

## Florida Baptist Historical Society Biography Collection

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The link you have chosen connects to the specific individual's resource files that provide the basis for information which the Historical Society has used to develop the respective biographical profile. The sources attached may include copies of articles gleaned from back issues of the *Florida Baptist Witness* and other news publications. Other resources include books, historical journal articles and church histories that are cited as documentation for the biography.

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**Sanders, William Ira (also Saunders)** served as pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Jacksonville



for 39 years until his death (1921-1959). He was born and raised in Florida. At the time of his death, he held the living record for the longest continual pastoral service in any Southern Baptist Church in Florida. He served as a Baptist minister for 51 years. He served as pastor of First Church West Palm Beach, Cocoa and Titusville. He also served as clerk of the Jacksonville Baptist Association from 1921-1959. Sanders was a graduate of Columbia College in Lake City (A.B. 1914), and attended Crozer University in Pennsylvania and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. He married Sallie Childs Harrison in 1920.

**WILLIAM IRA SANDERS, DEAN OF FLORIDA PASTORS  
& ASSN. CLERKS, DIES IN JACKSONVILLE**

William Ira Sanders, pastor of Grace Baptist Church, Jacksonville for 39 years and a Baptist minister 51 years, died on January 21 after a brief illness.

Funeral services were held in Jacksonville Church on January 23. Officiating was John Maguire, executive secretary of the Florida Baptist Convention, assisted by J. Stracener, editor of the Florida Baptist Witness; John Sanders, minister of music, South Jacksonville Church; Sydney L. Rees, deacon of Grace Church; E. D. McLaughlin, pastor of Paul Avenue Church; Joe J. Martin, pastor of Shore Church; and L. A. Sanders, retired minister, all of Jacksonville.

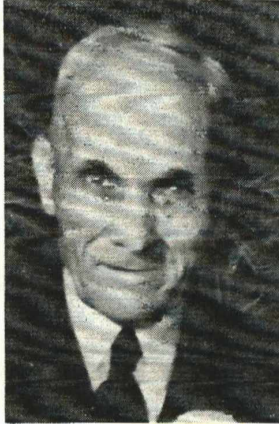
Deacons of Grace Church and active pallbearers and Baptist pastors of the area honorary members.

Additional services were held on January 24 in Medulla Church, Jacksonville, and with Frank Colburn officiating. Burial was in Fitzgerald cemetery.

Sanders was not only one of Jacksonville's oldest active pastors, but was one of the oldest in point of service. He held the state record for the longest continuous pastorate in a Baptist church. He had served as clerk of the Jacksonville Baptist Association continuously since 1921, another record.

A graduate of Crozer University, Pennsylvania and Southwestern University, Ft. Worth, Texas, Sanders was pastor of First Church, Jacksonville, before coming to Jacksonville.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Sallie Harrison Sanders, and six children and nieces and nephews.



William Ira Sanders

**S. Guy Elected Secretary of Hospital Board**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla.—(BP)—T. Sloane Guy, Jr., pastor, First Baptist Church, Birmingham, Ala., was elected to the position of executive secretary-treasurer of the Southern Baptist Hospital board. Election came at the annual meeting of the board held at Baptist Memorial Hospital here. Guy succeeds Dr. Frank Tripp who, for 12 years of service with the board as its executive officer, has announced his retirement effective June 1.

Guy was expected to announce his decision shortly.

A native of North Carolina, he was educated in the public schools of Lawrenceville and Lynchburg, Va., and graduated magna cum laude from Wake Forest College in North Carolina in 1939. He received his graduate training in theology at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Yale University.

Since completing his education he has held pastorates in First Baptist Church, Wilkesboro, N. C.; Westhampton Baptist Church, Richmond, Va., and First Baptist Church, Wadesboro, N. C.

He served one year as chaplain of Kentucky State Children's Home; had special training in North Carolina Baptist Hospital at Winston-Salem, N. C., in 1953 and 1954, and served as chaplain of two Baptist hospitals in Birmingham, 1954-56. He has been pastor of First Baptist Church, Birmingham, since 1956.

Guy is presently an Alabama representative on the Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention, a trustee of the Birmingham Baptist hospitals, and is trustee of the Birmingham Sunday School Association. He is a member of the executive committee of Birmingham Baptist Association of churches and a member of the Alabama Baptist State Convention's executive committee.

He is married to the former Anne Haynes of Greensboro, N. C. and has three children, Linda Evelyne, Thomas Sloane, III, and Christy Anne.

Guy is a certified professional hospital chaplain and has done considerable work in the field of hospital administration and management.

Although Tripp will not retire until June 1, the Hospital board has requested its new executive officer to assume his responsibilities March 1.

(Continued on page 16)

**Blind Chinese Student to Return to Hong Kong  
As Missionary Upon Completion of Studies in U. S.**

Miss Lucy Ching, Braille Evangel scholarship student, completes training this month at Southwestern Baptist Seminary, Fort Worth, and will join the host of Baptist men and women around the world witnessing for God's kingdom. Miss Ching offers this departing message: On February 10 my round trip to America comes to an end. Words are not adequate to express my personal thanks for the three years of Seminary training and the sincere kindness of many Baptist friends.

I shall miss your dear fellowship and the comfort of your American conveniences. But I must now go to answer my Lord's call to serve Him among His people in my homeland.

The special blessing of my visit in America is to have learned that I have a wonderful opportunity to be useful. I have learned that many blind people in America have regular work in professions and common trades. The common people in my country cannot read and write. I do not like to remember that my Chinese fellow-blind have no opportunity, because there are no educational facilities for them. It is comforting to know that the Lord has prepared me to serve in a special work for Him.

Although my sight was taken in infancy, God has provided a protecting watch-care over my life through the care of wonderful parents, through the loving interest of missionaries from America, and through the Braille Evangel scholarship for Seminary training.

Upon my return to Hong Kong as a missionary I want to emphasize that the thought that all true Christians are called to be missionaries. Some are called to serve in distant lands, and some are called to help others to go and tell Christ's message of salvation. There is much work to be done for opening a ministry to the blind in Hong Kong. This extension of the Braille Evangel ministry will depend on your prayerful concern. As you look forward to reports from my work, my prayer is that the blessings of God's grace shall abide in all services offered in the name of Jesus.

Lucy Ching  
Box 6999  
Fort Worth 15, Texas



Miss Lucy Ching, reading the large Braille Bible open on the table before her.

## Rev. Sanders

# Honored By Jax Church

COCOA — Cocoa friends of the **Rev. Ira Sanders**, formerly pastor of the First Baptist Church, Cocoa, will be interested to know that he celebrated his 36th anniversary as pastor of the Grace Baptist Church, Jacksonville, last Sunday.

The church honored Pastor **Sanders** and his family on the occasion of his anniversary.

The **Rev. Mr. Sanders** was pastor of the Cocoa Church on two occasions. He accepted the Jacksonville pastorate in 1920, upon leaving Cocoa, and has continued in that work since. He is the dean of Jacksonville pastors, and it is believed his 36 year tenure is the longest of any Florida minister.

The Cocoa church sent greetings to the **Rev. Mr. Sanders** and his church on the occasion of his anniversary.

Mr. Porcher was called on business.  
—20 Years Ago—  
Rev. Ira Sanders, pastor of the First Baptist Church, had accepted a call to the Punta Gorda Baptist Church.

nesday.  
Rev. Ira Sanders, who has been attending Columbia College at Lake City, is here at his old home for a time and is temporarily assisting Editor Brittain in the office of the Florida Baptist Witness.  
The host of friends of Emmet Rob-

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**THE COCOA TRIBUNE**  
**WEDNESDAY, MAY 18, 1960**  
and ended his work in September 1915. For nine months the church was without a pastor until the Rev. W. Ira Sanders began his pastorate June 18, 1916. He left on October 22, 1916, to go to Punta Gorda Baptist Church.  
October 29, 1916, the Rev. J. C.

**BAPTIST CHURCH**

**Rev. W. Ira Sanders** will preach his final message to the members and congregation of the Cocoa Baptist Church Sunday evening, June 13th.

**Rev. Mr. Sanders** having resigned the pastorate of this church, has accepted a call to the First Baptist Church, Punta Gorda, Fla., and will begin work on his new field June 15th.

There will be a special service Sunday night, and the public is cordially invited to attend.

**NEW SMYRNA NEWS, FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1913.****Baptist Church—**

At the evening service in the Baptist church next Sunday evening **Rev. W. Ira Sanders**, who has been serving the church as pastor during the summer, will preach his farewell sermon to the congregation here.

**Rev. J. T. Jenner** of Palmetto has accepted the call to become pastor of the church and has arrived in the city to take up his work. **Rev. Mr. Sanders** will go back to Lake City to complete his course in Columbia college.

MISS HARRISON AND  
REV. SANDERS MARRIED.

At a six o'clock morning wedding, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Zeke Messer, Tuesday, August 10, 1920, Miss Sallie C. Harrison and Rev. Wm. Ira Sanders, of Punta Gorda, were united in marriage, Rev. A. J. Beck, pastor of the Baptist church, conducting the ceremony.

Only a few intimate friends of the bride were present: Mr. and Mrs. C. M. Howard and Miss Alice, Miss Willie Beck, Mrs. J. D. Jones and little Florence, Estelle and Lottie Mason and Effie Tucker.

Immediately after the ceremony the bride changed her pretty white wedding gown for her traveling dress of blue taffeta, and accompanied by the party, went to the train, leaving at 6:45 for a short honeymoon at different places in Florida.

Their home will be at Punta Gorda, where Rev. Sanders is the pastor of the Baptist church.

Miss Sallie has made her home with her sister, when in Sarasota, for a number of years. She was a valued Teacher in the Bradentown primary school, having held the position for seven years, and was dearly loved by her pupils. An earnest Christian worker, she will be a real help to her husband in his ministerial work.

That their path in life will be one of happiness is the wish of many friends.—Sarasota Times.

(Herald Bureau)

West Palm Beach, May 8.

Church, in this city.

Rev. W. Ira Sanders, the new pastor of the Baptist church in this city, preached at the morning service yes-

The Evening Tribune (Cocoa, Florida) 04 Feb 1959, Wed Page 5

## W. Ira Sanders, Former Baptist Pastor Here, Dies

The Rev. W. Ira Sanders, on two occasions pastor of the First Baptist Church, Cocoa, died in Jacksonville January 21, following a brief illness. His passing terminated a ministry of 39 years at the Grace Baptist Church Jacksonville, the church to which he went from Cocoa in 1920.

Mr. Sanders was not only one of Florida's oldest active pastors, but was one of the oldest in point of service. He held the state record for the longest continuous pastorate in a Baptist Church. He had also served as clerk of the Jacksonville Baptist Association since 1921. He was an active minister for 51 years.

Mr. Sanders began his first period of pastoral ministry with the Cocoa church in 1916 on a half-time basis. During his second period of leadership the church went to a full-time status, which has since been maintained.