

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. 70 No. 40 10-24-17

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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.

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www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com



**IN
SEARCH**
OF THE LORD'S WAY

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

Help Spread the Word! Invite Your Friends & Neighbors!



South Florida Avenue
Church of Christ
Invites You To Our

Gospel Meeting
November 12-15, 2017

with **Steve Higginbotham**

Fundamentals for Faith and Accountability

Sunday Services, November 12

9:30 am – *How to Be a Better Student of the Bible*

10:30 am – *Seeing Through the Eyes of Jesus*

11:45 – **Lunch provided (visitors welcome!)**

6:00 pm – *He Is My Everything*

Monday—Wednesday Services Begin at 7:00 pm

Mon. – *Morals in an Immoral Age*

Tue. – *Non-Denominational Christianity*

Wed. – *Reasons to Keep the Faith*

THE DANGER OF DENOMINATIONALISM

Hiram Kemp

As we approach the 500th year since the beginning of Protestant denominationalism, it is important that those of us ascribing to New Testament Christianity recognize the dangers associated with denominationalism. Denominationalism did not begin in the mind of God. Protestant denominationalism started as Martin Luther opposed the corruption of the Roman Catholic Church and nailed his 95 theses to the door of the Castle Church in Wittenberg, Germany on October 31, 1517. While Luther was right in opposing the errors of the Roman Catholic church, he was wrong in not going back to the Bible to restore the church of the New Testament. Martin Luther and many of the other denominational reformers did not intend to restore New Testament Christianity, but instead to reform Roman Catholicism. Many people today do not know how denominations started. As members of the church for which Jesus died, we need to remind people that denominations are of human origin. They are not a part of the church Jesus promised to build (Mt. 16:18-19). Over time, if Christians fail to hear lessons that point out the sin of denominationalism and the distinctiveness of the church of Christ, many will grow up thinking all churches are the same and there is no difference between us. There is a difference, and we must continually point it out so a generation among us will not arise that does not know the Lord (Judg. 2:6-10).

DIVIDES INSTEAD OF UNITES

Jesus promised to build only one church (Mt. 16:18-19). In the church that Jesus built in the first century there was room for both Jews and Gentiles, males and females (Gal. 3:27-28). There was no need for denominationalism in the first century and there is no need for it now. The word denomination means division and deals with differences. Jesus prayed that all who would believe in him through the teaching of the apostles would be one (Jn. 17:20-21). To be divided into separate segments and denominations is to disrespect and disregard the prayer that Jesus prayed. The apostles urged Christians in the first century to remain unified (1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:1-3). Someone has said that Sunday is the most segregated day of the week. This is a sad statement. The reason for the religious division we see today is because men have put their preferences ahead of God's Word. Denominations teach various ways to be saved, even though the Bible knows only one plan of salvation (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38). The New Testament worship that pleases God is to be done in spirit and in truth (Jn. 4:24). Denominations often worship with unauthorized instrumental music and other human innovations. Christianity thrives on the unity that comes about as men and women from different places and backgrounds submit to the Word of God and conform their lives to its teaching.

WARNINGS FOR THE CHURCH

While it is easy to see the error of denominations, we must examine ourselves and guard against allowing it to influence us (2 Cor. 13:5). We must never look with envy on the denominational world and try to imitate their behavior. Jesus' church is different. As long as we cling to the New Testament for our authority and practice, we will stand out in a world of religious copycats. Some congregations of the Lord's church have introduced instrumental music and women preachers, surrendering genuine faith for that which does not profit (Jude 3). I am glad to be a part of a congregation that wants to hold firm to the pattern of sound words that we find in the Bible. May we familiarize ourselves with what the Bible teaches about the church so that we will know the truth and be able to engage others. Grab your Bible this week and review the passages that mention the singular nature of the church, the acts of worship she is authorized to perform, and the passages that teach what a sinner must do to be saved (2 Tim. 2:15). Apostasy rarely happens on purpose. It usually happens because people forget to review and instill the first principles into their hearts and minds (2 Pet. 1:12-13). We must also instruct younger generations about what Christianity is and *(continued on page 4)*

Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, "Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?" And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!" (Mt. 7:21-23)

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Please continue to remember Ginny Hamby, Brenda Mask, Evelyn Wyatt, Jim Turner, Margaret Coone, Sharon Washington, Carol Eason and Josephine Bowman in prayer.

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

Others: Joy Baker, (Michelle Paulin's cousin), Duane Nelson, Joyce Stearsman, Jack Pinckert, Joe Kozlesky, (Michelle Paulin's nephew) and Carla Chin (Zsazeli Enamorado's teacher).

Upcoming Events

Saturday October 28th: All members interested in helping to plan, organize and direct a Senior Saints program, there will be a meeting at 9:00 a.m. in the fellowship hall. If you plan to attend there is a sign up sheet on the bulletin board.

Saturday, November 4th: Ladies Day at Kissimmee church of Christ.

Saturday, November 4th: Door knocking for our up-coming Gospel Meeting. Meet at the building at 9:00 a.m.

Sunday November 5th: Any youth that want to decorate turkey bags for VISTE, please meet at the church building at 3:00 p.m.

Sunday November 5th: Teacher Training Workshop from 2-5 p.m. This is the first workshop for our new material. All teachers scheduled for the Dec.-Feb. quarter should attend, all others are welcome.

Saturday Nov 11th: Door knocking for our up-coming Gospel Meeting at 9:00 a.m.

Saturday November 11th: If you are interested in using the Bible to teach english on the internet, please join us for an informational brunch about the World English Institute in the fellowship hall from 9:30-11:30 a.m. For more info see Kelcey Grimes.

November 12th-15th: Our Fall Gospel Meeting, speaker will be Steve Higginbotham.

Response

Ray Nashick was baptized into Christ on Friday Oct. 20th. Let's encourage him and welcome him into our family.

Thank You

Dears sisters, Thank you for inviting me to speak for your Ladies day! You all did such an amazing job. That was very kind of you all. I enjoyed being with you. May God bless all of you as you continue to live for him!
Love Kathy Pollard

Visitors

Taj Williams, Jaylen Toliver, Peter Saunders, Bob & Teresa Murrell, Tiffany Hash and Megan and Samuel and Dora Viner. It was good to have our missionary from the Pacific Islands Joey Treat and his family with us.

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

November

Stacey Paulin..... **Table** John McShane
Bobby Sheumaker **Assist** Tucker Sweeney

Sunday, October 29, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Tucker Sweeney
Prayer Kenny French

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Kenny French
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Ken Walker
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Bobby Simpson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Kyle Williams
Opening Prayer Kyle Bingle
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Jimmy Sweeney
Greeters Longfellows
Att. Cards Willcut boy's l
Open & Close Building John McShane

Wednesday, November 1, 2017

Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer David Anderson
Closing Prayer Kenny French

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Chuck Wyatt so he can get a replacement - (863) 602-9005

Sunday, November 5, 2017

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Kyle Bingle
Prayer Tucker Sweeney

10:30 A.M.

Announcements Matt Willcut
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer David Anderson
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Tim Croson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Vince Daugherty
Opening Prayer Kyle Bingle
Sermon Hiram Kemp
Closing Prayer Charles Paulin
Greeters Tyler & Jessica Anderson
Att. Cards Ian/Quadarius
Open & Close Building Charles Paulin

Wednesday, November 8th, 2017

Song Leader Ken Walker
Opening Prayer David Williams
Closing Prayer Paul Romine

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Oct. 01.....	\$10,676.00
Oct. 08.....	\$4,847.23
Oct. 15.....	\$4,691.00
Oct. 22.....	\$4,652.46
Contribution Average	\$5,361.54
2017 Weekly Budget	\$4,716.51

(continued from page 2) is not. Young Christians must be ready to give a defense to their friends and classmates who want to know what the difference is between the church of Christ and denominationalism. Paul warned that we must speak the truth in love, but we must first know the truth ourselves (Eph. 4:15).

CONCLUSION

Many denominations will celebrate in the coming weeks as their 500th anniversary approaches. While we can applaud the courage of Martin Luther, we must avoid his mistake. Martin Luther did not go back far enough, and he fell short of God's design for the church. Christians celebrate the rich heritage we have as we go back to Acts 2 and see where Christianity began. Ω

Believe, Teach, and Practice Only What God Authorizes!

If there is one single Bible verse that summarizes the difference between the church of Christ and denominationalism, it would be Colossians 3:17, which reads: "And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him." The terms "whatever ... in word or deed ... do all" leave nothing out! Everything a true follower of Christ does must be done by God's authority (i.e., "in the name of the Lord Jesus")! This would even include what we eat and what we do for recreation! Consider church organization. The head of the Roman Catholic Church is the pope. By what authority does the pope oversee the whole church? By what authority can his word (continued below)



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(continued from above) override the Bible and add or subtract doctrine? The Protestant denominations vary in the heads of their churches, any where from the "pastor," a synod, or an "apostolic board," but, again, by what authority do such arrangements exist. Yes, they all claim to follow Christ, but it is impossible to truly follow Him without adhering to His word (Lk. 6:46 cf. Pr. 30:6; Dan. 12:32; Rev. 22:18-19). Consider also worship. We can find Bible authority for five avenues of worship: singing (Eph. 5:19), preaching/teaching (Acts 20:7), praying to God (Acts 2:42), partaking of the Lord's Supper every Sunday (1 Cor. 11:23-29 cf. Acts 20:7), and giving a



We again rejoice with heaven at the baptism of Ray on Friday morning, Oct. 20, 2017. We are thankful to the work of the Father, the Christ, and the Holy Spirit in making salvation possible and attainable through obedience to the Gospel. We also



thank our eldership, preachers, bringing others to Christ and to a knowledge of the truth!

financial contribution every Sunday (1 Cor. 16:1-2). Denominations practice more than these. Where is the authority for the use of mechanical instruments of music in worship? For hand clapping as worship? For teaching the doctrines of men? For praying to Mary, etc.? No matter the good we may think we are doing, if we do not have God's authority for it, we will be eternally lost (Mt. 7:21-23), unless we repent (1 Cor. 7:10). ❤️ Brian

Think souls! Let's Invite our friends and neighbors to church assemblies and/or to one-on-one Bible studies!

