

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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Speake, George served as pastor of Seventh Ave (aka Central/Ellyson) Baptist Church, Pensacola, 1940.

Woodlawn: Redecorating church.

William C. Carr Chapel: Completion of Chapel with dedication on April 24, 1974.

HISTORY OF BROWNSVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH

On Sunday, February 20, 1944, the Whitfield Memorial Baptist Mission was constituted as the Brownsville Baptist Church, with 73 charter members. Chaplain Alvin J. Lee served as supply pastor during the time in which the church was seeking out and calling the first pastor.

During the first year the church was not only getting organized to do an efficient job, but also experiencing growth in membership. The acquiring of property and erection of buildings was a vital need from the very beginning. The church has baptized into her fellowship over 1,500 new converts, and has a present membership of 1,414. Records also show that \$2,368,031 have been given through the church to all causes, with \$379,183 of this amount going to mission causes at home and abroad.

Physical properties include land two blocks long upon which there has been built 3 permanent brick educational buildings and a church auditorium which seats 1,190. The total property value exceeds \$900,000.

Seven pastors have guided this congregation during its 30 years. They are: Clarence H. Eiland (1944-45), Dr. A. W. Reeves (1945-46), I. Beryl Roberts (1946-51), Dr. J. Kelva Moore (1951-53), Gerald Walker (1954-59), D. William Dodson, Jr. (1959-66), and Clayton Baker (1966-present).

Twenty-three men have been licensed and/or ordained during the church's 30-year history. Other young people have gone out from this church into other religious work.

Four missions have been sponsored by this congregation during her history. All are now self-containing churches. They are Oakcrest Baptist Church, First Baptist Church, Gulf Breeze, Laurel View Baptist Church, and Pine Forest Baptist Church.

Financially, this congregation has experienced tremendous growth. The annual budget has grown from \$10,723 in 1944 to the present budget of \$128,255. Annual mission gifts show an increase from \$515 in 1944 to \$28,201 this year. \$22,687 of this amount was given to the Cooperative Program.

In addition to the full program of Bible study, evangelism and Christian growth, a special emphasis on music and youth ministry is present in the church. The spirit of missions that has characterized Brownsville's history finds expression in our present plans to sponsor another mission in the Pensacola area.

HISTORY OF OAKCREST BAPTIST CHURCH

Oakcrest Baptist Church was organized Oct. 16, 1955 as a result of the mission-minded Christians of Brownsville Baptist Church. Brownsville purchased property, in the then new Oakcrest Subdivision, on May 4, 1955, and applied to the Home Mission Board for a \$25,000 loan to erect the first building. All services at this time were being held in a lumber shed that was already on the property.

The Oakcrest Baptist Mission became a church after only 10 weeks of meetings with 94 charter members and Rev. J. W. Hunsucker was its first pastor.

In five years the membership grew to a Sunday School enrolment of 497 and Training Union enrolment of 187. The average attendance was 190 per week.

Seeing the need for enlargement, the church voted on Oct. 20, 1963 to apply for a loan and begin construction on another educational unit.

Rev. Reneau Dominey was called as the second pastor of the church on August 16, 1964. Sunday School enrolment at this time was 473 with an average attendance of 230 each week. In 1966 the church voted to purchase the adjoining property on the west for recreation and parking, and the property to the north and back of the church was purchased for a pastorium.

Rev. Overl Oglesbee accepted the call as pastor of the church on Nov. 10, 1968. The total membership at this time was 459. Since this time the church has seen a dream come true of finally having enough educational space and being able to begin work on a new sanctuary. On July 21, 1970, ground-breaking ceremonies for this building were held; on Aug. 6, 1972 the building was completed and dedication services held. There is much pride on the part of the people for this building since the labor was furnished almost completely by the laymen of the church under the leadership of the pastor.

At present, the total membership is 494. We have a vision of continued outreach at Oakcrest.

HISTORY OF CENTRAL BAPTIST CHURCH

The Central Baptist Church originated on the front porch of Mr. & Mrs. H. C. Johnson at 9th Avenue and Jordan Street as a small Sunday School class. The class grew to the extent that they erected a brush arbor on 7th Avenue between Jordan and Maxwell Streets. Here they started having regular church services. A Bro. Crabtree was secured to serve as pastor of the mission church until it grew enough to organize as Seventh Avenue Baptist Church in March, 1924.

In the fall of 1952 the church voted to move from its location on 7th Avenue and Maxwell Street to 12th Avenue and Yonge Street. The name was changed to Central Baptist Church, and ground breaking took place on December 7, 1952. \$60,000 in bonds were issued to finance the building. A pastorium was also built and on May 29, 1955 the present auditorium was started. In 1956 it was necessary to issue two additional bond issues of \$25,000 each in order to enclose the auditorium and provide additional educational space. The first full-time Minister of Music and Education, L. C. Rucker, was employed.

In July of 1962 the old bonds were called in and a new bond program was issued for \$220,000. Another for \$10,000 was issued in November and in July, 1966 a \$40,000 program was issued. During these years the auditorium was completed, as well as many improvements were done, such as air conditioning, etc. The old pastorium was sold and a new one built. The front of the auditorium was remodeled and an upstairs was added to the nursery building.

In 1973 another remodeling program was entered into which when completed will include the establishing of a suite of offices; the improvement of the halls leading to and from the auditorium; and a new portico drive-in entrance.

As best as can be determined the pastors were as follows:

1924 Bro. Crabtree, Bro. Grubbs, Bro. Pool; 1927 Bro. R. R. Beal; 1930 Bro. W. D. Mann; 1931 Bro. A. E. Middlebrooks, Bro. C. O. Stewart; 1938 Bro. G. C. Eubanks; 1939 Bro. C. G. Kellum; 1940 Bro. George Speake; 1941 Bro. D. F. Hickman; 1943 Bro. A. M. Smith; 1948 Bro. A. J. Roddy; 1951 Bro. J. E. McKinley; 1952 Bro. A. B. Allen; 1955 Bro. C. S. Wemp; 1962 Dr. James H. Wright; 1968 Bro. A. C. Phillips; 1971 Bro. James A. Coleman, Jr.

Pensacola Bay

1974

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