

Baptists In North Miami 'Grow With Community'

No. 225 In a Series

By JOSEPH FAUS

Rev. O. C. Rainwater, pastor of First Baptist Church of North Miami, NE 129th St. and 8th Ave., discussed the familiar phrase, "the day after."

"Ordinarily," he said, "the day after a scheduled event lacks the joy of anticipation of the day before and the thrill of the day itself. The day after Christmas should be different!"

"It was different to the shepherds that Luke tells about—the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen." The day after they had knelt in adoration before the baby Jesus, they were back at their usual task of sheep watching but with an unusual exultation in their souls and radiance on their faces.

"The day after" for them meant no let-down feeling, no day of exhaustion. Something wonderful happened Christmas Day. They were excitedly telling others about it on "the day after!"

Organized In 1926

It was many days after Christmas in 1926 that the First Baptist Church of North Miami was organized, but on May 31, 1926, and through the years its membership has never ceased to feel exultant about the birth of Christ the Saviour and has continually passed the marvelous story on to others.

This suburban church was organized by a small group who lived in the then sparsely settled northside community, formerly called Arch Creek. Members met in the old Potts building on West Dixie Highway at about N. 127th St. **Rev. J. E. Johnstone** was the first pastor.

In the hurricane of Sept. 18 of that year the meeting house was damaged; and the congregation then assembled in the homes of various members.

The Woman's Missionary Union was especially eager to have a permanent home for the church. With the help of J. V. Shellhorse, it made the first payment and other payments on a sturdy building on West Dixie Highway and NE 126th St. This was remodeled and furniture installed for sanctuary and class rooms.

Membership Gains

The church, seeking assiduously to follow the pattern of life as set by Him born on Dec. 25th, continued to grow. In 1936 **Rev. Reginald Johnson** became the second pastor. During his stay of 10 years the membership increased from 56 to 228 and the church property was made free of debt. **Rev. Fred Lowrey**, coming in



REV. O. C. RAINWATER

early 1947, was the third spiritual leader of this flock. In 1947 **Arthur M. Griffing**, beloved pioneer of this area, donated as site for a pastorium two lots at 690 NE 123rd St., and that same year construction began on the residence.

In 1948 **Rev. Clarence W. MacDonald** was called as the fourth pastor. During his tenure of two years the pastorium was completed, a site at NE 129th St. and 8th Ave. was bought for a new church home; and on this spacious location a magnificent church plant was erected. It was first occupied on Easter Sunday, 1948.

This CBS structure has an auditorium with accommodations for 450 worshippers, also 12 classrooms, pastor's study, office, church library, rest rooms, etc.

The 5th pastor of First Baptist Church of North Miami was **Rev. H. L. Fisher**, who led the congregation for two years. After this came **Dr. George Apel, Jr.**, who served a short time.

Pastor Here Year

On Dec. 11, 1952, **Rev. Mr. Rainwater**, the 7th and present pastor, was called to this pulpit.

Rev. Mr. Rainwater, a native of Ala., attended Union University, Jackson, Tenn., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky. With noteworthy success he served six Baptist churches in Tenn. and Ky. before coming to the local congregation. Sunday, Dec. 13, marked **Rev. Rainwater's** first anniversary with the North Miami church.

On "the day after" "the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen."

So with this church: in humble and happy spirit of gratitude for the birth and life of Christ, and inspired by the devout leadership of Brother **Rainwater**, it has made steady progress this past year.

Attendance at worship services and Sunday school has greatly increased. A fine spirit of cooperation is manifest among

members. With eye to future expansion, the congregation recently purchased adjacent lots, and now owns half a block of land, 300 by 300 feet.

Today the First Baptist Church of North Miami has a membership of 522, a Sunday school enrollment of 787, and a total property valuation of \$118,000.

Church Directory

The church directory includes **H. L. Wagoner**, superintendent of Sunday school; **A. Sanders**, director of Training Union; **Mrs. L. I. Fleming**, president of Woman's Missionary Union; **Mrs. H. L. Wagoner**, church secretary; **W. Stewart**, church clerk; **J. B. Burman**, church treasurer; **H. R. Carter**, chairman of deacons; **L. Magness**, director of music; **Mrs. Carl Jackson**, organist.

"As we take down the Christmas tree today," said **Rev. Rainwater**, "and pack away the decorations, we need to maintain the Christmas experience, the Christmas glow. We can make all the 'days after' warm with Christmas emotions of wonder, joy and love. Christmas means being conscious of the spirit of Christ and practicing His love. We can have Christmas every day!"

Mrs. Glen Cass Heart Victim

Mrs. Glen B. Cass, 57, head of the Miami Public Library's circulation department and wife of **Allan L. Cass**, of the Miami Beach News Bureau, died yesterday in Jackson Memorial Hospital.

Victim of a heart ailment, Mrs. Cass had been a patient in the hospital a week.

She was a native of Marinette, Wis., and moved to Miami in 1926 following her marriage in Albany, N. Y.

From 1926 to 1930, Mrs. Cass was librarian at Miami Senior High School. She was associated with the Miami Beach Public Library in the late 1930's and for the last 10 years had been on the staff of the Miami Library.

Her husband is a former news editor of The Miami Daily News. The couple lived at 6808 NW 6th Ave.

Surviving besides her husband are two daughters, **Mrs. Ann C. Millward**, and **Miss Joan B. Cass**, of Miami, and a sister, **Helen I. Brewer**, of V. ville, N.Y.

Funeral services will p.m. Monday in Philbri

Baptists Call Pastor; Youth Minister Named

First Baptist of North Miami has called a new pastor and Miami Springs Methodist has appointed a new minister of youth activities.

The **Rev. O. C. Rainwater**, Harriman, Tenn., will fill the pulpit at First Baptist of North Miami Dec. 14. A native of Alabama, he was graduated from Union University and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Ky.

Rev. Rainwater is a trustee of Cumberland University and a member of the state board of missions in Kentucky. He is married and has two sons.

Miami Springs Methodist has appointed the **Rev. Myron W. Hill** to head its youth activities. He has been a pastor in Tallahassee and Sarasota before coming here.



REV. O. C. RAINWATER

Bible Revision

New Pastor Due

The **Rev. O. C. Rainwater** of Harriman, Tenn., has accepted the pastorate of First Baptist of North Miami. He will begin his work here Dec. 1.

Find a Grave https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/152147303/oliver_clinton-rainwater

Rev Oliver Clinton "O.C." Rainwater

Birth 2 Jul 1904 Alabama, USA

Death May 1978 (aged 73) Loudon, Loudon County, Tennessee, USA

Burial Lenoir City Cemetery Lenoir City, Loudon County, Tennessee, USA

Father of: John Clinton Rainwater & Earle Rainwater

Former Pastor of: First Baptist Church Sterns, KY

Trenton Street Baptist Church, Harriman, TN

Loudon First Baptist Church, TN

Family Members

Parents

Miles "Bud" Rainwater

1857–1911

Sarah Frances "Fannie" Allen Rainwater

1863–1943

Spouse

Margaret McGee Rainwater

1911–2006 (m. 1935)

Children

John Clinton Rainwater

1940–2005