

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, Mark was born in Columbus, Ohio. He graduated from Ohio State University and Ashland Theological Seminary. Smith served as pastor of churches in Ohio, Mississippi, Georgia and Florida including Murdock Baptist Church, Port Charlotte, 2005-2013. He and his wife, Toni have two sons.



Smith leads a growing congregation

By AMY ABERN

amy.abern@heraldtribune.com

The **Rev. Mark Smith** never has to look very hard for subject matter for his sermons. Everything in the Bible, he said, is relevant today, it's just up to him to draw the proper parallel.

Smith preached his first sermon a month ago at Murdock Baptist Church. He succeeds retired Pastor **Adair Allen** and interim Pastor **Jim Sweet**. Presiding over a healthy congregation that has been steadily increasing over the past couple of years, **Smith** said he has walked into a wonderful job and credits Allen and Sweet for paving the way.

"Just a year ago there were about 120 church members," said **Smith**. "Now there are over 200 and the numbers keep growing. All I had to do was take the baton and run with the program after they laid the groundwork."

He comes to the church with 22 years experience in the ministry, first in Ohio and then outside of Atlanta. He and his wife, **Toni**, had vacationed in Southwest Florida for several years and made friends with people in Port Charlotte. One of those friends was a member of the Murdock Baptist Church; he told **Smith** of the opening



STAFF PHOTO / AMY ABERN

The **Rev. Mark Smith** preached his first sermon a month ago at Murdock Baptist Church. He succeeds the **Rev. Adair Allen** and interim pastor the **Rev. Jim Sweet**.

The timing was right to move, said **Smith**, and God "wanted" him here.

Smith believes the increase in numbers of church attendees has to do with

a need for family, a need for a kind of encompassing care. The current congregation, he said, is "one of the most loving" congregations he's witnessed

and is fostering its own sense of family and belonging under the care of Christ.

"God is being worshipped here, not a preacher, not a staff," he said. "On many occasions, people have left a service telling me they've never worshipped so profoundly. And I know they're getting the message."

Smith's biggest goal in his new ministry is to see his "flock" grow spiritually and at the same time, reach out to people who don't know Christ.

"I am not looking to make a nuisance of myself," he said. "I'm not going to tear down your door to preach to you, but my mandate is to share my faith. It's intentional evangelism, not invasive."

Smith also sees one of his greatest responsibilities as keeping the children in the congregation and in the general area safe from harm. He hopes to put into effect a system where people who volunteer and work in the church with children and teens undergo a mandatory background check and will learn CPR. He will bring the motion before the Church Council; casual conversation with members has brought nothing but an enthusiastic response.

Murdock Baptist Church is located at 18375 Toledo Blade Blvd. For more information, call 627-6352.

<https://showmetimes.com/Blogpost/v7p1/New-Pastor-at-First-Baptist-Church-in-Dexter>
Dexter, Missouri - Pastor Mark Smith has been called as the new Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church in Dexter

He has been a pastor for over 20 year and his experience, wisdom, and passion for the Lord makes him a powerful proclaimer of God's Word.

Pastor Mark teaches principles from the Bible that can transform the lives of people through the deepening of their faith. He believes that we have to fully belong to Christ before we can do for Christ. His first Sunday to preach at First Baptist Dexter will be Sunday, July 23, 2017.

Pastor Mark is 58 years old and is coming from the First Baptist Church in West Jefferson, Ohio, where he currently serves as Senior Pastor.

Prior to that, he served at the First Baptist Church in Jackson, Mississippi from 2013 - 2015, Murdock Baptist Church in Port Charlotte, Florida from 2005 - 2013, Brookwood Baptist Church in Lawrenceville, Georgia from 2002 - 2006, and the First Baptist Church in Aurora, Ohio from 1998 - 2002. He also served the Lord in other full-time ministry service in Ohio and Georgia (1989-1998).

Pastor Mark was saved at the age of seven at Southside Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio and began his ministry as Minister of Music and Evangelism at Highland Baptist in Grove City, Ohio (1983-1989).

Pastor Mark was born and raised in Columbus, Ohio. He received his undergraduate degree in music from Ohio State University in 1987 and received a master's degree in Christian Education from Ashland Theological Seminary in 1998.

Pastor Mark's proudest accomplishments stem from his personal life. He and his wife, Toni, have been married for 38 years. They have two sons, Keith (34) and Kyle (32).

Keith and his wife, Tasha, live in Nashville, Tennessee and are expecting their first child, so Mark and Toni will become grandparents in the upcoming months. Kyle just got married recently and he and his wife, Katherine, live in Brandon, Mississippi. Both sons serve full-time in different aspects of Christian music ministry; Keith as a writer/arranger/performer, and Kyle as Pastor to the Bands at Pine Lake Church in Brandon, Mississippi.