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, Wilson served as pastor of First Baptist Church Wildwood, 1977-1999 and Belle Shoals, Brandon. Smith and his wife, Sue Smith, have four children.

Department with the Sunday School Board in Nashville, was called. During his three years as pastor, a new pastorium was built, valued at $13,365.00 and a mission church was built at Orange Home.

In July, 1958, the present auditorium, valued at $85,000.00, was dedicated by Dr. John McGuire. The church was then pastored by Rev. Gene Hitchcock. During this time the first organ was purchased.

In recent years the church has created a history of longevity. Bro. Claud McAdams was called as pastor in June, 1961, serving 16½ years, retiring in September 1977, but continued on as supply pastor through November. He is now Pastor Emeritus of the church. In January 1961, Kay Kelley was elected organist, serving 17½ years, until she moved in August 1978. In May 1971, Claud Smith, Jr. was called as Music and Recreation Director and has now served 10 1/2 years.

During the 16½ years Bro. McAdams was pastor the church grew in every way - church properties expanded, including all of the Sunday School annexes, kitchen and fellowship hall. A library was started, church bus and a second organ were purchased. Also a full time Music, Recreation Director and an Educational Director were hired by the church.

In December, 1977, the church called its 24th pastor, Rev. Wilson E. Smith. During the last few years, under Brother Smith, the church has added many things to its ministry program including a Media Center, complete with projectors, tape players, (tapes of all services are carried to shut-in members) and a full library.

The present auditorium is now being renovated at a cost of approximately $125,000.00.

Several outstanding men have been ordained to the ministry by this church - including Charles Roesel, pastor of First Baptist of Leesburg, Florida and Jimmy Hensley, pastor of Wyomina Park Baptist of Ocala, Florida.

During the last ninety-seven years The First Baptist Church of Wildwood has grown from 13 members to 1005. It's property value has increased from $300.oo to $1,000,000.00, said property including auditorium, several educational units, a large fellowship hall, a modern kitchen, media center, nursery and pastorium.

Flora Kelley
Church Historian