

## History

First Baptist Winter Haven started in a schoolhouse in the summer of 1885. Mrs. S.A. Crosier, a member of Thirty-Third Street Baptist Church, New York City, living in Winter Haven, raised funds from her home church in New York to begin a Baptist work in Florida.

On November 22, 1885, the First (Missionary) Baptist Church of Winter Haven was organized with five charter members: Mrs. Eliza J. Pierpont, Walter J. Robinson, Mrs. Annie Robinson, P.S. Crosier and Mrs. S.A. Crosier. The Rev. P.S. Crosier was the church's first pastor. In 1886 the church was received into the South Florida Baptist Association. The first church was erected at the site of Third Street and Central Avenue S.W. for the sum of \$700.

The year 1916 saw the church relocate to the present site of Second Street and Central Avenue, building a new sanctuary. In 1918 the church called Dr. J. Harrison Griffin as pastor. He served 20 years as pastor of First Baptist Church.

In 1948, Dr. James P. Rodgers was called as pastor of First Baptist Church. During his pastorate, the church voted to build the "Griffin Educational Building" and the Lake Shipp mission was started. On January 1, 1956, Lake Shipp Chapel was organized into Lake Shipp Baptist Church.

In September 1961, First Baptist Church broke ground for a new S.E. Chapel, and in February 1962 this chapel was constituted into the Parkland Baptist Church. In 1963 the church voted to build a new sanctuary located at the corner of Second and Central Avenue. Groundbreaking for this building was July 14, 1963. This is the present sanctuary.

First Baptist is still a vibrant and growing congregation. There are ministries for all ages. From children's musicals to trips and programs for senior adults, First Baptist Church strives to be a lighthouse for the city of Winter Haven and the surrounding communities. To God be the glory; great things he has done and continues to do through the people of First Baptist Church Winter Haven, Florida.

*History*  
**1885 - 1985**

*First Baptist Church*  
*Winter Haven*

**PASTORS OF FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH**

Rev. P. S. Crosier .....	1885-1892; 1895-1896
Rev. G. W. Robie .....	1893
Rev. O. J. Frior .....	1894-1897
Rev. M. Sloan .....	
Rev. J. H. Tharp .....	1902
Rev. Thompson .....	1903
Rev. Beck .....	1904
Rev. E. E. Sanford .....	1905-1908
Rev. S. G. Mullins .....	1909
Rev. S. R. Shimer .....	1910
Rev. W. G. Law .....	1911-1915
Rev. F. J. Griffin .....	1916-1917
Rev. R. N. McNemer .....	1917-1918
Dr. J. Harrison Griffin .....	1918-1938
Dr. Arthur Stovall .....	1938-1947
Dr. James P. Rodgers .....	1948-1954
Dr. Robert E. Carnell .....	1954-1970
Rev. Jacob Gamble .....	1970-1984



## YOUNG PASTOR



The **Rev. James P. Rodgers** pastor of the Northwood Baptist church, who leads an energetic congregation which this week will launch a new phase of the church building program. The church is located at Broadway and Thirty-ninth street.

The **Rev. James P. Rodgers**, pastor of the Petworth Baptist Church of Washington, D. C., will preach at Palm Avenue Church, twice daily. A native of Florida, Mr. **Rodgers** was graduated from Stetson University and received his theological training at Southern Baptist Seminary at Louisville. He has been serving at Washington for the last five years, and is chairman of Evangelism, as well as being head of the Education Committee for the District of Columbia Baptist Convention, and a member of the board of trustees for the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary at Fort Worth, Tex.

**THE REV. JAMES P. RODGERS,**

who Sunday announced his resignation as pastor of the Northwood Baptist Church to accept the pastorate of the Norwood Baptist Church of Birmingham, Ala. His resignation becomes effective June 18.

# RODGERS ACCEPTS NEW PASTORATE

## Resigns As Pastor Of Northwood Baptist Church Sunday

The **Rev. James P. Rodgers,** Sunday announced his resignation as pastor of the Northwood Baptist Church to accept the pastorate of the Norwood Baptist Church of Birmingham, Ala., the resignation to become effective June 18.

His resignation leaves both Baptist churches of the city without pastors, Dr. C. H. Bolton having resigned as pastor of the First Baptist Church to accept an appointment with the Relief and Annuity Board of the Southern Baptist Convention.

### Here Six Years

Mr. **Rodgers** is leaving Northwood Church after a successful pastorate, coming here six years ago when the church membership was less than 100 and at present the roll numbers 517. He has seen the church property grow from a small auditorium to a large edifice with complete church school facilities. The Sunday School attendance has grown from less than 100 to an average of 325 each Sunday.

The Northwood Church six years ago was valued at about \$2,500 and was heavily in debt and today is valued at \$25,000, with a small indebtedness.

Mr. **Rodgers** is a graduate of Stetson University, class of 1930 and attended Southern Baptist Theological Seminary at Louisville, Ky. He was field secretary for two years for Stetson University, then accepted the pastorate of the Pahokee Baptist Church which he held for two and one half years before accepting a call to the Northwood Church.

He is moderator of the newly organized Palm-Lake Baptist Association and is secretary of the Ministerial Association of the Palm Beaches.

### Born In Miami

He is the son of the late Jesse S. **Rodgers** and Mrs. **Rodgers**, of Miami, and was born in Miami where he was active in church and young peoples work before attending college.

With his wife and two children, Jimmy, Jr., and Nell, Mr. **Rodgers** will leave for Birmingham shortly after June 18, taking over his new work July 1.

## REVIVALISTS



Rev. James P. Rodgers



# Three Baptist Revival Rites Begin Sunday

Revival meetings will open in three Baptist Churches here tomorrow, with out-of-town preachers having prominent parts in the campaigns.

Ortega Church, Algonquin Avenue and Longfellow Street, will have services nightly at 7:45 from tomorrow through April 19, and will also have services for boys and girls from 3:30 to 4 p.m. daily.

The Rev. James P. Rodgers, pastor of First Baptist Church of Winter Haven, will be the guest speaker and W. G. Stroup, head of the music department for the Florida Baptist Convention, will lead the choir and congregational singing.

Rev. Mr. Rodgers was pastor of Petworth Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., before going to Winter Haven. He is a native of Miami and prior to his Washington service was pastor of the Northwood Church in West Palm Beach.

## **Rev. James P. Rodgers** **Accepts Valdosta Call**

WINTER HAVEN, Nov. 3—The **Rev. James P. Rodgers**, pastor of First Baptist Church here since August, 1948, has announced his resignation to accept a call to the pastorate of the First Baptist Church of Valdosta, Ga.

The resignation, which came as a surprise to the 1,300-member congregation, becomes effective Dec. 15 but the minister will preach his farewell sermon at the Sunday, Nov. 29, services.

### **NELL CELIA RODGERS**

A daughter was born to the **Rev. James P. Rodgers** and Mrs. **Rodgers**, of 515 Thirty-ninth street, at the Good Samaritan hospital Monday morning at 2 o'clock. The baby, their second child, will be named **Nell Celia Rodgers**.

## New Pastor to Preach First Sermon Next Week

The Rev. James P. Rodgers, former field secretary for Stetson University and for the last two and a half years, pastor of the First Baptist church of Pahokee, has accepted the call of the Northwood Baptist church of this city.

Mr. Rodgers and Mrs. Rodgers arrived in the city during the week and will make their home at 527 Thirty-ninth street. He will preach his first sermon as pastor at the morning service, April 9.

Mr. Rodgers, a graduate from Stetson University, also received his theological training there. His former home is Miami.

A young pastor, Mr. Rodgers said that he is especially interested in young people and that he would completely reorganize the young people's departments of the church to make them more attractive to the youth of the city.

Mrs. Rodgers is a trained worker in women's and young people's work of the church, as well as a talented musician.

The pastor will preach his last sermon as pastor of the Pahokee church at today's services and will make this city his home in the future.

## **REV. J. P. RODGERS** **IS REPORTED ILL**

Serious illness of the **Rev. James P. Rodgers**, Miamian who is studying at the Southern Baptist seminary, Louisville, Ky., from sleeping sickness was reported here today by his brother, Wilbur **P. Rodgers**, clerk of Dade county school board. **James**, a graduate of Miami High school, was pastor of Northwood Baptist church before going to the seminary.

Senior High, who has taught advanced studies program.



**REV. JAMES ROGERS**

## Graduation Speaker Named

From The News-Journal Bureau

**DELAND**—Rev. James P. Rodgers, who received his bachelor of science degree at Stetson in 1930 and whose son received his degree at Stetson in 1955, will be the Summer commencement speaker Friday, according to Dr. J. Ollie Edmunds, president of the university.

**Rev. Rodgers** is pastor of First Baptist Church, Valdosta, Ga. He previously had pastorates at Winter Haven, Washington, Birmingham and West Palm Beach. He is a graduate of Southern Baptist Seminary.

A member of the Georgia Baptist Education Committee, he has served as a member of the boards of trustees of the Southern and Southwestern Baptist Seminaries, member of Southern Baptist Evangelical Committee, president of Florida Baptist Assembly, vice president of Florida Baptist Convention, chairman of Florida Baptist Witness Commission, and moderator of Valdosta Baptist Assn.

At Stetson, **Rev. Rodgers** was business manager of the Glee Clubs for four years and arranged the first tour of churches in the state. He was business manager of Theta Alpha Phi, president of Delta Sigma Phi, university Summer field worker, member of Oxford Fellowship group and monitor of Conrad Hall.

## Influence Charge For Adams Again

**WASHINGTON (AP)**—Interstate Commerce Commissioners were accused yesterday of yielding to influence by Sherman Adams and others in refusing to investigate the takeover of the New York Central Railroad by Robert R. Young.

Stockholders trying to force an investigation also charged that friendship between Dr. Milton Eisenhower, Pres. Eisenhower's brother, and Young had an effect on the commission.

They said in a lawsuit filed in U.S. District Court here the friendship between Dr. Eisenhower and Young, a spectacular business operator who later committed suicide, was made known to the President and to members of the ICC or persons close to them.