

Revival Begins

Central Baptist Church of Ft. Lauderdale will conduct a week-long revival beginning Sunday.

Located at 1012 SW Second St., Ft. Lauderdale, the church will have Earl Smith as a special guest. Smith will be featured in special music selections and will conduct the 50-voice church choir.

He is a professor of music at the Baptist Bible College in Springfield, Mo.

The Rev. Bernie Rodgers, pastor of the congregation for six years, will be evangelist for the revival. He has conducted seven crusades in the last year, but this is the first one he has conducted in a church he has pastored.

In the last two years the church has enlarged its facilities with a new sanctuary seating over 500 and is presently constructing a two-story educational building with expansion of the sanctuary to seat 1,000 scheduled for the near future.

Rev. Rodgers is pastor of the Central Baptist Church, Fort Lauderdale, and is a graduate of the Baptist Bible College.



Rodgers Returns, Central Baptist Revives

Judging by the history of Central Baptist Church, the **Rev. Bernie E. Rodgers** isn't just an ordinary Sunday preacher.

When **Rev. Rodgers** became the church pastor in 1961, its membership was about 250. When he left in 1970 to accept a pulpit in Detroit, it was up to 1,200.

Last December, an urgent call came from the Fort Lauderdale church. In his absence, internal problems had eroded membership to about 900 and had left debts and unpaid bills totaling \$70,000.

Today, just three months after **Rodgers** responded to a call to return, the church has cleared all debts, its membership has

climbed back to about 1,000, and a building renovation project has been undertaken.

In purely statistical terms the change has been remarkable. But there is more to it than that. **Rev. Rodgers** is an adherent of the basic philosophy of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International — a denomination which has seven of the top 10 Sunday schools in the United States.

"We are the direct result of the creation of man by God," **Rev. Rodgers** explains. "Because of Adam's sin, we are all born into sin. We are therefore a fallen race. Christ gives us the means to get out of the fallen family and be adopted into the family

of God. And once we are in the family of God, we should be committed to reach everyone else and draw them into the holy family with us. Those who remain in the fallen Adamic family are headed for hell. The only important thing in life is to prepare people for eternity in heaven."

With this theology in mind, **Rev. Rodgers** prepares most of his pulpit messages with an evangelistic theme. "I try weekly to sell the truth that Christ is in people and wants to grow out of them. We are to let God's love flow through us as channels to the world. We are to let Him use our lives as He sees fit."

Lay witnessing is at the heart of the Central Baptist program of outreach for Christ. About 50 members of the church take part in weekly Thursday visitations. And there are about 30 young people in a 'soul winners' class under the direction of Len Curtis, a young man preparing for the ministry.

"It is wonderful to me to see young people willing to make a stand for Christ," Curtis says.

Rev. Rodgers estimates about 20 per cent of the congregation from high school age up participates in the evangelism program of the church.

BAPTIST

CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH
2980 N. Wickham Rd., Melbourne
Pastor: Bernie Rodgers

Sunday School	10:00 am
Morning Worship	11:00 am
Evening Worship	6:30 pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting	7:30 pm

Nursery Provided for all services.
Interpretation for the Deaf
254-8802