

The South Florida Avenue MESSENGER

A Friendly Church With a Vital Message Proclaiming the Unsearchable Riches of the Lord Jesus.
The Messenger is published weekly by the South Florida Ave. Church of Christ meeting at 1807 South Florida Ave - Lakeland, FL 33803 Vol. 68 No.36 09-15-15

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SUNDAY SERVICES

Bible Study.....9:30a.m.
Worship.....10:30a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Ladies Class.....10:00a.m.
Bible Study.....7:00p.m.

HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching

MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill.....Russia
Don Iverson.....India
Randy Judd.....Malawi, Africa
Graham McDonald.....Scotland
J. Paguaga.....Honduras, C.A.
Joey Treat.....Pacific Islands
Ted Wheeler.....Ghana, W.A.

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www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



IN
SEARCH
OF THE LORD'S WAY

Sundays @ 8:30 a.m. Check local listings

Are You a Bread Squeezer?

Neal Pollard

Samuel Feldman is the world's most famous bread vandal. He did \$8,000 worth of damage to bread and cookies throughout the Yardley, Pennsylvania area. He was going around "squeezing, smashing, and poking" bags of bread and packages of cookies. Finally, one store, suspecting Feldman, put him under surveillance and caught him in the act three times. He is charged with one count of criminal mischief. Three years of aggravation and loss were caused by an idle person with a mean streak.

There is a bread squeezer in any group. The church even sometimes harbors a few bread squeezers. These are those sore tails and nitpickers, the storm clouds who live to rain on others' parades, those who seem to enjoy causing friction and irritating others, those who hold petty grudges, and general pot-stirrers. They are the busybodies (2 Thessalonians 3:11; 1 Timothy 5:13). Solomon described one as a worthless and wicked person who "soweth discord" (Proverbs 6:14, 19). Paul lamented lovers of controversy because they provoke "envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds" (1 Timothy 6:4-5).

Bread squeezers flatten a congregation's morale, squeeze the worst side out of others, and pick and poke at everyone from the church's leaders to any other Christian whose name comes into their crosshairs. They taint the productivity, good will, good deeds, attitude and joy of a congregation. They brighten entire rooms just by making an exit.

Are you a bread squeezer? How well do you speak of other Christians? Are you moody? Do you lash out at others when you feel you have been wronged? Do you give the cold shoulder? Do you not speak to others, only to complain that others are unfriendly? Do you wear your feelings on your sleeve? Are you the type that prefers the role of critic, since there are plenty of others to be the "cheerleader"? Then, you are a bread squeezer!

A bread squeezer is as needed in a congregation as Feldman was needed in Yardley! He was entirely destructive, and he caused others to pay for his bad habit. Barnabas was not a bread squeezer (Acts 4:36). Neither were Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32). Certainly, Jesus was not! The church is always in need of more encouraging, uplifting, positive, happy and contented members. Do not squeeze the bread!

Who Were the Church Fathers?

Joel Stephen Williams

Very often people want to know what the phrases “church fathers,” “fathers of the church” or “early church fathers” mean. The use of the terms “father” and “son” to refer to a relationship other than a biological one is ancient. It is found in the Old Testament and the New Testament (e.g. 2 Kings 2:12; 6:21; 1 Corinthians 4:17; Galatians 4:19; Philippians 2:22; 1 Timothy 1:2, 18; 2 Timothy 1:2; 2:1; Titus 1:4). Paul wrote to the Corinthians: “I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (1 Corinthians 4:15).

The use of “father” and “son” or similar terminology for a “teacher” or a “mentor” to a “student” relationship was common in the ancient world, even beyond Judaism and Christianity. It was found, for example, among the philosophical schools. In Christian circles the idea of a “church father” brought to mind a great teacher of theology in the past who guided the church in sound doctrine. These theologians, teachers and scholars were thought to have preserved the Christian faith against heresy and to have passed good teaching along to the next generation.

Who in particular were considered to be the “church fathers” in the era of the early church after the apostolic age? Four key criteria were generally used to designate someone as a church father (see Christopher A. Hall. *Learning Theology with the Church Fathers*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity P., 2002, 20-21).

Antiquity – To be a church father one needed to have lived in the earlier centuries from the close of the apostolic age until the eighth century (the time of John of Damascus) for the eastern half of the church and until around 600 A.D. (the time of Gregory the Great) for the western half of the church.

Holiness of life – This measure did not mean absolute perfection, because some of the church fathers had obvious character flaws and none of them were sinless. Nevertheless, they needed to be men of devotion and faith who lived a life of Christian service.

Substantial orthodox doctrine – The fathers were not heretics. Some of them held an occasional odd opinion or two, but on the whole, each of them believed the chief, important doctrines of the Christian system. They were champions of what was considered the true faith. This depended, of course, on who defined what was true and false doctrine. Orthodoxy ended up being defined by the majority. Contrary to what some skeptics are claiming today, it was a very large majority that held to a general consensus of what the cardinal tenets of Christian doctrine were. Today, some people would refer to this as the “mainstream” church. For example, on teachings such as the deity of Jesus, the virgin birth of Christ, and the resurrection of our Lord, only a miniscule minority denied these cardinal truths

Widespread ecclesiastical approval – The point of this gauge is that one cannot claim the title “church father” for oneself. As Old Testament wisdom says, “Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips” (Proverbs 27:2).

The terms “church fathers” or “fathers of the church” do not place these men in a position of supremacy over the apostles or Jesus in any way. The meaning of the terms is simply that these men were considered to be reliable teachers, on the whole, who helped guide the church in the early centuries after the apostolic age in an effort to defend the faith “once for all delivered to the saints” (Jude 3), and to pass the Gospel treasure along to the next generation. They did not found or establish the church. That credit goes to Jesus Christ (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 3:11; 6:19-20; Ephesians 2:20; Revelation 5:9), a fact for which many of those church fathers contended very zealously.

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Jacqueline Dopwell's cancer has returned. She has been admitted into L.R.M.C. Evelyn Wyatt was home not feeling well. Grace McAnally will have knee surgery on September 23rd. Also keep Ginny Hamby, Brenda Mask, Jim Turner, Taleah Anderson and Margaret Coone in prayer.

Relatives: Wayne Hendrix, Trevor Hutchinson, (Becky Sheumaker's brother in law,) and Barry Richardson.

Shut In Members: Virginia Plumlee, Bill Burton, Dick & Joyce Burbage and Duane Nelson.

Others: Chrissi Fuesner, Shirley Randall (sister of a friend of Sharon Egolf), who has cancer.

Upcoming Events

Sept. 19th: Men's Breakfast at the Hilltop Church of Christ in Winter Haven at 8:00 a.m.

Sept. 20th: Ladies' Planning meeting after morning services. This meeting is for all ladies of the congregation to make suggestions for several future events.

Sept. 25th: Chicken Supper at the Mount Dora Christian Academy. See the flyer on the bulletin board for more details.

Oct. 3rd - 4th: 50th Anniversary Homecoming at the Central Church of Christ in Clearwater. Flyer is on the bulletin board for more info.

Oct. 4th - 8th: Family Enrichment Seminar at the Hilltop Church of Christ in Winter Haven. See flyer for more details.

Fall Faith Series

Don't forget the Fall Faith Series at the Hilltop Church of Christ in Winter Haven. It continues through the rest of the month. The flyer list the dates, times and speakers.

Visitors

Mike Phipps, Derell Ellerbe, Brittany Atwater, Jayden Reid, Tim Gengle, Amanda Patterson, Claud Romine and Tina Cipriani.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

September

John McShane..... **Table** Charles Paulin
Bob Cooper..... **Assist** C.J. Grimes

Sunday, September 20, 2015

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class..... Kyle Bingle
Prayer..... Ken Walker

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer..... Fred Strickland
Closing Prayer..... Josh Estridge

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... Paul Romine
Opening Prayer..... Steve Hunley
Closing Prayer..... Ken Walker
Greeters..... Brenda Mask & Melissa Craft
Att. Cards..... Paul & Sebastian
Open & Close Building..... Jimmy Sweeney

Wed. Sept 23, 2015

Song Leader..... Ken Walker
Opening Prayer..... David Williams
Closing Prayer..... Jim Turner

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Chuck Wyatt so he can get a replacement - 859-5231

Sunday, September 27, 2015

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class..... Jim Turner
Prayer..... Fred Strickland

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader..... Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer..... Frank Hamby
Closing Prayer..... Antonio Martin

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader..... Tucker Sweeney
Opening Prayer..... C.J. Grimes
Closing Prayer..... David Williams
Greeters..... The Bingles
Att. Cards..... Quadarius and Ian
Open & Close Building..... Jimmy Sweeney

Wed. Sept 30, 2015

Song Leader..... Jim Turner
Opening Prayer..... Charles Paulin
Closing Prayer..... Bobby Sheumaker

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Aug 23	\$4,080.55
Aug 30	\$4,984.70
Sept 06.....	\$4,562.00
Sept 13	\$3,742.60
Contribution Average	\$4,637.38
2015 Weekly Budget	\$4,302.98

HEAR OUR RADIO SPOTS

This Week

"Excuses, Excuses"



WONN 1230 or WLKF 1430 or on web page
www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com

Faithfulness in Little → Faithfulness in Much

When Jesus ended the parable of the unjust steward, He said, "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much; and he who is unjust in what is least is unjust also in much" (Luke 16:10). Though the parable presents a hard to reconcile fact (i.e., the master commending the unjust steward because he had dealt shrewdly), the basic message is clear: faithfulness is no accident! Our faithfulness, like life itself, can be seen in the little things. If we are responsible with the "small" rules that our parents make that we do not think are important (like school-night bed-times), then our parents can trust us with bigger responsibilities (like driving their car). However, if we cannot be trusted to handle the little things our parents expect (like honoring school-night bedtimes), then why should they trust us with larger responsibilities (like driving their car)? Spiritual life is the same way. Take, for example, the patriarch Joseph. "The Lord was with him" was the theme of his life (Genesis 39:2-3, 21, 23; Acts 7:9). Though he was unjustly put in a pit by his brothers, found by the Midianites, and sold into slavery, he stayed faithful to God (Genesis 37:1-36). While a slave in Potiphar's house, Joseph was so faithful he eventually was placed to rule over all (Genesis 39:4). Even after being "framed" by Potiphar's wife and put in prison, he stayed faithful and ended up ruling over all the prisoners (Genesis 39:22-23). Because of his trust in God (continued below)



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The End of Your Search for a Friendly Church . . .

Youth Group News

Sunday, Oct. 11 Will be our next L2L group meeting. in the fellowship room at 4:00 p.m. In the meantime, our event mentors are coming up with their schedules, which will be out soon. If you would like to be a mentor in the following events, please let Brian know: puppet theater, mass media website, or mass media audio and video. We have a great group of young people. Let us pray for them!

"Pew Packers" is meeting every Sunday evening at 5:45 to learn the Bible!

(continued from above) while in prison, Joseph was placed in Pharaoh's palace and eventually made "ruler throughout all the land of Egypt" (Genesis 45:8). Because Joseph proved faithfulness in little, God blessed him with much. Are we faithful with what "little" we have? Faithfulness now determines whether we receive "much" later. Let us be faithful in whatever God has entrusted us! ❤️ Brian



We APPRECIATE our MENTORS! We could not conduct the Lads to Leaders program as part of our youth group without their help! Paul said that the church is composed of "many members, yet one body" (1 Cor. 12:20). THANK YOU for being a vital part of the body of Christ at SFA!

This Week's Memory Verses ➡ Matthew 1:18-23 ➡ Join As We Memorize 100 Verses!