

The South Florida Avenue MESSENGER

A Friendly Church With a Vital Message Proclaiming the Unsearchable Riches of the Lord Jesus.
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ELDERS

David Anderson
Kenny French
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Jeff Bingle
Stacey Paulin
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
since 1969

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

God's "Book of Life" and Our Church Directory

By Brian R. Kenyon

Special thanks to Dottie (and Phil) for their work in putting together our most recent church directory! This is a great tool for getting to know one another better and to increase communication among the church members here. We also thank church members for their cooperation in having their pictures taken and for proofreading their individual pages. All of us working together makes tasks like this come together quicker and smoother.

We must realize, of course, that our name being in a church directory does not necessarily mean that our name is in God's "Book of Life." Our church directory is compiled by fallible human beings who cannot always know the heart of those on the "church roll." Also, our church directory will include some non-Christians (such as unconverted spouses or family members). Church directories are good, but being enrolled in God's Book of Life is far better!

Background of God's "Book of Life"

Other than in the Book of Revelation, the only New Testament passage that explicitly mentions God's Book of Life is Philippians 4:3, where Paul says, "I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life." In the context, Paul mentioned some of his coworkers in the Lord (such as Euodias, Syntyche, Clement, and perhaps, Suzygo [the transliteration of "companion (yokefellow, KJV)" as a proper name], but since he did not have space to mention all of them, he referred to them simply as those whose names are in the Book of Life.

God's book of life is seen throughout Scripture. In the Old Testament, God's book moved from what could refer literally to a list of those in Israel to a figurative list of those who have spiritual life. Following the sin of making the golden calf, Moses said to the Lord, "Oh, these people have committed a great sin, and have made for themselves a god of gold! Yet now, if You will forgive their sin—but if not, I pray, blot me out of Your book which You have written" (Ex. 32:31-32). Here, God's book can refer to those listed in Israel. While speaking of the enemies of the Lord and His people, the psalmist wrote, "Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, And not be written with the righteous" (Ps. 69:28). Here, God's book

seemed to refer to those who have physical life, but there are definite implications that the psalmist also wants these enemies to be removed from any possible spiritual life. Isaiah spoke of the Messianic kingdom, “it shall come to pass that he who is left in Zion and remains in Jerusalem will be called holy—everyone who is recorded among the living in Jerusalem” (Isa. 4:3). Here, the reference to those who are “recorded among the living” is spiritual. Daniel said in reference to the Christian age, “At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book” (Dan. 12:1). Here again, the reference is to those having spiritual life.

Who Will Be Written In God’s “Book Of Life”?

The Hebrews writer said that “the general assembly and church of the firstborn ... are registered in heaven” (Heb. 12:23). Those “registered [written, KJV]” in heaven (i.e., God’s Book of Life) are members of the church. The term “firstborn” here does not refer to Jesus. The Greek word behind the translation is plural, and could be translated “church of the first born ones,” as the plural verb “are” indicates. Here is an example where the church is named after those of whom it consists rather than after the one who owns it (cf. 1 Thes. 1:1). Membership in the church requires obedience to the Gospel (Acts 2:38-41, 47). In Philippians 4:3, those whom Paul mentions as being in God’s Book of Life are his fellow laborers. This implies that these ones are faithful, struggling to “fight the good fight of faith” (1 Tim. 6:12). All of Paul’s coworkers did not remain in God’s Book of Life. Demas was once a faithful coworker with Paul (Col. 4:14; Phile. 24), but later pursued the world instead (2 Tim. 4:10). Those whose names are written in God’s book of life must keep their names written there by overcoming the temptations of the world. “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels” (Rev. 3:5).

Will Our Names Be In God’s “Book Of Life”?

All of us will appear before the judgment seat of Christ on the last day (Heb. 9:27; 2 Cor. 5:10). Concerning that Judgment Day, John wrote, “And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works ... And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire” (Rev. 20:12, 15). Clearly, God’s Book of Life will be a relevant volume until time as we know it is no more!

All who are accountable will receive one of two possible eternal destinations, based upon whether or not their names are written in God’s Book of Life. If our name is not found in God’s book of life, we can expect eternal torment (2 Thes. 1:9). In fact, even while upon this earth, those not written in God’s Book of Life are considered His enemies (Rev. 13:8; 17:8 cf. Rom. 5:6-10). However, those whose names are written in God’s Book of Life will be told, “Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Mt. 25:34). Is it any wonder then that Jesus told the seventy that having their names “written in heaven” was worthy of more rejoicing than being endued with miraculous power (Lk. 10:20)? Our names may be in the church directory, but when “the roll is called up yonder,” will we be there?

Florida School of Preaching begins Its 49th School-Year!

This would not be possible without the loving and sacrificial support of individual Christians (like many South Florida Avenue church of Christ members) and congregations (like the South Florida Avenue church of Christ)! Since 1969, the South Florida Avenue eldership has supported the school and has allowed it to meet in its facilities. Over the years, inconveniences and potential conflicts have been worked through in godly peace and Christian harmony because everyone involved has been more concerned about serving Jesus than personal agendas. The school is thankful for your allowing the Lord to work through you in training Gospel preachers! The school looks forward to continuing many years, even until Jesus comes again, if the Lord wills!

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Continue prayers for Jim Turner, Ginny Hamby, Margaret Coone, Mickey Phillips, Sharon Washington and Josephine Bowman.

Relatives: Brian Patterson, son of Gene Patterson, Benny Martin, Cameron Soles, grandson of Cheryl Barker, Dorothy Trice and Kristen Cox's mother.

Shut In Members: Virginia Plumlee, Dick & Joyce Burbage, Don Starks, Sharon Edler and Duane Nelson.

Others: Joyce Stearsman, Chrissi Fuesner, Connie Hyer, Jack Pinckert, Brian Tagtow, and Corey Perry, a good friend of Stacey Paulin.

Upcoming Events

Sunday August 13th: Important meeting at 4:30 in the fellowship hall, for all teachers and those willing to help in classrooms. If you are willing to help, but cannot attend please let Hiram know.

Saturday August 19th: Men's breakfast at Jackson Ave. in Bartow at 8:00 a.m.

Saturday August 19th: Back to School Bash at the Grime's house at 5:00 p.m. All ages are invited!

Saturday August 26th: 2nd Annual Teen Summit "Stand Up and Stand Out" at the Laura St. Church of Christ in Plant City from 9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. Complimentary breakfast will be served at 8:30 a.m. Our own Hiram Kemp will be the speaker.

Sept. 8th-10th: Scrap the Weekend at Central Florida Bible Camp.

Sept. 29th - Oct. 1st: A weekend of spiritual enrichment called **Rush** at Freed Hardeman University for middle school and high school students.


October 7th: Save the Date: South FL. Avenue's Ladies Day!

Response

Melody Baxter responded to the invitation on Sunday. Please keep her in prayer and be an encouragement to her.

Visitors

Laura Rushing, Will & Autumn Vann and Mac & Avery, Jane Jessee, Jerry & Lula Sanders and Tamara & Tia and Joshua Potvin.

 Tune into AM 1330 (station WWAB) with your friends and neighbors every Monday from 5:00-5:30 p.m. for the "Way of Truth" program. This is a joint effort to evangelize involving Terrance Brownlow-Dindy (6th Street) and Hiram Kemp. Let's point our community to the Bible!

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

August

Frank Hamby Table Fred Strickland
Chaz Hine Assist Bobby Simpson

Sunday, August 13, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Stacey Paulin
Prayer..... Ken Walker

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... David Williams.
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer David Anderson
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer David Deal

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer John McShane
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Kyle Bingle

Greeters The Grimes
Att. Cards..... Paul & Sebastian
Open & Close Building..... Bob Pratt

Wed. August 16, 2017

Song Leader Steve Hunley
Opening Prayer John McShane
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, August 20, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Kyle Bingle
Prayer..... Josh Estridge

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... David Williams
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Charles Paulin
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tim Croson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer Stacey Paulin
Sermon..... Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer David Deal

Greeters The Williams
Att. Cards..... Willcut boy's
Open & Close Building..... Bob Pratt

Wed. August 23, 2017

Song Leader Casey Paulin
Opening Prayer Bobby Sheumaker
Closing Prayer David Deal

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

July 16.....	\$4,392.82
July 23.....	\$4,568.00
July 30.....	\$5,817.95
Aug 06.....	\$6,128.50
Contribution Average.....	\$5,359.93
2017 Weekly Budget.....	\$4,716.51

Let Your Voice Be Heard!

During a morning devotional before door knocking on a foreign mission trip, the song leader picked a song whose title was similar to one he wanted to sing. However, after starting the first stanza he realized it was not the song he thought. Right away, though, a few of the young ladies who knew the song sang out loud and strong, and in just a few seconds the whole assembly was enthusiastically singing in beautiful pitch and harmony. In fact, of all the morning devotional songs sung that week, that one could arguably be regarded as the best sounding. That incident reminds us of three truths. First, all of us know some things that others do not that can help us and those we influence be more spiritual. Sometimes we wrongfully compare ourselves with others and think that compared to their knowledge and perceived abilities, we are nothing (cf. Num. 13:33). As a result, we “silence our voice” and do not use what we know. All of us can contribute to the betterment of God’s kingdom if we let our “voice be heard”! Second, like those young ladies who sang out, even just a little sharing of what we know in the Lord can have a lasting impression. Remember the woman who anointed the head of Jesus with ointment (Mk. 14:3-9)? Jesus commended her by saying, “She has done what she could” and then told those around Him, “Assuredly, I say to you, wherever this gospel is preached in the whole world, what this woman has done will also be told as a memorial (continued below)



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 . . .

 TAKE ME OUT TO THE
BALLGAME! 



We had a great youth outing to see the Lakeland Flying Tigers baseball game. Pictured is most of our group. Thanks to C. J. for organizing this event and choosing a "dollar night" game!

to her” (Mk. 14:9). Do you see the power of just one small deed of kindness? Though our names may not appear in public record for some great thing we have done, God knows and blesses accordingly (cf. Rev. 2:13). Our deeds cannot have a lasting impression for good unless our “voice be heard” for good! Third, letting our “voice be heard” may just be the spark that other people need to get “on fire for the Lord.” Those few young ladies singing encouraged the entire assembly to enthusiastically participate in that song service! This is the same principle behind Jesus’ comparison of His disciples with “salt” and “light” (Mt. 5:13-16). Our influence will encourage others to be what God wants us all to be! Never underestimate the power of encouragement in what little we may think we know of God’s word or of our talents in the Lord. We can, like those young ladies who sang out, encourage others to greater service! ❤️ Brian