

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



Smartt, Steve graduated from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He served as pastor of Moultrie Baptist Church, St. Augustine, 2002-2004 and GracePointe Baptist Church, St. Augustine. Smartt and his wife, Cheryl Buchanan Smartt have four children.

worshippers come to church.

The **Rev. Steve Smartt**, pastor of Moultrie Baptist Church, said that no decision had been made as of Thursday morning. He suggested worshippers call the church office at 797-9005 or go to the Web site at www.moultriebaptist.com to get the latest information.

Other churches contacted

Meet Pastor **Steve**

Pastor **Steve Smartt** is married to the former Cheryl Buchanan. The couple has four children ranging in age from 17 to 22.

His education includes a Bachelor of Science, Pastoral Ministry, Lee University, Cleveland, Tenn.; New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, North Georgia Extension, Decatur, Ga; the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville, Ky.

Since 1995 he has served in various capacities at churches in Tennessee, Georgia, Kentucky and Florida.

Previous work experience includes positions with Barnett Banks, Inc., Jacksonville.



Moultrie Baptist Church St. Augustine
Our History

In 1926 residents J.A. Barnes, Minnie May Barnes and Cordin Barnes expressed thoughts toward God and friends. They made these thoughts a reality by legally deeding a sizeable piece of property in the Moultrie area of St. Augustine to the Ancient City Baptist Church. Ancient City Baptist Church was unable to use the property at the time so they placed a sign on the property that read “Future site of Moultrie Baptist Mission sponsored by Ancient City Baptist Church”.

In the early 1970's, the Baptist residents in the Moultrie area and the Saint Augustine Shores felt a real need for a church in their area.

In the spring of 1980, Mr. Jeff Brown, at the time a seminary student seeking a summer job was sponsored by Calvary Baptist Church to survey the Baptist interests in the Moultrie and Saint Augustine Shores area. Mr. Brown invited all the residents to attend a mission service at 10:00 am on August 10, 1980 in the card room of the Saint Augustine Shores Riverview club. The first service was led by Mr. Brown while Ms. Theresa Franklin provided the music. The second service was led by Rev. Carl Franklin and then the third and those afterward were led by Rev. Bill Carmichael.

Pastors called to serve at Moultrie

1981-1982: Bill Carmichael

1982: Armando Silverilo

1982-1999: Micheal Mott

1999: Bob Anderson

2000-2002: Larry McCarty

2002: Clarence Hackett

2002-2004: Steve Smartt

2004-2005: Franz Cornelius

2006- 2016: Sanford Colley

2016-2017: Intrim Pastor: Asa Greear

2017-Current: Whitney Walters

Founders: J.A. Barnes, Minnie May Barnes and Cordin Barnes

Original Name Moultrie Baptist Mission

Date Built 1981



New Moultrie pastor looking to shepherd flock into the future

By **MATTHEW GEIGER**
Staff Writer

International turmoil has directly affected the members of Moultrie Baptist Church.



Last year, the church community had to sacrifice its pastor for the country. Now, members have finished the search for a replacement. Pastor **Steve Smartt** began his duties June 1.

There was just something about the young, energetic candidate that excited the committee, explains Trish Armenta, who writes the church's newsletter and handles much of its public relations work.

"He is young," says Armenta, "and full of energy. He will reach out to the young people, and he has a vision for our church and our community."

"We had over 250 resumes," says Armenta. These resumes were carefully looked at by a pastor search committee, consisting of seven people.

Smartt takes over the leadership of the church from former senior pastor, Larry McCarty, who is currently

learned that McCarty's stay at Fort Bragg had been extended due to the approaching conflict with Iraq.

"It was then that he decided to resign," says Armenta. "He decided we needed a little stability, so that we could move forward."

It was after McCarty's resignation, that the members of the church turned their attention to finding a permanent replacement.

Smartt, who graduated from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky., is no stranger to the St. Augustine area. He grew up in Jacksonville and still has family in the area.

Smartt, along with his wife and three sons, has lived in four different states over the past eight years.

"We had to move around a lot because of school," he explains. "It feels good to return home."

Some see the coming together of **Smartt** with Moultrie Baptist Church as more than just blind luck.

"He was led here," says Armenta.

Smartt agrees wholeheartedly with Armenta: "I was being actively pursued by two other churches, but I felt like I was being led to Moultrie."

Smartt says he is excited about leading the church in a

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former senior pastor, Larry McCarty, who is currently serving as a chaplain in the Army Reserve.

It was in the wake of the events of Sept. 11, 2001, that McCarty was called up into active duty at Fort Bragg in North Carolina.

Armenta describes the effect that losing McCarty had on the church: "We have many members in the National Guard and one in Special Forces, but we all felt it when Larry was called up."

For nearly 10 months the church community lived in a state of limbo.

"At the time we didn't know how long he would be gone," says Armenta. "At first he would come home from Fort Bragg every two weeks."

The drive from Fort Bragg to St. Augustine was long, and according to McCarty, it took a toll on him.

"I made 22 trips back to Moultrie," says McCarty.

On the weeks that McCarty could not make it back to St. Augustine, an interim pastor from Jacksonville would fill in.

McCarty was soon promoted to lieutenant colonel, and he describes his duties, including counseling soldiers and working on the death notification team, as "intense."

In October 2002, the church

Smartt says he is excited about leading the church in a positive direction. "How often do you get the opportunity to lead a thriving church in a great area like St. Augustine?" he asks. "I want to help the church continue growing, and I want the people of the church to have a positive impact on the world around them."

McCarty is still stationed at Fort Bragg, and he is pleased that they have found a replacement.

"They were willing to sacrifice for God and country," he says. "I am very excited about the arrival of the new pastor."

Smartt says he believes in the "pastor/shepherd model for church leadership." According to a leaflet about himself that he provided to the church, **Smartt** wants the church to be "pastor-led, staff-driven and accountable to the proper teams."

The members of Moultrie Baptist say they are ready for some long-term stability, and they are confident that Pastor **Smartt** is just the man for the job.

Pastor **Smartt** says that as Moultrie Baptist's "shepherd," he hopes to lead them far into the future.

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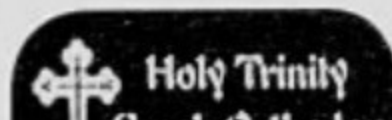
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Moultrie pastor to be installed

Special to The Record

The members of Moultrie Baptist Church invite the community to join them for a special occasion — the installation service of the church's new pastor, **Steve Smartt**, Sunday at 6 p.m.



Steve Smartt

A reception follows. The **Rev.** Ron Moore, pastor of Anastasia Baptist Church, will be the guest speaker. Moultrie Baptist is located at 3699 U.S. 1 South.

For further information, call the church office at 797-9005.

Smartt began his duties at Moultrie June 1. A graduate of the Southern Baptist Theologi-

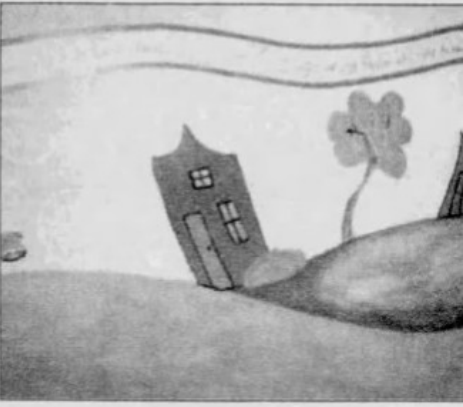
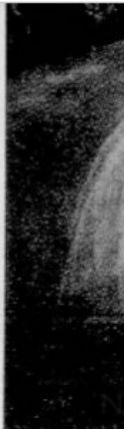
PLEASE SEE PASTOR/3C

A 124 feet long, five feet tall and took 28 artists to create?

Answer: The newly completed mural for the children's wing at Ponte Vedra Presbyterian Church.

The visual arts ministry at the church recently involved artists ages 9 to 80 in the 200-hour project to create a masterpiece painting that the children "love to touch and search for hidden things" says Ellen Jones, vi

director for the church. Artists were given areas to paint ac their artistic abilities.



PASTOR

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1C



cal Seminary, Louisville, Ky., he grew up in Jacksonville. He took over church leadership after the church's senior pastor, Larry McCarty resigned. McCarty is currently serving as a U.S. Army chaplain, having been called to active duty at Fort Bragg, N.C., after 9/11.

Church moves Sunday services to new location

By **LORRAINE THOMPSON**
 Correspondent

From a meeting room to a warehouse, and now to a high school auditorium, GracePointe Baptist Church is on the move — again.

The church began with a community worship led by Pastor **Steve Smartt** in October 2005. Held in the meeting room at Beacher's Lodge, an oceanfront condominium in Crescent Beach, 61 people attended the first service.

When the congregation invited him to continue with weekly services, Pastor **Steve** accepted their invitation after deep prayer, discussions with his family, and other considerations.

"It was through the grace and providence of God that I was given this opportunity," the pastor commented.

The congregation quickly organized and was recognized by the Florida Baptist State Convention in December 2005. The name

GracePointe Baptist Church was chosen.

GracePointe soon outgrew its temporary facility.

Within a year, through word of mouth, the number of Sunday

worshippers swelled to 100.

Mindful that his young parish wasn't ready to build its own church yet, Pastor **Steve** and the parish organizers began looking for a larger temporary facility.

"We could have gone to two services," the pastor said, "but our philosophy was determined to be one church, one service." He explained that with two or more services, churches break down to individualized groups that don't get to know each other. "With one service we are truly one church with one mind," he said.

Always on the lookout for options, Pastor **Steve** recalls driving west on State Road 312 one day and seeing a "Warehouse For Rent" sign on the north side, opposite Cobblestone shopping center.

With the approval of the congregation, a contract was quickly negotiated for use of the warehouse and within a few weeks, the real challenge began.

Without hesitation, leaders of the church accepted that challenge and in early January 2006, the congregation began meeting in a double warehouse at 1703 Lakeside Ave. With the creativeness and skills of church members, the interior of the 3,000 square foot facility was effectively transformed into a church. Two metal crosses adorn the outside of the building. The entrance is a clear glass office door imprinted with the church name and its hours.

Interior transformation

But it was what was on the other side of that door that dispelled the warehouse atmosphere and set the tone for a House of God. A pulpit crafted by one of the church's members sits on a platform stage. A huge wooden



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hangs in the background. Chairs are arranged in auditorium style. The warehouse church is complete with audio and video systems.

PLEASE SEE **CHURCH/6C**

6C • THE ST. AUGUSTINE RECORD

CHURCH

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1C

some of which were donated by Anastasia Baptist and Crescent Beach Baptist churches. There is also a multi-purpose area walled off at the rear of the facility that serves as a nursery, classroom, or hospitality center, as needed.

Pastor Steve describes the popular Sunday 10 a.m. service as upbeat with God-focused music and practical messages preached from the Bible. "Our worship begins with an acoustical blend of traditional and contemporary music incorporating scripture and prayer led by our pastoral staff."

That staff now includes Pastor James A. Smith Sr. who serves as teaching pastor, and Pastor Phil Nicolosi who is the associate pastor.

GracePointe programs and ministries continue to grow to meet the needs of the increased number of followers, including midweek worship at 6:30 p.m. on Wednesdays, Bible study fellowship groups for all ages throughout the week, special children's programs, and a "From Heart to Home" outreach program.

Recently the "one service, one church" concept once again became a challenge. With as many as 120 attending the Sunday service and limited parking, the search for an even larger site began. "Once again our prayers have been answered,"

About GracePointe

The church is autonomous and maintains the right to govern its own affairs, independent of any denominational control. It is voluntarily affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, the Florida Baptist State Convention and the St. Johns River Baptist Association.

Location: The Sunday 10 a.m. worship services are held at the Pedro Menendez High School Performing Arts Center, 600 State Road 206 W

The office, all other programs and services will remain at the 312 Business Park warehouse, across from Cobblestone shopping center, at 1703 Lakeside Avenue.

For worship information and other questions, call 823-8907 or e-mail admin@gracepointebaptist.org. Information is also available at the Web site: www.gracepointebaptist.org.

Pastor Steve announced.

Now at Menendez

On April 1, GracePointe Baptist Church moved again — but only for the Sunday 10 a.m. service. The new

site was the Pedro Menendez High School Performing Arts Center, which accommodates 515 people. There was also plenty of parking spaces available.

"It will be huge to begin with," Pastor Steve said, "but we are a small church that is growing quickly. Use of the high school will allow time to enjoy that growth while searching for permanent land or a building to purchase."

Through Pastor Steve's leadership and with the enthusiasm of his flock, that day may not be far off.

Tabitha Dotson who assumed the role as director of children's ministries said: "It doesn't matter if we're in a warehouse or a fancy church. We're here to hear the Word of God. It's the message we take home that counts," she said.

Dotson further commented, "I've heard a lot of preachers during the past 30 years, but never one like Pastor Steve. His presentations are fantastic. He is faithful to the Bible and he explains the meaning of passages in simple terms that we can all understand."

Edrie and Jack Pearson have found no problem with moving from building to building for church services. "They're only stepping stones. It's Pastor Steve that makes the difference," Jack said. "He and his family are great. His preaching techniques and church leadership are the best I've ever seen in 70 years of church going," Jack added.

FOR T JOBS O From building,

