

# 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. 73 No. 42 11-26-19

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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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[SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist](http://SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist)



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

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

## *Surveying Ships in Scripture*

Hiram Kemp

Many fathers have taken their children on a boat to fish and to enjoy some time together. There is something calming about being on the water and away from the stresses and problems of daily life. As one climbs into a boat or a ship and pushes off from land, there is time for good conversation, memories made, and lessons learned. Throughout scripture God is teaching his people lessons from individuals on ships. In both the Old and New Testaments, major Bible lessons are taught from ships as God deals with sin, worry, faith, and discipleship. Notice a few lessons we learn from some ships of scripture.

## *God Punishes Sin & Extends Grace*

As the wickedness of man increased in the earth during the days of Noah, God decided to cleanse the world with a global flood (Gen. 6:5-13). God was going to punish the rampant evil that was taking place and start over with a new family. As God was planning to destroy the wicked, he was not going to punish the righteous as well. God does not punish the righteous for the deeds of the wicked (2 Pet. 2:9). Noah found grace (favor, ESV) in the eyes of the Lord (Gen. 6:8). The first "ship" in scripture shows us that God will punish evil but that he also extends grace. It is interesting to observe the same word used for ark (*tēbāh*) in the account of Noah is the same word used for the basket in which Moses' mother placed him during the days before the Exodus (Exod. 2:3-5). The deliverance of God's people from Egyptian bondage began with an "ark," just like the one God used to deliver his people from the world of unrighteousness in the days of Noah.

God promised that disobedience would be punished, and he kept his promise (Gen. 2:16-17). Throughout scripture we are given small glimpses into the wrath of God as he punishes different generations for their sins. Yet, in all of the punishment about which we read, we should remember that our God is a God of grace (Exod. 34:6-7). God will do the right thing and rescue the righteous in times of trouble. While righteousness was hard to find in the days of Noah, Noah still found grace in God's eyes. God is always looking to extend grace toward his people. We learn this as Noah builds the ark and is remembered and rescued by his God (Gen. 8:1).



## *You Can Run But You Can't Hide*

Though the Assyrians were the enemies of Israel during the days of Jonah, God sent Jonah to Nineveh (the capital of Assyria) to preach to those individuals (Jonah 1:1-2). Jonah was sent to cry out against the wickedness of the city, but instead he boarded a ship in tried to run in the opposite direction (Jonah 1:3). Of course, Jonah's attempts to escape God's presence were futile. God is everywhere at all times. God sees everything and knows everything. We can go as deep or as high into the earth as we choose, and still God is there (Psa. 139:7-11). The Lord sent out a great wind to get Jonah's attention and get him to see the error of his way (Jonah 1:4). Jonah's shipmates cast lots and come to understand that the danger they are in is because of Jonah. Jonah calls for his shipmates to throw him overboard, and when they do, the sea is calm (Jonah 1:11-15).

Jonah thought he could run from the Lord, but he was wrong. Many pagan gods in the Old Testament were believed to have special ability on land or sea (cf. 1 Kgs. 20:23, 28). The God of Israel was never to be seen as being more powerful on one type of surface versus another. He was just as knowledgeable about affairs on the land as he was about things taking place on the sea. All things are naked and open before him (cf. Heb. 4:13). We, like Jonah, may think we can do things of which God is unaware, but may we learn from Jonah's ship that we cannot. If we are committing "secret sins," we should be reminded that nothing is a secret before God (Jer. 23:24). If we are doing what is right, we should remember that God sees this as well, and he will reward us openly (Matt. 6:4, 6). When we read the account of Jonah, we learn that no matter where we run in this world, God reigns!

## *Peace Is Provided in Perilous Times*

Once Jesus was on board a ship with his disciples, and there was a great tempest in the sea, and the ship was covered with waves (Matt. 8:23-24). As Jesus slept, his disciples woke him up and begged for him to save them as they believed they were perishing (Matt. 8:25). The word translated perish (*ἀπόλλυμι, apollymi*) means to suffer destruction or to be ruined (cf. 2 Pet. 3:9). Jesus woke up and challenged their faith. Did they really believe he would allow them to perish in his presence? He then rebuked the winds and there was a great calm, and then great astonishment among those who saw what took place (Matt. 8:26-27).

Jesus teaches us from this ship that when we think God is unconcerned or unaware of our circumstances, we are wrong. God is paying attention, and God is watching over his people. We just need to trust him. The disciples showed their faith was still in an stage of infancy as this time of peril caused them to doubt and despair. Trials make us stronger, if we allow them to do so (Rom. 5:2-5; James 1:2-4). Jesus rebuked the winds and the sea and gave them peace in the midst of danger. We should remove worry from our hearts and replace it with prayer, knowing that Jesus does the same for us today (Phil. 4:6-7).

## *Shine Your Light Even in the Dark*

After Paul appealed to Caesar before governor Festus, he was on his way to Rome (Acts 25:11). Paul found himself on a ship with 276 other passengers, and many, if not all of them, were not Christians (Acts 27:37). While on the ship, Paul took every opportunity to let his light shine. Paul warned them of the impending shipwreck that had been revealed to him by the Lord (Acts 27:9-10, 21-24). Paul encouraged those who had not eaten in fourteen days to eat something, and he prayed for the food (Acts 27:33-36). Paul spoke confidently in his faith in God and how God had revealed to him the coming destruction of the ship, although He would save all the human lives aboard it (Acts 27:15). On this ship Paul teaches us that we might find ourselves surrounded by faithless people, but we can still have faith. In fact, we must (Heb. 11:6). We should pray openly, speak freely about God, help others, and shine our light (Matt. 5:13-16). Paul did this, and he stood out from the crowd and found favor in their eyes (cf. Acts 27:43).

## *Conclusion*

The Bible speaks often about ships and journeys taken. There are many lessons to learn as we read these accounts. We should see ourselves in these various accounts and seek to avoid the mistakes many of these individuals made. These things were written for our learning. Let us be wise enough to learn (Rom. 15:4)!

# SFA FAMILY MATTERS

## Prayer List

**Our Members:** It was good to have Anita Shearer back with us. Jim Turner and Marion Beals were home sick. Ginny Hamby, Cierra Edwards, Jeanelle Thrower, Carol Pace (skin cancer surgery), Ellen Shearer, Ray Naschick, Ron Ford, Chuck (hand surgery) & Evelyn Wyatt, Debbie Bush, Ginny Johnson and Alan & Rachel Grimes who are traveling.

**Shut In Members:** Faith West, Carol Eason, Virginia Plumlee, Joyce Burbage and Cheryl Barker.

**Others:** Tonya Mathis (hospice care), Larry Laster, Chrissi Fuesner, Chip Bolding, Tony Seibert, Neil Entwistle Sr., Tanya Irizarry, Trevor & Sandy Hutchins, (Becky Sheumaker's brother-in-law and sister) both of them going thru a difficult time with cancer, Wesley Brunson's mother, and Peggy Nabors cancer has returned (Kim Faneuf's mother).

## Upcoming Events

**Sunday December 1st:** Fellowship In-Service after evening worship service. Please bring finger foods.

**Sunday December 8th:** Elders/Deacons Meeting at 4:30 p.m.

**Tuesday December 10th:** Senior Saints will meet at 9:00 a.m. in the fellowship hall to make teddy bears and reindeer covers for candy bars, just bring candy bars (flat) and whatever leftover material you might have to make the teddy bears.

**Tuesday December 10th:** H.A.P.P.Y. Hospitality Among People Pursuing You. Dinner with the Kemps. Sign up sheet is on the bulletin board.

**Thursday December 19th:** Senior Saints will be going to look at Christmas lights. The van will leave the building at 6:15 p.m.

**Saturday December 21st:** Men's Breakfast at Griffin Rd. church of Christ in Lakeland at 8:00 a.m.

**Saturday December 21st:** Youth group will go Christmas caroling, leaving the building at 2:30 p.m. There is a sign up sheet in the foyer if you would like for them to come and sing for you.

**Saturday December 21st:** Annual Christmas Party here in the fellowship hall at 5:00 p.m. Bring a potluck dish and a white elephant gift for your specific age group. The youth group will lead Christmas carols for the whole group.

**Friday December 27th:** Youth group will prepare a meal for the families residing in the Ronald McDonald House in Tampa. See Vince for more details.

**Tuesday December 31st:** 3rd Annual Chili Cook-Off at 6:00 p.m. Please bring a side dish, drinks and dessert.

## Christmas Stockings

We will be making Christmas stockings for the Women's Abuse Shelter again this year. Please see Rene' Bingle if you would like to help with this project. A Deadline for bringing items is December 1st.

## Response

Charles Brown came forward Sunday evening requesting prayers for strength as he repents and is restored to the Lord.

## Visitors

Sherman Williams, Jerry Green, Eric Bunch, Brownlow-Dindy family, Dolly Martin, Alexis Dunn, Andrew & Mel Bacic, Charles Brown and Albert Bess.

### Communion to Shut-Ins

Dec. 1st.....Deal and Turner  
 Dec. 8th ..... Van Allen  
 Dec. 15th..... Youth Group  
 Dec. 22nd ..... Volunteer Needed

## SCHEDULED TO SERVE

### December

**Designated Elder During Services - Kenny French**

**Open/Close Building - Bob Cooper**

Bobby Sheumaker..... **Table** ..... Wayne Shearer  
 Phil Fife ..... **Assist** ..... Ken Walker

### Sunday, December 1, 2019 9:30 A.M.

**Song at Bible Class**..... David Williams  
**Prayer**..... Josh Estridge  
**Sound Booth**..... Casey Paulin  
**Announcements**..... Fred Strickland  
**Song Leader**..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer**..... Matt Willcut  
**Sermon**..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer**..... Rick Kenyon  
**Greeters**..... Fife/Daugherty  
**Cards**..... Klark/Willcut

### 6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader**..... Paul Romine  
**Opening Prayer**..... Alex Parramore  
**Sermon**..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer**..... David Anderson

### Wednesday, December 4, 2019

**Song Leader**..... Matt Willcut  
**Opening Prayer**..... Wayne Shearer  
**Closing Prayer**..... Frank Hamby

### December Clean-up Jimmy Sweeney's team (E-K)

*Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Stacey Paulin so he can get a replacement - (863) 838-8911*

### Sunday, December 8 2019 9:30 A.M.

**Song at Bible Class** ..... Kyle Bingle  
**Prayer**..... Tyler Anderson  
**Sound Booth**..... Phil Fife  
**Announcements**..... Wayne Shearer  
**Song Leader**..... Jason Hendrix  
**Opening Prayer**..... John McShane  
**Sermon**..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer**..... David Deal  
**Greeters**..... Pratt/Smith  
**Cards**..... Williams/Sweeney

### 6:00 P.M.

**Song Leader**..... Paul Romine  
**Opening Prayer**..... Kenny French  
**Sermon**..... Hiram Kemp  
**Closing Prayer**..... Alex Parramore

### Wednesday, December 11, 2019

**Song Leader** ..... Tucker Sweeney  
**Opening Prayer**..... Kyle Bingle  
**Closing Prayer** ..... Bobby Sheumaker

## ~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

**Nov. 03** ..... \$8,476.66  
**Nov. 10** ..... \$6,139.25  
**Nov. 17** ..... \$7,162.25  
**Nov. 24** ..... \$4,965.50  
**Contribution Average** ..... \$6,531.18

# From Thanksgiving to **Thanks Living**

Thanksgiving Day means different things to different people. The gathering of family, time off from work and school, outdoor activities, good food, and/or watching football are some of the things people like about this day. When the holiday is over, most will go back to their usual routines. However, let us not forget that we still have much for which to be thankful! We have the physical blessings that God gives to all (Mt. 5:45; Jas. 1:17), and more importantly, we have the spiritual blessings that are only found in Christ (Eph. 1:3). For these blessings we should always be thankful, and it should show in our lives. Among the blessings Paul lists in Ephesian 1 are our being chosen in Him (Eph. 1:4-6), redemption (Eph. 1:7), having access to God's revelation (Eph. 1:8-10), and the promise of an inheritance (Eph. 1:11-14). To live thankful, we must continue to "walk worthy of the calling with which you were called ... endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:1-3). Furthermore, to live thankful, we must influence others for Christ so that they too may possess these spiritual blessings that we enjoy (Mt. 5:13-16). May we never lose sight of our blessings, and always be characterized by "thanks living." *Æ Brian*



*South Florida Avenue*  
**CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
*1807 South Florida Avenue*  
*Lakeland, FL 33803-2653*



Return Service Requested

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



## HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

We have so much for which to be thankful!  
May your holiday be happy and heart-felt . . . like a Publix commercial!



### MISSION TRIP PERU

We are gearing up with prayer and planning for a YES II mission trip to Ica, Peru, on July 17-25, 2020. If you have gone in the past and want to go again, register online. See Brian if you are new.



**SPECIAL THANKS** to Lee for researching, interviewing, and traveling all over Polk County to find the best option for upgrading our sign, which now shines brightly, pointing people to God and His word! Lee represents many members of SFA who "work behind the scenes" to make the congregation run more smoothly in glorifying God. We thank everyone who so "works behind the scenes"!

**Thanks be to God for His  
indefinable gift!** *2 Cor. 9:15*

**THINK SOULS!** Let's invite our family, neighbors, and friends to Bible classes, church services and/or one-on-one personal Bible studies.

