

Florida Baptist Historical Society Biography Collection

This link provides the specific resource information which documents and undergirds the biographical resource information on a specific Florida Baptist pastors, church staff or significant laity leaders.

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.

Visit our website at FloridaBaptistHistory.org

Saunders, J. Harvey (1910-2004) was born in Danville, Virginia the son of James Wesley Saunders and Ollie Virginia Burton Baisey. He graduated from Guilford College, North Carolina and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Saunders served as pastor of churches in North Carolina, West Virginia and Florida including Palm Avenue Baptist Church, Tampa, First Baptist Church, Bartow, 1958-1967 and First Baptist Church, Brandon, 1967-1975. He married Enid Tiller Saunders (b.1907; d.1987) in 1930 and they had three children. Saunders was survived by his second wife, Sondra Murfee Saunders.

Roll Call of Pastors

FBC, Bartow
(South Florida)

1875-1975

- Elder J. M. Hayman - September 21, 1875 to May 5, 1883
- W. T. Gordon, May 5, 1883 - November 1883
- W. W. Bostic, February 10, 1884 - January 9, 1886
Concurrently with W. W. Bostic, in 1885, A. F. Randall preached 3rd & 4th Sabbaths each month,
J. M. Hayman preached each 1st Sunday, and Pastor Bostic preached each 2nd Sunday.
- W. B. Dye, January 9, 1886 - October, 1888
- J. K. Nunnally, March 3, 1889 - May, 1889, October 18, 1889 - May 25, 1890
- T. E. Tillery, October 1890 - Died December 25, 1890
- C. P. Martin, February 7, 1891 (Ordained March 28, 1891) April 19, 1891 (In ill health, he died in late 1891)
- C. H. Nash, October 1891 - October 1898
(225 added during Nash's pastorate - 115 for baptism)
- Bro. Masee, November 1898 - Supply
- M. A. Clonts, St. Petersburg, March 5, 1899 - Supply
- W. E. Bogart, December 3, 1899 - February 24, 1901
- J. A. Davis, February 24, 1901 - April 30, 1901
- J. E. Martin, May 15, 1901 - September 1, 1901 (Returned as pastor in 1923)
- S. G. Mullins - January 7, 1902 - September 1, 1905 To St. Petersburg
- George T. Leitner - November 8 - 1905 - 1910
- John T. Walters - June 1910
- R. E. Reed, April 1, 1912 - April 1 - 1923
- Dr. J. E. Martin, October 11, 1923 - July 1, 1947
- Dr. P. R. (Pat) Wimberly - July 1, 1947 - May 15, 1951
- Clarence H. Eiland, December 1, 1951 - December 8, 1957
- Dr. J. Harvey Saunders**, March 1, 1958 - August 31, 1967
- Dr. Charles F. Stanley, July 1, 1968 - September 30, 1969
- Dr. Norman S. Deaton, March 15, 1970 - to date
- Dr. W. E. Denham, Interim
- Dr. W. E. Denham, Interim
- O. Floyd Montgomery, Interim
- O. Floyd Montgomery, Interim



Clarence H. Eiland led the church from December 1, 1951 until December 8, 1957, developing a staff of workers somewhat like we have today. Under his leadership, Alturas Baptist Mission which was sponsored by our church, was organized into a church in 1954. Many of our young adults remember that Brother Eiland began and took a big part in the first annual sweetheart banquets, and otehr social and recreational events for the youth. The ground work and raising of money for a new educational building was done prior to his leaving in 1957. During these years several persons capably fulfilled the ministry of choir director: these included, Miss Beulah Tate, Roger Hickman and Martin Bridges. Harold Dann served for a time as educational director, beginning in March, 1954, and Coleman Bassett was assistant to the pastor. James W. Cotton was minister of music and education from April, 1957 through December, 1958. He set up the graded choirs program and led the music ministry to grow from an enrollment of about 40 to more than 175.

On March 1, 1958, **Dr. J. Harvey Saunders** began almost a decade of leadership as pastor. The children's educational building was completed in February of the next year. In August of 1959 he led the church to call Paul E. Puckett as minister of music and education. With this leadership team the church showed great growth in membership, Sunday School, Training Union, music ministry, missions auxiliaries, stewardship, and other areas. Average attendance in Sunday School increased from 506 in 1958 to 637 in 1963. The budget increased from \$70,832 in 1957 to \$140,000 in 1966. Almost every Easter Sunday was a "Great Day" with high attendance - 1960 - 876, 1962 - 960 - and large special offerings, usually for Debt Retirement or the Building Fund - 1960 - \$10,051, 1961 - \$11,378. From 1958 to 1966, our gifts through the Cooperative Program increased from \$5,400 to \$23,514, and total gifts to missions increased from \$12,385 to \$35,900. We have remained among the top 25 churches in Florida in gifts to missions in the years since.

In February, 1962, James O. Wade came as associate pastor with some responsibilities in the educational area, preaching each Sunday evening, and for a time conducting a youth prayer meeting on Wednesday nights. In August, 1964, Mr. Wade went to the pastorate of the Rockledge church. John C. Phillips came in November, 1965, to share the educational ministry with Mr. Puckett, becoming fully responsible for this in March, 1966, and serving until February, 1967.



First Baptist Church, Brandon, 100 years tribute

MINISTERS from 1915- 1976

Rev. Joe L. Hampton, 1915-1919

Rev. W. G. Doyle, 1919-1921

Rev. Riley Calvert, 1921-1924

Rev. Algie L. Fisher, 1924-1925

Rev. D. W. Waters Sr., March-Octo

Rev. W. S. Cornett Sr., April-Octob

Rev. P.C. Shilling, 1927-1928

Rev. J.A. Davis, 1928-1929

Rev. W.B. Davidson, 1929-1930

Rev. C.E. Rodgers, 1930-1935

Rev. W.L. Hambrick, 1935-1937

Dr. Willburn L. Head, 1937-1938

Rev. Perry Tomlinson, 1938-1939

Rev. L.M. Nelson, 1939-1940

Rev. Ison Beasley, 1940-1943

Rev. R. E. Miller, 1943-1945

Rev. A. L. Phillips, 1945-1946

Rev. W. E. Hicks, 1946-1950

Rev. Ted Jones, 1950-1953

Rev. S. S. Mathis, 1953-1954

Rev. Tom Broomall, 1954-1961

Rev. Tom Broomall, 1954-1961

Rev. C. E. Rodgers, 1961-1962

Rev. L. G. Meadows, 1962 – 1966

Rev. G. A. Leichliter, 1966-1967

Dr. Harvey Saunders, 1967 – 1975

Dr. M. J. Berquist, 1975-1976

Dr. Fred H. Boehmer, (First Sermon: February 15, 1976, He announced his retirement for March 31, 1995)

J. Thomas Green, III, Th.D., (First Sermon: April 7, 1996 – Last Sermon as Pastor June 7, 2015)

7:30 p. m.—“Dead Beggar.”
at **FLORIDA STREET**
Rev. J. Harvey Saunders, Pastor.
10:45 a. m.—“Our Besetting Sin.”
7:30 p. m.—“Where Are the Dead?”
REVOLUTION.

News and Record
Sun, Aug 20, 1944 · Page 9

2

you are a credit to the camp," which Voehringer is president.

Rev. J. Harvey Saunders Resigns Pastorate Here

Minister To Enter Seminary; His Successor To Take Charge Sept. 15

Rev. J. Harvey Saunders, for the past six years pastor of Florida Street Baptist church, has resigned, effective September 10, to go to Louisville, Ky., to take a post-graduate course in the Baptist seminary there, it was announced last night.

The congregation has called as pastor **Rev. James R. Thompson**, of Carlisle, Ky., who is expected to begin his pastorate September 15, holding first services the following Sunday.

Rev. Mr. Saunders, accompanied by Mrs. **Saunders** and their two children, James Gray, 11, and Ethel Virginia, three, will go to Louisville September 10, according to present plans, to make their home during the two years the minister will be engaged in study at the seminary. **Rev. Mr. Thompson** and wife will immediately thereafter occupy the parsonage of the Florida street church.

Coming to Greensboro in 1938 from Reidsville, **Rev. Mr. Saunders** has seen the Florida street church activities materially expanded, 471 members having been received into the church during the pastorate. Present membership is now 558. The Sunday school enrollment is 475.

During his pastorate the congregation has purchased a residence for the parsonage, erected a cottage at Ridgecrest for use of workers attending summer conferences and a hut for Boy Scout activities on the church property. In addition, land has been purchased adjoining the

church edifice for the erection of a modern educational building of three stories and \$15,000 of the building fund is already in hand. Preliminary plans for a \$35,000 structure have recently been completed, and it is the purpose to proceed with the building as soon as restrictions are removed from building materials.



REV. J. HARVEY SAUNDERS

The Tampa Tribune
Sat, Aug 01, 1953 · Page 8

ptist churches or 8 Missions

Oak **Park—Rev.** Charles Crofton
4903 10th Avenue

Orient **Park—Rev.** Babb Adams
Ohio St. & Orient Road

Palm Avenue—Rev. J. Harvey Saunders
1811 Florida Avenue

Palm **River—Rev. M. J.** Gowing

The Tampa Tribune
Sat, Aug 12, 1967 · Page 38

Announces Call To Bartow Pastor

The First Baptist Church, Brandon, announces the call of **Rev. J. Harvey Saunders,** pastor of the First Baptist Church, Bartow, as their new minister. He is expected to arrive in Brandon and assume his pastorate on September 1.

G. Oscar Lastinger, chairman of the pastoral committee, announced the acceptance of the church call by Dr. **Saunders.**

CHURCH, HE IS ALSO A CATTLE DEALER AND HOW
too long ago raised horses.
The **Rev. J. Harvey Saunders**, minister
of the First Baptist Church in Brandon,
talked enthusiastically about the young
Brandon attorney. He feels that "Russell
has done a lot of living and growing in his

Two Baptist Churches Call New Pastors

The **Rev. Dr. J. Harvey Saunders**, a Virginian, has accepted a call to Palm Avenue Baptist Church, and is entering on his pastoral duties this week.

Dr. **Saunders** comes to the long vacant Palm Avenue pastorate from the First Baptist Church, Kenova, W. Va. His other pulpits included Baptist churches in Reidsville and Greensboro, N. C.

During his two and one-half years' ministry at Kenova, the church erected a \$100,000 educational building; the budget was increased from \$25,000 to \$60,000; there were 234 additions to the church. He was moderator of the association, and a member of the board of trustees of Alderson-Broadus College.



Saunders

Dr. **Saunders** was born in Danville, Va., and attended local schools there. He received his B. D. from Guilford College, and his B. D. and Th. D. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

Mrs. **Saunders** is the former Enid Tiller of Richmond, Va. They have one son in college and two daughters, ages 12 and 6 at home.

Another pastoral change has

James Harvey Saunders

Birth 28 Aug 1910 Danville, City of Danville, Virginia, USA

Death 20 Dec 2004 (aged 94)

Burial Restland Memorial Park Dallas, Dallas County, Texas, USA

DR. JAMES HARVEY minister, servant, teacher, counselor and friend was called to his heavenly home on December 20, 2004.

Dr. Saunders was born on August 8, 1910 in Danville, VA. He was a graduate of Guilford College, Greensboro, NC, and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary where he earned a Bachelor of Divinity and Doctor of Theology Degrees. Dr. Saunders began his work as a pastor believing he was to "preach the word, feed and nurture the sheep and win the lost." He began his ministry when he was 22. He pastored at Mt. Olive Baptist Church in Reidsville, NC; Florida Street Baptist Church, Greensboro, NC; First Baptist Church, Kenova, WV; First Baptist Church, Bartow, FL, First Baptist Church Brandon, FL. He served in all capacities of ministry as a volunteer at Prestonwood Baptist Church

He was a happy servant of Jesus Christ from his conversion in 1930 until his death. Dr. Saunders is survived by his wife, Sondra Murfee Saunders; children, Dr. James Saunders and wife Judy of Tampa, FL, Ethel Churchwell and husband Rev. James Churchwell of Stuart, VA, Chrysti Melus and husband Antonio of Alexandria, VA; grandchildren, Derek Huckabee of Winchester, VA, Gavin Huckabee of Euless, TX, Julie Churchwell of Hurst, TX, Jennifer Davis and husband Rick of Grapevine, TX, grandson Mike and wife Peggy of Martinex, CA, Valerie Spence and husband Steve of Temecula, CA; great-grandchildren, Catherine, David, Wesley, William, Sabrina, and Rebecca Davis of Grapevine, TX and Jimmy Spence of Temecula, CA; sisters-in-law, Suzanne Bryom and husband Charles of Roswell, GA and Carole Blanchard of Orland, FL; niece, Kim Hakes and husband Vern; great niece, Caroline; great nephews, Rob and Will Hakes of Marietta, GA; plus a host of wonderful friends and the Prestonwood Baptist Church family.

Services will be held at 11:00 AM, Thursday, December 23, 2004 at Prestonwood Baptist Church, 6801 W Park Blvd, Plano, TX, with Dr. Jack Graham, Pastor of Prestonwood Baptist Church, officiating. Family will receive friends from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM, Wednesday, December 22, 2004 at Restland Funeral Home. Honorary pallbearers will be Gavin Huckabee, Rick Davis, Charles Byrom, Vern Hakes, Lewis Prince, J.D. Phillips, Don Conry, Charles Pendley, Connie Armstrong, Sam Wilson, Bill Borenstein and members of Dr. Saunders' Bible Study Class. In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to Living Faith, Prestonwood Baptist Church. Restland 972-238-7111 restlandfuneralhome.com

Dallas Morning News, The (TX) - Thursday, December 23, 2004

Inscription

"GOD'S SERVANT" ROMANS 12:1-2

Family Members

Parents James Wesley Saunders 1865–1938

Ollie Virginia Burton Baisey 1890–1997

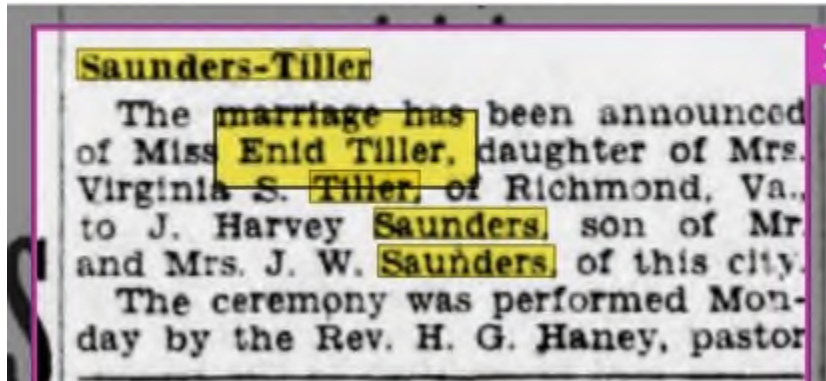
The Bee
Wed, Oct 22, 1930 · Page 2

Saunders-Tiller

The marriage has been announced of Miss Enid Tiller, daughter of Mrs. Virginia S. Tiller, of Richmond, Va., to J. Harvey Saunders, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Saunders, of this city. The ceremony was performed Monday by the Rev. H. G. Haney, pastor

The Bee

Wed, Oct 22, 1930 · Page 2



Enid G Tiller Saunders

Birth

14 Aug 1907

Richmond, City of Richmond, Virginia, USA

Death

19 Jul 1987 (aged 79)

Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, North Carolina, USA

Burial

Hillsboro Memorial Cemetery

Brandon, Hillsborough County, Florida, USA

https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/85595380/enid_g-saunders

DEATHS/FUNERALS

Ollie V. Baisey

Ollie V. Baisey, 107, died Thursday, Dec. 4, 1997, in Tampa, Fla., where she had been a resident for 25 years.

She was born in Scottsville, Va., on March 23, 1890.

She was predeceased by her husband, W. N. Baisey.

Survivors include a son, Rev. J. Harvey



Saunders, of Dallas, Texas, and a daughter-in-law, Edna F. Saunders, of Danville; five grandchildren, one of whom is Wesley Saunders of Danville; 13 great-grandchildren; and five great-great-grandchildren.

She spent most of her life in Danville, where she was a homemaker and member of North Main Baptist Church. In recent years, she was a member of First Baptist Church of Brandon, Fla.

Graveside services were held Dec. 6 by her son, the Rev. J. Harvey Saunders.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the Lottie Moon Mission Offering through your local church.

Born May 23, Danville, she was the daughter of John T. Ball and Lillian Ball.

She was married to Baxter Ferrell, who died in 1973.

A lifelong resident of Danville, she had worked at the Knitting Mill.

She was a member of Westover Baptist Church.

Survivors include two daughters, Justine Danville, Francine Fort Worth, Texas, Avery of Flat Rock, N.C., John L. Ball of Danville; 26 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted 2 p.m. today at the Yeatts North Main Chapel by Rev. R.J. Barber Jr. and Wayne Martin. Interment was in Highland Burial Park.

The family will receive friends at the residence of Justine Barber, 1111 S. Drive.

Odell Gwynn

Odell Gwynn, 75, of St., died Friday, Dec. 5, at his residence.

Born July 24, 1922, in Thomas County, N.C., he was the son of Thomas Gwynn and