

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

Smith, Travis D. (1956-) was born in Lancaster, South Carolina. He served as pastor of Hillsdale Baptist Church, (formerly Buffalo Avenue) Tampa. Smith and his wife, Sheilah Ipock Smith have three children.



(Buffalo Ave) Hillsdale, Tampa

The first additional staff member was J. Richard Nichols, who came to serve the youth and led Hillsdale's choir and music program. During Dr. Nichols' 33-year ministry, the music of Hillsdale became a nationally known standard of excellence. Other noteworthy staff members were Larry Karsies (youth) and Charles Dreyer (children) who contributed greatly during their years at Hillsdale. In addition, God led the church forward in world missions, supporting scores of missionaries around the globe and also sending some of Hillsdale's own to the foreign field.

In June of 1995, God chose to end an era. While driving with two interns to perform a funeral, Pastor Bradshaw suddenly succumbed to a heart attack and was ushered into eternity. Hillsdale was overwhelmed with grief and fear at the loss of its shepherd, but God was still in control. In October of 1995, Hillsdale voted to call Rev. Travis D. Smith, the youth pastor of 10 years, to become the Senior Pastor. With the death of Pastor Bradshaw, Hillsdale closed a foundational chapter in its history; but under the leadership of Pastor Smith, God opened a new and exciting chapter for His people to set their hearts and souls to build a mighty testimony for Him in Tampa.

Dr. Travis Smith, Senior Pastor



Born in Lancaster, South Carolina in 1956, graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Sacred Music in 1977. He married Sheilah (Ipock) on July 24, 1977. From 1979-1985 he served as the Youth and Music Pastor at First Baptist Church of Sterling Heights, Michigan. In 1985 he came to Hillsdale Baptist Church as the Youth Pastor and served in that ministry until 1995 after the sudden death of Dr. Alan J. Bradshaw (former Pastor). Dr. Smith was voted Senior Pastor of Hillsdale in 1995 and continues to serve as Senior Pastor. He received his Master of Arts in Pastoral Studies in 1997, graduating Magna Cum Laude. In May of 2000, Dr. Smith received an honorary Doctor of Divinity Degree from Bob Jones University. The Smiths have three adult children and one granddaughter.