

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. 68 No.24 07-14-15

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SUNDAY SERVICES

Bible Study.....9:30a.m.
Worship.....10:30a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Ladies Class.....10:00a.m.
Bible Study.....7:00p.m.

HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching

MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill.....Russia
Don Iverson.....India
Randy Judd.....Malawi, Africa
Graham McDonald.....Scotland
J. Paguaga.....Honduras, C.A.
Joey Treat.....Pacific Islands
Ted Wheeler.....Ghana, W.A.

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STAYING BUSY

Gary C. Hampton

Professional beekeepers say that you never want to “rob a hive” (remove the honeycomb to extract the honey) on a rainy day. On rainy days the bees are typically in a bad mood because they are stuck in the hive. They really do not like the rain. However, pick a sunny day because on sunny days the bees are out working, and they are always the happiest when they are working.

Our Creator knew that man needed work to do, so He assigned Adam to “tend and keep” the Garden of Eden (Genesis 2:15). Paul understood this principle, as is evidenced in his words to the brethren in Thessalonica.

For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: If anyone will not work, neither shall he eat. For we hear that there are some who walk among you in such a disorderly manner, not working at all, but are busybodies. Now those who are such we command and exhort through our Lord Jesus Christ that they work in quietness and eat their own bread. (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12)

Raymond Kelcy noted that Paul used the imperfect tense, which means the apostle repeatedly commanded them. The ones who habitually refused to earn a living were to be refused aid by their brethren.

Unfortunately, the same people who refuse to do anything to help themselves often fill their hours telling others how to do their business. It really is impossible to remain idle. Those who do not busy themselves taking care of their own needs and those of their family will be actively doing things that harm both their physical and spiritual families. The apostle commanded, thereby exercising authority he had from the Lord, and exhorted or called them to his side to lovingly encourage them to change their ways.

The church, God’s family, can learn a great lesson from Paul’s instructions. Each of us, as members of the body, has a job to do (Romans 12:4-5). We ought to stay busy doing the work God has made us best suited to do. This will keep us happy and make it less likely that we will hurt the work of the Lord by becoming busybodies in other men’s business.

Bored or Edified?

Robert Johnson

A brotherhood periodical recently asked comments from its readers regarding the influence of sports, if sports were hurting church attendance and if people cared about it. There were lots of responses to this issue, many of which concurred that sports could be detrimental to faithfulness in worship. One person, however, responded, “What’s the big deal about kids missing irrelevant Bible classes and boring worship assemblies that they and their parents are not getting anything out of anyway? Isn’t this another example of measuring success by how many people show up?”

In thinking of this, of course, we should do our best, and we should offer our best to glorify God in our worship of Him. We can and should be relevant to the age in which we live, as God’s Word is always relevant to every aspect of our lives. “Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more as you see the day drawing near” (Hebrews 10:24-25 NASB).

On the other hand, who decides whether worship is “boring” or not? Worship is the prerogative of God and is to be offered to Him from a pure and loving heart. If one comes to worship but expects it to be focused on what each person wants and desires, instead of what God desires, then how is God glorified in that? Each person present in worship comes with different feelings, different ideas and different expectations. A person could complain he or she didn’t get anything out of worship because the sermon topic didn’t address a specific issue, or the songs weren’t what one wanted to sing. Yet, would what you wanted in a sermon be what someone else wanted or needed? The songs you thought were boring to you, were they edifying to another? If worship is all about pleasing oneself, there can be no unity in the assembly, and some will leave each week thinking it was boring to them.

This is the problem so many have, and why so many have no problem absenting themselves from gathering together to worship for other activities; they have made it all about what they want. Worship has never been about what man wants, but about what God wants! Only God is divine and knows how best to be worshipped. It’s only when one empties him or herself of such self-centered desires and is willing to focus on what God desires, to place our minds and hearts around Him, that we truly worship God (John 4:24).

Look at the chaos that happened in Corinth during the Lord’s Supper when they focused on themselves rather than on Christ who died for them (1 Corinthians 11:27-30). Worship isn’t boring if God is the focus of our worship. We should make the words of whatever song is led our words of praise to God. We should make whatever prayer is led our prayer to God. We should listen to the message proclaimed and examine our hearts and determine to live more for Christ. We remember the death of Christ in communion, and thank God for all our material blessings when we give as prospered. Such a perspective honors God, and emptying ourselves of ourselves allows God to fill us up with Him, giving us joy, edifying us and encouraging us in what is spiritual.

As long as we view Christianity as being ‘all about me,’ we will experience discontent and never find the peace God provides. Worship, the church and Christian living are not about me; it’s about God. Jesus told us, if we are to be His disciples we must first deny ourselves (Matthew 16:24), crucifying ourselves with Christ so we might no longer live but instead Christ lives in us (Galatians 2:20); Christ is our life (Colossians 3:4). If one is bored, the place one needs to look first is within oneself. “Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God” (Romans 12:2 HCSB).

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Brenda Mask had a bad re-action to the medication given for some testing. She is now home awaiting test results. C.J. Grimes was home sick this week. Also keep Jacqueline Dopwell and Margaret Coone in prayer.

Relatives: Wayne Hendrix.

Shut In Members: Ann Howard, Virginia Plumlee, Bill Burton, Dick & Joyce Burbage.

Others: Chrissi Fuesner, Roger DeWitt and Dott Webb.

Upcoming Events

July 18th: Men's breakfast will be at the Medulla Church of Christ at 8:00 a.m.

July 31st-Aug 2nd: 22nd Annual Youth Explosion at the Hilltop Church of Christ in Winter Haven. The speaker will be Jermaine Tolefree of Jackson, TN. The theme is "Heaven... Don't Miss It For The World" Adults and children are invited. There is a \$10.00 registration fee. Please check out the flyer on the bulletin board for more details.

August 3rd-7th: V.B.S. and a Gospel Meeting at the Kissimmee Church of Christ at 7:00 p.m. The theme is "What It Means To Wear The Armor Of God." Dan Cates will be the guest speaker for the Gospel meeting. See the flyer on the bulletin board for more information.

Hither, Thither and Yon

Please pray for safe travels for Michelle Paulin as she will be traveling to Michigan for her dad's 90th birthday celebration!

Wedding Announcement

Mr. & Mrs. Everton Patterson would like to request your presence at the marriage of their daughter Ashley Patterson to Christopher Morgan on Saturday July 25th at 3:00 p.m here at South Florida Ave. Church of Christ.

Visitors

Larry Exum, Debra Pavlovic Okolichany, Dana Crosslin and Joseph Maillet.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

July

Bobby Sheumaker **Table** Fred Strickland
Bobby Simpson..... **Assist** Phil Fife

Sunday, July 19, 2015

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Jim Turner
Prayer..... Fred Strickland

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... David Anderson
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Charles Paulin
Closing Prayer Paul Romine

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader David Williams
Opening Prayer Tucker Sweeney
Closing Prayer Kenny French
Greeters The Stricklands
Att. Cards..... Sebastian & Ian
Open & Close Building Kenny French

Wed. July 22, 2015

Song Leader Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer Jeff Bingle
Closing Prayer Kyle Bingle

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

Sunday, July 26, 2015

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class..... Ken Walker
Prayer..... Phil Fife

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... David Anderson
Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer..... David Williams
Closing Prayer..... Tyler Anderson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... David Williams
Opening Prayer..... Ken Walker
Closing Prayer..... Antonio Martin
Greeters The Estridges
Att. Cards..... Paul & Ian
Open & Close Building..... Kenny French

Wed. July 29, 2015

Song Leader..... Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer..... Ken Walker
Closing Prayer..... Charles Paulin

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

June 21	\$5,046.20
June 28	\$5,123.75
July 5	\$4,597.00
July 12.....	\$3,517.70
Contribution Average	\$4,665.75
2015 Weekly Budget	\$4,302.98

HEAR OUR RADIO SPOTS

This Week

"Never Give Up"

WONN 1230 or WLKF 1430 or on web page

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



Does God's Love Mean He Approves Anything?

At the core of the recent controversy in the religious world over same-sex marriage is a misunderstanding of God's love. Those "Christians" (?) in favor of same-sex marriage say that God approves because of His "unconditional love." However, since when does "unconditional love" mean that anything goes? For example, a parent can unconditionally love his or her child, but that doesn't mean the parent approves that child's inappropriate behavior! Loving people and approving of their behavior are not the same! Yes, God loves everyone (John 3:16), but that does not mean He approves of sinful behavior. God loved the Gentiles, but Paul said that "God also gave them up to uncleanness" (Romans 1:24), that "God gave them up to vile passions," which included going against nature in the sexual realm (Romans 1:26-27), and that "God gave them over to a debased mind" (Romans 1:28). Between those verses in Romans, God listed a number of sins, none of which are acceptable to Him. A person has to either redefine God or deny the Bible to think that God is okay with sinful behavior, no matter how sincere and/or apparently loving the sinners are! God still loves sinners and is good to all people! God's goodness, however, is intended to lead people to repentance (Romans 2:4). For God and/or the Bible to benefit us eternally, we must simply accept who He is and what His word teaches. "But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?"  Brian



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

Have You Considered Being a Bible Class Teacher?

We are looking for teachers to teach in our Fall quarter, which begins in September. If you would like to teach, please see Brian.



Bible Bowl Questions on the Book of Matthew
Are Now Available

Take advantage of the VBS's in our area in the coming weeks! It's always good to learn God's word and make friends with more of His people!

"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind" (Matt. 22:37)

Pray for Costa Rica

By the time most of our members receive this bulletin, some from our youth group and their mentors will be wrapping up and returning from the mission trip to Costa Rica. We appreciate the prayers and support for the spread of the Gospel and the well being of [Brian](#), [Jagie](#), [Elly](#), [Lorelly](#), [Zsazeli](#), [Rene](#), [Heidi](#), [Kyle](#), [Kathy](#), [Tucker](#), [Pat](#), and [Shannon](#). A report will be given July 26.

Use Summer Break To . . .

- 1. Study the Bible**
- 2. Memorize Bible verses**
- 3. Do helpful service projects**
- 4. Lift up the discouraged**