

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

Sparks, Stephen Edgar (1894-1966) was born in Ellijay, Georgia the son of Allan and Cordelia Maines Sparks. He served as pastor of East Palatka First Baptist Church.



Dedication



The New River Baptist Association lovingly dedicates the minutes of the 94th annual session to the memory of Reverend Stephen Edgar Sparks, and to those who survive him.

Reverend Sparks was born in Ellijay, Georgia on June 2, 1894, the son of the late Allan and Cordelia Maines Sparks. He was a member of the Madison Street Baptist Church and the New River Baptist Association.

Reverend Sparks served as pastor of a number of churches in the area and was for nine years the moderator of the Association. He was a dedicated man of God, a fine Christian, and a loyal supporter of his church and the denomination. Under his leadership the churches went forward, and as far as the writer can determine, all of the churches of the association were unanimous in their support of the Southern Baptist Convention, a victory not easy to come by.

To this fine Christian gentleman, we the New River Baptist Association, dedicate the minutes of this session, October 10 & 11, 1966.

East Palatka First, Palatka

Officers of the Church

Year	Pastor	Clerk	Treasurer	S.S. Dir.	C.T. Dir.	W.M.U. Dir.	Brotherhood	Ch. Deacons
1928	L.E. McRae	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1929	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1930	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1931	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1932	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1933	H.W. Tucker	J.W. Stallings	--	T.M. Waldron	--	--	--	--
1934	L.R. Wasdin	J.W. Stallings	--	T.M. Waldron	--	--	--	--
1935	L.R. Wasdin	E.H. Ragin	--	Mrs. Hankins	--	--	--	--
1936	L.R. Wasdin	E.H. Ragin	--	G.W. Hosware	--	Mrs. Stallings	--	--
1937	L.R. Wasdin	J.A. Oglesby	--	--	--	Mrs. Stallings	--	--
1938	L.R. Wasdin	W.P. Hitchcock	J.A. Oglesby	--	Mrs. J. Bell	Mrs. B. Warwick	--	--
1939	L.R. Wasdin	W.D. Wall	Nettie Bullock	--	Mrs. B. Horton	Mrs. W. P. Hitchcock	--	--
1940	R.V. Hogarth	J.A. Oglesby	Julia Gornto	--	--	Mrs. Hogarth	--	--
1941	--	J.A. Oglesby	Julia Gornto	--	--	--	--	--
1942	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1943	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1944	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1945	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1946	S.E. Sparks	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1947	V.J. Major	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
1948	V.J. Major	Mrs. B. Beach	C.T. Tomlinson	Mrs. W. Crosby	S.A. Gornto	Mrs. Tomlinson	--	--
1949	V.J. Major	Mrs. B. Beach	J.C. Bullock	W.M. Crosby	Mrs. W. Crosby	Mrs. Tomlinson	--	--
1950	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	J. Bradshaw	W.M. Crosby	Mrs. W. Crosby	Mrs. Tomlinson	--	--
1951	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	J. Bradshaw	S.A. Gornto	J. Methvin	Mrs. W. Crosby	--	--
1952	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	J. Bradshaw	S.A. Gornto	J.C. Bullock	Mrs. E.M. Harris	--	--
1953	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	J. Bradshaw	J.B. Crain	Dan Baden	Mrs. E. Crain	C.C. Saunders	--
1954	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	J. Bradshaw	J.B. Crain	J. Methvin	Mrs. E. Crain	J.B. Crain	--
1955	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	J. Bradshaw	J.B. Crain	J. Methvin	Mrs. M. Major	C.T. McCormick	--
1956	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	J. Bradshaw	J.B. Crain	J. Methvin	Mrs. M. Major	C.T. McCormick	--
1957	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	Wayne Wells	J.B. Crain	J. Methvin	Mrs. P. Usina	C.T. McCormick	--
1958	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	Mrs. G. Knighten	J.C. Willis	J. Methvin	Mrs. M. Major	C.T. McCormick	--
1959	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	Mrs. G. Knighten	J.C. Willis	J. Methvin	Mrs. M. Major	R.B. Boone	--
1960	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	Mrs. J. Franklin	J.C. Willis	R.C. Crews	Mrs. M. Major	E. Carnes	--
1961	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	Mrs. J. Franklin	C.T. McCormick	R.C. Crews	Mrs. Tomlinson	E. Carnes	--
1962	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	Mrs. J. Franklin	C.T. McCormick	E. Carnes	Mrs. Tomlinson	G. Taylor	--
1963	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	Mrs. J. Franklin	Frank McDaniel	J. Methvin	Mrs. M. Major	--	--
1964	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	Mrs. J. Franklin	W.E. Warwick	George Taylor	Mrs. M. Major	W.R. Polk	--
1965	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	Mrs. J. Franklin	W.E. Warwick	Frank McDaniel	Mrs. E.M. Carnes	W.R. Polk	--
1966	V.J. Major	Mrs. Tomlinson	Mrs. J. Franklin	W.E. Warwick	Frank McDaniel	Mrs. M. Major	W.R. Polk	--

This, That and the Other

Whipple Accepts Pastorate First Church, Okeechobee



Richard E. Whipple, pastor of the Lake View Church, Miami for the past 13½ years, has accepted the pastorate of the First Church, Okeechobee.

During Whipple's ministry at Lake View the membership grew from less than 100 to 1,150. Over 1,000 people accepted Christ and were baptized into the fellowship of the church. Thirteen men, including three of his own brothers, surrendered their lives to the Gospel ministry. Four buildings were built and three and one-half acres of property purchased for future growth. The Big Pine Mission in the Florida keys was begun. This year the church adopted a \$71,000 budget, using the Forward Program of Church Finance for the fifth time.

Whipple is a graduate of Stetson University and Immanuel Seminary. He recently graduated in the first class of The Clinical Pastoral Training course at the Miami Baptist Hospital. He has been active in associational work in the Miami area.

Mrs. Whipple is the former Miss Annette Chester of Jacksonville. They have four children.

Morris Accepts Pastorate

Merlin Morris, recently called to be pastor of Shady Grove Church, south of Grand Ridge, will be ordained to the Gospel ministry August 21, by Friendship Church, Bon Secour, Ala.

Morris is a student at Baptist Bible Institute, and will move to the pastor's home August 30.

"Miss Staffer" at Gloria

Becky Roberts, daughter of Col. and Mrs. W. W. Roberts, First Church, Tallahassee, was elected "Miss Staffer" for the first six-week session at Gloria Assembly. Her duties were in the assembly dining hall. About 23,000 Baptists visit the assembly during its three-month operation, June 9 to Sept. 5.

Revival Reports

Pleasant Hill Church, Bell, Evangelist Charles Pinkerton, 10 for baptism, three by letter, one by statement, G. W. Kinard, pastor.

First Church of Inwood, Winter Haven, Evangelist Allen H. Higginbotham, Singer Joe Hart, 31 for baptism, five by letter, J. W. Campbell, pastor.

Rawls Becomes Interim Pastor at Lake View

J. Elwood Rawls, director of promotion and education, Miami Baptist Association, has accepted the call as interim pastor of Lake View Church, Miami. This church will participate in the Sunday School Enlargement campaign of the Miami Association this fall.

First Church, Sanford Calls Minister of Music - Youth



Erroll Simmons assumed duties as minister of music and youth at First Church, Sanford July 3. He comes to Sanford from Heights Church, Pensacola, where he served in a similar capacity the past three and one-half years.

Simmons is a native of Louisiana. He attended Southeastern Louisiana College and graduated from William Carey College in Hattiesburg, Miss. He also attended New Orleans Seminary. In 1963 he completed the residence requirements for Master of Church Music degree, and accepted the call from Pensacola. In May, 1966 he completed his thesis and received this degree from New Orleans Seminary.

He was active in Pensacola Bay associational work, serving two years as music director.

Mrs. Simmons is the former Mary Ishee of Laurel, Miss. They have two children.

Secretaries' Institute Attracts 2 from Florida

That unsung heroine, the church secretary, had her day (or week) in Louisville, Kentucky this summer, and two secretaries from Florida Baptist churches were on the scene.

Office workers from eleven states met at the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary July 11-15 for the seventh annual Institute for Church and Denominational Secretaries.

Those from Florida were: Mrs. Marjorie Gery of Clavary Church, Clearwater; and Mrs. Robert Teague, Avondale Church, Jacksonville.

Despite a sultry 100-degree heat wave which had Louisianians willing, the secretaries remained cool: they were the first guests to stay in the seminary's newly-renovated (and air-conditioned) women's dormitory, which opens in September.

Floridians on Faculty for Recreation Conferences

Two Floridians will be on the faculty of church recreation leadership conference Aug. 11-17 at Gloria (N.M.) Baptist Assembly and Aug. 25-31 at Ridgecrest (N.C.) Baptist Assembly.

They are: Richard Pyburn, pastor, First Church, Lake Park, and Mrs. Lake (Agnes) Pylant, former secretary of the Baptist Sunday School Board's church recreation department, Nashville.

At the conferences, which will have sessions for both adults and youth, Pyburn will serve at Ridgecrest as a Bible study leader for youth. Mrs. Pylant will lead workshop sessions on choral speaking and storytelling at both assemblies. During sessions for adults, these new horizons in church recreation will be discussed: senior adults, day camping, family recreation and drama.

For reservations, write: E. A. Herron, manager, Gloria Baptist Assembly, Gloria, N. M., 87535; or, Willard K. Weeks, manager, Ridgecrest Baptist Assembly, Ridgecrest, N. C. 28770.

Edwards Resigns Forest City to Attend Seminary

Arthur B. Edwards has resigned as pastor of Forest City Church, Forest City, effective August 8, to complete his studies at Stetson University, and enroll in the New Orleans Seminary in the fall.

W. H. Baker Joins Staff at Webster Avenue, Lakeland



W. H. Baker recently joined the staff of Webster Avenue Church, Lakeland as minister of music and education. He comes to Lakeland from First Church, Lindale, Ga., and has also served in a similar position at First Church, Kissimmee.

Mr. and Mrs. Baker have two sons, Robert and Preston.

The Armando Silverios, formerly of St. Augustine and Tampa, now home missionaries to the Italian speaking people, will be serving on the faculty during WMU week at Ridgecrest, beginning August 11. Silverio will also be speaking during the Sunday school hour there.

Armando and Geneva, in their sixth year with the Home Mission Board, are now located in Pittsburgh, Pa., where they started a new pioneer mission, The Rolling Hills Baptist Chapel. Their address is 131 Crescent Gardens Dr., Pittsburgh, Pa., 15235.

Called to Leonia Church, Ordained for Service

Lamar McCullough, who was recently called to be the pastor of Leonia Church, Leonia, was ordained to the Gospel ministry July 10 by Melrose Heights Church, Miami, where he was formerly a deacon, Sunday school teacher and Training Union director.



Pastor J. W. Sibole gave the charge to the candidate, Stephen Julian offered the ordination prayer, and Jack Watts presented a Bible to McCullough.

Retired Pastor Dies



S. E. Sparks of Starke passed away June 20, after a long illness, and was buried June 22 at Hickory Grove Church, Green Cove Springs.

Brother Sparks was well known and loved by the people of Florida, and especially the New River Association, of which he was moderator a number of years. He served several churches around this area as pastor. He was also active in denominational and civic work.

About Missionaries

Pratt J. Dean, Southern Baptist missionary appointee, plans to leave the States June 23 for Japan, where his first assignment will be language study. He may be assigned at 352 2-chome, Nishi Okubo, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, Japan. He was pastor of First Church, Cottontale, when appointed a missionary in March, 1966.

Mr. and Mrs. J. William Geiger, Jr., Southern Baptist missionary appointees for Chile, expect to leave the States August 24 for Costa Rica, where they will study the Spanish language for a year. Their overseas address will be Apartado Aereo 4035, San Jose, Costa Rica (until leaving the States, they may be addressed at 2700 N.W. 24th Court, Miami, Fla. 33142). He is a native of Miami. When they were appointed missionaries in April, 1966, he was minister of education at North Jacksonville Baptist Church, Jacksonville.

Mr. and Mrs. Howard C. Knight, Southern Baptist missionaries to Argentina, were scheduled to leave the States July 12, following furlough. They may be addressed at Bolanos 139, Buenos Aires, Argentina. Mrs. Knight, the former Joyce Wheeler, is a native of Miami.