

# The South Florida Avenue **MESSENGER**

CHURCH OF CHRIST

**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. 68 No.13 04-7-15

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## SUNDAY SERVICES

Bible Study.....9:30a.m.  
Worship.....10:30a.m.  
Evening Worship.....6:00p.m.

## WEDNESDAY

Ladies Class.....10:00a.m.  
Bible Study.....7:00p.m.

## HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching

## MISSION FIELDS

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

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[www.sfacc.net](http://www.sfacc.net)

## COULD IT BE?

Roger Rush

**I**t was early Sunday morning when Mary Magdalene made her way to the tomb where the body of Jesus had been laid to rest. To her great surprise and distress, she found the stone rolled away from the entrance to the tomb and the body of Jesus missing. What had happened? Where could he be? Who would do such a thing? These, and a dozen other questions, must have flooded her mind as she rushed to tell the other disciples of her discovery (John 20:1-23).

What she did not know but would soon learn was the startling revelation that Jesus Christ was alive. The devil had been defeated. Death had been unable to hold him. Christ had conquered all. It was resurrection morning, and Jesus was alive. Because of his victory, all can be victors. His resurrection was the crowning miracle of his ministry. It was the “good news” of the Gospel. By it, he demonstrated the scope of his sovereign power.

Doubters deny, scoffers scoff, skeptics question and critics seek to controvert it. But the fact remains; there is no viable explanation for the empty tomb other than the resurrection. Consider these questions. 1) If his enemies had taken his body, why did they not produce it? 2) If his disciples had removed his body from the tomb, how did they do it without being detected by the guards. 3) If his disciples had taken his body, they would have known that the Gospel was fabricated on a lie. Would they have sacrificed and died for something which they knew was not true? 4) How were so many witnesses fooled into believing they saw him alive following his crucifixion (1 Corinthians 15:5-8)? 5) How do we explain the conversion of Saul (Acts 9, 22, 26)? 6) Where is his grave? 7) What happened to his body?

If the resurrection story is a hoax, then Christianity rests on a lie, and Christians are the sorriest of the sorry (1 Corinthians 15:12-19). But could it be that there is no explanation for the empty tomb beyond the resurrection? Given the available evidence, it takes far more faith to deny the resurrection than to believe it. Because he lives, we shall live with him some day. That knowledge restores hope to lost souls. Doubt or disbelief offers nothing.

# UNFEIGNED LOVE

*Nat Evans*

**U**nfeigned” literally means not being hypocritical. Originally, it meant one who was real and not just a play actor on a stage, acting out a part. He is genuine. Unfeigned love is, therefore, sincere affection without admixture of deceit; it is true affection. It is not in word only. Thus, we have in 1 Peter 1:22, “Seeing ye have purified your souls in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another with a pure heart fervently.”

**They had purified their souls through their obedience to the truth.** They had heard the word of the truth of the Gospel and had obeyed it (John 17:17; Romans 10:17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9). They then had the same spiritual parentage. They had become children of God. They had now been added to the New Testament church (Acts 2:47; 1 Corinthians 12:13). They had the same spiritual Father. They had become brothers and sisters in Christ. They were to love one another with a pure heart fervently. “Fervently” is from ektenos and describes an emotion that is forceful and warm.

**We read in 1 Peter 4:8, “Above all things, being fervent in your love among yourselves; for love covereth a multitude of sins: using hospitality one toward another without murmuring.”** He described a warm, ardent love. The word from which fervent comes is Ktenos. It originally had to do with music, referring to the drawing out, of the stretching of a music string. The point being that children of God are not to love one another halfheartly or indifferently like a lost string on a musical instrument, but with the full tension of heart strings giving our all.

**In New Testament Scripture, love is the badge of discipleship.** This is one of the chief ways that the world recognizes us as truly being the children of God by the love we have one for the other (John 13:34-35). “A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” Since this is the case, then it is also true that when brethren fight and war with one another over matters of judgment, it will leave a bad taste in people’s mouths in the community. It often takes many years for a community or town to get over a church split. Brethren, why must we bite and seek to devour one another over matters of judgment (Galatians 5:15)? Paul lovingly wrote, “Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment” (1 Corinthians 1:10).

**At the same time, love does not mean maintaining silence and allowing error to gain control.** It does not mean compromising the truth for anybody, at any place or at any time. Truth is never an item to be surrendered at any price (Proverbs 23:23; 2 John 9-11; Romans 16:17-18). However, let us have the wisdom to distinguish between matters of doctrine and matters of judgment. Further, while doing so, let love of the brethren continue (Hebrews 13:1). Let us love one another from a pure heart fervently, and let our love be unfeigned. Christian love is interested in helping, in binding up, healing and forgiving. It is interested in protecting and preserving the church and the truth as well as saving men’s souls. It is “unfeigned.” Let us “abound in love one toward another” 1 Thessalonians 3:12; 1 John 4:11-12, 19). “Ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another (2 Thessalonians 4:9). “Love the brotherhood” (1 Peter 2:17).

# SFA FAMILY MATTERS

## Prayer List

**Our Members:** Jacqueline Dopwell's cancer has returned she will start chemotherapy soon. Grace McAnally and Sharon Egolf have been home sick. Gerry Lawrence had surgery last Friday and is in the hospital in Zephyrhills. Sharon Washington has been admitted into L.R.M.C. Also keep Margaret Coone in prayer.

**Relatives:** Jimmy Puckett & Wayne Hendrix.

**Shut In Members:** Ann Howard, Virginia Plumlee, Bill Burton, Dick & Joyce Burbage.

**Others:** Sybil Carr who is under Hospice care. Clifford Laul, Jeanne Frye, Amanda Burton and Chrissy Fuessner.

## Upcoming Events

**April 12-15th:** -Orange Street will be hosting their Homecoming Gospel Meeting. Jackie Stearsman will be the speaker. See the bulletin board for more details.

**April 12th:** -The Lads to Leaders Banquet will follow the morning service. The theme is Italian and the sign up sheet is on the back bulletin board. Come and support our youth.

**April 18th:** -The Men's Breakfast is at the Eagle Lake Church of Christ at 8:00 a.m.

## Placed Membership

Percy Smart and Janet Crosby placed membership on Sunday. Please welcome them into our family.

## Thank You

Your prayers, calls, visits, food and every act of kindness was appreciated. I'm ready to work again.

In Christian love, bettie bolding.

## Response

Nicole Dix was baptized last Wednesday night after services. Also Marissa Estridge, Flo Duffy, and Faith West responded and asked the prayers of the congregation.

## Visitors

Brian Strickland, Mr. & Mrs. Long, Debra Okolichany, Tina Booth and Brandon Nelson.

## HEAR OUR RADIO SPOTS

*Message this Week*

**“JONAH”**



WONN 1230 or WLKF 1430 or on web page  
[www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com](http://www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com)

## SCHEDULED TO SERVE

### April

Stacey Paulin .....	Table .....	Josh Estridge
Fred Rapley .....	Assist .....	Tucker Sweeney

**Sunday, April 12, 2015**  
**9:30 A.M.**

Song at Bible Class .....	Jim Turner
Prayer .....	David Anderson

**10:30 A.M.**

Announcements .....	Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader .....	Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer .....	David Williams
Closing Prayer .....	Kyle Williams

**6:00 P.M.**

Song Leader .....	Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer .....	Fred Strickland
Closing Prayer .....	Tim Croson
Greeters .....	The French's
Att. Cards .....	Paul & Quadarius
Open & Close Building .....	David Anderson

**Wed. April 15 2015**

Song Leader .....	David Williams
Opening Prayer .....	John McShane
Closing Prayer .....	Fred Strickland

*Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Chuck Wyatt so he can get a replacement - 859-5231*

**Sunday April 19, 2015**  
**9:30 A.M.**

Song at Bible Class .....	Kyle Bingle
Prayer .....	Tucker Sweeney

**10:30 A.M.**

Announcements .....	Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader .....	Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer .....	Kenny French
Closing Prayer .....	Jim Turner

**6:00 P.M.**

Song Leader .....	Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer .....	Steve Hunley
Closing Prayer .....	Ken Walker
Greeters .....	The Bingles
Att. Cards .....	Sebastian & Quadarius
Open & Close Building .....	David Anderson

**April 22, 2015**

Song Leader .....	Jim Turner
Opening Prayer .....	Jimmy Sweeney
Closing Prayer .....	Jeff Bingle

## ~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Mar 15 .....	\$4,370.90
Mar 22 .....	\$3,929.85
Mar 29 .....	\$6,101.22
April 5 .....	\$4,597.13
<b>Contribution Average .....</b>	<b>\$4,691.42</b>
<b>2015 Weekly Budget.....</b>	<b>\$4,302.98</b>

# Re-Charged . . . and Re-Challenged

We had a wonderful Lads to Leaders convention the weekend of April 3-5 in Orlando! Our young people did great. Whether they win trophies or not, we can be thankful they are learning how to lead singing, how to speak publicly, and, most importantly, how to study and live the word of God. In next week's bulletin, we will list our young people's accomplishments. Let us realize some of the great values of the program, culminating with the weekend in Orlando. First, seeing so many young people (including ours) from different congregations all over the country is an encouraging "re-charge"! The wise man said, "As iron sharpens iron, So a man sharpens the countenance of his friend" (Proverbs 27:17). Fellow Christians enthusiastically involving themselves in spiritual growth help and encourage other faithful Christians to do the same, no matter how young they are! It is so uplifting to see these young people so involved in these activities! Second, seeing these young people memorizing a hundred Bible verses, preaching sermons, and constructively arguing in debate is a "re-challenge." Is it good



that these young people are so involved? Is there any reason why all of us could not memorize a hundred Bible verses? Next year's theme involves the Book of Matthew, which has twenty-eight chapters. Why could not all of us memorize four verses from each chapter? Or how about the Sermon on the Mount? It has 111 verses. Can we not "do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13)? Brian



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

## UPCOMING EVENTS

**Sunday, April 12** will be our L2L banquet in the fellowship room following morning worship services. All are invited to see the work our young people have been doing!

**Saturday, April 18** will be our next youth devotional and activity. If you would like to host this event or help in any way, please let Brian or Jagie know.

**Sunday, April 19** will be a meeting at 5:00 pm for those who want to be involved with next year's Bible Bowl teams and/or the Second Language program of studying the Bible.

**Sunday, April 26** will be a meeting at 5:00 pm for the Bible Bowl teams and Second Language participants. We will also have a Meeting for the K-2 students as well.

**Thank You** to the South Florida Avenue church of Christ and her elders for investing in our youth! A great time of fellowship and testing of spiritual skills was had by all! May God bless us!



Our wonderful youth group: Quadarius, Katrina, Emily, Darenicka, Olivia, Tucker, Lorelly, Elly, Antonio, Ian, Kyle, Paul, Courtney, Sebastian, Heidi, Zsazeli, Sophia, and Alex. Thank you South Florida Avenue church of Christ!