



Here & Now

Vol. 4

An update for Florida Baptist Historical Society Board of Directors and friends

No. 1

January 2012



Directors

Curtis Clark
Chairman
Tallahassee

Elaine Coats
Fernandina Beach

Clysta De Armas
Port Charlotte

David Hecht
Hollywood

Judith Jolly
Dade City

Thomas Kinchen
Graceville

Dori Nelson
Miami

Paul Robinson
Pensacola

John Sullivan
Jacksonville

Jerry Windsor
Sec. Treas.



Penny

Baumgardner
Secretary

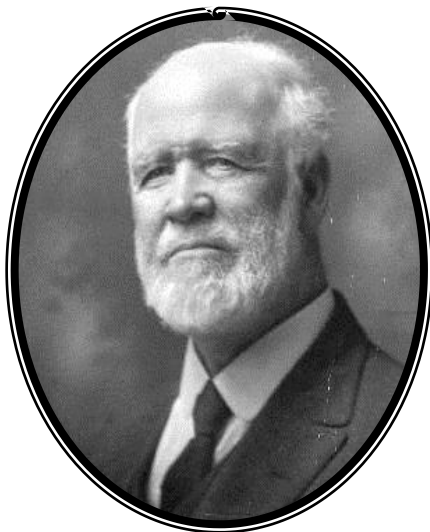
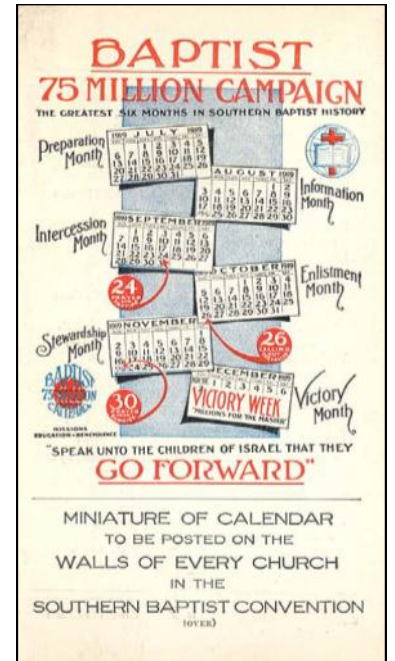
Dear Board Members and Friends of the Florida Baptist Historical Society,

Historically there is one question that comes often to the forefront. What year was the best year ever for Florida Baptists? There are at least ten different years that could be mentioned but may I make a suggestion. How about 1919?

In 1880 the Florida Baptist Convention State Board of Missions was begun and W. N. Chaudoin was the first corresponding secretary. The 1880 total income was \$150.00. Twenty years later in 1900, the total gifts were \$55,029.00. A challenge was needed on the SBC and state convention level to challenge Florida Baptists in new thinking and new action.

James Bruton Gambrell was president of the Southern Baptist Convention in 1919 and challenged the convention to "adopt a program" that would enhance the work of all convention agencies. M. E. Dodd preached, Lee Rutland Scarborough made the motion and the 75 Million Campaign was born. Each state was given a goal and Florida was asked to raise one million dollars.

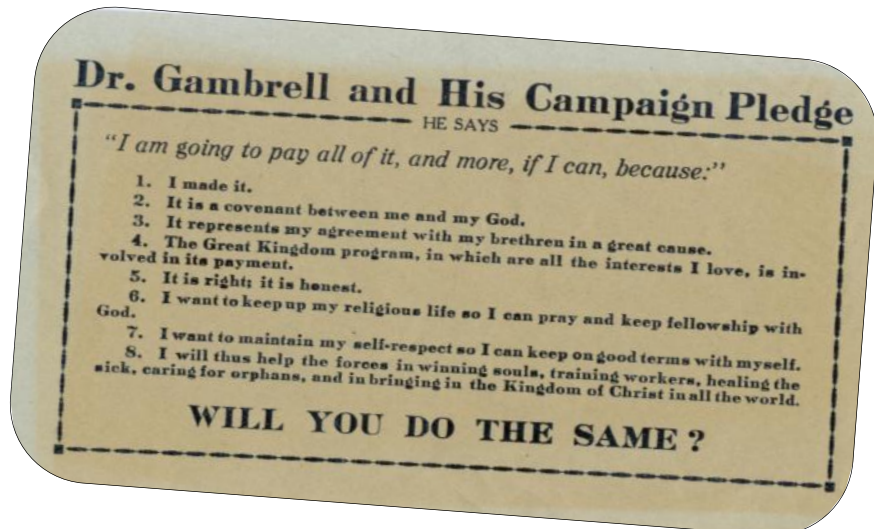
The 75 Million Campaign was to last from 1919-1924, but the pledging of the 75 million dollars was to be done in 180 days. July was Preparation Month. August was Information Month. September was Intercession Month. October was Enlistment Month. November was Stewardship Month and December was Victory Month. Some have said that those were the greatest six months in Southern Baptist history. It produced new leadership, unity, needed funds, mission vision and the birth of the Cooperative Program.



James Bruton Gambrell

The Florida State leadership was composed of W. M. Hobson, S. B. Rogers, Frank Purser, C. L. Collins, Mrs. S. B. Rogers, Mrs. H. C. Peelman, M. A. Clonts, W. L. Shaddix, W. W. Willian, J. W. Mitchell, and O. B. Falls. Falls was the father of Helen Falls who later taught missions at New Orleans Seminary until her retirement and she now lives in Richmond, Virginia.

In 1919 there were 550 Southern Baptist preachers in Florida and 700 Southern Baptist churches. There were 65,000 Florida Baptists and it was determined that if every Florida Baptist would give a penny a day for five years (1919-1924) the amount of \$1,166,250.00 would be raised.



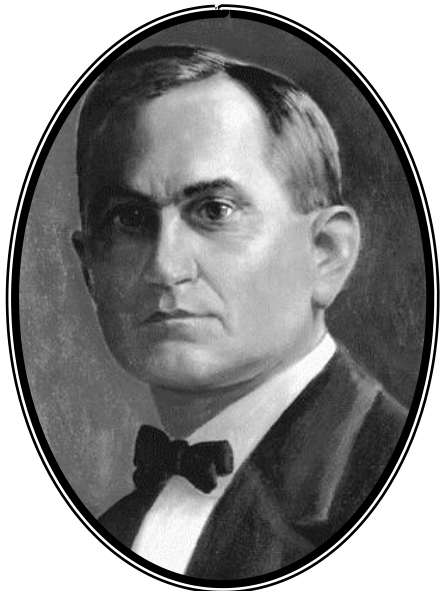
On Sunday, November 30, 1919, in four hours, Florida Baptists pledged over one million dollars as their part of the 75 Million Campaign. The Southern Baptist Convention pledged \$92,630,923.00 and there were shouts of joy all across the land. Due to serious economic downturn and other problems Southern Baptists gave only 58 million of the 92 million dollar pledge, but Florida Baptists exceeded their one million dollar goal by giving \$1,300,000.00.

How was it done? Vision, leadership, prayer, planning and hard work won the victory. Every county in Florida had a goal. Every church had a goal. There was house to house canvassing and transparency and accountability was reported weekly in the Florida Baptist Witness. Baptists worked together and in unity made 1919 one of the best years ever in the history of the Florida Baptist Convention. Is it time for another beyond tithes and offerings goal? Are there mission, evangelism, education and social needs that call for another state capital campaign among Baptists? There are one million Florida Baptists and a million pennies a day for five years might make a difference.

Honoring those who honor Christ,



Jerry M. Windsor
Secretary-Treasurer
Matthew 6:33



S. B. Rogers

