



# South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.  
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 78 No. 29 July 16, 2024

## ELDERS

David Anderson  
Brian Kenyon  
Bobby Sheumaker

## DEACONS

Tyler Anderson  
Jason Hendrix  
Stacey Paulin

## MINISTER

Steven Ford

## ASSOCIATE MINISTER

## OFFICE PHONE

(863) 682-4702

## EMAIL

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

## 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.....6:30 p.m.

## WEB PAGE

[SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com](http://SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com)

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## HOME OF

*Florida School of Preaching*  
since 1969

**Missionary - Huron, SD**  
*Casey & Emily Paulin*

## MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill ..... Russia  
Don Iverson ..... India  
Marc Veary ..... Malawi, Africa  
Graham McDonald ..... Scotland  
J. Paguaga ..... Honduras  
Ted Wheeler ..... Ghana, W.A.

## What About Hand Clapping as Part Of New Testament Worship? (Part 2)

Brian R. Kenyon

### Is Hand Clapping Equivalent to Saying, Amen?

Proponents of hand clapping in worship say that clapping hands is the modern cultural equivalent to saying “Amen.” That is, saying “Amen” was the cultural way of showing approval in Bible times, but Christians today live in a different culture, and in our culture approval is shown by clapping hands. Therefore, according to them, hand clapping in worship is acceptable to God because it shows approval for that which is being applauded.

While on the surface this argument seems sensible, there is one major difference—saying “Amen” is authorized in the New Testament as a means of expressing approval in worship, whereas hand clapping is not! Note the words of Paul to the Corinthians: “What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding. Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say “Amen” at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say?” (1 Corinthians 14:15-16).

Paul, in the context of appropriately using miraculous spiritual gifts in a worship assembly, was making the point that people cannot know to approve of a prayer or a song if they did not know the language in which it was spoken (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:9, 11, 19). The important point, as it relates to hand clapping in worship, is that Paul authorized verbal approval by saying “Amen” (or whatever word in a language is equivalent), but nowhere is hand clapping authorized.

Some might respond by saying, “What’s the difference? Approval is approval no matter how it is expressed.” In response, it is interesting to note that everything God authorizes in worship is to be clearly understood by those who worship. Singing must be clearly understood in order to teach and admonish (cf. 1 Corinthians 14:15; Ephesians 5:19; Colossians 3:16). Praying must be clearly understood in order for those praying to approach God acceptably and to ask according to his will (cf. Matthew 6:9; 26:39; John 17:1; 1 Corinthians 14:15; 1 John 5:14-15). Preaching and teaching must be clearly understood by both speaker and hearer in order for God to be glorified, exalted, and obeyed (cf. Mark 16:15; Acts 10:33; 2 Timothy 4:1-2; 1 Peter 4:11). Giving money back to the Lord when the collection is taken on the first day of the week must be clearly understood by the person offering in order for him to purpose in his heart and truly be a “cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7 cf. Acts 20:35; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2). Partaking of the Lord’s Supper must be clearly understood by those participating in order for it to be done in a manner pleasing to God (cf. Matthew 26:26-29;

1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:23-29). What, however, is understood when a round of applause is given during or after any one, or all, of these God-approved avenues of worship? Is the applause for God? If so, by what authority? Is the applause for the person who led singing, led prayer, preached the sermon, passed the communion tray, or contributed the most money? If so, why are hand clappers praising men when they ought to be praising God?

## **What About Bible Verses That Mention Hand Clapping?**

Another common attempt to justify hand clapping in worship is to appeal to Bible verses where hand clapping is mentioned with apparent approval from God. It is assumed that because hand clapping is found in the Bible, it must be acceptable to God at the present time. However, in evaluating this assertion, the following observation must be considered.

First, every verse that mentions hand clapping is found in the Old Testament (2 Kings 11:12; Job 27:23; 34:37; Psalm 47:1; 98:8; Isaiah 55:12; Lamentations 2:15; Ezekiel 25:6; Nahum 3:19). From the start, therefore, any effort to justify hand clapping in worship based upon these verses is doomed to failure. It shows an obvious neglect to “rightly divide the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15). The Old Testament has been completely fulfilled by Christ and taken out of the way (cf. Matthew 5:17-20; Romans 8:3-4; 10:4; Colossians 2:14). Our authority must come from the New Testament (cf. Matthew 28:18-20; Colossians 3:17).

Second, of the nine verses that mention hand clapping, five reveal that hand clapping was a way of expressing contempt and disdain. Concerning the total ruin God brings upon the wicked man, Job said that “Men shall clap their hands at him, And shall hiss him out of his place” (Job 27:23). Elihu upbraided Job for his defense against the accusations of the three friends by saying that Job “adds rebellion to his sin; He claps his hands among us, And multiplies his words against God” (Job 34:37). As Jeremiah described the tragedy of Jerusalem’s fall, he wrote, “All who pass by clap their hands at you; They hiss and shake their heads” (Lamentations 2:15). Ezekiel gave the reason why God would destroy the Ammonites: “Because you clapped your hands, stamped your feet, and rejoiced in heart with all your disdain for the land of Israel” (Ezekiel 25:6). Concerning Nineveh’s certain destruction, Nahum stated that “Your injury has no healing, Your wound is severe. All who hear news of you Will clap their hands over you, For upon whom has not your wickedness passed continually?” (Nahum 3:19). In the light of these verses, why would anyone want to clap his or her hands at God?

Third, of the remaining four verses that mention hand clapping, three depict the excitement and jubilation associated with the enthronement of a king. In Second Kings 11:1-21, the royal lineage of David survived the attempts of destruction by Athaliah. David’s lineage was able to survive because Joash, the son of King Ahaziah, was hid by Jehosheba (2 Kings 11:1-3). When the time was right (2 Kings 11:4-11), Jehoiada, the high priest, “brought out the king’s son, put the crown on him, and gave him the Testimony; they made him king and anointed him, and they clapped their hands and said, ‘Long live the king!’” (2 Kings 11:12).

Using this imagery of a civil celebration at the enthronement of a king, the psalmist twice referred to hand clapping as an expression of excitement and jubilation at the enthronement of God. “Oh, clap your hands, all you peoples! Shout to God with the voice of triumph! For the LORD Most High is awesome; He is a great King over all the earth” (Psalm 47:1-2). “Let the rivers clap their hands; Let the hills be joyful together” (Psalm 98:8 cf. verse 6, “the LORD, the King”). It must be noted here that Israel was both a religious and a civil state. Because hand clapping was done in civil ceremonies, when a king was enthroned in ancient Israel, does not mean that hand clapping is authorized by the Lord in New Testament worship. New Testament worship must be authorized by the New Testament!

The other verse that mentions hand clapping is in a context where Isaiah exhorts his readers to follow the Lord’s ways (Isaiah 55:6-13). Among other reasons, Isaiah says, “For you shall go out with joy, And be led out with peace; The mountains and the hills Shall break forth into singing before you, And all the trees of the field shall clap their hands” (Isaiah 55:12).

Isaiah here used “exodus” imagery to show that only those who obey God’s word will “go out with joy” and “be led out with peace.” Like the psalmist, Isaiah personified nature as rejoicing. This deliverance about which Isaiah speaks finds its ultimate fulfillment in the Messianic kingdom. Neither this verse nor the others mentioned above justify the use of hand clapping in worship to God. There is simply no Bible authority for it!

## PRAYER LIST

**Current:** Fran Gabaldon is having complications following surgery and needs our continued prayers, she is at her son's in Auburndale.

**Continual:** Jim Turner (cancer) Sharon Mathis Washington (Health & family); Stacey Wilson (health); Debbie Bush (struggles); Carlene Long (health & strength); Ron Ford (health); Annett Phillip (health); Janie Wise (health); Margaret Coone (health); Melissa Craft (health); Kathy Nester (health).

**Shut-ins:** Carol Eason, Kenny & Reba French, Barbara Jones, Charles Paulin, Helen Perrin, bettye bolding, Sharon Roy, Nellie Anderson

Also continue to pray for those on the extended family and friends list!  
[Extended family and Friends List is Emailed Weekly.](#)

### Lads to Leaders/Leaderettes

Time to sign up if you want to participate in this great program this year! We also need adults to sign up to mentor and help in various areas! We can't do this without your support! Sign up in the notebook by the doorway into the auditorium.

**See Becky Sheumaker with any questions!**



There will be an important Bible class teachers meeting on Sunday, July 28, at 5:00 pm. All who are willing to teach for the fall quarter are requested to be there. We would benefit greatly from your input.

### Fellowship Meal to Welcome The Ford Family

Sunday, July 28 following the morning service  
 Bring food for your family and to share with visitors!

**Team 3** will be in charge of the kitchen and clean up.



Our Sympathy to the Ford family in the passing of Steven Ford's mother Gail Churikian.

Her Celebration of Life will be July 20, 2024 at the Wyoming Ave church of Christ in Detroit, MI.

Please keep this family in your thoughts and prayers.

Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, "Write: 'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'"

"Yes," says the Spirit, "that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."

Revelation 14:13



### Scheduled to Serve in July

Designated Elder	David Anderson
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#### Wednesday, July 17, 2024

Announcements	Tyler Anderson
Song Leader / Prayer	Frank Hamby
Devotional / Invitation	Bobby Sheumaker
Closing Prayer	Cam' Ron Bailey

#### Sunday, July 21, 2024

10:30 am Sermon	Chad Tagtow
"Apathy" (Rev. 3:14-19)	
6:00 pm Sermon	Andre Medley
"The Power of the Gospel" (Rom. 1:16-17)	

#### Those to Serve 10:30 am

Greeters	D&N Williams
Song/Pray before class	Kyle Faneuf
Announcements (both)	Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader (both)	Tucker Sweeney
Prayer / Bible reading	Paul Sweeney
Lord's Table (both)	George Beals
Closing Prayer	Jeff Bingle
Open/Close Building	David Anderson
Attendance Cards	-
Sound Booth (both)	Jason Hendrix

#### Those to Serve 6:00 pm

Greeters	Nona/Janis
Announcements	Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader	Tucker Sweeney
Prayer / Bible reading	Bobby Sheumaker
Closing Prayer	Phil Fife

#### Wednesday, July 24, 2024

Announcements	Stacey Paulin
Song Leader / Prayer	Kyle Faneuf
Devotional / Invitation	Josh Potvin
Closing Prayer	Matt Willcutt

#### How We Are Giving

June 30	\$7,510.00
July 7	\$7,469.15
July 14	\$6,440.25
Contribution Average	\$6,833.89
Weekly Budget	\$7,410.00

**If you cannot serve as scheduled, please notify Stacey or the office. Even if you arrange your replacement, please notify Stacey or the office. Thanks!**

## Importance of Friendships

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 “Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.”

As women, our lives are often interwoven with the lives of others—family, colleagues, and friends. This passage from Ecclesiastes beautifully highlights the strength and support that come from true friendship.

Friendship is a gift from God that brings joy, comfort, and strength. When we have friends, we are not alone in our struggles or our celebrations. Friends help us when we stumble, rejoice with us in our triumphs, and provide warmth during our coldest moments.

Think about your closest friends. How have they lifted you up when you were down? How have you supported them in return? These relationships are precious, a reflection of God’s love and care for us. Moreover, the scripture reminds us of the power in numbers. When we stand together, we are stronger and more resilient.

A friendship grounded in faith and love is not easily broken. Let us cherish our friends and strive to be the kind of friend who reflects the love of Christ—supportive, caring, and steadfast. Reach out to your friends today, remind them of their importance in your life, and thank God for the blessing of friendship.

# LADIES' BIBLE STUDY

Taught by  
Susan Stearsman

Abide in Him  
Study of First John

July 23, 2024  
7:00 PM

Future Class Dates:  
August 6, 2024  
September 10, 2024  
October 22, 2024

All ladies are invited to join us in the FSOP classroom at 1807 South Florida Avenue, Lakeland, FL 33803 or Live stream through Zoom.

Receive the link to join class at  
<https://fsop.net/ladies-class-registration>



Ladies who miss class may watch the recording later when it is posted to our Facebook Group: FSOP Ladies Class.



TO SIGN-UP

If you have questions please contact us (863) 683-4043 [jagle@fsop.net](mailto:jagle@fsop.net)

Hello  
my name is  
Jesus

Join us as we learn about the NAME OF JESUS  
the Nazarene the Savior the Almighty

Join us at the Orange Street church of Christ for VBS  
August 3rd from 9-noon lunch will be provided  
Classes for newborns-99+

[www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com](http://www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com)  
Email us: [SFA.church@gmail.com](mailto:SFA.church@gmail.com)

For sermons and podcasts, find us here.



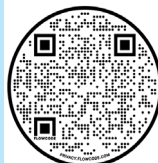
## South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST

1807 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

“ My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is made perfect in weakness.”

11 Corinthians 12:9



If you prefer to receive the bulletin via email, contact us.