

# 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 06-20-17

## ELDERS

David Anderson  
Kenny French  
Bobby Sheumaker

## DEACONS

Jeff Bingle  
Jimmy Sweeney  
Chuck Wyatt

## MINISTER

Hiram Kemp  
(386) 405-5372

## ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Brian Kenyon  
(863) 944-8565

## SECRETARY

Michelle Paulin

## OFFICE PHONE

(863) 682-4702

## 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.

## EMAIL

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

## WEB PAGE

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



IN  
**SEARCH**  
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

## LESSONS FROM GHANA

By Hiram Kemp

I was privileged to take a trip to Ghana, West Africa, May 29 - June 12. It was my first trip to Africa, and a memorable one indeed. I made the trip with Brian Kenyon, Bob Bauer, Chad Tagtow, and Marvin Frazier. Our purpose was to help strengthen smaller congregations in the villages, to study the Bible with non-Christians, to preach publicly, and to teach the Bible to 16-17 year old students in what we would consider a high school for a week. The trip from Lakeland to Ghana covers about 5,500 miles, and it takes about 14 hours of flying to make the journey. Though the trip takes a person half way around the world, I was able to bring some lessons back, and I want to share some of them with you.

**THE GOSPEL IS FOR ALL** The Gospel is for every person in the world. Jesus told his disciples to take the Gospel to all nations and preach it to every creature (Mt. 28:19; Mk. 16:15). The early church could boast in that during their lifetime the Gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven (Col. 1:23). Going to Ghana reinforced what I already knew was true: everyone needs the Gospel. The Gospel transcends culture, nationality, and race. It is for all people. Paul wanted to take the Gospel to Greeks, Barbarians, wise and unwise. No one was too good for the Gospel (Rom. 1:14-15). There is a temptation, when one travels to a country like Ghana that does not have the material advancements of the United States, to load them up with financial assistance and relieve some economic burden. Surely people in impoverished places could use more money and, as their economy improved, it would help their material lives, but what they really need is the Gospel (Mt. 16:26). It will not matter if we improve their physical lives just to give them a more comfortable place from which to go to hell. The Gospel adds eternal value to any life. Jesus did not say, "Go into all the world and deliver bread and water." He said take the message that can save them. The Gospel is for everyone, and all can respond to it (Rom. 10:13).

**GRATITUDE IS IMPORTANT** Christians are told to give thanks in everything (1 Thess. 5:18). In our land of plenty, we often want more and complain when we do not receive it. In Ghana, most of the homes I stood outside as we studied were the size of many of our living rooms, some even smaller. However, the people of Ghana were happy, smiling, and inviting. I never once heard anyone complain about their lot in life or about their lack of material goods. It is not what we have that makes us happy but our attitude toward life. *(continued on page 2)*

We can be loaded with goods and toys, but if we are ungrateful we will never be satisfied no matter how full our bellies and bank accounts are. The trip to Ghana has taught me to be thankful for the things in life I often take for granted. God does not look on ingratitude with favor, but instead with fury (Rom. 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:2). We should learn to give thanks to God continually for all he has blessed us with and use it for his glory (Psa. 136:1).

**THE CHURCH IS INTERNATIONAL** The church of Christ as spoken of in the New Testament is a worldwide institution. The church does not belong to any one nation or group of people. Wherever people are hearing the Gospel, believing it, and obeying it, the church will exist. There are some things that differ from culture to culture but the doctrinal truths which cannot be compromised are the same. The Christians in Ghana sing acapella praises to God in worship (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16), partake of the Lord's Supper every first day of the week (Acts 20:7); give as they have been prospered (1 Cor. 16:2); pray (Acts 2:42); and hear a lesson from God's Word (2 Tim. 4:2). The worship service in Ghana, though not conducted in an air-conditioned building or in an auditorium with padded pews is the exact same worship we read of being offered up in the New Testament. The brethren we worked with from Ghana (brothers Solomon, Adela, John, and Albert) are all strong and capable Bible students. These men have been on the spiritual battlefield for years and are still going strong (2 Tim. 2:1-2). The church reaches all people in all places, and it is a joy to know that we can find God's people wherever we go. We need to use this argument more in appealing to the world around us with the truth. People need to know that the church can be placed into any location and still be the church of Christ. In Ghana, I realized more than I had before that the church is not bound to any country or specific time, but it is alive and well wherever people adhere to the Scriptures.

**PEOPLE STILL WANT TRUTH** The truth is found in God's Word, and it is what sets us free (Jn. 8:31-32, 17:17). Every house that I had the chance to go to doing personal work welcomed me and my translator for a Bible study. The people we studied with listened patiently and with interest as we taught them what the Bible says about their condition. Many of the Ghanaians had questions about the Bible and about what its truth meant for their lives personally. There are still people who want to know God and want to apply his truth to their lives. Many of the cars in Ghana have bumper stickers with some sort of religious message. When we did "street preaching" at night, many from the village, old and young, came out to hear the lessons. Many stood through the entirety of the lesson. I was encouraged by the fact that the Gospel was valued by the Ghanaians. When we went to the Village of Hope orphanage and school to teach the high school aged children, many of the students had countless questions about the Bible. They were asking questions about baptism, worship, and God's view of denominationalism. Five of the students were baptized as a result of the study. The Gospel is God's power to save, and its power is effective anywhere (Rom. 1:16). The trip to Ghana encouraged me to continue to ask people to study the Bible and visit our worship assemblies. While America is going in a more secular direction, no doubt there are still people who are searching for the truth (Acts 17:11). We do not know the hearts of people until they reveal them to us by their words and actions. Like the parable of the soils, we need to sow the seed and pray that it falls on good and honest hearts (Lk. 8:5-15). I am persuaded that as earnestly as we want to teach the truth to people, there are people waiting and willing to be taught.

**ERRORS ABOUND** One final lesson I learned from the mission trip to Ghana is that religious error still abounds. While I did not encounter much of the traditional religion (i.e. idol worship), there still was religious error. Many of the people we studied with in Ghana had been influenced by denominations that teach that the Old Testament Law of tithing is still binding on Christians today. The New Testament teaches that the Old Law was nailed to the cross and Christians are to give sacrificially on the first day of each week (1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6-7; Col. 2:14-15). Christians do not tithe. Ghana has also been influenced by some error regarding baptism, the mode and purpose of baptism (Acts 22:16; Rm. 6:3-5). This lets us know that false teaching is not limited to the United States but often travels as far as truth does (2 Pet. 2:1). Some were willing to surrender their false views of Scripture and submit to the Lord and others were still thinking things through.

Ghana was a great experience. I am glad I could make the trip. The Ghanaians are welcoming and friendly people who are willing to give a listening ear. The lessons I learned in Ghana will continue with me for the remainder of my life. Everyone needs the Gospel, gratitude goes a long way, the church is international, and truth is still popular as well as error.

# SFA FAMILY MATTERS

## Prayer List

**Our Members:** Ginny Hamby is having a catscan done on Tuesday, June, 20th. Quadarius Askew had all four wisdom teeth pulled this last week. Also continue prayers for Jim Turner, Margaret Coone, Sharon Mathis Washington, Josephine Bowman and Taleah Anderson.

**Relatives:** Benny Martin and Dorothy Trice who will be having medical testing done this week prior to up-coming surgery.

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

**Others:** Joyce Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Connie Hyer, Jack Pinckert and Maurice Davis, Jr.

## Upcoming Events

**Sunday, June 25th:** A meeting to plan for the up-coming Ladies' Day in October will be at 4:30 p.m.

**July 1st-9th:** Our young people and chaperones will be traveling to Penonome, Panama, on a mission trip.

**Sunday, July 2nd:** Fellowship in Service following evening services. Please bring finger-foods.

**July 24th-28th:** VBS will be hosted by the Orange Street church of Christ. The theme is "Fix Your Eyes on Jesus!"

**Saturday, July 29th:** Don't forget our VBS here at SFA. Classes for all ages. Terrance Brownlow-Dindy from 6th Street church of Christ will be teaching the adult class.

## Response

JoAnne Mitchell, who was recently baptized and placed membership, asked for the prayers of the congregation. Let us please encourage and get to know our new members.

## Hither, Thither and Yon

Jason Hendrix is on a Missions Trip to Honduras, working with Jesus Paguaga. Bernetta Green and Saundra Foust will be traveling out of state for the next few weeks. Please pray for safe travels.

## Visitors

Mary Moore, Jane Jessee, Mr. Stacey Wilson, Victor and Alexis Travis and Derell Ellerbe.



## Keep the Lord in Your Summer Travel Plans



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

### July

David Anderson ..... **Table** ..... Ken Walker  
John McShane..... **Assist** ..... Kenny French

**Sunday, June 25, 2017**  
9:30 A.M.

**Song at Bible Class** ..... Kyle Bingle  
**Prayer**..... Paul Romine

10:30 A.M.

**Announcements**.....Matt Willcut  
**Song Leader**..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer**..... Fred Strickland  
**Sermon**.....Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer** .....David Deal

6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader** .....David Williams  
**Opening Prayer**..... David Anderson  
**Sermon**.....Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Jim Turner

**Greeters** ..... The Pratts  
**Att. Cards**..... Paul and Ian  
**Open & Close Building**..... Tim Croson

**Wed. June 28, 2017**

**Song Leader** .....Matt Willcut  
**Opening Prayer**.....Jeff Bingle  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Jason Hendrix

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

**Sunday, July 2, 2017**  
9:30 A.M.

**Song at Bible Class** .....David Williams  
**Prayer**.....Tucker Sweeney

10:30 A.M.

**Announcements**..... Fred Strickland  
**Song Leader** ..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer** ..... C.J. Grimes  
**Sermon**.....Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Kenny French

6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader** ..... Stacey Paulin  
**Opening Prayer**..... Charles Paulin  
**Sermon**.....Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Kyle Williams

**Greeters** ..... The Fifes  
**Att. Cards**.....Quadarius/Ian  
**Open & Close Building**.....Phil Flfe

**Wed. July 5, 2017**

**Song Leader** ..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer** .....Jeff Bingle  
**Closing Prayer** .....David Deal

## ~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

May 28 .....	\$4,431.30
June 04.....	\$7,164.00
June 11.....	\$4,986.00
June 18.....	\$5,474.00
<b>Contribution Average</b> .....	<b>\$5,406.12</b>
<b>2017 Weekly Budget</b> .....	<b>\$4,716.51</b>

# Wisdom's Deliverance

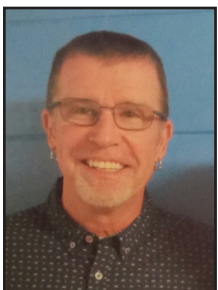
Wisdom should be a very sought after commodity (Job 28:1-28), yet people often disregard it! Solomon offers great incentive for us to be guided by true wisdom. First, wisdom must be accepted because “when wisdom enters your heart, and knowledge is pleasant to your soul, discretion will preserve you; understanding will keep you” (Proverbs 2:10-11). Second, wisdom keeps us from trouble. Its purpose is to “deliver you from the way of evil, from the man who speaks perverse things, from those who leave the paths of uprightness to walk in the ways of darkness; who rejoice in doing evil, and delight in the perversity of the wicked; whose ways are crooked, and who are devious in their paths (Proverbs 2:12-15). Its purpose is also to “deliver you from the immoral woman, from the seductress who flatters with her words, who forsakes the companion of her youth, and forgets the covenant of her God. For her house leads down to death, and her paths to the dead; none who go to her return, nor do they regain the paths of life” (Proverbs 2:16-19). Third, wisdom will keep us in the place of God’s approval: “So you may walk in the way of goodness, and keep to the paths of righteousness. For the upright will dwell in the land, and the blameless will remain in it; but the wicked will be cut off from the earth, and the unfaithful will be uprooted from it” (Proverbs 2:20-22). This world is full of foolishness, but we can safeguard ourselves from it by immersing ourselves in God’s wisdom. Have you accepted it? ❤️ *Brian*



*South Florida Avenue*  
**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
*1807 South Florida Avenue*  
*Lakeland, FL 33803-2653*

Return Service Requested

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



The elders would like to appoint **Stacey Paulin** as a deacon. Please let them know if you have a Scriptural objection. God, through the apostle Paul, described the qualifications for a man to serve as deacon (1 Tim. 3:8-12). We appreciate Stacey's willingness to serve the Lord in this capacity.

Let us pray for **Jason Hendrix** who is currently in Honduras, serving with the evangelistic team on a medical mission trip. He is working with **Jesus Paguaga**, a missionary we have supported for many years. May the seed they sow fall on good and honest hearts!



Continue praying for our YES II campaign to Penonome, Panama, July 1-9, 2017. Our young people and their chaperones will be passing out tracts, inviting people to the Gospel meeting, and conducting personal Bible studies.

**“Super Saturday”**

**VBS July 29**

**Classes for all ages including adults!**

**Terrance Brownlow-Dindy, preacher from the 6th Street church of Christ, will teach the adult class!**

