

Jesus Is the Reason for **EVERY** Season!

Concerning Jesus, Paul wrote, "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him" (Col. 1:16). While some in our present culture give Jesus as the "reason for the season," the Son of God is the reason why *every* season exists! Not only is Jesus the creator and sustainer of all things created (Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:17; Heb. 11:3), but He is also the object to which all creation moves, toward the fulfilment of His purpose (note: "All things were created...for Him"). This purpose will culminate in the Second Coming of Christ (see Rom. 8:19-25). It is not inherently sinful to focus on the birth of Christ in December, but everyone must remember all year long that Jesus was and is more than just a "babe wrapped in swaddling clothes." He is the Lord! Jesus Himself said, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Mt. 28:18). His authority resides over creation as well as His new, spiritual creation, the church. Paul went on to write, "And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18). Jesus wants first place in our lives (Mt. 11:28-30). He died to make that possible (Heb. 2:9). We should not superficially acknowledge Him in December, but truly give ourselves to Him all the time. Is Jesus the reason in our every season? ❤️ Brian



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



Sunday, January 12 --- Our next L2L Sunday will be held. We thank kids and adults who sacrifice their afternoon to make themselves better servants of Christ. You are great examples!

Saturday, January 18 --- Youth devo and activity will be at the Bingle's. Stay tuned for further announcements and possible opportunities to help with this event. We look forward to it!

February 21-23 --- Forrest Park church of Christ will host YES Weekend 2014. The theme is "Unmasked," and is dedicated to revealing sin for what it really is and pointing to Jesus who can make us innocent. Make plans now to attend!



The youth group and its leaders appreciate all the encouragement and help the elders and members of the SFA church of Christ have been to us in 2013. Though you have always displayed such, this year of

being "re-vamped" has brought special challenges, yet our young people (and adult mentors) are more spiritual because of it! Your help with this has made us a stronger congregation!

Do You Understand Truth?

is the theme of the Florida School of Preaching's 39th Annual Lectureship

January 20-23, 2014

Monday is a holiday, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, which means no school! Why not take advantage of this opportunity to learn about truth? Hope to see you there!

The South Florida Avenue MESSENGER

A Friendly Church With a Vital Message Proclaiming the Unsearchable Riches of the Lord Jesus.
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SUNDAY SERVICES

Bible Study.....9:30a.m.
Worship.....10:30a.m.
Evening Worship.....6:00p.m.

WEDNESDAY

Ladies Class.....10:00a.m.
Bible Study.....7:00p.m.

HOME OF

Florida School of Preaching

MISSION FIELDS

Dub Hill.....Russia
Don Iverson.....India
Randy Judd.....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
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Home for the Holidays

Raymond Elliott

As I look to my left and across the street, I see the lights in my neighbor's front yard. He has really worked hard this year to put up the 'Christmas lights' and decorations. It is the same as you drive through our small community and our entire city. It is indeed a festive time of the year. In fact, I really like this season of the year. Why? Because it is when most families can be together. The young father across the street is especially happy this year because his wife gave birth recently to a baby boy. Now the older son will have someone to play with – in time. I have so many fond memories when our four children were all at home during this season of the year. There were occasions when the older boys and I would go to some friend's farm and cut a 'Christmas tree.' Virginia and I would really enjoy seeing the children opening presents on Christmas morning. Virginia would have a delicious meal prepared, which would be consumed by our very hungry group. Those were precious years when the children were young and were at home. How fortunate you are if you have sweet memories of family gatherings.

Now, we look forward to the children returning home with their families. It is something else when our tribe assembles in one place. It seems that we 'wear the house' because the space is so restricted. What a wonderful sight to see grandchildren opening presents on Christmas morning. What a mess to clean up! How much food is required for so many hungry mouths waiting to consume grandmother's delicious meats, vegetables, salads, pies and cakes? Well, it doesn't matter. Her love reveals itself in the joy she experiences when she cooks for those who are so close to her heart. After all, what are grandmothers for? We want our grandchildren to have pleasant memories of Papa and Ma's home during the holidays.

The Christmas – New Year holidays provide a break from the everyday and sometime mundane affairs. People tend to be kinder and friendlier. Friends get together and enjoy festive occasions. Parents attend seasonal musical programs at school. Old friends are remembered as well as new friends with Christmas cards. Certainly, everyone needs a new tie and/or underwear to wear. Ah, life is good. So enjoy this festive time of the year with your friends and loved ones. Yes, remember those family members who have gone before, but don't permit those memories to rob you of the blessedness and happiness of the present.

A New Year's wish for you: "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers" (3 John 2).

All Scripture Is God-Breathed

Robert Johnson

An article in a local newspaper took a look at the history of the Bible. While much of the article had good information about the process God has used to give us His Word, there was an interesting statement made regarding the apocryphal books, books not included in our canon of Scripture. “The Authorized Version of 1611 included the apocryphal books that most Protestants say are not part of the Biblical canon. The apocrypha was not removed until 1885.”

While this statement is basically true, in and of itself, without any further explanation, it may leave a false impression about the apocryphal books, especially with so much interest these days in what are typically called the “lost books” of the Bible. Some more information is helpful in understanding why usually only Catholic editions of the Bible include some apocryphal works.

The evidence is clear that the apocryphal works were never accepted by the Jews as inspired. They were written between the 2nd century B.C. and the 1st century A.D. The time after Malachi is sometimes called the “four hundred silent years,” as it is acknowledged there was no prophetic word from God during this time. In addition, the works contained in the apocrypha never claimed direct inspiration from God. In fact, there is a great deal of historical, geographical and doctrinal error to be found in them! They have never been part of the Hebrew Scriptures, nor were they ever quoted by Jesus or the apostles.

The Catholic Council of Trent affirmed some of the apocryphal books as canonical in A.D. 1546, and condemned those who would reject them. This all occurred during the days of Martin Luther and the Protestant Reformation. During this time, Luther condemned many practices of the Catholic Church as being without biblical authority (such as prayer for the dead). It was convenient that some of these practices could be found in apocryphal works. It is also interesting that the Council of Trent pronounced that the Scriptures are and mean what the Catholic Church says they mean.

Catholicism calls the apocrypha “deuterocanonical,” or second canon. They acknowledge these books were not originally a part of the canon, but were accepted later. The evidence is clear that only the 66 books in our Bible are those that are inspired, that possess the marks of inspiration. No individual, or church council, has the right to add later to the canon of Scripture given by God. There is only one canon of inspired books, which we have in the 66 books of our Bible.

The apocrypha had been placed in English Bibles since the translation of Coverdale (1535). It was placed between the Old and New Testaments, not in the Old Testament, which reveals it was not held with the same regard as the Old and New Testament Scriptures. As early as 1629, an edition of the KJV was published without the apocrypha, even though its omission did not become general until the 19th century.

When all of the evidence is examined, we understand why the apocrypha is excluded from the Bible. It is not the Word of God. We can have confidence in the Bible we have, in what it tells us of God and Christ, of salvation, of life today and eternally. May we not only trust it, but also live by it each day. “So we have the prophetic word made more sure, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts” (2 Peter 1:19).

SFA FAMILY MATTERS

Prayer List

Our Members: Joyce Burbage, Hannah Hendrix, Duane Nelson, Sam Bolding, Ann Howard, JoAnn Hoback, Jacquelin Dopwell, Margaret Coone & Sharon Washington.

Relatives: Lois Stewart, Danny Stephens, Dorothy Trice, Lewis Tillis, Darnell Kirkland & Annie Beth Coone.

Shut In Members: Artis Bassett, Virginia Plumlee.

Others: Timothy Teel, Allison Bridgemohan, Ann Caldwell, Michael Ray, Christina Fuessner, Steve Roberts, Bonnie Hendricks, Kathy Peel, & Danny Edmonds.

Upcoming Events

Jan. 4th - The Ladies Brunch will be at the Central Church of Christ in Winter Haven at 9:00 am.

Jan 5th - "Fellowship in Service" after our evening worship service. Bring finger foods to share in the fellowship.

Jan. 18th - The Mens Breakfast will be at the Orange St. Church of Christ in Auburndale at 8:00 am.

Jan. 20th -23rd, 2014: FSOP 39th Annual Lectureship.

Visitors

Nellie Anderson, Kristen Barfield & son. Ronald Cox, Britni Ettel, Lystra Ortiz, Sean Slaton.

Sympathy

Maurice Davis, long time minister of the Sixth Street Church of Christ & teacher at the Fla. School of Preaching passed away December 17th. The wake will take place December 27th from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Sixth Street Church of Christ. Funeral services will be December 28th at 11:00 a.m. at the church.

Thank You Note

Dear Friends at So. Fla. Ave. Church of Christ,

We wish to thank you for your contribution to the Ronald McDonald House. Your donation of needed items is greatly appreciated. Because of friends like you, Ronald McDonald House is much more than a house; it's truly a home. Thank you again for making a difference in the lives of pediatric families.

Maggie Somerville, Tampa Program Assistant
Ronald McDonald House Charities

SCHEDULED TO SERVE

December

Fred Rapley Table Frank Hamby
Bobby Simpson..... Assist..... Bob Pratt

January

Jeremy Padilla Table Kyle Williams
Fred Strickland..... Assist..... Ken Walker

December 29, 2013

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class David Williams
Prayer..... Josh Estridge

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Fred Strickland
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Chuck Wyatt
Closing Prayer Bobby Sheumaker

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Dave Williams
Opening Prayer Tucker Sweeney
Closing Prayer Antonio Martin
Greeters Frank & Ginny Hamby
Att. Cards..... Sebastian Rapley & Quadarius Askew
Open & Close Building..... Robert Cooper

Wed. January 1, 2014

Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer Frank Hamby
Closing Prayer David Anderson

Please meet in the library. If you cannot serve, please call Jason Hendrix, so he can get a replacement - 537-0857

Sunday, January 5, 2014

9:30 A.M.

Song at Bible Class Brian Kenyon
Prayer..... Stacey Paulin

10:30 A.M.

Announcements..... Frank Hamby
Song Leader Jason Hendrix
Opening Prayer David Anderson
Closing Prayer Tyler Anderson

6:00 P.M.

Song Leader Jim Turner
Opening Prayer Jason Hendrix
Closing Prayer Phil Fife
Greeters Kenny & Reba French
Att. Cards..... Quadarius Askew & Paul Sweeney
Open & Close Building..... Ken Walker

Wed. January 8, 2014

Song Leader Ken Walker
Opening Prayer Jeff Bingle
Closing Prayer Jason Hendrix

~ HOW WE ARE GIVING ~

Dec. 01 \$4,189.67
Dec. 08 \$5,483.02
Dec. 15 \$5,665.95
Dec. 22 \$4,915.23
Contribution Average \$4,196.06
2013 Weekly Budget \$4,255.13
Our Budget Deficit (\$2,983.35)

HEAR OUR RADIO SPOTS



This Week's Message

"Our Giving"

1230 or 1430 on radio dial or web page

www.southfloridaavenuechurchofchrist.com