Father that has told us in His word that we should cast our worries on Him. In Philippians 4:6-7 we read, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." In 1 Peter 5:7, "Casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you." It is time we put God back in all the places that have thrown him out, so the rest of the world can know what we know.

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

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

Our Members:

Bob Pratt
 Chuck Wyatt
 Adeline Hine
 Bill & Carlene Long
 Cieara Edwards
 Kathy Nester
 Sharon M. Washington
 Joyce Williams
 Antoine & Marcella Swain

PRAYER LIST

Brenda Mask
 Linda McShane
 Bernetta Green
 Bobby Simpson
 Brian Smith
 Margaret Coone
 Annette Phillip
 Ron & Judy Ford
 Carol Edmonson
 Jim Edmonson
 Jim Turner
 Melody Baxter
 Geny Johnson
 Sharon Roy
 George Davis
 Ray Nashick

(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

Jim Edmonson has moved to rehab and was able to see his family recently.

Debbie Bush is suffering from eye problems, possibly a detached retina.

Sharon Washington is back in LRMC with bone problems.

Jim Turner's great-grandson, Robert, was born on March 10, 2021 at 28 weeks weighing 2 lbs 15 oz, 16 1/8 inches long. Please remember baby Robert and Mom (Jennifer Melhrose) while he is in the hospital.

Thank you

There is a note from **Wissam Al-Aethawi** on the bulletin board.

World map

Mission Work

We have recently received newsletters from
Joey & Tammy Treat - Pacific Islands
Wissam Al-Aethawi - Arab Christian Ministry
Marc Veary - Malawi, Africa

Please take a moment to get caught up with their work. Their contact info is on their newsletters on the bulletin board.
 Send them a letter or an email.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

March

Designated Elder - Brian Kenyon

Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Song Leader/Prayer Ian Enamorado
 Devo Rick Kenyon
 Closing Prayer Bobby Sheumaker

Sunday, March 21, 2021

10:30 A.M.

Sermon Hiram Kemp
"Things That Are Impossible"
 Hebrews 6:18

6:00 P.M.

Sermon Hiram Kemp
*"A Church Pleasing to God:
 God Approved Elders"*
 1 Timothy 3:1-7

10:30 A.M.

Open/Close bldg (both times) David Anderson
 Greeters E&C Smith
 Song/prayer before class Stacey Paulin
 Announcements Brian Kenyon
 A.M. Song Leader Vince Daugherty
 Scripture reading/Prayer Rick Kenyon
 Lord's Table Wesley Brunson
 Closing Prayer Josh Estridge

6:00 P.M.

Greeters Stewart
 P.M. Song Leader Vince Daugherty
 Scripture reading/Prayer Josh Potvin
 Lord's Table Wesley Brunson
 Closing Prayer George Davis

Wednesday, March 24, 2021

Song Leader/prayer David Williams
 Devo Hiram Kemp
 Closing Prayer David Anderson

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 ~

Feb. 28 \$6,804.00
Mar. 7 \$7,337.65
Mar. 14 \$6,135.05
Contribution Average \$7,117.94

As I was eating my morning Cheerios recently, I noticed some were shaped like hearts instead of the usual "O". This made me think of my lifelong friend and sister in Christ who loves, collects, and always seems to find things in the shape of a heart. Many of you have seen the hearts she has found or has even sent her pictures of hearts that you've seen. Have you ever wondered how she spots so many hearts? All around, whether a leaf, a rock, or a cheerio, she has a passion and thus has developed an eye for finding hearts (and has some of us trained to do the same).

What if we compare this example to how we look for souls? Do you love souls? Want to "collect" them and help bring them to Christ? When you look at the driver who honks at you in frustration, do you see a soul or just an angry face? When you see someone on the street corner, do you see a soul or do you just try to decide if they are really in need? How about the person on the phone who you can't understand very well and is taking forever to help you? Do you think of a soul or just someone wasting your time? Developing an eye for seeing all these as souls may require some practice and perhaps a change of heart.

Let us seek lost souls as Jesus did (Luke 19:10), be passionate and diligent in our search (Colossians 3:23), and use our own "hearts" to love others as Jesus loves us (John 15:12)!  

Major Lessons From Minor Prophets

Lack of knowledge destroys
Hosea 4:6

God is good
Nahum 1:7

Walk humbly with God
Micah 6:8

God sings
Zephaniah 3:17

God does not change
Malachi 3:6

God restores when we repent
Joel 2:25

God can hear us anywhere
Jonah 2:1-2

God's eyes are pure
Habakkuk 1:13

Promises of God

Eternal life - 1 John 2:25

Abiding presence - Matthew 28:20

Forgiveness - Hebrews 8:12

Jesus will return - John 14:3

Heaven is reserved - 1 Peter 1:3-5

Christians are heirs - Galatians 3:29

Life - 1 Timothy 4:8 and 2 Timothy 1:1

Crown of life - James 1:12

www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

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**South Florida Avenue
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1807 South Florida Avenue

Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

"FOR GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD, THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY BEGOTTEN SON, THAT WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM SHOULD NOT PERISH BUT HAVE EVERLASTING LIFE."

JOHN 3:16