

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.

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Secrist, Holly (1921-1985) was a native of West Virginia. He served as pastor of Walnut Hill Baptist Church, Wallace Baptist Church, Pine Level Baptist Church, Pine Grove Baptist Church and East Side Baptist Church all in Santa Rosa County. Secrist and his wife, Lynette Blocker Secrist, had three daughters and three sons

WALNUT HILL BAPTIST CHURCH

In 1915 Southern States Lumber Company constructed a one-room school building near the present Walnut Hill Station east of the Frisco Railroad. Arranged for classroom work and preaching services, Baptists and Methodists met there together for almost five years. On June 13, 1920, under the leadership of Rev. J.H. McAnally and Rev. J.T. Fillingim, Walnut Hill Baptist Church was organized.

Charter members were Mr. and Mrs. J.H. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. J.J. Deaux, Mr. and Mrs. W.O. Cohron, and Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Brown. Mr. W.A. Brown was elected clerk and deacon, and Rev. McAnally was called as pastor, receiving \$60 annual salary. The church was received into Pensacola Bay Baptist Association October 12, 1920.

The first building was constructed in 1925 on land donated by Mr. and Mrs. W.A. Brown. Located on the north side of the highway, it stood until 1992. Construction on the present sanctuary was completed in 1954, and the adjacent pastorium (today a youth building) was built in 1958. A brick pastorium was completed in 1976, and a fellowship building was constructed in 1986.

r. All) Some of the pastors who have served the church are J.T. Fillingim, H.W. McNair, A.J. Noblett, C.O. Stewart, Leo Roberts, Holly Secrist, LaDon Hall, Cary Hanks, Jr., Roy Chewning, Jesse Wood (Interim), and James Boyd (Interim).

The church owns twenty-one acres of land, including the cemetery with 641 gravesites. A special offering to maintain the cemetery is received each year at Homecoming, which is observed the first Sunday in August.

Submitted by Billy G. Ward, 5361 Arthur Brown Rd., Walnut Hill, FL 32568

Written by Judith Richbourg Jolly, 8588 Belle Meadow Blvd., Pensacola, FL 32514

Sources: Records of Walnut Hill Baptist Church and Pensacola Bay Baptist Association

Photo: Walnut Hill Baptist Church, 5741 Arthur Brown Road, Walnut Hill, Florida

(248 words - June 19, 2001)

*Written for
The Heritage of Escambia County, Florida
250 words permitted*

Wallace Baptist Church

Smyrna Baptist Church, the original church, was organized in 1905. It was located approximately 300 yards west of the present pastorium at 3287 Wallace Lake Road.

The church relocated on Chumuckla Highway on land donated by a family in the community. In about 1943, a one-room, red tile building was constructed where the church is located today. In October 1946, the name was changed to Wallace Baptist Church. In April 1949, the church began a Baptist Training Union and in February 1952, held its first weekly prayer meeting.

In 1963, the church added an auditorium to the building and converted the red tile structure into Sunday School rooms. Approximately five years later, the red tile building was torn down and the present sanctuary constructed by the men of the church. Others were employed to do the block laying or jobs the men could not perform.

On August 1, 1990, the church voted to construct a fellowship hall, and in 1992, dedication services were held for the completed building.

Some of the pastors of Smyrna and Wallace include James Arzo Abbott, Nathaniel Timothy Cardwell, Richard Wyche, James B. Ward, Charles Rockwood Beal, Hernando DeSoto Wilson, Theodore Smith, Rev. Rogers, B.H. McWaters, K.E. Hawley, Howard Higdon, Richard Edward Morris, Clettus Columbus Morris, Rodney Riddles, **Holly Secrist**, Joe Secrist, John Smith, Russell Sauls, Roy Barrow, Robert Grover Key, E.L. Kirkland, David Strickland, John Suarez, Earl Plant, C.B. Raley, George Westmoreland, Joe Bradford, and LaDon Hall.

The church joined Pensacola Bay Baptist Association in 1907 and Santa Rosa Baptist Association in 1913.

Judith Richbourg Jolly
Florida Baptist Historical Society
April 2, 2002

Source: Church and association records;

Research of Beverly Campbell and Sandy Wyrosdick

**NEW BETHEL
BAPTIST CHURCH**

ROUTE 2
JAY, FLA.

Will Observe

HOMECOMING
Sunday, Nov., 8th 11 A. M.

Rev. Holly Secrist

7 Church Students Attend Chipola, Have Pastorates

MARIANNA —(Special)— Seven ministerial students from Florida and Alabama are serving churches in this area while studying at Chipola Junior college here, it is stated by Harold Bell, president of the institution.

Rev. William T. Bracewell, an Army veteran, who is president of the college ministerial association, is pastor of two rural churches and director of Baptist training unions. He was ordained Dec. 19 at Cypress with the Rev. A. C. Abney, of Marianna First Baptist church, as moderator. Bracewell lives at Chipola Terrace, veterans' housing unit, with his wife and little daughter.

SANDY CREEK PASTOR

The **Rev. Roy Lee Barron, Jr.**, of Miami, secretary of the college association, is pastor of Sandy Creek church at Ponce de Leon, Fla., and chaplain at the Northwest Florida state sanatorium here. Barron, a Navy veteran, was a student of music at Miami university and will enter the Golden Gate Baptist seminary in San Francisco next fall.

Driving daily to classes from Slocumb, Ala., is the **Rev. James Dority**, pastor of Slocumb's First Baptist church. He was a former student at Mercer university at Macon, Ga. He has a wife and son.

Rev. Horace Chance, of Graceville, is serving one Alabama church

and three in Florida. His Alabama church is near Headland and in Florida he is pastor of Providence, Leonia and Harmony churches.

TO BE ORDAINED

S. A. Coxwell, another student, will be ordained this month at Blountstown and will serve the church at Hasty Pond.

The **Rev. Otis Walden**, of Frink, Fla., who came to Chipola from the New Orleans Baptist seminary, is pastor of the West Pitman Baptist church at Westville, Fla. His wife is a teacher in the public schools.

The **Rev. Holly T. Secrist**, another Navy veteran, from Jay, Fla., is pastor at Pine Level and Pine Grove churches in Santa Rosa county and of Mt. Olive church near Bonifay, Fla.



Get this quick

SECRETIST, Holly T., 63, of Route 1, Jay. Minister. Immediate survivors: wife, M. Lynette; three daughters, Joann Jordan, Peggy Fetters and Vicki Young; three sons, Jerry,

Mike and Rusty; one stepdaughter, Shirley Gomillion; two stepsons, David and Dwayne Reaves; one sister, Mary Wood; 19 grandchildren. Visitation, after 4 p.m. Saturday; funeral, 2:30 p.m. Sunday. Arrangements, Lewis Funeral Home.

LEWIS FUNERAL HOME
SECRETIST
BERRYDALE — Rev. Holly T. Secretist, 63, of Route 1, Jay, died Thursday evening. Pastor Secretist was a native of West Virginia but had resided in Santa Rosa County for most of his life. He was a veteran of World War II and a minister with 42 years of service in the Santa Rosa County area and presently served as minister of the East Side Baptist Church of Milton.
Survivors include his wife, Mrs. M. Lynette Secretist of Berrydale; three daughters, Joann Jordan and Peggy Fetters both of Pace and Vicki Young of Fontana, Calif.; three sons, Jerry Secretist of Katy, Texas, Mike Secretist of Pace and Rusty Secretist of Fontana, Calif.; one step-daughter

Shirley Gomillion of Pensacola; two step-sons, David Reaves of Pensacola and Dwayne Reaves of Jay; 19 grandchildren; a sister, Mary Wood of Hico, West Virginia.
Funeral services will be 2:30 p.m. Sunday at the East Side Baptist Church on Ward Basin Rd of Milton with Dr. Joe Bamberg and the Rev. George Pugh officiating.
Burial will follow at the Pine Grove Cemetery with Lewis Funeral Home directing.
Friends may call after 4:00 p.m. Saturday at the Lewis Funeral Home.
Active pallbearers will be Ray Lay, Fred Shavers, Phillip Smith, Jr., Mitchell Smith, Larry Matthew, Ricky Lay.
Honorary pallbearers will be Glen Smith, David Dubose, Woody Deason and Pat Losse, F.M. Fisher and Harley Thompson.

Rev Holly T Secretist
Birth 19 Jun 1921
Death 18 Apr 1985 (aged 63)
Burial Pine Grove Cemetery Berrydale, Santa Rosa County, Florida, USA

Family Members
Children
Michael Jerome Secretist

1951–1989