



# South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST *MESSENGER*



1807 S. Florida Ave.  
Lakeland, FL 33803

Vol. 78 No. 50 December 10, 2024

### ELDERS

David Anderson  
Brian Kenyon  
Bobby Sheumaker

### DEACONS

Tyler Anderson  
Jason Hendrix  
Stacey Paulin

### MINISTER

Steven Ford

### ASSOCIATE MINISTER

OFFICE PHONE  
(863) 682-4702

EMAIL  
[SFA.church@gmail.com](mailto:SFA.church@gmail.com)

### 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.....6:30 p.m.

### WEB PAGE

[SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com](http://SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com)

Find us on  
YouTube & Facebook

### HOME OF

*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  
Ted Wheeler ..... Ghana, W.A.

## Jarred Spivey to Graduate Florida School of Preaching December 15, 2024



Jarred was baptized into Christ in 2013. He came to FSOP from the Beville Road church of Christ in Daytona Beach. Previous to enrolling with Florida School of Preaching, he earned an associate of science degree from Johnson University Florida. He also received a diploma of Biblical Studies from Summit Theological Seminary. Although he worked in various secular fields, immediately before starting FSOP, he was an automotive technician for a Ford dealership. After graduation, he will continue looking for a faithful congregation with whom he can teach and preach the truth, even if he needs to work a secular job to support himself and his family.

## Rally 'Round Remembrance

Brian R. Kenyon

Memory is a powerful tool. There are memories, good or bad, so etched in our minds that when triggered, the feelings attached to them immediately bring us joy, laughter, or pain. Paul wanted Timothy, his "son in the faith" (1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2), to keep in memory some very important facts, "Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel, for which I suffer trouble as an evildoer, even to the point of chains; but the word of God is not chained. Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect, that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Timothy 2:8-10). If all Christians will remember the following three truths, we will be focused and productive servants of the Lord, no matter the challenges and/or persecutions that arise.

## Jesus Was Raised from the Dead

Jesus often told His disciples that He would suffering, die, and be raised from the dead (Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:18-19; Luke 9:22; 24:6-7), which is what Scripture said long before He "became flesh" (John 1:14 cf. 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Isaiah 53:1-12). However, Jesus' being raised from the dead is significant on many levels. Paul wrote concerning "Jesus Christ ... who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God ... according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Romans 1:3-4). According to His earthly, fleshly lineage, Jesus was the seed, or offspring, of David

(Matthew 1:1; 22:42). According to the “Spirit of holiness,” He was made known to be the “Son of God with power ... by the resurrection from the dead” (Romans 1:4). The word translated “declared” in Romans 1:4 is from a verb form that means to set out, determine, show the boundaries (found also in Acts 17:26, 31). No one but Christ has risen from the dead never to die again! This was the gospel Paul preached (Romans 1:14-16). Paul’s use of “my gospel” does not suggest that he originated the gospel, for he also wrote that “the gospel ... preached by me is not according to man but it came through the revelation of Jesus Christ” (Galatians 1:11-12). However, the gospel was Paul’s in the sense he took it into his being and lived and preached it (Romans 2:16; 16:25 cf. 1 Thessalonians 1:5, “our gospel”). Jesus has indeed risen from the dead! Have we accepted that fact by obeying the gospel through baptism (Romans 6:17 cf. Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12; 3:1)? May we never forget that Jesus rose from the dead!

## God's Word Is Not Chained

As Paul wrote this epistle, he was in chains (2 Timothy 2:9). Because Paul was “appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles,” he suffered many things (2 Timothy 2:11-12 cf. 2 Corinthians 11:23-29). He referred to himself as the Lord’s “prisoner” (2 Timothy 2:8 cf. Ephesians 3:1; Colossians 4:3, 18), treated as if he were an “evildoer [malefactor, ASV; criminal, ESV]” (2 Timothy 2:9). The Greek word behind this term is only used again of the “criminals” crucified with Jesus (Luke 23:32-33, 39). Although Paul could be bound and immobilized, the “word of God is not bound” (2 Timothy 2:9, KJV). The more people tried to snuff out the gospel, the more it grew (cf. Acts 8:4). Suffering persecution is inevitable for those who live godly lives (2 Timothy 3:12 cf. Matthew 5:10-12). Paul listed “persecutions” as one of his traits Timothy had “carefully followed” (2 Timothy 3:11). One thought that helps Christians endure persecution is to know that despite what is done to the messenger, the message continues to permeate hearts. Paul wrote that his earlier imprisonment “actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel” (Philippians 1:12-14). Even if our stand for truth and the persecution that follows seem to go unnoticed, rest assured that God knows (Revelation 2:13). Paul asked the Thessalonians to pray that “the word of the Lord may run swiftly and be glorified, just as it is with you” (2 Thessalonians 3:1-2). Do we allow God’s word to “run swiftly and be glorified” through our lives? Do we allow it to shape our beliefs and behaviors (2 Timothy 3:14-17)? Let us never forget that no matter what may happen to us for living the gospel, the word of God is not chained!

## We May Obtain Salvation

Paul endured suffering so others could be saved (2 Timothy 2:10). Paul and his coworkers were “always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus ... always delivered to death for Jesus’ sake ... So then death is working in us, but life in you” (2 Corinthians 4:10-12). Paul applied Psalm 44:22 to Christians who refuse to allow persecution to separate them from Christ’s love, “As it is written: ‘For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter’” (Romans 8:36). Even though death on behalf of Christ was at work in Paul and his coworkers (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:31), their endurance allowed spiritual life for the Corinthians (and us)! As long as Paul could keep preaching, teaching, and writing, more souls would be saved. God still “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (2 Timothy 2:4). He has done everything on His end to make salvation possible. He gave His “only begotten Son” as a substitute for the punishment our sins deserved (John 3:16; Hebrews 9:24-28). He gave us a guarantee that as long we have faith in Jesus (John 8:24), repent of our sins (Luke 13:3, 5), confess our faith in Him (Matthew 10:32), and are baptized into Christ (Mark 16:16), we will be saved (Acts 2:37-38, 40-41). Not only that, but knowing sin would still be a problem after being saved (1 John 1:8, 10), our loving God also provided a way to stay saved, “if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin ... If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:7, 9). Have we obtained salvation? Are we maintaining salvation? Let us never forget that salvation is obtainable to all!

May we always remember that Jesus was raised from the dead, that God’s word is not chained, and that salvation is attainable to all! If we do, no matter the challenges and/or persecutions that come to us, “our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory” (2 Corinthians 4:17).

## PRAYER LIST

**Current:** Rosetta Vargas is having medical tests done. Debbie Lynn is now home, Cheryl Barker is experiencing multiple medical issues,

**Continual:** Melissa Craft (health), Rachel Zapata (health), Jim Turner (cancer) Sharon Mathis Washington (Health & family); Stacey Wilson (health); Debbie Bush (struggles); Carlene Long (health & strength); Ron Ford (health); Janie Wise (health); Margaret Coone (health);

**Shut-ins:** Carol Eason, Kenny & Reba French, Barbara Jones, Charles Paulin, Helen Perrin, Bettye Bolding, Cheryl Barker

Also continue to pray for those on the extended family and friends list!

[Extended family and Friends List is Emailed Weekly.](#)



**Christmas Party**

All Ages Invited  
Saturday, Dec. 14 @ 6:00 PM  
Bring finger foods to share and a white elephant gift if you plan to participate in the gift exchange!  
Team 1 will oversee the kitchen

Join us as we go **Caroling** on Monday Dec. 23. Meet at the building at 10:30 am. We will stop and enjoy lunch together and then continue afterwards! It will be a great time of fellowship and encouragement to our shut ins!! All ages are invited to attend!!

**FSOP GRADUATION**  
**Sunday, Dec. 15 following evening service.**  
**Bring finger foods to share following the graduation!**  
**Team 2 will be overseeing the kitchen**



**Baby Shower**  
Come help us celebrate with Casey and Emily Paulin.  
Sunday, December 29 after evening service  
Please bring finger foods to share.

They are registered at [my.babylist.com](http://my.babylist.com) and there will also be a money tree. Gift cards would also be appreciated. If you purchase a large size gift from the registry please have it shipped to their home in SD as they will have limited space to take items home with them. See Marissa or Michelle with any questions.  
(Their address is 1648 Kansas Ave. S.E. Huron, SD 57350)

Scheduled to Serve in November	
Designated Elder	Brian Kenyon
Wednesday, December 11, 2024	
Announcements	David Anderson
Song Leader / Prayer	Brian Kenyon
Devotional / Invitation	Steven Ford
Closing Prayer	Cam'ron Bailey
Sunday, December 15, 2024	
10:30 am Sermon	Steven Ford
"Putting Faith to Work Pt. 3 (James 1:13-27)	
6:00 pm Sermon	Brian Kenyon
"May God's Word Run Swiftly" (2 Thess. 3:1-5)	
Those to Serve 10:30 am	
Greeters	Olivia/Ingrid
Song/Pray before class	David Williams
Announcements (both)	Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader	Khaliel Pope
Prayer / Bible reading	Stacey Paulin
Lord's Table (both)	Brian Williams
Closing Prayer	George Beals
Open/Close Building	Bobby Sheumaker
Attendance Cards	---
Sound Booth (both)	Jason
Those to Serve 6:00 pm	
Greeters	Fifes
Announcements	Jimmy Sweeney
Song Leader	Chad Tagtow
Prayer / Bible reading	Roberson Louissaint
Closing Prayer	Allen Grimes
Wednesday, December 18, 2024	
Announcements	Stacey Paulin
Song Leader / Prayer	Terrance Dindy
Devotional / Invitation	Steven Ford
Closing Prayer	Kyle Bingle
How We Are Giving	
November 24	\$5,218.50
December 1	\$8,598.45
December 8	\$10,113.00
Contribution Average	\$7,027.53
<b>Weekly Budget</b>	<b>\$7,410.00</b>

**If you cannot serve as scheduled, please notify Stacey or the office. Even if you arrange your replacement, please notify Stacey or the office. Thanks!**

## "What Kind of Tree Are You?"



The holidays are upon us and many people will soon be bringing a fragrant pine tree into their home to cover with lights and beautiful shiny ornaments. We love to sit and stare at the beautifully decorated tree and enjoy the fragrance as we begin to pile presents underneath it. But in reality, it is a tree that is slowly dying and will soon be stripped of its beauty and thrown into a bonfire or into the trash after just a few short weeks.

Are we as Christians like the Christmas tree? Do we dress up and put on a happy face on Sunday morning to make others think we are what we should be when in reality we are carrying around sin and ugliness within us? The Bible tells us that we should be as the fruit tree. We should be producing fruit each day, fruit that is evident of our Savior living within us and guiding us (John 15:4-5). Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control should be the fruit we are bearing and sharing (Galatians 5:22-23). Only one that is connected to the true life source, rooted (Col. 2:6-7) and grounded in His word and receiving daily nourishment can grow to be what God has intended it to be. We will not be able to force others to produce fruit like us, but we must be busy sowing the seed and watering where we can and God will give the increase (1 Cor. 3:6). Let us all strive to be as the fruit tree and be productive for Christ so that our reward will be one in heaven to spend eternity, rather than one who lives only for this world and who will one day be cast into the eternal fire (Matthew 25:46).

# Make Plans to Attend Now!

[www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com](http://www.SouthFloridaAvenueChurchOfChrist.com)  
Email us: [SFA.church@gmail.com](mailto:SFA.church@gmail.com)



### **South Florida Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1807 South Florida Avenue  
Lakeland, FL 33803-2653

Return Service Requested

"By this My Father is glorified, that  
you bear much fruit; so you will be My  
disciples"  
John 15:8



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