

# 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. 68 No.15 04-21-15

## **ELDERS**

David Anderson  
Kenny French  
Bobby Sheumaker

## **DEACONS**

Jeff Bingle  
Jimmy Sweeney  
Chuck Wyatt

## **MINISTER**

Robert McAnally  
(863) 682-3600

## **ASSOCIATE MINISTER**

Brian Kenyon  
(863) 944-8565

## **SECRETARY**

Michelle Paulin

## **OFFICE PHONE**

(863) 682-4702

## **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.

## **EMAIL**

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

## **WEB PAGES**

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

## **I Thirst! - John 19:28**

*Gantt Carter*

Looking up from the ground, you could see what was left of His weak, bleeding, and torn body. He had been hanging there on that tree in great agony, suffering for hours. If you were there, you heard His words. "Woman, behold your son!" and "Behold your mother!" he said in care of His mother. Then, His innocent lips uttered the words, "I thirst!" Only two words. Two simple words of need. In fact, it's not really an unusual request for anyone to make. All humans are designed with a need for water, and they will seek it quite strongly. I am certain that you've moaned the words, "I'm thirsty!" Or maybe on a burning summer day you've cried, "I'm so thirsty!"

He had every reason to be thirsty, with the greatly dehydrated tissues within His body sending their urgent messages to the brain, longing for relief. The cry He expressed fulfilled the Scripture. The Messianic 22nd Psalm foretold of His condition, "My strength is dried up like a potsherd, And My tongue clings to My jaws; You have brought Me to the dust of death." These words come from the parched lips of a Man dying in deep anguish! Have you ever experienced that kind of thirst?

Yet, this Man was different. Let us not forget that He was the Son of God (Matthew 3:17). He was and is Deity in the fullest sense (1 Corinthians 8:6; John 1:14; Philippians 2:5-11)! The One hanging on that cross is the same One who created the entire universe (John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16). Therefore, the one who made from nothing all the oceans, seas, lakes, rivers and ponds was thirsty? The One who invented the subatomic particles that form the atoms contained in H<sub>2</sub>O, the God who made the tears in your eyes said, "I thirst"!

Do you realize the great depth of meaning in that short declaration? Why would He endure such pain and thirst? "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). The Creator and the Supreme Being of this universe did that for me, and I have the audacity to complain? I possess the stubbornness to disobey His commands, and I think life as a faithful Christian is too tough? Just maybe I need to step back and take a good look at myself in perspective. "I thirst!" Do you truly grasp the depth of love and sacrifice in those two words?

# The Future Coming of Christ

Robert Rawson

The return of the Lord was announced as He ascended (Acts 1:9-11). It was not a strange timing, for the disciples standing there would have neglected to take the message the Lord left them. Thus, the angel shocked them into reality, “He will come again.” Mary had acknowledged to Jesus (John 11:24) there is coming a resurrection at the last day. Of course, Jesus was there to call Lazarus back to life on that day. He said, “I am the resurrection.” Notice the use of the words “when” and “then” (Matthew 25:31-41, 46) setting out the time of His return and judgment for setting some on the left hand and others on the right hand for eternal punishment or eternal life. Jesus taught that till that day, we are to follow his Word (John 12:48) because His Word will be the standard of judgment at that day.

Are there any signs for the return of Jesus? His disciples asked about such signs (Matthew 24:3). Jesus gave them no distinct sign and said the Father only knows (verse 35-36). Look at the expression of the Lord about who does not know: “no man and neither do the angels in Heaven.” In Mark 13:30-37, Jesus said, “neither the Son,” but the Father only knows. When the disciples asked about signs (Matthew 24:3), Jesus named a number of unsettling things – wars, rumors of wars, natural distresses – which are not the signs of his return. Rather these were signs of the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple thereof. They were told to pay attention to the signs that would precede that event (Matthew 24:3-36).

Notice the change from the “days” you can know and then the “day” that no man nor the angels know, but the Father only. Yet, there are religious teachers who major in using such troubles to announce the Lord’s return. It is not given for us to know, but we are taught to watch and be ready. Watch for what? Signs? or the actual return of the Lord?

God will judge the world in righteousness (Acts 17:30-31) by the Lord Jesus Christ. The return of the Lord is assured in the New Testament. Our faith should rest in the word of the Lord, not in the ever changing events of weather, nations and troubles. The day will come when our mortal bodies will be made alive (quicken) again (Romans 8:11) just as surely as the Lord Himself was raised from the dead.

The examples in the Book of Acts of the apostles assure us of various people in the New Testament who wanted to obey the Lord and enjoy His salvation (Acts 2, 8, 9, 10, 16, 18, 19 and 22). Let’s follow these examples and enjoy salvation also and wait for the hour when the Lord will return (1 Thessalonians 4:16). Let’s encourage and comfort one another with words about His return. Let us not be caught unprepared as many were in the days of Noah (Matthew 24:36-46). They were described as living life with the common and basic thoughts in mind – marriage, giving in marriage, eating and drinking. They were not paying attention to the words of righteous Noah, but they were overtaken in the day of the flood. Jesus used this tragic example to urge His disciples never to be caught up in the day to day troubles, temptations of sin and enjoyments of the flesh, thereby, knowing not until taken away. Remember the words told to many little children before sleep “...I pray the Lord, my soul to keep; if I should die before I wake...” Let’s not forget to prepare for Jesus’ return or our going to meet Him.

# SFA FAMILY MATTERS

## Prayer List

**Our Members:** So good to have Grace McAnally and Sharon Egolf back with us. Ron Ford has been home sick. Kathy Sweeney's shoulder surgery went well and she was back with us. Tonya Anderson is in L.R.M.C with pancreatitis. Jim Turner's test results came back negative and he is cancer free at this time. Keep Margaret Coone, Jacquelin Dopwell, Gerry Lawrence, and Sharon Washington in prayer.

**Relatives:** Wayne Hendrix, Alice Watson (Kirkland's cousin), Craig Mills, and Jeffrey Moore (Carla Moore's cousin).

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

**Others:** Sybil Carr who is under Hospice care. Jeanne Frye, Chrissy Fuessner and Elizabeth Tubbs.

## Upcoming Events

**May 1st-3rd:** -Weeki Wachee Teen Youth Retreat. The theme is "Get Connected" Register by April 27th. See the bulletin board for more information.

**May 15-16th:** -Highlands County Youth Rally at the Sebring Church of Christ. The theme is "Creation vs. Evolution?" Registration begins Friday at 6:00 p.m. and Saturday at 8:00 a.m. See the flyer on the bulletin for more details.

**May 16th:** -Fish Fry at Central Florida Bible Camp Serving from 4:30 to 6:00 p.m. The flyer is on the bulletin board.

## Thank You

Thank you so much for the prayers, cards and calls while I was not feeling well. I am thankful to be part of a caring Christian family.

In Christian love, Sharon Egolf

## Visitors

Bill & Carlene Long, Elizabeth Tubbs, Robert Marshall and Magnus, Larry Ellis, Lily Palermo, Kathryn Thompson and Alexis Harvey .

## SCHEDULED TO SERVE

### May

Frank Hamby ..... **Table** ..... Fred Strickland  
Jim Turner..... **Assist**..... Stacey Paulin

Sunday, April 26, 2015

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  
**Closing Prayer** ..... David Deal

6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader** ..... Kyle Williams  
**Opening Prayer** ..... David Anderson  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Tyler Anderson  
**Greeters** ..... The Kenyons  
**Att. Cards**..... Paul & Ian  
**Open & Close Building**..... David Anderson

Wed. April 29 2015

**Song Leader**..... Ken Walker  
**Opening Prayer** ..... Tucker Sweeney  
**Closing Prayer**..... David Deal

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

Sunday May 3, 2015

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  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Tim Croson

6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader** ..... Paul Romine  
**Opening Prayer** ..... Kyle Bingle  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Charles Paulin  
**Greeters** ..... The French's  
**Att. Cards**..... Ian & Quadarius  
**Open & Close Building**..... Jim Turner

May 6, 2015

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

## ~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Mar 29 .....	\$6,101.22
April 5 .....	\$4,597.13
April 12 .....	\$4,545.25
April 19 .....	\$4,640.14
<b>Contribution Average</b> .....	<b>\$4,679.08</b>
<b>2015 Weekly Budget</b> .....	<b>\$4,302.98</b>

## HEAR OUR RADIO SPOTS

*Message this Week*

**"Tomorrow's Foundation"**

WONN 1230 or WLKF 1430 or on web page

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



# 3-D Spiritual Growth

A tremendous concern that church parents, preachers, elders, and church members in general have is spiritual growth, especially in our young people. Will the congregation's young people still be faithful when they leave home for college, the military, or various pursuits and/or careers? One way to assure faithfulness for life is to keep focused on three "dimensions" of spiritual growth. **Desire** Jesus said, "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, For they shall be filled" (Matt. 5:6). He also declared, "If anyone wants to do His will, he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God or whether I speak on My own authority" (John 7:17). In order to have spiritual growth in the first place, we must desire God and want to follow Him. To maintain spiritual growth, we must continue seeking Him through His word (John 14:15). **Determination** Following God is not always easy, especially at first (Acts 14:22). We must be determined to follow through with our desire to grow spiritually. Paul said that "one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:13-14). We must not let even "important events" keep us from serving God. These "must do" events of the world are trivial compared to the blessings of eternity. Let's keep that in perspective! **Destination** Jesus gave only (continued below)



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



**Sunday, April 26** We invite all our young people K-2nd grade to a youth meeting in the fellowship room in order to inform their parents and them about being involved in our youth group, including Lads to Leaders. It is never too early to start preparing young minds!

**Sunday, May 3** We will "officially" begin our Second Language program with Lads to Leaders. All are invited to participate, especially those going on the Costa Rica mission trip. We learn some Spanish to help us spread the Gospel.

(continued from above) two possible eternal destinations when implored, "Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow [strait, KJV] is the gate and difficult [narrow, KJV] is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it" (Matt. 7:13-14). We must not make our choices based only on the here and now! We must think more about the "then" rather than the "now." If we apply these "three dimensional" principles of spiritual growth, we will be faithful in the present and future no matter where we are. Are we growing spiritually? ❤️ Brian

**Weeki Wachee Teen Youth Retreat** **May 1-3** "Get Connected" to God, Church, Family, Life, Grace. If you would like to participate, see Jason or Brian.