

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.23 06-07-16

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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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IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

Beginning the Ministry

Hiram Kemp

The month of June has arrived and I am looking forward to beginning the work here as the preacher for the South Florida Avenue congregation. I appreciate Bob and all that he has done in his time here, and I am glad to be able to continue to work with him and Brian. As the preacher, it is my desire to labor with the congregation to the glory of God, and reach out to the community with the truth of the gospel (Rom. 1:16). Nobody accomplishes anything in the kingdom of Christ alone. We must work together, using our talents and abilities for the kingdom and pray that God is glorified (1 Cor. 12:12-24). Times of transitions often require patience. I pray we can get to know each other better and continue to do the Lord's work here.

The relationship between a preacher and a congregation is one of the most beautiful relationships contained in scripture. Paul thanked God every time he thought about the church at Philippi and what they meant to him (Phil. 1:3-5). Likewise, Paul could not pray without making mention of the churches in Colossae and Thessalonica (Col. 1:3-4; 1 Thess. 1:2-3). Epaphroditus was once sick nearly to death, but did his best to come and see Paul and minister the things the Philippians had been unable to do (Phil. 2:25-30). The relationship between a preacher and a congregation is a relationship that will have a bearing on the eternity of both parties. As we begin this journey together I am excited about what the future holds. I look forward to making great memories together and building a bond that will outlast this life.

It is my desire to keep regular office hours as best I can, provided there are no emergencies or unforeseen circumstances. I plan to be in the office Monday through Thursday from 9 AM to 3 PM. If anyone would like to drop by to talk, pray, or seek counseling of some sort, I will welcome it. I only ask for a call ahead if possible so that I may schedule my time properly and not have overlapping appointments. My desire is to preach the Word, encourage, challenge, convict, and comfort with the message from God so that we might all be more effective servants for His cause (2 Tim. 4:2). Please pray for me and my family as we begin this new work and for the congregation at South Florida Avenue that things will go smoothly and be pleasing to the Lord (Col. 3:23). I appreciate the encouragement I have already received and am looking forward to being here on a permanent basis.

(continued on page 4)

Willing to Impugn the Word of God

Kevin Rhodes

It should go without saying that one's attitude toward the Word of God itself will affect interpretation greatly. However, time and time again in my studies with individuals, I have seen people willing to impugn God's Word rather than accept the truth. In other words, they would rather imply that the Bible is inconsistent or wrong than admit being inconsistent or wrong themselves. The Pharisees were so intent on proving Jesus was wrong that they were willing to assign Jesus' healing power to Beelzebub (Matthew 12:22-24). To this Jesus replied, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men" (Matthew 12:31). Jesus told them that in their efforts to circumvent Jesus' teaching they, in fact, had brought indictment against the Holy Spirit who had provided the means of the miracle. Likewise, when we take a position that implies that the Bible is in error, we have effectively committed blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, impugning the Source, because we are implying that what God says is not really from God (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Many people commit this moral felony when they refuse to examine the entire context of a passage. How many people have quoted Jesus saying, "Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matthew 7:1), and then interpreted that to mean that all judging is wrong? Jesus also said, "Judge not according to appearance, but judge righteous judgment" (John 7:24). Therefore, Jesus could not have meant in Matthew 7 that all judging is wrong. Yet, some people would rather act as if Jesus was right in Matthew 7 but wrong in John 7 in order to try to justify their own position. This essentially pits Scripture against Scripture. I have taken people to various passages in the Bible in an attempt to teach them only to have them try to jump here and there in the Bible looking for some Scripture that would contradict the Scripture I pointed out to them. This attitude itself is wrong! How are we better off by treating God's Word as if it is full of contradictions? Again, this is an attack against God himself. When you have two verses contradicting one another, you can be sure that your interpretation of at least one of them is wrong. "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (1 Corinthians 14:33).

Satan tried to pit Scripture against Scripture when he tempted Jesus. Rather than agreeing that there was some contradiction or inconsistency, Jesus pointed out that Satan's interpretation was incorrect and therefore the problem (Matthew 4:6-7). Some try to mask their own inconsistency in doctrine by calling it "tension." Others try to play down the fact that they are undermining verbal plenary inspiration. Any time we study the Bible, we must examine the entire context, not only of the passage and book, but also of the entire Bible, in order to make sure that our interpretation does not create inconsistency in our beliefs (Acts 20:27). The Bible is always right; we are often wrong. Let us not confuse these two.

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Joyce Burbage is home from the hospital and doing some better. Jeanelle Thrower fell and fractured her wrist. Jacquelin Dopwell had another chemo treatment last Thursday. She is still not feeling well and in alot of pain. Also keep Evelyn Wyatt, Patricia Chisholm, Jim Turner, JoAnn Hoback, Elizabeth Tubbs, Dorothy Trice, Debbie Horsley and Margaret Coone in prayer.

Relatives: Wayne Hendrix, Bonnie Patterson, Dee Moore, Margie Bolding, Bobby Cooper, Earl Shanes, Janet Romberger, Pamela Cox and Harold Rister.

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

Others: Jackie Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Ann Wood, and Alyssa Buckner. Keep all of these in your prayers.

Upcoming Events

June 13th-17th: V.B.S. at the Central Church of Christ in Haines City. The theme is Scar Force. Dinner at 6:00 p.m. Classes begin at 6:45 p.m. See the flyer or slide for more details.

June 18th: V.B.S. here at South Florida Ave. from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The theme will be Biblical Love. Please invite your family and friends.

June 18th: Men's breakfast at the Central Church of Christ in Haines City at 8:00 a.m.

June 25th-July 3rd: A group of our members will be traveling to Nicaragua on a Missions trip. Please keep them in your prayers for safe travels and a successful trip in spreading the gospel.

Sympathy

Bill Burton passed away on Sunday June 5th. There will be no services here. The services will be in South Carolina. Please keep the Burton family in your prayers.

Hither, Thither and Yon

Grace McAnally is in Michigan visiting with family and will be gone for a few months. Please keep her and Bob in your prayers.

Visitors

Peter Saunders, Victor Travis, T'Jean Tomlinson, and Louise Stewart.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

June

Bobby Sheumaker **Table** C.J. Grimes
 Kyle Williams **Assist** Tucker Sweeney

Sunday, June 12, 2016 9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Kyle Williams
Prayer..... David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer John McShane
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Paul Romine

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader David Williams
Opening Prayer Fred Strickland
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Greeters The Frenchs
Att. Cards..... Paul & Quadarius
Closing Prayer Tim Croson
Open & Close Building..... Tim Croson

Wed. June 15, 2016

Song Leader Kyle Bingle
Opening Prayer Kenny French
Closing Prayer Paul Romine

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

Sunday, June 19, 2016 9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Frank Hamby
Prayer..... Tucker Sweeney

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Kenny French
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tyler Anderson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader David Williams
Opening Prayer Steve Hunley
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Greeters The Bingles
Att. Cards..... Sebastian and Quadarius
Closing Prayer Ken Walker
Open & Close Building Tim Croson

Wed. June 22, 2016

Song Leader Bill Long
Opening Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Closing Prayer Jason Hendrix

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

May 15.....	\$5,253.00
May 22.....	\$4,306.00
May 29.....	\$4,818.50
June 05.....	\$4,567.00
Contribution Average	\$5,022.75
2016 Weekly Budget	\$4,422.60

(continued from page 1)

It will help for all to remember that the purpose of the church is to display the wisdom of God to the spiritual world and uphold the truth in this world (Eph. 3:10-11; 1 Tim. 3:15). Preachers are not perfect, but they are the clay jars that house the truth of God's Word (2 Cor. 4:7). Remember to appreciate those that have labored before and all the good that was done through them (Prov. 22:28; Heb. 13:7). Pray for the elders as they continue to do their best to shepherd the flock here and make the best decisions they can to help us all go to heaven (1 Thes. 5:12-13). Thank you for the opportunity to work with you all and preach the unsearchable riches of Christ!

Earthen Vessels!

The power of the Gospel is not in its ministers but in God! Paul wrote of himself and his coworkers,

For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake. ⁶For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. ⁷But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellence of the power may be of God and not of us. (2 Corinthians 4:5-7)

Paul and his coworkers only preach "Christ Jesus the Lord." Rather than promoting themselves, they became the humble servants of others. They communicated what God had given them. The "knowledge of the glory of God" is (continued below)



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



The time is drawing near for our mission trip, to Nicaragua **June 25 thru July 3**. If you want to make a special contribution to this work, please see the elders.

VBS Theme: **Biblical Love**
Lessons: God's Love for Us
Our Love for God
Our Love for One Another
Saturday, **June 18**



We will feature our graduates in next week's bulletin

(continued from above) the light that dispels darkness (see John 1:6-9; 3:19-21; 8:12; 2 Peter 3:18).

The ministers of the Gospel are nothing more than mere mortal beings. "Earthen vessels" are of very little value compared to the treasure they contain. The fact that this Gospel "treasure" is contained in weak and fragile containers emphasizes the true source of its strength - God!

When preachers faithfully proclaim the Word, they are not meant just to be admired. Rather, the Gospel they preach is meant to "prick the hearts" of those who listen and motivate them to obedience and/or greater service (Rom. 1:16; Eph. 1:19-20; 1 Cor. 2:5).

We are thankful God has brought Hiram our way. Let us not just admire his God-given talent to preach, but let us also allow the Gospel he preaches to affect our lives and make us better servants! ❤️ Brian