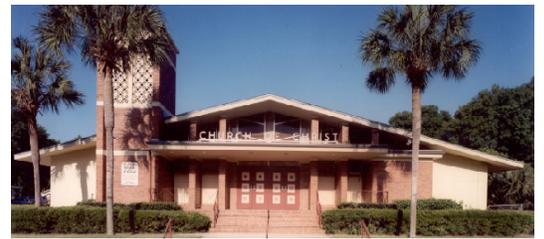




SOUTH FLORIDA AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.,
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 74 No. 39 September 28, 2021

ELDERS

David Anderson
Brian Kenyon
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

Tyler Anderson
Jason Hendrix
Rick Kenyon
Stacey Paulin
Jimmy Sweeney

MINISTER

Joshua Cantrell

ASSOCIATE MINISTER

Vince Daugherty

SECRETARY

Dee Parramore

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.

EMAIL

SFA.church@gmail.com

WEB PAGE

SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

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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.

LET'S RISE UP AND BUILD!

Nehemiah 2:17-18

Joshua Cantrell

One of my favorite accounts in all of Scripture is that of Nehemiah. God had blessed all of His children to come home from Captivity. Nehemiah, a contemporary to Ezra and a cupbearer to Artaxerxes in the Persian place, led the third and last return to Jerusalem after the Babylonian exile. The ten tribes that had made up the Northern Kingdom of Israel had fallen to the mighty Assyrian world empire nation in 722 B.C. 96 years later, in 626 B.C., Babylon rebelled against the Assyrian Empire. Nehemiah received word that his people had not done anything (Neh. 1:3). Two statements in two verses capture my attention. The challenge of Nehemiah: "Come and let us build the wall of Jerusalem" (Neh. 2:17). The response of the people: "Let us rise up and build." They set their hands to this good work, and we must do the same today.

Doing the work of God is not limited to just building buildings. We must be a church that can worship inside that building. It's not enough to build homes, we must build families to dwell in those homes. In everything that we do, it is ultimately to the glorification of our God. Nehemiah was able to get many people, from all backgrounds to work together. God is expecting the same from us today! We have to continue to build the Lord's church up by any means necessary. We have to continue to be fully committed to the mission, to carry out the great commission of our Lord (Matt. 28:17-20; Lk. 19:10).

LET'S RISE UP AND BUILD...OUR COMMITMENT

Being fully committed to God is not just a suggestion but a command. From Genesis to Revelation, the word of God focuses on our ability to stay the course (Heb. 12:1-2). Paul would say to the Corinthians, "know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain" (1 Cor. 9:24). Our Lord was fully committed to doing the will of the Father. He never wavered from His mission (Jn. 9:4). Commitment is not something we can put on and take off. Here's my definition of commitment, "Doing what you said you would, long after the mood you said it in has left." It's easy to feel committed to something when our energy is high, but what about when that goes away? Commitment is a lifestyle, not just something we do (Eph. 4:1-3). If we are to successfully rise up and build, we must continue to understand the commitment, dedicated service, self-denial, and willingness to make some sacrifices that this requires.

In Nehemiah 4, we learn many principles that help us learn of God and successfully help us carry out His ways. We have to be fully committed to God (Neh. 4:6), work together as a team (Neh. 4:1), take precautions to prevent problems where possible (Neh. 4:2-4), turn to God for help when facing any obstacle (Neh. 4:4, 9), and help and encourage one another (Neh. 4:14, 19, 20). In doing the work of God's kingdom, it is always important to regularly encourage and motivate one another. When the going gets tough (as it did for Nehemiah and God's people), we must remember why we are doing this. Everything that we do is to point people to salvation.

Many things we do are not wrong, but how are they helping people know Jesus? Each time we walk out the door, we should be looking for ways to share the Gospel with people. I have an expression I like to use, "The Gospel is too good to keep to ourselves." The Devil does not mind us knowing the word of God. He does not care how much of it we have kept in our hearts. As long as we don't share it with anyone else, he is satisfied. The Devil himself knows the power of the word of God. We have to continue to fight him while using the word of God (Matt. 4:4). Being committed to God

helps destroy the distractions that sometimes hinder us from our responsibilities. Distractions don't look like distractions until they finish distracting you.

LET RISE UP AND BUILD...OUR FAITH

As we walk with God and commune with God, there is nothing more important than our faith. With each passing day, God has provided us another opportunity for our faith to grow. Your faith validates your belief, and your belief validates your faith. God is wanting us to "show our faith." That is not just a statement in James, but God's constant call to His children. God told Noah He was going to destroy the earth (Gen. 6:13), and what God says to Noah is "show Me your faith." God commanded him to make an ark of Gopher wood. Thus, Noah responded to God in faith (Gen. 6:22), "Thus did Noah according to all that God required." The Hebrews writer reveals for us, "By faith Noah moved with fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his house" (Heb. 11:7).

If we were cars, faith is the fuel that moves us. We can have the best car in the world, but without fuel, it won't take us far. If we were houses, faith is the foundation on which our spiritual houses stand. Without it, we would have built our lives on the shifting sand, and when the storms come, we will fall. If we were ships, faith is the rudder that surely brings us to shore. Without it, we would be a ship on the sea of life with no possible way of getting back to Him. Faith is the key that unlocks the door to the kingdom of God. Nehemiah and the people had a mind to work. We must rise up and continue to build upon what our Lord has started. Paul would say to the Corinthians, "For we are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (1 Cor. 3:9). Paul wanted their foundation, their faith, to be solid, rooted, and established upon God. He goes on to say, "According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise master builder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth

thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," (1 Cor. 3:10-11).

LET RISE UP AND BUILD... OUR BROTHERLY LOVE

(Hebrews 13:1)

Peter would tell us to add brotherly love, with faith as our foundation (2 Pet. 1:5-8). Without sincere love for the brethren, the apostle John wrote that any claim to love or even to know God is impossible (1 Jn. 4:7-8). If we truly desire to grow in our knowledge and love of God, then it is essential that we continue in brotherly love. One of the great joys about being at SFA is that our love for each other is displayed everywhere. This love is constantly shared with everyone around us. This love is contagious and wanted by everyone who comes in contact with it. It's important to note that this call to brotherly kindness comes after the call to godliness. In our world today, this quality seems to be disappearing. We should always care for each other as the people of God did during the days of Nehemiah. The word of God helps us become better. It's the foundation for every thing that we do. Let's continue to "Rise up and build," in every aspect of our lives.

Senior Saints by John McShane

Can any of you remember the taste of Camay? I can, and it is not a fond memory. It was applied by my parents when my mouth overrode my brain and the wrong words came out. As my ears hear and eyes see the swearing and cussing and using God's name in profane ways that are so common today, I feel that a lot more people should have had the Camay treatment in their younger years. We find this abusive language in print, in song, and in general use by people everywhere. Like many other sins in today's society, the use of "bad language" has been downgraded to freedom of speech or freedom of expression in an attempt to justify it. A wise gentleman once explained to me that the use of such language demonstrates a person's lack of knowledge of how to correctly use the English language in normal conversation. Many in the religious world that claim to be followers of the Bible seem to forget that 25 verses mention the correct use of the tongue. We, members of God's church, should make sure that we set the example for others and especially for our young people in the use of our daily conversations. The book of James provides the most explicit instruction on how we should manage our tongue. In James 3:7-10, we read "For every kind of beast and bird, of reptile and sea creature, can be tamed and has been tamed by mankind, but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison. With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse people who are made in the likeness of God. From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers, these things ought not to be so." In James 1:26, "If anyone thinks he is religious and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his heart, this person's religion is worthless." It would probably not hurt if the Camay corrective measure was still in use.

Youth Group News

by Vince Daugherty

Beware of Offering Less Than Your Best

(Malachi 1:6-8)

"A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am the Father, Where is My honor? And if I am a Master, Where is My reverence?" God was not ok with how His people were treating Him. Yet in Malachi's day, the people had the audacity to say, "In what way have we despised Your name?" God said they had dishonored Him by, 1) offering "defiled food" on His altar; 2) offering "the blind as a sacrifice"; 3) offering "the lame and sick". God's people certainly knew what God expected from their worship and they were not offering their best. Because they offered less than their best to God they had dishonored Him. Be careful when we worship, the way we sing, pray or behave during worship shows what we think of God. Always bring God our absolute best because He absolutely deserves it!

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16

Our Members:

Bob Pratt - health
 Carol Edmonson - loss of Jim
 Bernetta Green - health
 Brian Smith - heart
 Bobby Simpson - health
 Kathy Nester - eye surgery
 Sharon M. Washington - health
 Antoine & Marcella Swain - health
 Flo Duffy - eye problems
 Stacey Paulin - health
 Janie Wise - health
 Neil Entwistle - heart attack
 Darlene Thompson - health

Recent requests:

Joyce Williams - strength
 Linda McShane - reaction to booster

Davion Chisholm - sick
 Antoine Swain - sick

(Please update the office of any changes)

The **EXTENDED FAMILY** and **FRIENDS** prayer requests are emailed every week and posted on the bulletin board

Pray for our Shut-ins

Joyce Burbage Carol Eason Ellen Shearer

Please call before visiting. Some locations are locked down.

Responses

Joyce Williams asks for prayers for spiritual strength.

- EVANGELISM -

There will be a brief meeting for anyone interested in helping with evangelistic efforts. If you are a greeter, please attend this meeting. It will be after morning service Sunday, October 3 in the north wing.

- SFA FAMILY RETREAT -

If your family plans to go on the retreat, payment is due October 10.

2ND ANNUAL BROTHERHOOD-WIDE DOOR KNOCKING DAY

10/2/21

We will begin at 1:00 pm. Due to current situations, we will simply hang bags on doors. If neighbors are out, we can engage in conversation at a safe distance. Please pray for this outreach effort as well as others that are reaching out and sharing the gospel.

"...and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ." Acts. 5:42



This week's pantry item request:

Pop-tarts (any flavor)

PRAYER LIST

John & Linda McShane
 Ron & Judy Ford - health
 Jim Turner - health, tests
 Fred & Kathy Strickland - health
 Debbie Bush - health
 Margaret Coone
 Annette Phillip - health
 Vanessa Palmer - health
 Tanner Estridge - health
 Dorothea Lauther - surgery recovery
 Brenda Mask - health
 Melody Baxter - knee surgery
 Nigel St. Bernard - traveling

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

September

Designated Elder - Brian Kenyon

Wednesday, September 29, 2021

Song Leader/Prayer Rick Kenyon
 Devo Bobby Sheumaker
 Closing Prayer David Anderson

Sunday, October 3, 2021

10:30 A.M.

Sermon Joshua Cantrell
 "Turning Your Prison to Your Platform"

6:00 P.M.

Sermon Joshua Cantrell
 "Turning Your Prison to Your Platform"
 pt.2

10:30 A.M.

Open/Close bldg (both) David Deal
 Greeter O. Smith/Thrower
 Song/prayer before class Matt Webb
 Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
 A.M. Song Leader Jason Hendrix
 Scripture reading/Prayer Josh Estridge
 Lord's Table Jimmy Sweeney
 Closing Prayer Wayne Shearer

6:00 P.M.

Greeters Sweeney
 P.M. Song Leader Jason Hendrix
 Scripture reading/Prayer Vince Daugherty
 Lord's Table Jimmy Sweeney
 Closing Prayer David Deal

Wednesday, October 6, 2021

Song Leader/prayer Johnny Singh
 Devo Joshua Cantrell
 Closing Prayer Charles Paulin

Upcoming Events

October

2 - Ladies' Day, 9am
 2 - Annual door knocking, 1pm
 3 - In-service
 - Evangelism meeting
 - Lads workday
 9 - Youth ice skating
 10- Elders meeting, 4pm
 15-16- Family Retreat
 23 - Sisters reveal, 10am
 26 - FSOP ladies class, 7pm
 31 - Trunk or Treat

November

14-17 Fall gospel mtg
 19 - Youth group thankful meal

December

4 - Youth group caroling & parties
 18 - Wreaths Across America



~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Sept 12 \$6,191.00
 Sept 19 \$6,549.00
 Sept 26 \$5,367.90
 Contribution Average \$6,976.92

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We Are God's Beautiful Bouquet

God's beautiful arrangement of sisters, different shades of colors, backgrounds, and talents
Brought together by a common goal, to make heaven our eternal home

No sister is an island, none should ever feel alone in this world
We sisters of the church of Christ should provide support and encouragement for each other
Lovingly caring and sharing in trials, struggles, blessings, and victories

Let us use our talents to create an aroma that draw others to the path of truth
Each of us leaving behind a trail of sweet fragrance that attracts souls to God's kingdom.



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Christ's Church and Salvation

South Florida Ave. church of Christ

invites you to our

Fall Gospel Meeting

November 14 - 17, 2021

Save the dates - more details to come



Robby Eversole

www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

Email us: 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

"BLESSED ARE THE
PEOPLE TO WHOM SUCH
BLESSINGS FALL! BLESSED
ARE THE PEOPLE WHOSE
GOD IS THE LORD"

Psalm 144:15