



South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST MESSENGER



1807 S. Florida Ave.,
Lakeland, FL 33803

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ELDERS

David Anderson
Brian Kenyon
Bobby Sheumaker

DEACONS

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Rick Kenyon
Stacey Paulin

MINISTER

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Vince Daugherty

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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.

WEB PAGE

SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com

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Florida School of Preaching
since 1969

Missionary - Huron, SD
Casey & Emily Paulin

MISSION FIELDS

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

THE KINGDOM OF GOD IS STILL STANDING PART 2

Joshua Cantrell

In the days of the Roman Kingdom, John announced the coming of the Lord of the kingdom of God. Matthew records, "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:1-2). As the Messiah commissioned the twelve to go to the lost sheep of Israel (Matthew 10:6), the message was to remind them of this eternal kingdom spoken of long ago by Daniel, "as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 10:7)

As the Lord's ministry progressed, he announced his intent to build the church, "and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 16:18-19). Near the time of the Lord's death, he spoke to Pilate and asserted that His kingdom, unlike Rome's, was heaven. John records, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence" (John 18:36).

After the Lord's death and resurrection, he announced that his power and authority were from above and beyond and the realms that were established, or set up, before him. "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matthew 28:18). The significance of that declaration was made evident by the apostles on the Day of Pentecost as the kingdom of God, the church, was established. Luke records, "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). On that day, despite all the upheaval within the world, the eternal kingdom was established and proposed (Acts 2:46-47).

THE KINGDOM STILL STANDS DESPITE EFFORTS TO DESTROY IT

Just as the forces of Satan have lied, schemed, and conspired to discredit Christ and dismantle His divine missions, they also sought to do the same to the kingdom in its infancy. Jesus gave a clear warning of this to his disciple within the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew records, "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake" (Matthew 5:11). The great organized effort to destroy Christ and the kingdom concentrated on the subjects and the doctrines of the King. Therefore, during the first century, the people of God endured relentless and brutal persecution at the hands of the Jews and the Romans (Acts 4; 5).

In AD 64, Nero initiated his campaign to destroy the kingdom, which efforts resulted in at least one hundred and twenty-nine years of intolerance and cruelty to God's people. The Romans, who were usually tolerant of various religious beliefs, greatly distrusted people with such loyalty to a king, or a God, other than Caesar. They were also constantly reminded that this group considered themselves the "kingdom of God." Nero, from all indications, was insane, and on the occasion of the burning of Rome, blamed Christians, and inflicted great bloody punishment for his enjoyment.

Jesus taught and warned of this undeserved hatred. John records, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I

have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you” (John 15:18-19). Christ made it evident that the persecution was an attempt to destroy the heavenly kingdom, a kingdom that would not adhere to a worldly structure, nor yield to the authority of earthly kings and kingdoms.

THE KINGDOM STANDS

God’s people are not easily threatened, and early disciples did not quit. The kingdom of God contains a population who will not be bullied by evil and embarrassed by truth. Evil’s efforts against the kingdom will always backfire, leaving some to trust the King even more. Saul of Tarsus and others killed Steven, who refused to deny the Lord and His kingdom (Acts 7:59). Luke also records, “As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison” (Acts 8:3). Saul’s behavior was outrageous. He kicked in the doors of innocent Christians and dragged them from their homes to prison.

The disciple’s reputation for upholding the kingdom was widely known. When Paul and others went to Thessalonica, an uproar was caused and those of the city complained (Acts 17:6). The prophecy said the kingdom would “stand forever.” Satan cannot change that by persecution. The apostles voiced their commitment, “We ought to obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). The kingdom of God is still standing because Christ stood for it and Christians stand for him.

THE KINGDOM STANDS AGAINST THE WILES OF THE DEVIL

The Devil has always sought the destruction of God’s beloved creation, mankind. The devil hates man and therefore resents God’s efforts to save man from the law of sin and death. Mankind possessed something that he would never again possess, the mercy and grace of the Lord God. The Devil, being a created being himself and a free moral agent, chose to lead a rebellion in heaven (2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 12:3-4). God’s justice demanded an immediate response to maintain the purity and holiness of heaven. The Hebrews writer reminds God’s people of God’s intolerance of transgressions, “For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation” (Hebrews 2:2-3).

Filled with eternal contempt and spite, the Devil entered Eden armed with the first and most damaging lie ever told, “Ye shall not surely die” (Genesis 3:4). Satan became public enemy number one of the King and his kingdom, the church of Christ. However, Satan failed through the ages to prevent the completion of God’s scheme of redemption. Therefore, the Devil seeks its destruction after the fact. The apostle Paul warned those of the kingdom who and what sought the kingdom’s destruction (Ephesians 6:11-12). At least ninety-six times in the New Testament, the devil is called by name. He will stop at nothing to keep the kingdom of God from standing and to hinder God’s purpose. Satan’s lies are meant to cause divisions and decay in the kingdom of God. Jesus’ description of the Devil should be known by all God’s children (John 8:44). Paul warned Timothy, “But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived” (2 Timothy 3:13). Even with all the attempts of the evil one, the kingdom of God is still standing.

Instructions from a Father (Pt. 3)

How to L-E-A-R-N: A is for Asking Questions

If you are going to learn something new you must first admit there is something you do not know. Only the son in pride and arrogance believes that he has nothing new to learn. A humble spirit is needed. James says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to you. But let him ask in faith with no doubting" (1:5,6). If you are unsure about what direction to take, wisdom is asking for help from a father to know the way. Jesus said, "ask and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be open to you" (Matt. 7:7). When you find yourself frustrated and wrestling with the thoughts in your head, sit on the edge of your bed and ask the following question: 'What is one stupid thing am I doing that I should and could change about myself.' Sit there and wait for the answer to appear. Until you seek, until you knock, until you ask, nothing will be opened to you. All you have to do is ask.

-VD

Happy Holidays

If you want to bring in Christmas cards for the "elves" to deliver, please have them in no later than December 14th and please have them in alphabetical order by the last names.



SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Our Members:

Bob Pratt - health
 Jim Turner - health
 Brian Smith - heart health
 Debbie Bush - struggles
 Antoine & Marcella Swain - health
 Wayne Shearer - health
 Geny Johnson - health
 Sophia Smith- LRMC
 George Davis- toe surgery
 Bill & Carlene Long- strength

PRAYER LIST

Ron & Judy Ford - health
 Pat Chisholm - tests done
 Bobby Simpson - health
 Annett Phillip - health
 Janie Wise - health
 Brenda Mask - blood pressure issues
 Bitsy Thomas - injury
 Neyome Brunson- trip to Sri Lanka
 Charles Paulin- health
 Jeff Bingle- health

(Please update the office of any changes)

The **EXTENDED FAMILY AND FRIENDS** prayer requests are emailed every week and posted on the bulletin board. Please let the office know if someone's status on that list needs to be updated or if a person needs to be removed from the list.

Pray for our Shut-ins

Joyce Burbage Carol Eason

Brothers, pray for us. 1 Thessalonians 5:25

Jean McCarter has asked to coordinate a team of senior saints to visit senior saints. This will be discussed at the next Senior Saints meeting on Monday, December 12, beginning at 10 am.



There will be an informational meeting after A.M. Worship in the north wing on December 11th for those interested in attending Y.E.S. Weekend in Valdosta at Forrest Park church of Christ.

The Florida School of Preaching Lectureship is taking place January 16-19, 2023. Your help is needed before and during lectureship. Please see the sign-up sheets on the bulletin board with volunteer opportunities for everyone! If you have any questions, see Kathy or Jagie

The SFA church directory is now available on the **Instant Church Directory App.**

Privacy and safety is an absolute factor! To access the app, your email address **must** be registered with the office to verify identity. If the office does not have your email, access to the directory will be **denied**.

If you need assistance or more information about it, please see Rick Kenyon.



SCHEDULED TO SERVE

December

Designated Elder - Brian Kenyon

Wednesday, December 7th, 2022

AnnouncementsB. Sheumaker
 Song Leader/Prayer.....Kyle Faneuf
 DevoVince Daugherty
 Closing PrayerNigel St. Bernard

Sunday, December 11th, 2022

10:30 A.M.

Jesus Rises After the Cross .. Joshua Cantrell
 Matthew 28:1-6

6:00 P.M.

Rise, Fall, Restoration: Peter .. Joshua Cantrell
 Luke 22:31-34

10:30 A.M.

Song/prayer before classTerrance Dindy Jr.
 AnnouncementsB. Sheumaker
 A.M. Song LeaderAndre Medley
 Scripture reading/PrayerTyler Anderson
 Lord's TableTucker Sweeney
 Closing PrayerJeff Bingle
 Open/Close bldg (both)Jason Hendrix
 GreetersFife
 Attendance cards (both)Cam'ron/ Caelen

6:00 P.M.

P.M. Song LeaderAndre Medley
 Scripture reading/PrayerWayne Shearer
 Lord's TableTucker Sweeney
 Closing PrayerRick Kenyon
 GreetersNona & Janis

Wednesday, December 14th, 2022

AnnouncementsBrian Kenyon
 Song Leader/prayer David Williams
 DevoJoshua Cantrell
 Closing PrayerJimmy Sweeney

Upcoming Events

December

- 8 - Ladies' Scrapbook Night
- 10 -Parents Night Out 6:30-9:00
- 11 -Elders, Deacons & Preachers' Meeting
- 11 -Ladies' Cookie Swap
- 11 -FSOP Monthly Ladies' Class
- 16 - Youth Polar Express Night
- 17 - Christmas Lights and S'mores @ the Shearers'

~ HOW ARE WE GIVING ~

Nov 20 \$4,899.00
 Nov 27\$5,594.00
 Dec 4 \$10,213.00
Contribution Average.....\$6,493.04
Weekly budget \$7,663.43

I used to wonder what life must be like for a prisoner on death row. Are there feelings of anxiety or dread? Are there feelings of regret or remorse as they await their day of execution? Some may not care and have resigned themselves to their fate.

Then I reflected on mankind and realized that everyone is sitting on death row! We may have never looked at it that way, but since the day of our birth, we are moving one day closer to the day of death. Ecclesiastes 3:1-2 says, "To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die." The difference between us and the death row prisoners is they know the specific date of their death/execution.

Though we will all die physically one day (unless Jesus comes back first), we don't have to die eternally separated from God. Sin has separated us from God, but Christ came into this world, died, and rose again to give us a chance to live eternally with him in heaven.

Read: John 3:15-17; John 14:1-3; 1 John 5:11-12; Matthew 19:16-19; Romans 6:23.



Ladies' COOKIE SWAP
 @ Stephanie's house
 Sunday, December 17th, 4:00 P.M.
 LADIES SHOULD BRING 2 DOZEN OF EACH COOKIE THEY WANT TO SHARE.
 PLEASE BRING COPIES OF THE RECIPE FOR LADIES TO TAKE HOME.
 THERE WILL BE GAMES, COOKIES, AND REFRESHMENTS. PLEASE JOIN US!
 THERE IS A SIGN-UP SHEET ON THE BULLETIN BOARD.



CHRISTMAS LIGHTS and S'mores
AT THE SHEARERS'
 December 17th @ 5:00 P.M.
BRING A CHAIR
 SIGN UP SHEET ON THE BULLETIN BOARD

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
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Return Service Requested

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Psalm 119:105



If you prefer to receive the bulletin via email, contact us.