

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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Smith, Gene P. is a native of Alief, Texas. He graduated from Houston Baptist University, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Smith served as pastor of churches in Texas, Mississippi and Florida including First Baptist Church, New Port Richey, 1986-1997. He and his wife, Marsha Beavers Smith have three sons.



FBC, New Port Richey (Pasco)

Pastors of First Baptist New Port Richey

1921-1922	Rev. A.E. Gammage
1922	George L. Barnwell
1922-1923	R.C. Alderman
1923-1926	B.M. Pack
1926-1927	A.B. Cannady*
1927-1928	E.A. Wood
1928-1930	W.A. Thurston
1930-1931	Edward L. Andrews
1931-1934	A.J. Kroelinger
1934-1935	W.A. Albritton
1936-1938	B.M. Glisson
1939-1941	David O. Alderman
1941-1942	Grant W. Duncan
1942-1944	Rev. Joe Lee Kiser
1944-1952	Rev. A.J. Hoolsema
1952-1955	Rev. Francis Georgia
1955-1970	Rev. Ralph W. Acree*
1970-1971	Rev. James R. Hamrick (staff)
1971	Rev. Byron M. Wilkinson*
1973-1985	Rev. C. Thomas Bennett*
1985-1986	Rev. Paul S. James* (interim)
1986-1997	Rev. Gene P. Smith*
1998-1999	Rev. Mike L. Adams
1999	Rev. Bruce McCoy (interim)
1999-2000	Rev. Jim Graves
2000-2015	Rev. Guy S. Sanders, III*
2015-2017	Rev. Mickey Burroughs (staff)
2017-PRES	Rev. Jay Huddleston*

Continuing the Legacy

A pastor finds his way back to home church

Tampa Bay Times
Sat, Nov 26, 1994 · Page 199

■ First Baptist Church of New Port Richey will find a familiar sight in the pulpit this week. Gene Smith is returning from Dallas.

By SUZANNE HAYES
Times Staff Writer

NEW PORT RICHEY — The Rev. Gene Smith's recent decision to leave First Baptist Church of New Port Richey was a tough one, and as it turns out for him, a bad one. After a short time at Casa View Baptist Church in Dallas, he realized he had made a mistake.

"I just finally came to a determination that I was in the wrong place," he said. "I felt that I was in someone else's office, someone else's territory and that *maybe* it was the Lord making me feel that way."

In an October story in the *Pasco Times*, Smith spoke about his decision to move to the Dallas church. Now talks about his change of mind and what he describes as the hardest thing he has done, telling the Texas folks he wasn't staying.

"I had to talk to the people in Dallas," he said. "It was worse after I did it, worse than I had bargained for."

He said they were extremely gracious, not angry or upset, and he has received many letters of thanks.

Helen Cook of Casa View Baptist said that the church was sorry to have lost Smith but that church leaders have already formed a second search committee to find a minister.

As Smith explained in October, when he first visited the Texas church he felt no inclination to accept the pastorship. The church asked him to come again. It flew his family out and offered many enticements. He finally said yes.

"I think that I began looking at signs and that is where I got off track," he said. "It has to be of the Lord. You have to have a conviction of the heart."

This Sunday, Smith will return to the open arms of First Baptist, which had not found a replacement for its beloved pastor. Smith will stand behind the pulpit he called home for eight years and he will talk about this experience, about how God speaks to people and about how the Holy Spirit speaks to the heart.

"The world looks for signs and open doors," he said. "I tell people that Satan can open doors too and that the house of destruction has an open door. The spirit will often tell you to *not* take the path of least resistance. I believe that the Lord told me very early that I was not supposed to go there."

Smith said he has received cards from several people who have had a similar experience. After speaking with other pastors, he found that it appears to be a somewhat common thing and that usually the pastors come back and have their most productive years.

"I hope that will be the case," Smith said. "A lot of grief is medicine for correction. There are so many decisions of life that have such grave consequences. I say I will listen better the next time. I will let God be master of those decisions."

Smith will be in the pulpit for the 10:50 a.m. Sunday sermon. The sermon will be broadcast live on radio stations FM 91.5 and AM 1600 and on TCI Cable Ch. 5 at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday.

Smith answers call to Florida church

The Rev. Dr. Gene P. Smith has accepted the call to pastor First Baptist Church, New Port Richey, Fla. He has pastored Richey, Fla. He has pastored Roseland Park Baptist Church in Picayune for the last five years. Previously, he served at Franklin Baptist Church, Franklin, Texas. He is a native of Alief, Texas.

Smith received his undergraduate degree at Houston Baptist University. He earned his Master of Divinity at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. His Doctor of Ministry Degree was completed at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

While serving in Picayune, Smith was active in the community. He served as president of Roseland Park P.T.A. He played basketball on the church team at P.A.A. He also served as monderator for the Pearl

River County Baptist Association.

He is married to the former

Marsha Beavers of New Albany, and they are the parents of three sons.

<http://www.mybvbc.org/MeetourStaff1174385>

Dr. Gene P. Smith, a native of Alief, Texas, graduated Houston Baptist University with a Bachelor of Arts in Biology, Health and Physical Education. In 1979, he graduated Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Ft. Worth, Texas with a Master of Divinity, followed in 1986 with a Doctor of Ministry from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Dr. Smith has served as pastor for churches in Texas, Mississippi and Florida. He preaches under the power and conviction of the Holy Spirit, and our church has been blessed greatly from his ministry. Pastor Gene recently retired from teaching science in the Katy Independent School District.