



# South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.  
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 78 No. 31 July 30, 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)

### Find us on

YouTube & Facebook

### 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.



## Welcome Ford Family!

A new era has officially begun as Steven Ford's first Sunday as both our preacher and Lakeland resident was July 28! We had a great Sunday worship and fellowship, which is an indication greater things to come, all to the glory of our Lord, Jesus!

## Goals As We Enter This New Era

Brian R. Kenyon

When Paul met the Ephesian elders at Miletus as he was returning from his third missionary journey, he had many encouraging things to say. Among those was what is recorded in Acts 20:24, "But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God." From this verse, let us note three noteworthy goals all of us should have, especially as we enter this new era with the body of Christ at SFA.

### Be Unmoveable In The Lord

Concerning the "these things" Paul said would not move him, he stated previously, "And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me" (Acts 20:22-23). Paul knew that he would face persecution and hardship, for "all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution" (2 Timothy 3:12). There are some things that can potentially "move" us away from the Lord, if we let them. Persecution and hardships can cause us to stumble (Matthew 13:20-21). False doctrine can cause us to "fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked" (2 Peter 3:16-17 cf. 2 Peter 2:14; Ephesians 4:14). Materialism can cause us to "stray from the faith" (1 Timothy 6:9-10 cf. 2 Timothy 4:10). However, we must not allow any of these (or other) things to move us from the Lord. We must continually grow in "grace and knowledge" (2 Peter 3:18). Paul also exhorted us to "be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord" (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:58)!

# Love Christ More Than Life Itself

First century Christians faced severe persecution. The extent of this persecution is perhaps best realized in the Book of Revelation, where some were exiled, cast into prison, martyred, and even beheaded “for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ” (cf. Revelation 1:9; 2:10, 13; 6:9; 16:6; 17:6; 18:24; 20:4). One of the main thrusts of this last book in our Bibles was to encourage the saints to “be faithful until death” (Revelation 2:10). Like the first century Christians John exhorted, we must love Jesus more than our very lives. These Christians “overcame him [Satan] by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death” (Revelation 12:11). The New American Standard Bible (1995 update) translates the last clause, “they did not love their life even when faced with death.” We must not fear even Satan himself over God. Jesus said, “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matthew 10:28). We will be blessed when we consider our lives expendable. Jesus said, “For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?” (Luke 9:24-25 cf. Luke 17:33). When we love Christ more than our own lives, we will attend church services to study together, worship God, and enjoy fellowship with God and one another (Matthew 6:33; John 4:23-24; Colossians 3:1-3; Hebrews 10:24-25); we will sacrificially give our time, talents, and money to the Lord (Romans 12:1 cf. Matthew 19:27-30; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 3:23); and we will be supportive of the gospel and efforts to spread it throughout the world, beginning right next door (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; 2 Thessalonians 3:1).

## Finish The Course

The Christian life is often compared to a race, or course. Paul wrote, “Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty” (1 Corinthians 9:24-26). In order to run successfully, we must exercise self control (1 Corinthians 9:24-17); we must remove all hindrances (Hebrews 12:1); and we must constantly press forward (Philippians 3:14). The writer of Hebrews assured our winning this race, when he wrote: “Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Hebrews 12:1). A reward awaits all those who finish, as Paul confirmed at the end of his life, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing” (cf. 2 Tim. 4:6-8).

## Conclusion

As we begin this new era, working with the Fords, we must not lay the responsibility of our Christianity on the “new preacher.” Rather, we must work together, realizing that, though we are a team, we will be judged individually by God. Note what Paul taught as he distinguished our roles versus God's role:

I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase. So then neither he who plants is anything, nor he who waters, but God who gives the increase. Now he who plants and he who waters are one, and each one will receive his own reward according to his own labor. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. (1 Corinthians 3:6-9)

Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 3:13-14)

## PRAYER LIST

**Current:** Fran Gabaldon is in LRH with a collapsed lung and pneumonia. bettye bolding has COVID, Nancy Jacobs has upcoming medical tests, Geny and Mark Johnson were in an auto accident, Neil Entwistle's nephew Kyle was in a motorcycle accident and Neil's cousin John was killed in an auto accident

**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, Nellie Anderson, Cheryl Barker



### Congratulations

Tucker and Anna Clair Sweeney were married on Saturday, July 27 in Plant City. Wishing them a lifetime of happiness together and a love that grows stronger with each passing day!

The angels are rejoicing and so are we! We have a new brother in Christ! Roy Staats obeyed the gospel on Thursday July 25. Roy had many Bible studies with different evangelists and the Gospel took root in his heart! Let's make him feel welcome at SFA!



Going away party for **Landan Willcutt** who will be leaving soon to attend Faulkner University. His parents are hosting the party at their home on Saturday August 10th at 5:00 PM. Please let Matt or Shannon know if you will be able to attend.

**Welcome: Khalial and Khalia Pope** have placed membership with us here at SFA. Please make this awesome couple feel welcome here among us as we all labor together for the Lord

We still need Bible class teachers for the next quarter. Please see Brian if you would like to either teach or be a helper in a classroom.

*You then who teach others, do you not teach yourself?  
(Rom 2:21)*

### Elders and Deacons Meeting

Sunday August 11

Please let the elders know if there is anything you would like them to discuss at this meeting.

### Scheduled to Serve in August

Designated Elder	David Anderson
------------------	----------------

#### Wednesday, July 30, 2024

Announcements	David Anderson
Song Leader / Prayer	Landon Willcutt
Devotional / Invitation	Steven Ford
Closing Prayer	Bobby Sheumaker

#### Sunday, August 4, 2024

10:30 am Sermon	Steven Ford
Seek Jesus (Luke 19:1-10)	
6:00 pm Sermon	Steven Ford

#### Those to Serve 10:30 am

Greeters	Bea/Jeanelle
Song/Pray before class	Frank Hamby
Announcements (both)	Stacey Paulin
Song Leader (both)	Andre Medley
Prayer / Bible reading	Josh Potvin
Lord's Table (both)	Nigel St Bernard
Closing Prayer	Josh Estridge
Open/Close Building	David Anderson
Attendance Cards	Sawyer
Sound Booth (both)	Jason Hendrix

#### Those to Serve 6:00 pm

Greeters	Nona/Janis
Announcements	Stacey Paulin
Song Leader	Andre Medley
Prayer / Bible reading	Bobby Sheumaker
Closing Prayer	Terrance Dindy

#### Wednesday, August 7, 2024

Announcements	Tyler Anderson
Song Leader / Prayer	Kyle Faneuf
Devotional / Invitation	Brian Kenyon
Closing Prayer	Allen Grimes

#### How We Are Giving

July 14	\$6,440.25
July 21	\$5,040.00
July 28	\$4,711.00
Contribution Average	\$6,688.33
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!**

Women of the Word

Jessica Anderson

## Reflecting on God's Love Through His Creation

We often find ourselves juggling numerous responsibilities. Amid the busyness, it's essential to take a moment to pause and reflect on the immense love God has for us, a love that is vividly displayed through His creation.

Consider the beauty of a sunrise. Each morning, the sky is painted with hues of pink, orange, and gold, a daily reminder that God's mercies are new every morning (Lamentations 3:22-23). The intricate design of a flower, with its delicate petals and vibrant colors, speaks to the care and attention God puts into even the smallest details. If He cares so deeply for the flowers of the field, how much more does He care for you?

The vastness of the night sky, dotted with countless stars, declares the glory of God (Psalm 19:1). As you gaze up, remember that the same God who created the universe knows you by name and holds you in His hands. The gentle rustling of leaves in the wind or the soothing sound of waves crashing on the shore can serve as a reminder of His constant presence and the peace that comes from trusting in Him.

Take time today to step outside, breathe in the fresh air, and look around at the world God has made. Let His creation be a reflection of His boundless love for you, a love that is steadfast, enduring, and unfathomably deep. No matter what challenges you face, remember that you are cherished by the Creator of all things. His love surrounds you, sustains you, and empowers you to walk confidently in the path He has set before you.

[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.



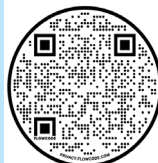
"May you be blessed by the LORD,  
Who made heaven and earth."

Psalm 115:15

## South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST

1807 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested



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

# 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+

## FLORIDA SCHOOL OF PREACHING

# LADIES' BIBLE STUDY

Taught by  
Susan Stearsman

## Abide in Him Study of First John

August 6, 2024  
7:00 PM

Future Class Dates:  
September 10, 2024  
October 22, 2024  
November 19, 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>



SCAN ME  
TO SIGN UP



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