



The South Florida Avenue church of Christ



MESSENGER

1807 S. Florida Ave., Lakeland, FL 33803

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ELDERS

David Anderson
Kenny French
Brian Kenyon
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Tyler Anderson
Jason Hendrix
Stacey Paulin
Jimmy Sweeney

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Hiram Kemp

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

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SECRETARY

Dee Parramore

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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.

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SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

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Dub Hill.....Russia
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Graham McDonald..Scotland
J. Paguaga.....Honduras, C.A.
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Ted Wheeler.....Ghana, W.A.

How To Talk to People About Jesus

Hiram Kemp

There is no doubt that evangelism is important. Jesus told His disciples to go everywhere teaching the gospel (Mk. 16:15). Jesus left His disciples a plan for how they were to begin in Jerusalem and eventually cover the entire Roman Empire with the gospel message (Acts 1:8). The early church was successful with their evangelistic efforts from the start as they began in Jerusalem (Acts 2:37-41). Before long they had as many as 5,000 men who were converts. When the church was scattered through persecution, they continued to teach the word and successfully win people to Christ (Acts 8:4). Even in one on one encounters, we read of people being taught the truth and obeying the gospel (Acts 8:26-40).

I am convinced that many of us want to be better at evangelism. We want to share the truth about Jesus and not live in a state of constant guilt over our inability to reach some people with the gospel. Sometimes we are simply unsure of how we should go about talking to people about Jesus. In a culture that is drowning in "political correctness" it is hard to know what will offend some people. Also, it seems that as secularism rises fewer people are interested in the truth about Jesus Christ. Though the odds seem stacked against us, all hope is not lost. The more we know about the Bible, human nature, and the times in which we live, the better prepared we will be to talk about Jesus (cf. 1 Chr. 12:32). In this article, I want to briefly mention several things we can all implement to better talk with our friends, neighbors, and loved ones about Jesus.

Talk to God First

Before we can excel at talking to men about God, we must learn to talk to God about men. Everything that we do for the Lord must be bathed in prayer (1 Thess. 5:17). Before the apostles preached on Pentecost, they were engaged in prayer (Acts 1:14). Paul told Timothy that prayers of various kinds should be offered for all men (1 Tim. 2:1-2). We should be praying to God before we think of various things to implement concerning evangelism. Our prayers in this regard can be general as we pray that God would open doors for us to reach people (Col. 4:30). We can pray that the Word would be able to run freely throughout our community (2 Thess. 3:1). Additionally, we can pray that we be led away from those who have no interest in the gospel message (Matt. 7:6; 2 Thess. 3:2).

Still, our prayers can be more specific concerning evangelism. If we are honest, sometimes we are timid or nervous about sharing our faith with certain people. We should be praying for boldness to speak the truth with courage and confidence (Eph. 6:18-19). By looking up to God in heaven, we can gain the strength to overcome our fear of men below. We may not be interested in sharing the gospel at all, in which case, it would be appropriate for us to pray that God would help our love for Him and others to grow. We can pray that God would providentially lead us to those who are seeking Him (cf. Acts 16:9-10).

If there are specific people, we have been talking to already, it would be wise to appeal to God for their heart to be opened and their circumstances to be such that they would develop a deeper interest in spiritual things. God can do far more than we can, therefore, we should talk to God about how to talk to men (Eph. 3:20). Pray for wisdom because God promises to give it to us (James 1:5). Step one for talking to others about Jesus is ask for God's help.

Learn to Listen

We may be more concerned with having the right answers than we are listening to the person we are speaking to. We should listen to people intently, and hear the things that they are telling us. When Jesus spoke with people, He always gave them the opportunity to speak even though He could read their minds (Jn. 2:24-25)! By listening to others, Jesus was able to give them the answers they needed for their specific situations. He answered Nicodemus (Jn. 3) different than He did the woman at the well (Jn. 4). We need to learn from His example.

When you are talking with your neighbor or the cashier at the store listen to the things they are saying about their beliefs. People will tell us where they are hurting and what they are currently depending on to help them. By becoming better listeners, we will be better equipped to point them to the One who is the way, the truth, and the life (Jn. 14:6). Listening allows us to learn what people grew up believing or not believing. We will learn what they think about God, the Bible, Jesus, and the church. Before we can provide an answer, we need to hear the questions people are asking (cf. 1 Pet. 3:15). Being a good listener takes practice, I am not an expert in this field. However, being a good listener also takes humility. Listening well means that we believe the other person and their life matters enough to be heard. The best evangelist are good listeners (Matt. 11:15).

Ask Good Questions

Jesus had all of the answers, but He loved to ask people questions. He would ask them what they thought about certain Bible passages (Matt. 22:41-46). He would ask them how they read the Bible or what it said (Lk. 10:26). He would answer their questions with questions of His own (Matt. 21:23-27, 22:17-19; Jn. 18:33-34). Jesus was not afraid to answer questions, but He knew there was more value in letting people arrive at the truth themselves than there was in telling them the answers.

Learn how to ask people good questions. Ask them where they go to church and why. If they believe they are already saved, ask them when they were saved and what they did to become a "Christian". If something erroneous is stated ask them if they would like to read a verse in the Bible that teaches otherwise. Ask questions about their work schedule and then ask them if they would like to attend worship or Bible classes (provide them with the

Youth Group by Vince Daugherty

Elisha takes up Elijah's Mantle (I Kings 19:19).

Elisha asks for a double portion of spirit as Elijah (II Kings 2:8).

Older men and women of God seek out younger men and women to take up and carry on the faith.

Younger boys and girls should learn the lessons from Elisha:

#1 accept the responsibility of taking up the faith.

#2 strive to exceed the spirit of faith of previous generations.

time). Ask questions about their family, religious history, hobbies, and other interest. All of these questions (and others like them) will help the conversation to flow smoothly and build a bridge rather than a barrier. Read any of the gospel accounts, and be impressed with how often and skillfully Jesus does this. The apostles do the same later on (Acts 8:30, 10:29, 19:2).

Sow and Trust

In the end, the increase will come at the hand of God (1 Cor. 3:6). You may not always be able to have a full-fledged Bible study with someone, but sow the seed and trust God to do the rest. Give a card; leave a track; send a link to our live-stream, and trust the Lord to work in the lives of people. Time and circumstances can change people and they may become more interested later on (Acts 24:25, 26:9-19). Talking to people about Jesus does not come as easy for some of us as it does others, but we can all do it. The world is in desperate need of the gospel. Let us do all that we can to get it to them.

Our Responsibility to Our Elders

Submit to them

(Hebrews 13:17)

Know them

(1 Thessalonians 5:12)

Hold them in high esteem

(1 Thessalonians 5:13)

Follow their example

(1 Peter 5:3)

Call them when we are sick

(James 5:14)

Do not receive false accusations against them

(1 Timothy 5:19)

Obey them

(Hebrews 13:17)

Senior Saints

by John McShane

Our country is in a state than many of us seniors have never seen in our lifetime. We are battling a disease that we have never seen before. Our political situation has our country divided like it has never been before. And, it seems like chaos is all around us. In many cases, worry has raised its ugly head in our population. One definition of worry is "our minds give way to anxiety or unease; allow one's mind to dwell on difficulty or troubles". We, as Christians, know that there is a way to become worry free. We can turn to our Bibles and learn what God has said in His holy word regarding worry.

His word has carried many people through times of trouble and will calm our fears today, if we practice what His words tell us. Proverbs 12:25 reads "An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up." Psalm 34:4 tells us, "I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." Philippians 4:6 reads "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God."

Let us listen and follow the word of God.

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16

Our Members:

PRAYER LIST

Ginny Hamby	Brenda Mask	Phil Fife
Chuck & Evelyn Wyatt	Linda McShane	Brian Smith
Margaret Norman	Bernetta Green	Ray Nashick
Carlene Long	Bobby Simpson	Bob Pratt
Cierra Edwards	Ellen Shearer	Geny Johnson
Ron & Judy Ford	Stacey Paulin	Jim Turner
Sharon Washington	Annette Phillip	Margaret Coone
Neil Entwistle	Antoine & Marcella Swain	

Others: **George French** (Kenny & Reba's son, pancreatic cancer); **Trevor & Sandy Hutchins** (Becky Sheumaker's sister & brother-in-law, cancer); **Roselyn Roberts** (friend of Darlene Thompson); **Thelma Rachford** (Dottie Fife's sister); **Maria Wardell** (Darlene Thompson's granddaughter, pneumonia & problems with liver and kidneys); **Alicia Zamot** (Jagie's aunt); **Keith Cozort** (former member); **Chip Bolding**; **Tony Seibert**; **Neil Entwistle Sr.**; **Tanya Irizarry**; **Derick Jordan**; **student of Jimmy Sweeney** (brain tumor); **Keijuan Callaway** (Sharon Washington's son); **Carl Chambers**; **Patricia Hewitt** (chemo); **Vontreal Mitchell-Copeland** (Ruby Lewis' nephew, cancer); **Jenny Laws's family** (Nikki Williams' cousin, cancer); **Tim Kenyon** (Brian's brother, possible cancer); **Gene Johnson** (Mark Johnson's father, cancer); **Harold Barker's family** (Darlene Thompson's cousin); **Cooper Terry** (18 year old son of Jeff Bingle's coworker, cancer); **Elizabeth Dean** (spider bite/possible cancer); **Brandon** (friend of Staci Smith, covid virus in ICU).

REMEMBER OUR SHUT-INS

Faith West Carol Eason Joyce Burbage
Cheryl Barker Ellen Shearer
Chuck & Evelyn Wyatt

UPDATES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

Bobby Simpson had a heart cath on Tuesday. He was able to go home later in the day. He and Linda thank everyone for the prayers

Jim Turner is having blood work done to determine treatment for low hemoglobin levels.

Sharon Washington's daughter and son-in-law, Jessica Youman, have the virus.

Staci Smith's friend, Brandon, is in the ICU in Texas battling the Covid virus.

Elizabeth Dean, former member, was bit by a spider and she is also being tested for possible cancer.

Thank you

Thank you for the cards, calls, and texts for my birthday. It made me feel very special. I love and miss my church family very much! In Christian love, **Sharon Egolf**

Rosalind and Bruce Coleman and their daughter, Brianna, have moved to Georgia. Their new information is on the bulletin board.

GOT QUESTIONS??

Hiram still has room for more questions for Q&A night
Put your question in the box located in the foyer

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

July

Designated Elder - Brian Kenyon

Wednesday, July 15, 2020

Song Leader/Prayer Tucker Sweeney
Closing Prayer Charles Paulin

Sunday, July 19, 2020

10:30 A.M.

Sermon Vince Daugherty
"The Lord's Provision in Times of Drought"
1 Kings 17 & 18

6:00 P.M.

Sermon Vince Daugherty
"Playing Politics Against God" Acts 12

10:30 A.M.

Open/Close bldg (both services) David Deal
Song before class David Williams
Announcements Brian Kenyon
A.M. Song Leader Rick Kenyon
Scripture reading/Prayer Tucker Sweeney
Lord's Table George Davis
Closing Prayer Jeff Bingle

6:00 P.M.

P.M. Song Leader Rick Kenyon
Scripture reading/Prayer Wesley Brunson
Lord's Table Phil Fife
Closing Prayer Curtis Morelock

Wednesday, July 22, 2020

Song Leader Ian Enamorado
Prayer Alex Parramore
Closing Prayer Allen Grimes

ASSEMBLING UPDATE

If you are not already attending and would like to, please notify the office. We still encourage those who do not feel well and those who consider themselves high-risk to stay at home.

As of July 2, the city of Lakeland has issued a face mask mandate. Masks must be worn upon entering the building.

We will continue live-streaming the services on YouTube as we have since March 22. In view of more people attending, we will post a "Those to Serve" list above. If you would like to serve in these areas, please let the office know.

- Elders -

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Jun 21	\$8,651.00
Jun 28	\$6,526.00
Jul 5	\$7,200.00
Jul 12	\$8,419.00
Contribution Average	\$7,104.55

Dorcas showed her love and concern for the widows of the church by making them tunics and other garments. Acts 9:36-39.

You may not be able to sew, but there is something you can do, even during this time of social distancing.

Here are a few ideas:

- send a text message with a scripture or quote
- make a phone call to read a chapter or a few verses to encourage someone
- send a card, a poem, or a few scriptures to let them know you are thinking about them.

Be creative and show your love for your family in Christ. It strengthens and encourages you as well as the other person. This is one way how God works through us. (Ephesians 2:10 and Colosians 3:23-24)

Men of the Master

by Brian Kenyon

Is It Just for Show?

As the facemask protocol has changed over the course of the pandemic, I sometimes get the impression some “mask” wearing is done merely for show. In the beginning, only people who were symptomatic were to wear masks, only certain masks were considered effective, and no mask wearers were to have beards, but now almost anything is accepted, even a mask dangling from an ear. I recently saw a government employee with a “Duck Dynasty beard” whose mask looked like a tiny parachute in the middle of a massive steel-wool hurricane! A spiritual application immediately occurred: are there people who “practice” Christianity merely for show? Like that bearded man’s mask, it is sometimes glaringly obvious. Jesus warned, “Take heed that you do not do your charitable deeds before men, to be seen by them. Otherwise you have no reward from your Father in heaven” (Matthew 6:1). If for show is our only motivation, our only reward is that we indeed were seen (Matthew 6:2). While many are not engaged in public worship, let us still examine our daily Christianity to make sure we are genuinely doing “the will of My [Jesus’] Father in heaven” (Matthew 7:21).

Places Where God Has Dwelt

In Eden
(Genesis 3:8)

In the Old Testament tabernacle
(Exodus 40:34)

In the Old Testament temple
(1 Kings 8:11)

In human flesh
(John 1:14)

In the church
(1 Corinthians 3:16)

In the individual Christian
(1 Corinthians 6:19-20; Ephesians 3:17)

In Heaven
(Matthew 6:9)

Everywhere
(Psalm 139:7-11)

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Return Service Requested