

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

Mark Saunders graduated from Moody Bible Institute, Chicago and Dallas Theological Seminary, Texas. He serves as pastor of Bay Life Baptist Church, Brandon. Saunders and his wife Eleanor have three children.

Tampa Bay website 2025

CHURCHES

Bay Life | Pastor Mark Saunders | 1017 Kingsway Rd | Brandon | 33510

Mark Saunders is the Lead Pastor of Bay Life Church. He's a graduate of the [Moody Bible Institute in Chicago](#) and [Dallas Theological Seminary in Texas](#).

He met his wife, Eleanor, in college and they have three children, Ben, Cooper, and Kye, who are all in their 20's.

If you ask him, Mark will tell you that "he is a work in progress" and a grateful daily recipient of God's amazing grace. When he's not preaching, he enjoys a round of golf, time with his bride and kids, and working on projects around the house (not really, but he tries).

Mark has been leading Bay Life since September 2004 and has seen God work in amazing ways to redeem, restore, and renew the people who gather here each week. After a decade of seeing all that God has done in the lives and families in our community, Mark is excited to see what God will do through Bay Life Church in the *next* ten years.

Mark is always eager to speak with "Lifers" and guests, so come [say hello to him in "The Corner" after one of our weekend services](#) — he'd love to meet you!

<https://www.baylife.org/discover/leadership/pastor-mark/>



Creating A Pattern

Missionaries from Bay Life Church teach skills in Africa to help change lives.

By DANN LAWRENCE WHITE
The Tampa Tribune

BRANDON — Marianne Phillips never thought of herself as a woman on a mission, much less a missionary.

Wife, mom and volunteer were the roles that made her most comfortable.

That changed three years ago, when Eleanor Saunders, the wife of Phillips' pastor at Bay Life Church in Brandon, the Rev. Mark Saunders, challenged Phillips to step out of her comfort zone and travel to Rwanda.

The country had been devastated by 100 days of genocide in the 1994 civil war between the Tutsi and Hutu tribes. During the conflict, 10 percent of Rwanda's population was slaughtered. In the aftermath, the country's economy was in shambles, children were orphaned and teen girls suddenly became the heads of their households. Many turned to prostitution to earn incomes.

The African Leadership and



To show her appreciation to Phillips and the other missionaries, one woman made them maraca-style instruments out of bug-spray cans.

HOW TO HELP

* For details on Village of Hope, go to www.villageofhopeuganda.com.

* To donate to the Bay Life mission project, send a check to Bay Life Church with Rwandan sewing or carpentry project on the memo line to 1017 Kingsway Road, Brandon, FL 33510.

* For information about the church mission, call Cindy Perkins at (813) 661-3696, ext. 246.

Reconciliation Ministry and other organizations sent out a cry for help that was heard by religious organizations throughout the United States, including Bay Life, which was founded the same year the genocide began. The church's aim was to offer "a safe, relevant place to experience the love of God in the real world."

Executive pastor Tom Eichem and Saunders brought the Rwandan mission to Bay Life after visiting the country.

Rev. Celestin Musekura started ALARM to train African pastors so they could go back and help reconcile the tribes in their area," Eichem said. "He has a real passion for this ministry."