



Here & Now

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

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FLORIDA BAPTIST
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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

The Southern Baptist Convention recently met in Columbus, Ohio, and it stirred my thoughts as to some SBC meetings that have directly affected the Florida Baptist State Convention.

Jerry Mae and I have attended a number of Southern Baptist Convention meetings (New Orleans, St. Louis, Los Angeles, Dallas, Miami). The 1975 SBC meetings were of special interest to me. What a lineup! There was Baker James Cauthen, Russell Dilday, James Pleitz, Carl Bates, Helen Falls, W. A. Criswell, John Claypool and R. G. Lee. Various speakers spoke to various groups that year but a highlight was when Jerry Clower spoke. Clower discussed numerous topics but in that charged atmosphere declared he had a cure for racism. Clower said God could use a "zap" machine. If you discriminated against blacks, God could "zap" you black. If you discriminated against whites, God could "zap" you white. I still miss Jerry Clower.



Jerry Clower

There have been twelve Southern Baptist Convention gatherings in Florida. The first was in 1911 at Jacksonville. The last was in 2010 in Orlando. The convention met in Jacksonville (1911, 1922), St. Petersburg (1932), Miami (1946, 1952, 1955), Miami Beach (1960, 1967, 1975) and Orlando (1994, 2000, 2010).



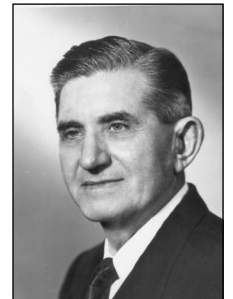
Mac Brunson

The first Southern Baptist Convention meeting was held in Augusta, Georgia in 1845, with 293 people registered. The lowest attendance was in Charleston in 1849, when 103 people registered.

We have had three Florida pastors to serve as president of the SBC. There was Jerry Vines (1989-1990), Jim Henry (1995-1996) and Bobby Welch (2005-2006).

We have had ten Florida pastors who preached the annual sermon. There was C. W. Duke (1917), Len Broughton (1925), J. L. White (1933), C. Roy Angell (1951), John H. Halderman (1965), James L. Monroe (1981), Jerry Vines (1987), Ken Whitten (2005), Mac Brunson (2010) and David Uth (2012).

When Jacob Lee White (1862-1948) preached the annual sermon in 1933, in Washington D. C., he had four minister sons sitting on the platform with him. White and Carl Bates (1914-1999) are probably the most renowned Florida pastors that have served the Southern Baptist Convention (Bates was pastor in North Carolina when he served as SBC president).



C. Roy Angell

In 2005, Florida Baptists were well represented when Bobby Welch was convention president and Ken Whitten preached the convention sermon. Mileage makes a difference for in 2011, the meeting was in Phoenix, Arizona, and only 4,852 messengers were in attendance. Controversy makes a bigger difference. In 1985, there were 45,519 messengers registered at Dallas. Those of us who were present at the Dallas meeting will always have tales to tell our grandchildren.

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Attendance at Florida SBC meetings has varied greatly. Jacksonville had 1,558 in 1911 and 4,272 in 1922. Saint Pete had only 2,178 registered in 1932 but Miami had 10,960 in 1952. The largest number of messengers attending a Florida Southern Baptist Convention was when 20,370 went to Orlando in 1994.

John Halderman (1915-1990) was an interesting Florida connection to the Southern Baptist Convention. Halderman was a native of Texas and served as pastor of Allapattah Baptist Church in Miami from 1945-1965. In 1955 he baptized 376 at Allapattah and the church eventually had the largest Sunday School in the state. He preached the convention sermon in Dallas in 1965, and the *Florida Baptist Witness* ran the sermon manuscript for Floridians to read. Halderman had a collection of rare Bibles and donated 230 of them to Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.



J. L. White



Lewis Drummond

Two men who served as pastors of Jerry Mae and me had SBC connections. J. D. Grey was SBC president in 1952-1953, and Lewis Drummond preached the convention sermon in 1992. Grey was our pastor when we were seminary students in New Orleans and Drummond was our college pastor when we were students at Howard College in Birmingham.

I never attended a Southern Baptist Convention meeting that I didn't enjoy. Its homecoming, worship, reports and inspiration all rolled into one. Make sure your church budget includes money for your pastor and wife to attend the annual Southern Baptist Convention meeting. They will be better for it and you will too.

Honoring those who honor Christ,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerry M. Windsor".

Jerry M. Windsor
Secretary-Treasurer
Matthew 6:33
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