



The South Florida Avenue church of Christ



MESSENGER

1807 S. Florida Ave., Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 74 No. 22 June 1, 2021

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

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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.

EMAIL

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WEB PAGE

SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

YOUTUBE.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.

How to Pray When You Don't Feel Like Praying

Hiram Kemp

The Bible tells us to pray without ceasing (1 Thess. 5:17). But if we're honest, we must admit that we don't always feel like praying. Some days we are worried about many things and have several important tasks at hand, and that causes us to pray bold prayers (Heb 4:16). Maybe we are sick, or someone close to us has a serious procedure coming up, so we "pray fervently" (Col 4:12 KJV).

However, there are other days when we find ourselves just going through the motions of everyday life. We are busy with school, work, and our jobs, and besides praying over our meals, we don't feel any urgent need to pray. What should we do in those times? Here are five ways to pray even when we don't feel like praying.

1. Acknowledge Your Dependence

The problem with not being in the "mood" to pray is that we fail to recognize that we are always dependent on God. To go a day without prayer is to pretend that we can make it without Him. Paul said that we live and move and have our very existence in God (Acts 17:28). The truth is, without God, we cannot do anything (John 15:5).

We might fall into the trap of thinking that we only need God for the big things and can manage the rest. But we should take an honest inventory of our lives and see that everything we have and maintain comes from God (Jas 1:17). All that we hope to accomplish will be done only if the Lord allows it (Jas 4:15).

If the pandemic is teaching us anything, it is how small and dependent we really are. We are being reintroduced to the reality that we are not self-sufficient. When we are not in the mood to pray, we should think about how much we need God. Start small. Thank God for letting you get out of bed, arrive safely to work, having a sound mind, food to eat, etc.

The recognition that we are dependent on God should cause our minds to think deeply, and our mouths should follow in expressing thanksgiving (Ps 116:12). If we fail to pray, we essentially claim to be autonomous, but we should know better. The sooner we meditate on how needy we are and how benevolent God is, the sooner we will be in a "praying mood" again.

2. Take Requests

We should make a habit of praying for others and not only for ourselves (1 Tim 2:1-4). Prayer is a spiritual blessing enjoyed by Christians, but we should use it to benefit everyone we can. When we do not feel like praying, we could profit from asking those close to us if there is anything we can pray for them about. There is a two-fold benefit to seeking prayer requests.

The first benefit is that we can pray on behalf of someone else. Jesus was always praying for others, and we are mimicking His behavior when we do the same (see John 17). The second benefit of taking requests is that we will hear the things others are going through. This may make us more grateful and drive us to our knees in thankfulness. We are not to capitalize on the hardships of others in a wicked way, but we would be wise to notice when we have been spared some hardships others are enduring and to thank God.

Epaphras was someone who was praying on behalf of others so often that Paul described him as "always struggling in his prayers" for the Colossians (Col 4:12). In almost every epistle Paul wrote, he spoke of praying for congregations

incessantly (Rom 1:9, Eph 1:15- 16; 2 Thess 1:3). I'm not sure if they requested the prayers of Paul, but by praying for others, Paul remained in constant communication with his God, and that's what we all need. If you don't feel like you are in the praying mood, find someone who needs your prayers, and pray for them!

3. Make Requests

While it is a good thing to take requests, it is wise to make requests as well. When we don't feel like praying, it may be an indication of other spiritual problems. Even if we are not immediately aware of it, we could be struggling in other areas as well. We should ask others to pray on our behalf, specifically about this. Hopefully, we all have close Christian friends that we can level with and with whom we can be honest about our spiritual condition (Prov 27:17).

Moreover, requesting prayer is not always a sign of spiritual weakness. It can be a sign of spiritual strength. Paul requested prayer more often than anyone else in the New Testament (Eph 6:18-19; Col 4:3; 1 Thess 5:25). Paul considered the prayers of others as an aid in his spiritual journey (2 Cor 1:11; Phil 1:19). Request the prayers of the congregation where you worship or confide in a close friend. If you don't feel like praying, ask someone to pray for you who does. Hopefully, it will stir your spirit to resume this necessary discipline.

4. Pray About It

We are supposed to take all of our cares, concerns, and anxieties to God in prayer (1 Pet 5:7). This does not eliminate talking to God about our spiritual weaknesses.

The Book of Psalms is filled with many types of prayers, and sometimes the psalmist speaks of his lack of desire to pray (Psalm 6:6, 69:3, 77:3-4). The good news for the psalmist is that he was talking to God about it, and he believed God would hear him (Ps 6:9)!

We can come to God openly and honestly when we are experiencing spiritual drought or when we feel like we are going through the motions without much enthusiasm. God wants to hear from us at all times. Just like parents want to hear from their children even when nothing exciting is going on—even when the conversation is not sensational—God still wants to hear from us. Maybe this is where we can most improve in our prayers. God desires to be reverenced, but he also wants us to be honest with him (see Ps 89:7). When we do not feel like praying, we should pray about that too

5. Force Yourself to Pray

If you don't feel like praying, you should pray anyway. Force it if you have to! Don't fake it, but force it. There is too much about prayer in the Bible for us to think it should only be done when we have a spark of inspiration or there is a hardship going on in our lives. We are to be constantly praying (Rom 12:12) and watchful in prayer (1 Pet 4:7). Christians are to continue steadfastly in prayer (Col 4:2). There is no way we can read these verses and conclude that God only wants us to pray when we are in the mood.

When it comes to following God and obeying Him, we need to learn to obey first and let our feelings catch up with our obedience. It's easier to act our way into feeling right than to feel our way into acting right.

(continued on page 4)

YOUTH GROUP NEWS by Vince Daugherty

Always Let Your Conscience Be Guided by God's Word

In the Disney film Pinocchio there is a song that says, "always let your conscience be your guide." Paul said he always strived to live in good conscience before God and men (Acts 24:16). He wanted to be able to look back on his actions and have no regrets about whether he did right or wrong. Your conscience is an alert system that can indicate when something does not feel quite right. While your conscience does alert you to something that feels wrong, your conscience is not always perfect. Take Paul for example, before he was converted he persecuted Christians, and thought he was doing what was right. Although his conscience was not alerted, he was far from doing what was right. A conscience must be guided by Scripture. That way we do not violate our conscience or God's word. Solomon said, "Rejoice, O young man in your youth. And let your heart cheer you in the days of your youth; Walk in the ways of your heart, And in the sight of your eyes; but know that for all these God will bring you into judgment." (Ecc. 11:9). He also said, "Remember now your Creator in the days of your youth, Before the difficult days come, And the years draw near when you say, I have no pleasure in them." (Ecc. 12:1).

Senior Saints

by John McShane

As we seniors age, our health becomes a lot more important to us. Most of us realize that we should have taken better care of our bodies as we traveled through life. Even as we go through our senior years, it is still possible to do things that help our bodies age well. There are many exercises that seniors can do that will help keep the body healthy longer. We can eat healthier and maybe not eat so much. We can get out and walk around the neighborhood, and not only get some much-needed exercise but also maybe meet and make new friends. However, not only our physical bodies that we need to worry about but also our spiritual bodies. Are we slowly letting it decay? Is our spiritual body getting the exercise that it needs to keep us on the road to our heavenly home? Do we use the excuse that our physical body keeps us from attending services? Do we start neglecting our prayer life and Bible study? As we age, our physical ailments can keep us from attending some church functions, but they should not keep us from neglecting our spiritual life. Keep in mind what we find in the following verses. Ephesians 6:10 "Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might." Isaiah 41:10 "Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand."

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

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

Our Members:

PRAYER LIST

Bob Pratt - health	Linda McShane
Adeline Hine - completed treatments	Jim & Carol Edmonson - health
Nasheka Medley - pregnancy	Darlene Thompson - family
Bernetta Green - health	Jim Turner - health
Bill & Carlene Long	Bobby Simpson - health
Melody Baxter - health	Cieara Edwards - procedure
Brian Smith - heart	Debbie Bush - health
Kathy Nester - health	Margaret Coone
Joyce Williams	Sharon M. Washington - health
Annette Phillip	Ron & Judy Ford - health
Antoine & Marcella Swain -health	

(Please update the office of any changes)

The EXTENDED FAMILY and FRIENDS prayer requests are emailed every week and posted on the bulletin board

PRAY FOR OUR SHUT-INS

Faith West	Joyce Burbage	Carol Eason
Ellen Shearer	Chuck Wyatt	

Phone numbers are in the directory. Give them a call.

Current newsletters from our missionaries are posted on the bulletin board. Previous newsletters can be found on the missionary bulletin board in the back hallway.

Sisters Sending Sunshine

Ladies of SFA, if you'd like to participate starting in July, please see Rene'



Ladies' Day Meeting

Sunday, June 6 after morning service



Lads to Leaders

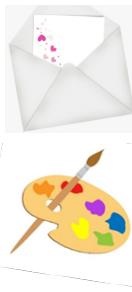
The 1st workday is

Sunday, June 6. The starting times for each event is posted on the youth group bulletin board.



Fellowship In-service

Sunday, June 6 after evening service



Ladies' Night Out

Tuesday, June 22, 2021

Details are on the bulletin board



SCHEDULED TO SERVE

June

Designated Elder - Brian Kenyon

Wednesday, June 2, 2021

Song Leader/prayer	Kyle Bingle
Devo	Stacey Paulin
Closing Prayer	Charles Paulin

Sunday, June 6, 2021

10:30 A.M.

Sermon	Hiram Kemp
<i>"Understanding the Holy Spirit"</i>	
Galatians 5:22-23	

6:00 P.M.

Sermon	Hiram Kemp
<i>"How to Pray For Your Children and Grandchildren"</i>	
Matthew 19:13-15	

10:30 A.M.

Open/Close bldg (both times)	Bobby Sheumaker
Greeter	Fife
Song/prayer before class	Ian Enamordo
Announcements	Jimmy Sweeney
A.M. Song Leader	Vince Daugherty
Scripture reading/Prayer	Rick Kenyon
Lord's Table	Terrance Dindy, Jr.
Closing Prayer	Jeff Stewart

6:00 P.M.

Greeters	Shearer
P.M. Song Leader	Vince Daugherty
Scripture reading/Prayer	Alex Parramore
Lord's Table	Terrance Dindy, Jr.
Closing Prayer	Nigel St. Bernard

Wednesday, June 9, 2021

Song Leader/Prayer	Vince Daugherty
Devo	Paul Sweeney
Closing Prayer	Jimmy Sweeney

ASSEMBLING UPDATE

As of May 26, 2021, wearing masks is optional. This policy may be adjusted if covid numbers in the congregation warrant such. Thank you for your patience!

We still request you stay home if you are not feeling well or have covid symptoms.

We will continue live-streaming the services on YouTube as we have since March 22, 2020. Thanks for your cooperation. - Elders

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

May 16	\$8,224.00
May 23	\$5,643.00
May 30	\$7,354.00
Contribution Average	\$7,203.93

Vitamins are types of nutrients your body needs to stay healthy and survive.

To get the vitamins we need, we must eat a variety of foods daily.

For Christians, there are things we must do daily or as often as possible that are essential to our growth so that we do not die spiritually. Here are some ways to maintain a healthy life in Christ.

Vitamin A

Acknowledge Christ - Proverbs 3:5-7; 1 John 2:22-23

Abide in Christ - John 12:46; John 15:4-7; 1 John 2:6, 28

Vitamin B

Bless the Lord - Psalm 34:1; Psalm 103:1-2

Begin each day in thanksgiving and praise -

Psalm 86:12; Psalm 118:24; Psalm 146:1-2

Vitamin C

Cry in prayer to God - Psalm 5:1-3; 34:17; 61:1

Confess your sins/transgressions - Proverbs 13;

James 5:16; 1 John 1:9

Vitamin D

Delight in the word of God - Psalm 1:2; Psalm 119:16, 102-104; Psalm 78:1

Do good - Psalm 34:14; Galatians 6:10; James 4:17

Vitamin E

Exalt God—Psalm 34:3; Psalm 99:5; Psalm 118:28

Encourage others—Hebrews 3:13; Hebrews 10:24

**A healthy Christian life pays off now,
and in the life to come!**

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www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

Email us: SFA.church@gmail.com

Find us on social media



**“PRAY WITHOUT
CEASING”**

1 THESSALONIANS 5:17

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CHURCH OF CHRIST
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Return Service Requested**