

The South Florida Avenue **MESSENGER**

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. 69 No.16 04-19-16

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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.

HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching

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.

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SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

Sundays @ 8:30 a.m. Check local listings

Doctrinal Landmarks Are Being Moved

Dennis Gullede

Solomon of old wrote, "Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy father have set" (Proverbs 22:28). Landmarks were property markers. It was and is wrong for a person's property to be encroached upon. Such boundaries are a standing witness to rightful ownership. The same applies to the doctrine of God. In recent years, we have seen many critical doctrinal landmarks being removed by liberal-minded brethren: baptism for the remission of sins, instrumental music in the worship, the uniqueness of the church and now the frequency of the Lord's supper. Denominations have always moved landmarks in these and other areas of teaching.

In the late 1980's, I worked as a contract chaplain for the Department of Corrections in Georgia. When the regular chaplain died, the "communion was celebrated" during a memorial service. I thought it highly erroneous, but characteristic of people who are untaught in the Scriptures. I never dreamed then that some of our brethren would be doing exactly the same thing. Stream 2000 is a mid-winter weekend event devoted to "worship in praise, prayer, song and small group fellowship" put on by the Golf Course Road Church of Christ in Midland, Texas. On their web page announcing this event they discuss "Communion - Frequency of the Celebration." They let it be known that when they were planning Stream '97 they thought it would be fitting to conclude their Saturday's schedule with "the celebration of Communion." Many of their members had been to an interdenominational weekend event where they "had been greatly blessed by the Communion service taken on a Friday or a Saturday." They wanted to do the same at Golf Course Road.

In a futile effort to explain their error, go through a listing of scriptural references to the Lord's supper, and then deny that any pattern exists for the frequency of observance. The writer, Ken Young, admits that "Acts 20:6,7 confirms the pattern of the New Testament church meeting on the first day of the week." Please understand that pattern is a bad word for liberals. In the very next sentence the same writer then says, "The strict tradition of observing the Lord's Supper exclusively on Sunday is built around the Acts 20 reference." According to this brother a "pattern" exists in Acts 20:7 for the church meeting on the Lord's Day, but in regard to the Lord's Supper a "tradition" has restricted it to Sunday! Pray tell me how can a pattern exist in the first consideration (assembling) and not in the second (the frequency of observing the Lord's Supper)? The writer adds, "The apostles never once specified a correct day to celebrate Communion in their writing." True to form the liberals ignore the binding force of an apostolic example when it suits them. No one has the right to move the ancient landmarks of apostolic example on this or any other matter. A serious error has been sanctioned!

What Consolation!

E. Russell King

Writing to the Christians in Rome, the apostle Paul made a very thought provoking statement: "...for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed" (Romans 13:11). It is quite clear that the writer is looking to the time when Christians will have completed all possible preparations for meeting the Lord in judgment to come, whenever that time will be. For this reason he said, "...it is high time to awake out of sleep..." On this basis, he urgently admonished those Christians to "cast off the works of darkness," "walk properly, as in the day" and "put on the Lord Jesus Christ" (vss. 12-14). One thing is certain: if that coming judgment day would be in this second millennium or if God chooses to delay it for ten thousand years (or more), no person, including those of Paul's day, will have had, generally speaking, more than three score and ten years (maybe fourscore - cf. Psalms 90:10) in which to make the needed preparations. No wonder Paul said, "...it is high time to awake out of sleep..." That is the urgency that presses upon every responsible soul--not that the Lord was expected to come soon, either in the first century, or A.D. 999, or A.D. 1843, or A.D. 1914, or A.D. 1975, or whenever.

By prior experience, this writer knows that 80 years seems almost like an eternity when one is young. But, oh, how short the time seems as we near the end of that time period! The certainty of that departure hour presses more and more heavily upon our thoughts day by day, and we become more and more conscious of the quality of the life we have lived and are living. It is then that we can really appreciate the seriousness of our Lord's words, "...seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness..." (Matthew 6:33), and the words of Solomon, "Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth..." (Ecclesiastes 12:1). What a consolation it truly is to know that one has at least tried to heed this admonition!

There is no person who can lay claim to perfection, having no portion of his/her life that is not, at least somewhat, shameful and/or painful to think about. If one dwelt exclusively upon these incidents, one would become depressed beyond measure. But what consolation it is to think about the incidents when one practiced self-control, not being selfishly motivated to obtain possessions, to experience worldly pleasures and vices, to be successful in worldly estimations, to be given to all the things that pertain to this fleeting, perishing world.

What consolation it is to remember the long, hard, wearisome hours spent in feeding the soul with the Word of God, the strain and expense of faithful attendance to Bible study, worship services and personal evangelism. What consolation it is to remember the things done to help relieve the sorrows and needs of those who were less fortunate than we.

These things are not mentioned to imply that such merits eternal salvation; they are mentioned to indicate that one has tried, at least to some degree, to seek first the kingdom of God and to remember the Creator in former days. They are, however, some of the good works that we were created for (Ephesians 2:10) and that serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

But after considering all of this, there is a matter that gives to the faithful Christian an ultimate consolation: that is the redemption and salvation that is in Jesus Christ. This is a consolation that makes all of the above worthwhile, but more importantly, it is a soothing balm to the anxious soul making a transition from this time world into the realities of the unseen world. Paul encouraged and comforted the Christians under duress in Thessalonica, "For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him" (1 Thessalonians 5:9-10). "Sleep" here refers to death. What a pleasant thought of death--sleep, sweet, restful sleep! When one is baptized into the death of Christ (Romans 6:3-6), and remains faithful to Christ, that one lives (has eternal life) with Christ, whether living in this time world or "sleeping" in the unseen world.

What consolation it is to know that Jesus was made a sin-offering for his people that they "...might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Corinthians 5:21). Those who stand in judgment righteous before God shall in no wise be cast out! What consolation! Is not that worth doing all we possibly can to faithfully serve the Lord now?

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Jim Turner has a severe infection and is very weak. JoAnn Hoback has breast cancer and is undergoing chemotherapy. Also: Evelyn Wyatt, Carol Pace, Taleah Anderson, Ron Ford, Jacqueline Dopwell, Janet Crosby, Debbie Horsley and Margaret Coone.

Relatives: Randy Stevens, Grace McAnally's son who is in the hospital with double pneumonia and a spot on his lung. Wayne Hendrix, Dee Moore, Alyssa Buckner and Harold Rister.

Shut In Members: Virginia Plumlee, Bill Burton, Ann Howard, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Duane Nelson and Sharon Edler.

Others: Jackie Stearsman has been diagnosed with an aggressive form of leukemia, (AML). Chrissi Fuesner, Jim Egolf, Nancy Griffith & Thelma Alesion. Keep all of these in your prayers.

Upcoming Events

April 23rd Youth Devotional, here in the fellowship hall at 5:00 p.m., followed by miniature golf.

April 24th-28th: Gospel Meeting at Laura St. Church of Christ, Plant City. Flyer is on Bulletin Board.

May 5th: Fellowship In Service here after evening services.

May 14th: Ladies Day at the Pinellas Park Church of Christ. Starts at 9:30 followed by lunch at 12:30. The flyer is on the bulletin board for more info.

Response

Debra Pavlovic-Okolichany responded Sunday morning and asked for the prayers of the congregation.

Thank You

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ, We really enjoyed getting to know you during our visits to see Bob's mother. Thank you for the prayers during her illness and death. We may not see you in Lakeland, but please look us up if your are in Chattanooga. In Christian love, Bob & Darlene Doak.

Congratulations

Darlene Thompson had a great grand-daughter, Bella Rose Alford, born 4-11. The proud parents are Heather & Christian Alford. The grandparents are Craig & Tammie Mills.

Visitors

Tania Portelles-Driggs, Peggy Richardson, Debra Okolichany, Amanda Patterson, Tiffany Hash and Megan, Jim Beltz, Luke & Laura and Lizzy Richardson and Mark Barber.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

May

Frank Hamby **Table** Fred Strickland
Jim Turner **Assist** Bobby Simpson

Sunday, April 24, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Kyle Williams
Prayer Paul Romine

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Fred Strickland
Sermon Bob McAnally
Closing Prayer David Deal

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader David Williams
Opening Prayer David Anderson
Sermon Brian Kenyon
Greeters The Kenyons
Att. Cards Paul and Ian
Closing Prayer Tyler Anderson
Open & Close Building David Anderson

Wed. April 27, 2016

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

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

Sunday, May 1, 2016

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Frank Hamby
Prayer Tucker Sweeney

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer David Williams
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tim Croson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Kyle Bingle
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Greeters The Frenchis
Att. Cards Ian & Quadarius
Closing Prayer Charles Paulin
Open & Close Building Jim Turner

Wed. May 4, 2016

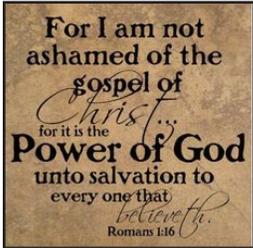
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer David Anderson
Closing Prayer Kenny French

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Mar. 27 \$6,809.58
Apr. 03 \$4,771.00
Apr. 10 \$4,550.54
Apr. 17 \$4,180.90
Contribution Average \$5,031.13
2016 Weekly Budget \$4,422.60

Paul's Declaration About the Gospel (PART 2)

Paul stated, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. ¹⁷For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith'" (Romans 1:16-17). The Gospel is not just the mere subject matter of preaching but is the agency through which God saves people from their sins (1 Corinthians 1:18; 2:4-5)! The Greek word translated "power" is from the same root as "dynamite." It means power, strength, or act of power (found in Romans 1:4, 20; 8:38; 9:17; 15:13, 19; 2 Corinthians 12:9; Revelation 12:10; 19:1). The Gospel is the very "dynamite" that blows to pieces the consequences of sin! Before Jesus died on the cross, death was sin's victory, but thanks to the resurrection, which showed Jesus to be "the Son of God with power" (Romans 1:4), death for the Christian is sin's defeat! The Gospel saves the soul from sin. "unto salvation" is found twelve times in the New Testament (Acts 13:47; Romans 1:16; 10:1, 10; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Philippians 1:19; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 3:15; Hebrews 9:28; 11:7; 1 Peter 1:5, 22). Because of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, the Gospel can penetrate and cleanse the inward person. The Bible reads: "How much more shall the blood of Christ ... purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance" (Hebrew 9:13-15). Have you tapped into God's power to save? ❤️ Brian



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

YOUTH DEVO & ACTIVITY ON SATURDAY, APRIL 23



Meet in the fellowship room @ 5 pm for devo and food. Following that, we will play miniature golf. Please bring money for miniature golf.

Our young people and their chaperones are gearing up for a mission trip to Nicaragua June 25 thru July 3. If you want to make a special contribution to this work, please see the elders.



WEEKI WACHEE YOUTH RETREAT APRIL 29 - MAY 1

Make plans now to attend this annual event! Let Brian know if you want to attend. We will arrange the transportation. This will be a great weekend!



SFA Graduates We will put together a bulletin announcing our graduates. Please submit a picture to the office ASAP.



2017 Theme: "All that you say to me I will do" (Ruth 3:5). Studies in Ruth, Esther, and Job

save the **Date** **VBS** **Saturday**
June 18