



# South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.,  
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 77 No. 36 Sep. 5, 2023

## ELDERS

David Anderson  
Brian Kenyon  
Bobby Sheumaker

## DEACONS

Tyler Anderson  
Jason Hendrix  
Stacey Paulin

## MINISTER

## ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Vince Daugherty

## 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.....7:00 p.m.

## WEB PAGE

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

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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.

## Phoebe: An Exemplary Servant

Brian R. Kenyon

In Romans 16:1-2, Paul wrote, “I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also.” Although some people make way too much out of these verses (i.e., by making her an official “deaconess”), this commendation of Phoebe is very remarkable. Her name means “bright,” or “radiant,” and she is the only person named Phoebe in Scripture.

### Was Phoebe a "Deaconess"?

One of the main reasons this question is even asked is because the word translated “servant” is from the same word (*diakonos*, δῆκονος) from which “deacon” derives. (The other main reason is that people want to force something that would appear to negate Paul’s teaching on the role of women in Second Timothy 2:8-15.) This word translated “servant” refers to one who renders service of whatever kind; “one who executes the commands of another; esp. of a master; a servant, attendant, minister” (J. H. Thayer, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, 138). The form of *diakonos* used here is accusative singular masculine (*diakonon*). Some more modern lexicons may describe this as an “accusative feminine singular common,” which is very misleading and seems to reflect a progressive attitude meant to keep up with the times rather than being true to the original language. In biblical Greek, unlike English but common in most contemporary languages, all nouns have a specific gender (masculine, feminine, or neuter). There are two kinds of gender in languages: “lexical gender,” which has nothing to do with the meaning of a word (but is used for pronoun antecedents, adjectives, etc.), and “natural gender,” which does affect the meaning of words (e.g., “girl” is feminine gender). “Servant” (*diakonos*) is masculine, but that does not mean it only applies to men and/or deacons in the local church! Those same (“progressive” reflecting) lexicons will say in Romans 15:8, where *diakonos* refers to Jesus, that it is “accusative masculine singular common.” Adjectives can change gender to match words they modify(cf. he, she, or it), but, unlike an adjective, *diakonos* is a noun and does not change gender!

While some like to see Phoebe as an official “deaconess” of the local church and seek to justify such a position today, there is no biblical evidence that suggests that. *Diakonos* simply refers to a servant. *Diakonos* (also translated “minister” and “servant”) occurs twenty-nine times in the Greek text, UBS4 (Mt. 20:26; 22:13; 23:11; Mk. 9:35; 10:43; Jn. 2:5, 9; 12:26; Rom. 13:4 [twice]; 15:8; 16:1; 1 Cor. 3:5; 2 Cor. 3:6; 6:4; 11:15 [twice], 23; Gal. 2:17; Eph. 3:7; 6:21; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:7, 23, 25; 4:7; 1 Tim. 3:8, 12; 4:6), and in one other place in the Received Text (1 Thes. 3:2). *Diakonos* is used of a king’s servants (Mt. 22:13), servants at a wedding

feast (Jn. 2:5), civil government (Rom. 13:4), Jesus Christ (Rom. 15:8), Apollos (1 Cor. 3:5), the apostles (2 Cor. 3:6), servants of Satan (2 Cor. 11:15), Paul (Col. 1:23), Tychicus (Eph. 6:21), and Timothy (1 Thes. 3:2). According to the general meaning of the word, all Christians are to fulfil the idea of *diakonos*! In the local church, however, there is also a “special” kind of servant, appropriately translated “deacon” in only three New Testament verses. The first occurrence is found where Paul writes, “To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons” (Phil. 1:1). In this context, “saints” (which refers to all Christians) are distinct from “bishops” and “deacons.” While it is true that all bishops and deacons are saints, all saints are not bishops or deacons. This verse also shows that deacons work with “bishops,” also known as “elders” (Titus 1:5-6) or “shepherds” (1 Pet. 5:4). The other two verses are in contexts where qualifications of deacons are given (1 Tim. 3:8, 12). Of the thirty times this word occurs, only three of them refer to the special servants of the local church called “deacons.” Why do people not consider any of the other individuals identified with the word *diakonos* as an official “deacon” in the local church, but insist that Phoebe was? If “deaconesses” were intended to be part of the church’s organization, then where are the qualifications? Some say First Timothy 3:11, but that context seems to refer to the wives of elders and/or deacons. Some may say First Timothy 5:9-10, but that context refers to widows who were supported by the church.

## Phoebe Was a Valuable Servant of God

Although she was not a female counterpart to the special servant “deacons” in the local church as per the qualifications of First Timothy 3:8-13, Phoebe was, like many women today, a valuable servant of the Most High God and of the church as per the general meaning of the term *diakonos*. According to R. C. H. Lenski’s *Interpretation of St. Paul’s Epistle to the Romans*, she could very well have been the carrier of this letter to the Romans. Lenski notes her commendation being placed first with mention of no other person “assumes simultaneous arrival of Phoebe and Paul’s letter in Rome” (898).

Regardless of her exact role, Phoebe was a faithful Christian who was a great asset to the local church and to the Lord. “Our sister” indicates she was family in Christ with Paul and the Romans (cf. “brethren,” Rom. 7:1, 4). Since she was from “Cenchrea,” a village seaport east of Corinth, the Romans would not immediately recognize her. Thus, Paul told them to “receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you” (Rom. 16:2a). The word translated “receive [welcome, ESV]” means to wait for, expect; receive, welcome; accept (Phil. 2:29). They were to welcome her in a way consistent with Christianity (cf. Rom. 15:7). The Romans were to assist Phoebe in whatever way they could because she herself helped many people, including Paul. The word translated “helper [succourer, KJV; patron, ESV]” occurs only here in the New Testament, and indicates Phoebe was a good helper, friend, and patron to members of the local church and even to her community and beyond (cf. Mt. 5:13-16).

## Conclusion

Women are held in high esteem by God (cf. Mt. 1:3, 5, 16; Heb. 11:11, 31, 35; Jas. 2:25), and His people should also hold them in such esteem! Not only are women valuable in the home (1 Tim. 1:5; 3:15; Titus 2:3-5; 1 Pet. 3:1-6), but their value is also incalculable to the betterment of the church, the body of Christ (2 Cor. 12:12-27). Let us not go beyond what is written in our belief and practice of the role of women or any other biblical topic (1 Cor. 4:6). There is plenty in what is written that tells us to love and honour faithful women, like Phoebe, in the church (cf. 1 Pet. 2:17)!

## Join Us for Bible Classes!

Christianity is a taught religion (John 6:44-45). It is impossible for our faith to outgrow our knowledge of God’s word (Rom. 10:17). Come and grow spiritually with us!

### Cradle Roll (behind tech booth)

Sundays: Nikki (Bible basics)

Wednesdays: Jagie (Bible basics)

### 2-3 Year-Old (Room 18)

Sundays: Marissa (EHT)

Wednesdays: Becky (EHT)

### Lower Elementary (Room 7)

Sundays: Anna Clair (EHT)

Wednesdays: Olivia (EHT)

### Upper Elementary (Room 17)

Sundays: Kathy (EHT)

Wednesdays: Marion (EHT)

### Teenage (Room 19)

Sundays: David A. (EHT)

Wednesdays: Vince (Romans)

### Adult (Auditorium)

Sundays: SFA men (Prophecies of Christ)

Wednesday: Brian (Revelation)

### First Principles Class (Fellowship Room, any aged adults)

Wednesdays: Rick

## PRAYER LIST

**Current** Shirley Loudermilk (health), Melissa Craft is home now but still needs our prayer, Beverly Adams (ongoing health concerns) Charles Paulin (recent fall) is in Carpenters Home Manor Rehab,  
**Continual:** Wayne Shearer (health); Declan Potvin (eye); Debbie Bush (struggles); Brian Smith (heart health); Antoine & Marcella Swain (health); Geny Johnson (health); Bill & Carlene Long (health & strength); Ron & Judy Ford (health); Bobby Simpson (health); Annett Phillip (health); Janie Wise (health); Jim Turner (health); Margaret Coone (health); Kathy Nester (health); Melody Baxter (health)  
**Shut-ins:** Joyce Burbage, Carol Eason, Kenny & Reba French

Also continue to pray for those on the extended family and friends list!



We were saddened to hear of the unexpected passing away of **Mike Elledge** on Sunday, August 27. Our sorrow, though, is not "as others who have no hope" (1 Thess. 4:13-18). Please keep his family in prayer. A memorial service will be hosted by the Lake Tarpon church of Christ (40839 US Hwy 19 N, Tarpon Springs, FL 34689) on Saturday, September 9 at 11:00 am. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to FSOP.

### Gospel Meeting at Griffin Road church of Christ

Sept 17-20.2023

Theme: **Fill the Void**

Speaker- Tom Hall from Bowling Green, KY

See the flyer on the bulletin board for additional information.

### Gospel Meeting at Central Church of Christ in Haines City

September 15-17,2023

Speaker Forest Antemesaris

See Flyer for times and topics

### Ladies Day at Orange Street church of Christ

September 23.2023 9:00 am - 12:00PM

"Her Growth, Her Glory"

Speaker Carmen Hodnett

**Teaching with Our Talents**  
 A "HANDS-ON" LADIES' DAY  
1 PETER 4:8-11

**S. Florida Ave. church of Christ**  
 Saturday, October 7, 2023 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M.  
 Speaker: *Nasheka Medley*

To register: call the office or scan the QR Code to the left.  
 Please register by Saturday, September 23rd.  
 Breakfast & lunch will be provided.

## SCHEDULED TO SERVE

### September

Designated Elder..... Brian Kenyon

### Wednesday, September 6, 2023

Announcements.....David Anderson  
 Song Leader/prayer.....Brian Kenyon  
 Devotional..... Bobby Sheumaker  
 Prayer.....Camron Bailey

### Sunday, September 10, 2023

#### 10:30 A.M.

Sermon..... Vince Daugherty  
 "Corrective Measures" (Neh. 13)

#### 6:00 P.M.

Sermon..... Kyle Faneuf  
 "What is Truth? (John 18:33-38)

### Those to Serve

#### 10:30 A.M.

Song/Prayer before class..... Kyle Bingle  
 Song Leader (both services).....David Williams  
 Announcements(both) .....Tyler Anderson  
 Scripture reading/Prayer.....Josh Estridge  
 Lord's Table (both).....Jarred Spivey  
 Closing Prayer.....Jeff Stewart  
 Open/Close bldg (both).....Brian Kenyon  
 Greeters.....Brenda/Darlene  
 Attendance cards (both).....Klark/Declan  
 Sound Booth (both).....Derrek Williams

#### 6:00 P.M.

P.M. Song Leader ..... David Williams  
 Scripture reading/Prayer .....Andre Medley  
 Closing Prayer .....David Deal  
 Greeters PM.....Olivia/Ingrid

### Wednesday, September 13, 2023

Announcements.....Bobby Sheumaker  
 Song Leader/prayer.....Brian Kenyon  
 Devotional..... Jarred Spivey  
 Prayer.....Rick Kenyon

### Upcoming Events 2023

#### September

- 10 Elders/Deacons/Preacher meeting
- 12 FSOP Ladies Bible Class @ 7:00 PM
- 15-17 Gospel Meeting @ Central in Haines City
- 17-20 Gospel Meeting Griffin Road
- 23 Ladies Day at Orange Street
- 29 Singing Night at Orange Street 7:00 PM

#### October

- 7 Ladies Day at SFA

### ~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Aug 20.....	\$4,856.60
Aug 27.....	\$5,590.91
Sep 03 .....	\$7,697.00
Contribution Average.....	\$7,037.64
<b>Weekly budget .....</b>	<b>\$7,410.00</b>



## The Cone of Uncertainty

*It's interesting to me that every time a hurricane heads our direction, it gets peoples attention. We begin making necessary preparations to protect our family and our homes from harm and danger, especially if we have been told that we are in the "cone of uncertainty."*

*Spiritually speaking we constantly live in the "cone of uncertainty". No one knows the day or the hour when Christ will return to take us home, so we should always live prepared and do what we can to make sure that we ourselves and our family are on the "ark of safety". There will be no warnings or emergency evacuation orders ahead of His arrival. He told us in His word that He will come as a thief in the night. (Matt. 24:42-44).*

*Although it is wise to prepare for upcoming physical storms in this life, it is much more important to be prepared for the day of Christ's return.*

Here are some life saving tips for you and your family:

- Cover everything in prayer (Phil. 4:6-7)
- Wash away your sins in baptism (Acts 22:16)
- Rest in God's promises (Matt 11:28, Ps. 4:8)
- Walk in the light (Ps. 119:105, 1 Jn. 1:7)

## Youth Section

### Lessons from 1 Timothy The Crown laid up for me 11 Tim. 4:6-8

*I remember growing up and loving to play sports. I played basketball, baseball and football any time they were in season. When my meager High School career came to an end, I felt a real sense that playing sports was no longer going to be the same. I could play pick-up games or recreationally, but my time of playing sports at a serious level had come to an end. Sometimes I will even dream at night and relive those fun times, but now there are younger generations who play, and I sit on the sidelines and cheer. At the end of Paul's life he said he knew, "his departure was at hand" (v. 6). He wrote to Timothy to encourage him to take up the ministry and work to the best of his abilities. Paul said about his own work in the ministry, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith" (v. 7). Paul had his go around and he had played his part. Paul said that he was looking forward to a crown of righteousness that was laid up for him on Judgement Day (v. 8). But Paul was not selfish in his desire for a crown. He told Timothy that he too could receive a crown. It is promised "to all who loved His appearing"(v.8). Are you striving for your own crown of righteousness? -VD*



### FLORIDA SCHOOL OF PREACHING LADIES' BIBLE STUDY

**Tuesdays 7:00-8:00 PM on these dates  
with instructor Susan Stearsman**

August 8, 2023  
September 12, 2023  
October 24, 2023  
November 14, 2023 - at 6:00 PM  
December 12, 2023 this class only

January 15-18, 2024 - 49th Annual  
February 20, 2024 Lectureship  
March 12, 2024  
April 9, 2024  
May 14, 2024  
June 11, 2024  
July 9, 2024



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For sermons and podcasts, find us here.



## South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST

1807 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

**"It is God who arms me with strength,  
And makes my way perfect."**

Psalm 18:32



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