

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. 70 No. 22 05-30-17

ELDERS

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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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WEB PAGE

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

Lessons from Year One

By Hiram Kemp

June 1 marks a year that I have been privileged to labor with the church here at South Florida Avenue. Even though I was a member here and served as a preacher intern with the church while in the Florida School of Preaching, I officially became the minister on June 1, 2016. The two years spent in preaching school prepare students for preaching the word and developing good Bible study habits, but there is nothing like on-the-job-training. My first year in full-time work has been great, I have learned a lot and want to share some of the lessons I have learned.

God's People Are the Best

Jesus said that his people would be known for the love that they have for each other (Jn 13:34-35). I have known the love of God's people before I became a preacher, but my appreciation of it has since been heightened. There are a lot of horror stories concerning church/preacher relations, but this first year has shown me how kind and loving God's people can be. From the time my family and I have been here, there has been an outpouring of generosity and fellowship from the congregation. I have received countless compliments concerning the lessons presented, and it has been encouraging to me. Paul talked about giving thanks every time he remembered the Philippians because of their participation with him in the Gospel. I feel the same way about South Florida Avenue (Phil. 1:3-5). The fruit of the Spirit consists of love among other things, and it has been displayed here in my first year (Gal. 5:22-23). There have been men who have stepped in to teach when I have been out and willing to serve anyway they can to help grow the work here. The ladies in this congregation serve in countless ways from setting up and serving fellowship meals to teaching Bible classes for the children. The elders of this congregation are to be commended for their love for the truth and their dedication to this congregation's development. I have seen their concern and love for the church here, and we should appreciate their work (1 Thess. 5:12-13). Love is more than just a warm fuzzy feeling where we all agree with each other. Love means that we challenge one another, hold each other accountable, and correct each other when we are wrong. I have experienced these things since I have been here. Let us continue in this way together and as the Hebrew writer says, "Let brotherly love continue" (Heb. 13:1).

(continued on page 2)

Preaching Is Hard Work

Another lesson I have learned is that preaching is hard work. Some people have the false impression that preachers only work twice a week (Wednesday and Sunday). Nothing could be further from the truth. Preaching is not for the faint of heart. Preaching not only involves the public proclamation of the Gospel but also teaching in individuals' homes or wherever one can get a listening audience (Acts 20:20). This year in preaching has helped me to appreciate men like Bob McAnally, who have been preaching longer than I have been alive. We are told to give honor to those who are deserving of it, and this would apply to preaching as well (Rom. 13:7). All men have feet of clay and make mistakes. However, when an individual has been on the spiritual battlefield for so long, we should take note of such effort. I have come to have a deeper appreciation for those who have prepared and delivered lessons week after week, written articles, and made visits for decades while also maintaining a family life. The help and example that Brian has provided for me throughout this first year has helped me to grow and develop as well. God chose preaching as the avenue through which he would distribute the Gospel truth to the world (1 Cor. 1:18-21). We should not take preaching lightly or look down on it. Preaching is a rewarding job as the preacher gets to see lives changed and transformed by the Gospel. I get an up close and personal view of some of the things that God is doing in the lives of his people. In preaching, one labors together with God to accomplish the desired goal of salvation (1 Cor. 3:9). I have come to appreciate more and more the privilege I have of preaching the Gospel, week after week (2 Tim. 4:2).

The Power Is in the Word

The power to save is in the Gospel message and not in any man (Rom. 1:16). I have preached lessons that I did not think were great and there have been responses to them. I have been reminded that the power is in God's Word. James said if it is received properly, the word of God will save our souls (Jas. 1:21). May we always remember that preachers merely dispense the truth of God, they do not originate it. Any success that is had in the church is due to what God is accomplishing through his word and not any one person (Lk. 17:10). Whether in Bible class, at a youth devo, or during a sermon, I have watched people be changed by the Gospel. Faith still comes by hearing the word of God (Rom. 10:17). If we want to impact the Lakeland area it will be to the degree that we are shining lights and we get the word into this community. When people receive the Bible as it is in truth, the word of God, we will see the difference the word can make (1 Thess. 2:13).

There's More to Be Done

When Joshua took over for Moses in leading the children of Israel into Canaan, he knew he had big shoes to fill. After much of the land had been conquered and the conquest seemed to be successful, God said to Joshua, "You are old and stricken in years, and there remains yet much land to be possessed" (Josh. 13:1). Though the Israelites had accomplished a lot and excelled in many ways, there was still more ground to be covered. This must be our attitude as we continue in the Lord's work together. The work here at SFA is going in the right direction but we need to be sure not to slow down or slack up, but to "abound more and more" (1 Thess. 4:1). There are still many wayward members to be won back to Christ, and other lost souls who have never heard the saving message of the Gospel. May we be stirred to further our efforts in this next year together, and realize we have not arrived but still have more ground to cover. If the congregation at SFA will prosper and be all that God wants us to be, it will be because we did not become complacent or lukewarm. May our love for Christ increase and may we continue in his service together until he returns.

Conclusion

I am excited about what the future holds for us here at SFA and want to serve in any way that I can. My family and I have appreciated all the kindness and love we have experienced so far. Let us roll up our sleeves together and continue to serve the Lord. Christianity is a team effort and we need each other to thrive in the local congregation (1 Cor. 3:6-7). Thanks for a great first year. We are looking forward to many more.



SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Becky Sheumaker was home sick. Please continue to pray for Jim Turner, Ginny Hamby, Kenny French, Bob & Grace McAnally, Margaret Coone, Sharon Mathis Washington, Josephine Bowman.

Relatives: Sandy West, Christy Wright and Benny Martin, (Carla Moore's uncle, who has cancer).

Shut In Members: Virginia Plumlee, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Don Starks, Sharon Edler and Duane Nelson.

Others: Joyce Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Connie Hyer, Johnny King and Jack Pinckert.

Upcoming Events

Sunday June 4th: Fellowship In Service following evening services. Please bring finger foods.

Tuesday June 13th: Elders/Deacons meeting at 7:00 p.m.

Placed Membership

Toney Wilson placed membership with us here last Sunday. Please let us welcome her into our family, encourage her and keep her in prayer.

Picture Directory

We are updating our picture directory. Sample pages are located in the back foyer. Please pick up yours and make any corrections or mark o.k. and turn into the office. Thank you.

Response

Deborah Okolichany responded to the invitation Sunday morning. Please encourage her and keep her in prayer.

Hither, Thither and Yon

Bob & Grace McAnally have moved to 400 Santana Dr. Athens, AL. 35611. They are moving to be closer to family due to health issues. We will surely miss them! Grace's email is aggiemay41@comcast.net and Bob's cell phone # is 863-701-4366. Please continue to pray for them.

Brian & Hiram have left for a missions trip to Ghana, West Africa with some members from the Auburndale Church of Christ. Please pray a safe and successful trip.

Visitors

Jane Jessee and Charles & Ruth Thornhill.



Tune into AM 1330 (station WWAB) with your friends and neighbors every Monday from 5:00-5:30 p.m. for the "Way of Truth" program. Let's influence Lakeland!

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

June

Bobby Sheumaker **Table** C.J. Grimes
Ken Walker **Assist** Tucker Sweeney

Sunday, June 4, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Jim Turner
Prayer Ken Walker

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Matt Willcut
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Bobby Sheumaker
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tim Croson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader David Williams
Opening Prayer Charles Paulin
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Jeff Bingle

Greeters The Edmonsons
Att. Cards Quadarius & Ian
Open & Close Building Tim Croson

Wed. June 7, 2017

Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Charles Paulin
Closing Prayer Ken Walker

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Chuck Wyatt so he can get a replacement - (863) 602-9005

Sunday, June 11, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Stacey Paulin
Prayer David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Matt Willcut
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Paul Romine

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader David Williams
Opening Prayer John McShane
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tim Croson

Greeters The Debra/ Melissa
Att. Cards Paul and Sebastian
Open & Close Building Tim Croson

Wed. June 14, 2017

Song Leader Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer John McShane
Closing Prayer David Anderson

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

May 07	\$4,888.61
May 14	\$5,484.25
May 21	\$5,163.29
May 28	\$4,431.30
Contribution Average	\$5,342.22
2017 Weekly Budget	\$4,716.51

The “Marino Factor”

For those who may not know, Dan Marino was the quarterback of the Miami Dolphins from 1983 – 2000. He was one of the best quarterbacks of his time, noted especially for his quick release and down field passing arm and accuracy. He even led his team to the Super Bowl in only his second year. Even though they lost, most people expected Dan Marino to start in more Super Bowls during his career. However, he never did, though he took his team to the playoffs many times. One reason, in this writer’s opinion, that the team never made it to another Super Bowl, was Marino’s teammates relied too much on him. That is, team members thought no matter how bad their mistakes, their star quarterback could bail them out, which most of the time he did. However, that attitude seemed to cause some players not to give their all while on the field. That same attitude can negatively effect the Lord’s church as well, not with Super Bowl wins, but with the much more important work of winning souls. A congregation may have great evangelistic preachers and elders and/or a few members that are involved in bringing souls to Jesus. That is good, but too often, other members rely too much on them, and do not put forth their own effort to point souls to Jesus. All Christians are to be “ready to preach [or teach] the gospel” (Romans 1:15 cf. Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16). Every local church will be much more successful in the eyes of God, when each member fulfills his or her responsibility (1 Corinthians 12:1-26). Let us not adopt a “Marino factor,” but may each one of us give everything we have in fulfilling our role on God’s team (1 Corinthians 3:5-8)! ❤️ *Brian*



South Florida Avenue
CHURCH OF CHRIST
1807 South Florida Avenue
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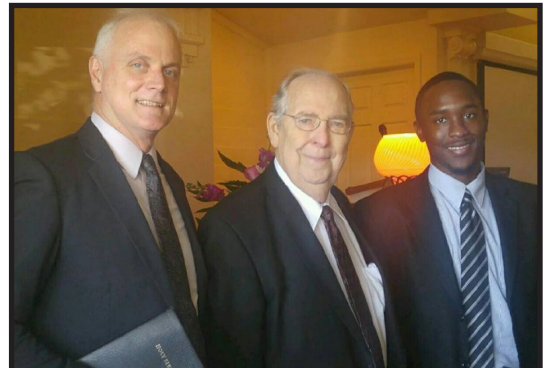
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The End of Your Search for a Friendly Church . . .

Bob and Grace McNally have moved to Alabama. We appreciate both of them, and thank Bob for working with us since 1979!



Bob presenting the 1995 lectureship book, dedicated to V. P. Black, with B. C. Carr looking on. Bob edited the lectureship book from 1994 thru the 1999 volume.



Bob with Brian and Hiram at Ann Howard’s funeral, Jan. 12, 2017, likely the last sermon Bob preached in Lakeland..