



SOUTH FLORIDA AVENUE CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.,
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 74 No. 41 October 12, 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

YOUTUBE.com

SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist

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.

GOD'S FOCUS ON US ... DESPITE OUR POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

Brian Kenyon

Recently, a preacher attended a community awareness event for an abortion alternative program. This entity is extensively equipped to handle every facet of unwanted or high-risk pregnancies, short of taking innocent human life inside the womb. A very emotional story was told by a mom who chose to have her baby, even though medical professionals tried very hard to convince her otherwise. There was one thing she just could not ignore amidst all the “reasons” why she should allow them to kill the defenseless baby inside her. While looking at the sonogram, despite all the potential problems being considered, she said, “I just couldn’t get my eyes off that beating heart!” That mom valued the physical life of her baby! Concerning the spiritual person, God is also focused on each person now and those who are yet to be born, despite the potential problems they will cause!

GOD CREATED US ... DESPITE OUR POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

On the sixth day of creation, God said, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness ... So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (Gen. 1:26-27 cf. Gen. 5:1-2). Because of His omniscience (Ps. 147:5; Jer. 23:23-24; Heb. 4:13), God knew the vast majority of His image-bearers would not follow His will. However, He still chose to create the human race. Although speaking figuratively of Israel, the truth about mankind in general remains, “I have created him for my glory” (Isa. 43:7). The purpose of mankind, therefore, is to glorify God! Unfortunately, “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). Right here, God had every right to completely do away with mankind, for “the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). However, God did not!

Abraham, for example, learned of God’s love and willingness to spare Sodom if only ten righteous souls could be found in that sinful city (Gen. 18:20-32). Then the great patriarch witnessed the necessary justice of God when those ten righteous people could not be found, and God destroyed Sodom and the cities of the plain (Gen. 19:24-29). Moses also learned that God would have been perfectly just to destroy the sinful generation who turned against Him at the bottom of Mount Sinai (cf. Ex. 32:7-10). Moses pled with the Lord, remembering God’s deliverance from Egypt, the Egyptians’ potential reaction if God’s people were destroyed, and the promise God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. After all this, the Lord, “relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people” (Ex. 32:14). Throughout the ages, which can be seen by God in one blink, He saw more than just a beating heart amongst all the ugliness of sin. He saw souls with whom to share eternity!

GOD LOVES US ... DESPITE OUR POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

God’s love, even stronger than a mother’s love for her child, did not write-off humanity because of the sin problem. Rather, “God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8). God’s demonstrating His love is really the force behind John 3:16. How much did God love us? He demonstrated His love to the point that “He gave His only begotten Son!” God’s love does not require that we love Him back (1 Jn. 4:19). His love is unconditional (Jn. 3:16)!

His unconditional love is further demonstrated in that all accountable humans have an opportunity to be saved, for “whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life” (Jn. 3:16). Obviously, salvation does not rest on a person’s merely believing that Jesus existed. If that were the case,

demons would be saved (Jas. 2:19), as would many of the “rulers” who “believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him” (Jn. 12:42). Rather, biblical belief is trusting Jesus enough to do what He says (Lk. 6:46-49). Thus, the belief of John 3:16 includes loving God (Mt. 22:37), faith in Jesus (Jn. 8:24), repentance of sin (2 Cor. 7:10), confessing faith in Christ (2 Tim. 2:19), being baptized in Christ (Acts 2:38), and living in “newness of life” (Rom. 6:3-4; 2 Cor. 5:17). The Philippian jailor illustrates this point very well (Acts 16:30-34)! Yes, God is aware of each beating heart, but He sees so much more amongst the ugliness of our sin. He sees souls whom He loves and with whom He wants to share eternity!

GOD WILL RETURN FOR US ... DESPITE OUR POTENTIAL PROBLEMS

The plan for saving sinful humanity was in God’s mind before the foundation of the world (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Tim. 1:9; Titus 1:2; 1 Pet. 1:19-20). When Adam and Even sinned, God banished mankind from Eden, “lest he put out his hand and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever” (Gen. 2:22). Physical death then became an inherent part of human life and remains that way today. Figuratively speaking, the tree of life that was lost in the Garden of Eden will be restored in the eternal presence of God (Rev. 2:7; 22:2, 14). Only the faithful will be a part of that blessing. Until then, “it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the

judgment” (Heb. 9:27). All people will die, and at death their eternal destiny will be sealed (cf. Lk. 16:19-31). Jesus will come with God’s authority in judgment at the appropriate time (Jn. 5:26-29). For the faithful Christian, the return of Jesus to judge the world will be a time of ultimate salvation. This is so because “Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many” and to “those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation” (Heb. 9:28). The word “once” carries with it the idea of “once for all time” (same word in Jude 3). Because Jesus was once offered for all time, His blood will cover the sins of those who have obeyed Him (cf. Heb. 5:9). While those outside the cleansing blood of Jesus will face condemnation when He comes again (2 Thess. 1:7-9), those who are washed in the blood of the Lamb have a blissful eternity to enjoy (Rev. 1:5; 21:1-22:5)! Every living human has a beating heart, but God sees more than that in each of us. He sees ever living souls with whom He wants to take back with Him when He returns to judge the world.

CONCLUSION

I can think of only one example of unconditional love stronger than a right-thinking mother’s love for her child and that is the love God has for all of us. His focus is on more than just our heartbeat. He focuses on our souls so much that He created us, loves us, and will return to take the faithful with Him forever. He wants us to be with Him in eternity. Are we living as though we want to be with Him forever?

Youth Group News

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU to Klark Kenyon for hosting the October Elementary Bible Class Dinner

Senior Saints by John McShane

I am sure that many of you remember some of the childhood games we used to play. One of them was the “king of the hill,” where the object was to beat one’s rival to the top of a mound or other high place and to keep possession of the place. It usually resulted in a lot of pushing and shoving without any major injuries, and when it was all over, we were all still friends. In our world today, it seems as if many adults are engaged in this game in a much more serious manner than we were. Too many people want to be the king of the hill in their chosen profession and will do whatever it takes to get there. The lying, backbiting, and infighting that goes on are not what we remember from our youth. It used to be that hard work, knowledge of the job, cooperation, and desire to help the company move forward were the norm. Now it is “I want to be king of the hill no matter what the cost.” The prophet Amos may have had this in mind when he heard the words of the Lord in Amos 8:11, “Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD.” It appears that we need to get busy bringing the word of the LORD back to our country.

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
 Melody Baxter - rehab for leg

Recent requests:

Sharon Egolf - procedure recovery

(Please update the office of any changes)

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
 Darlene Thompson - health
 Denise Gulizia - procedure recovery

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

September

Designated Elder - Brian Kenyon

Wednesday, October 13, 2021

Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
 Song Leader/Prayer Matt Webb
 Devo Andre Medley
 Closing Prayer Phil Fife

Sunday, October 17, 2021

10:30 A.M.

Sermon Joshua Cantrell
 "Spiritual Autopsy"
 James 1:25

6:00 P.M.

Sermon Vince Daugherty
 "Walking the Walk"
 Ephesians 4:1

10:30 A.M.

Open/Close bldg (both) B. Kenyon
 Greeter Bingle
 Song/prayer before class Kyle Bingle
 Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
 A.M. Song Leader David Williams
 Scripture reading/Prayer Paul Sweeney
 Lord's Table George Davis
 Closing Prayer Matt Webb

6:00 P.M.

Greeters Brunson
 P.M. Song Leader David Williams
 Scripture reading/Prayer Josh Potvin
 Lord's Table George Davis
 Closing Prayer Zach Jones

Wednesday, October 20, 2021

Announcements Bobby Sheumaker
 Song Leader/prayer Tucker Sweeney
 Devo Josh Potvin
 Closing Prayer Phil Fife

Upcoming Events

October

16 - Men's breakfast, 9am
 19 - Senior Saints, 9am
 21 - Ladies' prayer night
 23 - Sisters reveal, 10am
 26 - FSOP ladies class, 7pm
 31 - Singing Service
 - Trunk or Treat

November

6 - SFA corn roast
 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 26 \$5,367.90
 Oct 3 \$6,893.00
 Oct 10 \$7,141.00
 Contribution Average \$6,978.88

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.

Ladies Prayer Night
 October 21, 2021
 6:30 pm fellowship hall

Weekly prayer time for our
 evangelism efforts every Sunday
 evening - 5:45 pm fellowship hall

SENIOR SAINTS OCTOBER MEETING

Tuesday, Oct. 19 starting with breakfast at 9:00 am.
 Presentation begins at 10:00 am then blessing bags
 assembly. Please add your name to the list on the board



Sisters Sending Sunshine reveal will be on Saturday,
 October 23 at 10:00 a.m. at Rene's home.
 If you want to participate in the next round,
 please let Rene know by Oct. 20

5TH SUNDAY COLLECTION

The next 5th Sunday collection for the Building Fund will be
October 31, 2021.
 if you would like to give additional funds at other times of the
 month, please mail or bring them to the office. Be sure to designate
 the contribution as part of the Building Fund.
 It will be collected by the elders.



Thank you for visiting



Ashby Family Jeff & Christi Krantz (Kenyons)
 Garry & Jacqueline Cantrell Curtis & Duana Cooper(Cantrell)
 Nikia Brooks (Brenda Lynn) Ramona Beaty (Grimes)
 Shirley Loudermilk & Dawn Sutton Shantay & Gavin Williams

MY STRENGTH – WHEN I AM FEELING WEAK, I CAN TURN TO HIM FOR STRENGTH

Psalm 22:19; Psalm 18:1; Psalm 28:7

My salvation – Without him I am lost

Psalm 25:5; Psalm 27:1; Psalm 62:2; Isaiah 12:2

My redeemer – When I need deliverance from sins

Psalm 19:14; Psalm 49:15; Titus 2:14

My help – When I am in trouble

Psalm 70:1, 5; Psalm 94:16-18; Psalm 121:1-3

MY ROCK – WHEN I NEED PROTECTION

Psalm 18:2; Psalm 31:2-3; Psalm 61:1-3

My hope – Without him I am hopeless

Psalm 31:24; Psalm 38:15; Psalm 42:5; Psalm 71:5

MY MAKER AND SUSTAINER – HE CREATED ME AND KEEPS ME ALIVE

Psalm 71:6; Psalm 95:6; Proverbs 22:2; Acts 17:28



"And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved." Acts 2:47

Late Thursday night, October 7, 2021, Skyler Ingram put on Christ in baptism. Skyler had been studying the Bible and realized that he needed to obey the gospel. Welcome to the family!

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

**"THE LORD IS MY
STRENGTH AND MY SHIELD;
IN HIM MY HEART TRUSTS,
AND I AM HELPED; MY HEART
EXULTS, AND WITH MY SONG
I GIVE THANKS TO HIM"**

Psalm 28:7