



South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.,
Lakeland, FL 33803

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ELDERS

David Anderson
Brian Kenyon
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Tyler Anderson
Jason Hendrix
Rick Kenyon
Stacey Paulin

MINISTER

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Vince Daugherty

OFFICE PHONE

(863) 682-4702

EMAIL

SFA.church@gmail.com

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.

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Marc Veary Malawi, Africa
Graham McDonald Scotland
J. Paguaga Honduras
Joey Treat Pacific Islands
Ted Wheeler Ghana, W.A.

God's Greenhouse

Rick Kenyon

“A greenhouse is a structure which allows people to regulate climatic conditions, such as temperature and humidity” (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greenhouse>). Its purpose is to maximize the growth of plants by effectively utilizing the light and warmth of the sun, especially in climates where growth would be difficult or impossible. The greenhouse is typically an enclosed structure primarily comprised of glass (or plexiglass) and must be maintained to be effective. Primitive concepts of the greenhouse can be traced back to the first century Roman world:

The cucumber was a favorite of Roman emperor Tiberius, who “was never without it” (Pliny the Elder 77 CE in Bostock and Riley 1855). The Roman gardeners used artificial methods (similar to the greenhouse system) of growing to have it available for his table every day of the year. Cucumbers were planted in wheeled carts, which were put in the sun daily, then taken inside to keep them warm at night under special conditions (Pliny the Elder 77 CE). The cucumbers were stored under frames or in cucumber houses glazed with either oiled cloth, known as “specularia,” or with sheets of mica. (<https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Greenhouse>)

History also notes that even George Washington had a greenhouse built to grow pineapples. (<https://www.gardenguides.com/85466-history-greenhouse.html>)

From cucumbers to pineapples, people across the centuries have employed greenhouses to cultivate healthy plant growth despite adverse climate conditions. Experience and history prove that when plants get the sunlight, warmth, and water they need, growth is inevitable regardless of what lies beyond the greenhouse glass. Where there is a will, there is a way—God’s church is not too different.

Every Christian is a result of the gospel seed that has taken root within the fertile soil of a good heart (cf. Mt. 13:3-23). Whenever we “lay aside all filthiness and overflow of wickedness, and receive with meekness the implanted word,” the result is salvation (Jas. 1:21, NKJV). God’s grace coupled with our faith drives us to do good works and continue in them (Eph. 2:8-10). Collectively, even though we are individuals, we are all members of the same body (Rom. 12:5) called the church (Eph. 1:22-23). This “household of God” is designed to be a place where God dwells (Eph. 2:19-22) and where, “according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:16). In a similar sense, the church is (or should be) God’s greenhouse for Christians.

God's Greenhouse Is Filled with God's Light

“God is light and in Him is no darkness at all” (1 Jn. 1:7). “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light” (2 Pet. 1:19). “For you were once darkness, but now you are light

in the Lord. Walk as children of light” (Eph. 5:8). God’s church must be a place filled and defined by God’s light. If each Christian represented a glass pane in this greenhouse, how much of God’s light shines through you? A greenhouse is not designed to allow light through only a few select panes, but every pane provides a clear path. When others see our congregation (or homes), they should see God’s light permeating through every nook and cranny of our lives. From our public interactions with one another to our private conversations, our light must shine (Mt. 5:14-16). Even when there are visible “cracks” (i.e., flaws, faults, and failures), God’s light (i.e., grace, mercy, and love) still shimmers as we delicately mend and repair. As God’s people, “let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light” (Rom. 13:12)—there is no such thing as a dark corner in a house of light.

God's Greenhouse Produces The Ideal Conditions

“And may the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you” (1 Thess. 3:12). “And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment” (Phil. 1:9). God’s church should provide an ideal, Christ-like atmosphere contrary to the world. “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind” (Rom. 12:2). Greenhouses are built because the existing conditions fail to promote or sustain healthy growth. Congregational assemblies (worship or otherwise) should be the kind of meetings that, by the end, you leave uplifted, fed, and recharged. The church proves these ideal conditions when: edifying loves prevails against arrogant knowledge (1 Cor. 8:1); exemplifying Christ’s love replaces exercising our rights (1 Cor. 8:9); self-induced servanthood masters indulgent self-serving (1 Cor. 9:19-23); and seeking God’s glory eclipses seeking our own (1 Cor. 10:31-33).

God's Greenhouse Is A Place of Warmth

“Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart” (1 Pet. 1:22). “Be kindly affectionate to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another” (Rom. 12:10). God’s church should be the most inviting and welcoming entity in existence. Yet, why is it that so many churches portray the opposite? Jesus stood in stark contrast to the cold, calculating religious leaders of His day. While they would “justify” their icy demeanors in dismissing certain types/groups of people, Jesus welcomed all equally. Every invitation Jesus extended stemmed from a heart of love and compassion. A greenhouse emits warmth so that plants will grow and flourish; a refrigerator maintains a cold temperature to preserve foods. The former focuses on the development and maturity of plants, while the later focuses on keeping food edible as long as possible. May our lives and church be a greenhouse filled with warmth cultivating good trees with good fruit (Mt. 7:17), not a refrigerator maintaining a chilly atmosphere slowing the inevitable decay of every item in it.

Conclusion

God’s greenhouse, the church, was built by the sacrifice and blood of Jesus (Acts. 20:28). Just as He gave all to provide us a safe and secure place for growth in godliness, we must reciprocate in our devotion to him. “Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma” (Eph. 5:1-2). The church is designed to be a climate for growth and salvation, but it is also a place with expectations. As Paul reminded Timothy, “I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God” (1 Tim. 3:15). When we are “speaking the truth in love,” we “grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ” (Eph. 4:15). This is brought about when “the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love” (Eph. 4:15-16). “And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also” (1 Jn. 4:21).

Don't Be A House Not Divided!

Jesus declared a “house divided against itself will not stand” (Mt. 12:25). This world is full of division, and Satan loves to employ it in his schemes (2 Cor. 2:11; 10:3-5)! He would love nothing more than to divide local churches by whatever means it takes. Let us not allow the devil this opportunity (Eph. 4:27), but rather resist him through the Christ (Jas. 4:7)!

PRAYER LIST

Current: Declan Potvin is having complications from eye surgery, pray for positive results. Wayne Shearer will be starting chemotherapy soon. Brandi Brown is asking prayer for an upcoming move to Clearwater in June. Edna Kelly, a regular visitor, who recently lost her husband. Marissa Estridge will have knee surgery to repair her ACL and MCL on July 13th. Melissa Craft has been home sick.

Kathy Nester asks for prayers as she travels to Michigan for the summer.

Continual Melissa Craft (health); Debbie Bush (struggles); Brian Smith (heart health); Antoine & Marcella Swain (health); Geny Johnson (health); Bill & Carlene Long (health & strength); Ron & Judy Ford (health); Bobby Simpson (health); Annett Phillip (health); Janie Wise (health); Jim Turner (health); Margaret Coone (health); Kathy Nester(health); Melody Baxter (health)


Amanda Faneuf is collecting tissue paper rolls, paper towel rolls and cardboard boxes to be used at camp this summer. Please see her with any questions about this.

Thank You!

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

"Thank you to all" seems so little to say compared for all you have done for me. Your visits, cards, goodies and always and foremost the prayers. Your loving kindness is helpful and strengthening. Bill & I still earnestly ask for your prayers.

Thank You, In Christian love, Carlene Long



Recipes! The Hendrix girls are collecting recipes for a Lads to Leaders Project! Please bring a copy of your favorite Recipe(s) to give to them. Thank you!

Jesus called them one by one.



WWCC K-5 CAMP
Entering Kindergarten- Finishing 5th Grade
July 13-15, 2023
Register by June 25th to be guaranteed a T-Shirt
Register @ <https://shorturl.at/wAEYO>
If you have any questions please contact
Chad (863.412.0022) or Sabrina Tagtow (863.268.5811)

TAKE A LOOK
IT'S IN THE BOOK



PROVERBS

WEEKI WACHEE CHRISTIAN CAMP
Orange Street Week
JULY 16-22, 2023
Ages 10 and up
Register by July 1st to be guaranteed a T-Shirt
Register @ <https://shorturl.at/kxBGU>
If you have any questions please contact
Kyle or Nina Smith (904.310.2831)



SCHEDULED TO SERVE

June Designated Elder - Brian Kenyon

Wednesday, June 7, 2023

Announcements.....Bobby Sheumaker
Song Leader/prayer.....Rick Kenyon
DevotionalRobert Jackson
PrayerPaul Sweeney

Sunday, June 11, 2023

10:30 A.M.

Sermon.....Rick Kenyon
I Am With You (Isaiah 43:1-2)

6:00 P.M.

Sermon.....Brian Kenyon

Those to Serve

10:30 A.M.

Song/Prayer before class.....Frank Hamby
Song Leader (both services).....Andre Medley
Announcements(both)Rick Kenyon
Scripture reading/Prayer.....Josh Estridge
Lord's Table (both).....George Davis
Closing Prayer.....Matt Willcut
Open/Close bldg (both).....David Deal
Greeters..Nona/Janis
Attendance cards (both).....Klark/Sawyer
Sound Booth (both).....Brian Williams
6:00 P.M.

P.M. Song LeaderAndre Medley
Scripture reading/PrayerJimmy Sweeney
Closing PrayerJoseph Faulk
Greeters PM..... The Shearers

Wednesday, June 14, 2023

Announcements.....David Anderson
Song Leader/prayer.....Landon Willcut
Devotionalxxxxxxxxxxxxxx
PrayerBobby Sheumaker

Upcoming Events 2023

June

- 10 Baby Shower for Tiffany Daugherty
- 11 Elders/deacons/preachers meeting
- 13 FSOP Ladies Bible Class
- 17 Men's breakfast- Haines City
- 25 Fellowship In Service
- 26 thru July 2 - Faneuf Week at CFBC

July

- 8 Family/Friends Day at North Lakeland

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

May 21.....	\$ 5,824.00
May 28.....	\$4,707.00
June 4.....	\$9,168.00
Contribution Average.....	\$7,279.70
Weekly budget.....	\$7,410.00

BE CAREFUL....

"Be careful little eyes what you see, Be careful little eyes what you see, for the Father up above is looking down in love, so be careful little eyes what you see." We sing this cute little song with our toddlers but do we as adults really listen to the words? Are WE careful about what we see, and what we hear with our ears, and what we say with our mouths; knowing that God is watching us in love? The definition of careful is avoiding potential danger, mishap or harm, cautious. In today's society we are constantly surrounded by danger and evil but we as Christians can do our best to avoid unnecessary exposure to it. We are exposed to it on our phones, the TV, the movies, books, even walking down the street in front of us, but we can try our best to avoid it when possible. May we vow as David did in Psalm 101:3 to set no wicked thing before our eyes.

Do you ever get the notification on your phone that tells you how much time you have spent on your phone that day? It is very sobering to me and actually pretty frightening when I realize how much time I have wasted, when I could have been focusing on doing God's work or spending time in His word. One day we will all give an account for those hours and for all those things we have allowed into our hearts. Romans 14:12 tells us "So then each of us shall give account of himself to God." If you are anything like me, we all have room for improvement!

Therefore, "Be careful little eyes what you see. Be careful little ears what you hear. Be careful little mouth what you say and be careful little feet where you go. For the Father up above is looking down in love, so be careful little eyes what you see!"

Lessons from Second Timothy "Follow the Pattern" II Timothy 1:13

Do you remember when you were little and one of the achievements you received at school was for coloring in the lines and using scissors to cut properly? At one point that was a challenging task for you to follow the pattern. Spiritually speaking, there is a pattern for us to follow too. Paul told Timothy, "Hold fast the pattern of sound words you have heard from me" (2 Tim. 1:13). Paul viewed Timothy as his son in the faith, and Paul had not only been faithful in receiving the gospel, but also in the transmission of that gospel, he taught others. Not only did he teach through words, but also by the example, or pattern, of living. He passed that pattern down to Timothy, and charged him to keep following the pattern he received. While you are young you are still learning exactly what it means to spiritually color in the lines and follow the dotted lines when cutting your way through life. Be ready to receive sound words, and watch those older than you and see if you can pattern your life after those spiritual leaders.

VBS "Give Me Oil In My Lamp" Was A Huge Success!

Special Thanks to Vince and all his coworkers who sacrificed precious time, employed many talents, and put forth much effort to make sure the children (and adults) had a great time learning God's eternal word!

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South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST

1807 South Florida Avenue
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

*"His compassions never fail, they
are new every morning."
Lamentations 3:22,23*



If you prefer to receive the bulletin via email, contact us.