

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. 25 07-11-17

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

WEB PAGE

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

DOES GOD GROW?

By Hiram Kemp

God is from everlasting to everlasting, which means God is eternal (Psa. 90:2). As Moses made his boast in the power of God, he remarked that God is our refuge and possesses the everlasting arms (Deut. 33:26-27). When God questioned Job concerning his ability to contend with him he asked, do you have an arm like God? (Job 40:9). We do not know the shape of God neither do we know how God looks. No human being has ever seen God, but we can be sure he does not look like us; he is a spirit (Lk. 24:39; Jn. 1:18, 4:24). However, have you ever considered the question, can God grow? We know of his power, his eternal intelligence, his wisdom and his existence. Does God grow stronger or smarter through the years? The answer to these questions is no, but sometimes we behave as if God does grow.

EVANGELISM

The summer affords us with great opportunities to focus on mission work around the world. The elders at South Florida Avenue have provided opportunities for members here to be involved in work in Ghana, Nicaragua, Honduras, Costa Rica, and Panama. Jesus told his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel, and this is exactly the purpose of these trips (Mk. 16:15-16). Yet, the more of these trips I am involved in, I wonder does the command to evangelize grow in potency and importance on foreign soil or is it just as important here in Lakeland, Florida? We know the answer to this question intellectually but do we demonstrate this truth practically. We probably should not call our evangelistic efforts in foreign countries mission trips because trips end, but our mission does not. Our mission is to reach as many souls as we can with the gospel and bring every thought into submission to Jesus Christ (2 Cor. 10:4-5). The early church went everywhere preaching the Word, but they started in their hometown of Jerusalem (Acts 1:8, 8:4). I have heard it said, we cannot do here in America what we accomplish in other places. My question is who told us that we can't, when God has told us that we must? God demands that we do the same thing regardless of the results (1 Cor. 3:6). Is the reason that we are so on fire and zealous about evangelism in other places and at different times of the year because God grows more gracious, loving, and kind at those times? Is the gospel more important at those times of the year? The gospel and its proclamation is as important today as it was the first Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus and is as important

now as it will be if the world stands another two thousand years (Rm. 1:16). Let us talk to our friends about Jesus, mention the worship services to our family members and co-workers, and let us resolve not to remain silent regardless of the time of year or place we reside. May we like Paul say, “we believe and therefore we speak” (2 Cor. 4:13).

YOUTH FELLOWSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT

During the summer youth camps and seminars abound. Young people need to be trained in the way of righteousness (Prov. 22:6). When school is out for the summer this makes for an ideal time to have camps and get everyone together and do things together. Yet we should not allow this to be the only time that we are serious about the spiritual growth of our young people. Vacation Bible School and other youth oriented events are great for spiritual enrichment but are we guilty of shirking our responsibilities to the youth throughout the year only to turn up the intensity in the summer. Does God grow more concerned about the spiritual development of young people during the summer than he is at other times? All souls belong to God and he does not want any to perish but all to come to repentance (Ezek. 18:4; 2 Pet. 3:9). The year-round Bible classes for our young people should be treated seriously and taught by prepared Bible class teachers that have come to fill them with a knowledge and a love for God. Getting together for fellowship opportunities was a recurring thing in the Book of Acts and should be a priority for us as well (Acts 2:46). Young people must be an example, they need to be grounded in spiritual truth, using their gifts to God’s glory, and they need to be soul winners (1 Tim. 4:12-16). The teenage Christian who is only on fire for God during camp needs to rethink what it means to be a committed Christian. God has the same size heart for young people at all times of the year. Let the same be true for us.

DEVOTION AND DETERMINATION

The summer is a busy time for all of us but let us not be guilty of taking a vacation from God as we enjoy our downtime. Jesus encouraged his disciples to take time to rest and get away from the noise of the crowd (Mk. 6:31). Vacation is good, especially when the time can be enjoyed as a family. God does not grow less concerned with our spiritual development during these times of relaxation and unwinding and neither should we. Are you reading your Bible this summer? I enjoy reading books and, like others, have a summer reading list, but is the Bible at the top? The Bible is more important than any other book because it equips us for two worlds, the one we inhabit now and the eternal one to come (2 Tim. 3:16-17). Do not allow your Bible reading time to drop during the summer when magazines and fiction books may seem more appealing (2 Tim. 2:15). Jesus said there was a blessing attached to reading the Book of Revelation, and this is true of every book in God’s Word (Rev. 1:3). Attendance in worship is something we do for us but also for God because he desires our worship (Jn. 4:23). As you go to see the mountains and enjoy time at the beach, do not allow yourself to forget God. Find a sound congregation to worship with. When Paul went to a new city he made it a habit to find the Christians who were there, and we should mimic this same behavior (Acts 21:3-4). God does not shrink in importance during the summer, does he? Take time each day to spend in prayer with God and lay your cares on him as well as offer up praise for answered petitions (1 Pet. 5:7).

CONCLUSION

God is the same; he does not change (Mal. 3:6). Are we guilty of changing in our devotion and allegiance to God depending on where we are and what season we are in. Surely, no one can live on the proverbial mountain top consistently. There are things that happen in our lives that change our moods occasionally, but we should be faithful servants no matter what. God does not grow in kindness, mercy, or love. He possesses these attributes to their infinite capacity (Rm. 11:33-36). Therefore, we should to the best of our ability give him the consistent service that he is due. God loves us as much now as he did when he allowed his son to hang on Calvary’s cross and pay the penalty for our sins (2 Cor. 5:21). Jesus loves us as much today as he did when he was willingly offered on our behalf (Heb. 13:8). Do we love him the same, always? We sometimes talk about the seasonal devotion of the world as it relates to the observance of Christmas and Easter, but let us be on guard lest we be guilty of the same (Rom. 2:3). God does not grow, but we do. May we grow in the grace of knowledge of Jesus Christ and may we grow more devoted to him each day we live (2 Pet. 3:18).

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Toney Wilson was admitted to the hospital last week for blood pressure issues. She was expecting to be released Tuesday. Continue prayers for Jim Turner, Ginny Hamby, Margaret Coone, Sharon Mathis Washington, Josephine Bowman and Nadia Kemp.

Relatives: Benny Martin, Allan Cooper, son of Bob & June Cooper and Dorothy Trice.

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 Sam & Judy Crow.

Upcoming Events

Saturday July 15th: Men's breakfast at Medulla church of Christ at 8:00 a.m.

Saturday July 15th: Youth Devotional and get together at the Kenyon's house at 4:00 p.m.

Saturday July 22nd: VBS at the North Lakeland church of Christ 9am to 2pm. The theme is "Ocean Commotion"

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: Remember our VBS here at SFA. Classes for all ages. Terrance Brownlow-Dindy from 6th Street church of Christ will be teaching the adult class.

Hither, Thither and Yon

Welcome back to the 14 members who traveled to Panama for the YES II Mission Trip of 2017! We are thankful for your safe return home.

Picture Directory

The picture directory is ready and members will be able to pick up their copy at the back door. Let us please thank Phil & Dottie Fife for all their time and hard work put into this project.

Sympathy

Our sympathy is extended to the family of Maurice Davis Jr. who passed from this life on Friday, June 30, 2017. Visitation will be held Friday, July 14, from 6:00-8:00 pm, and services on Saturday, July 15, at 11:00 am, hosted by the church of Christ (157 W Tenth St, Apopka, FL 32703).

Visitors

Pauline Gilmore, Keith Greene, Rachel Wyniger, Tiffany Hash and Samuel and Megan, Jane Jessee, Mary Moore, Wanda Powell and Amy, and Chad & Sabrina Tagtow and Amelia, Anna, and Micah.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

July

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

Sunday, July 16, 2017

9:30 A.M.
Song at Bible Class Jim Turner
Prayer..... David Anderson

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Fred Strickland
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer..... David Williams
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Paul Romine

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Stacey Paulin
Opening Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Casey Paulin

Greeters The Williams
Att. Cards Antonio and Paul
Open & Close Building Phil Fife

Wed. July 19, 2017

Song Leader Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer Frank Hamby
Closing Prayer Phil Fife

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

Sunday, July 23, 2017

9:30 A.M.
Song at Bible Class David Williams
Prayer..... Josh Estridge

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Fred Strickland
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Matt Willcutt
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Jimmy Sweeney

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Stacey Paulin
Opening Prayer Bobby Sheumaker
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Bobby Simpson

Greeters The Pratts
Att. Cards Paul and Ian
Open & Close Building Phil Fife

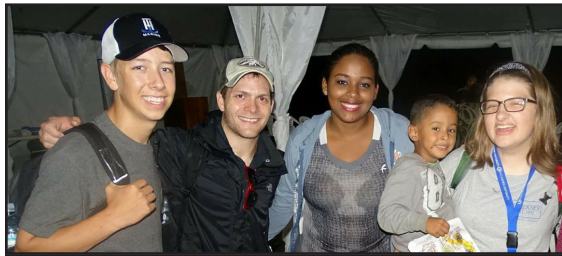
Wed. July 26, 2017

Song Leader Matt Willcutt
Opening Prayer Steve Hunley
Closing Prayer Tucker Sweeney

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

June 18.....	\$5,474.00
June 25.....	\$4,994.45
July 02.....	\$5,127.00
July 09.....	\$5,336.05
Contribution Average.....	\$5,378.94
2017 Weekly Budget.....	\$4,716.51

MISSION WORK IN PANAMA



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 . . .

MORE PANAMA PICTURES . . .



“Super Saturday”
VBS July 29

