

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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Spears, Raymond G. (1932-2020) was born in Clio, Alabama, the son of Howard and Thelma Carter Spears. He graduated from Florida State University and New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Spears served as pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church, Miami and Carol City Baptist Church, Miami. He and his wife, Betty Spears had two sons.



The Miami Herald · 20 Jun 1959, Sat · Page 10 · (Miami, Florida)

2600 East Eighth Avenue, Hialeah
Emmanuel—Rev. Raymond G. Spears
3165 N.W. 56th Street

The Miami Herald · 10 Oct 1964, Sat · Page 20 · (Miami, Florida)

226 S.W. 17th Ave.
Carol City — Rev. Raymond G.
Spears
5005 N.W. 173rd St. Carol City

The Miami Herald · 11 Oct 1958, Sat · Page 24 · (Miami, Florida)

2 New Pastors Named

Two Baptist churches here have new pastors and a Congregational church has new ministers of youth and Christian education.

The Rev. James A. McKeithen will take over the pulpit at Sunset Heights Baptist Church in Hialeah this Sunday. A native of Live Oak, he is a graduate of Norman Park (Ga.) College and Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth. He has served churches in Jacksonville and Lake City and comes here from Lakeland.

The Rev. Raymond G. Spears is the new pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church. He grew up in Winter Garden and was educated at Florida State University and the New Orleans Baptist Seminary.

Raymond G. Spears *... of Carol City*

A TESTIMONIAL dinner for the **Rev. Raymond G. Spears** who has led the Carol City Baptist Church, 5005 NW 173rd Dr., from a new mission to a church of 950 members of eight years will be held there at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Six fellow pastors will be speakers for the testimonial program.



The **Rev. Raymond G. Spears** will begin his seventh year as pastor of Carol City Baptist tomorrow at which time he will present future plans for the church. During his ministry the church has received over 800 new members.

Raymond Glen Spears (“Ray”) passed away in his sleep at home on November 9, 2020 in Winter Garden, FL. He was 87.

Ray was born on November 17, 1932 in Clio, Alabama, the fourth of seven children, to Howard and Thelma (Carter) Spears. His family moved to Winter Garden when Ray was 5 and Ray attended Winter Garden public schools through his graduation from Lakeview High School in 1951. At Lakeview he played football, baseball and basketball. Ray attended Florida State University where he met his wife Betty and was involved in the Baptist Student Union. He graduated with a BA in Social Work from Florida State University in 1955 and with a Masters Degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary in 1958.

Ray lived most of his life in Winter Garden. He served as mayor of Winter Garden for three terms and was a member and past president of Winter Garden Rotary. He was a licensed real estate broker and general building contractor and a charter member of the committee that planned the Orange County Convention Center. In 1976, he was chair of the Winter Garden bicentennial committee. He retired from full time work in 2004 but continued to work part-time the rest of his life. He was a long-time member of First Baptist Church, Winter Garden, the chair of the church centennial celebration committee in 1989 and a teacher of his Sunday school class for many years.

In his retirement, Ray enjoyed traveling with his wife on river boat cruises. Ray loved his family and enjoyed visiting his children and grandchildren as well as his large extended family. He loved FSU and had season football tickets for many years.

Ray is survived by his wife, Betty; son and daughter-in-law, Jim and Gayle (Reid) Spears of Green Bay, WI and son and daughter-in-law, Glen and Joni (Hardy) Spears of Grayslake, IL; his brother Gene and his sister Glynda; four grandchildren and two great grandchildren. He is preceded in death by his brothers Bob, Jack, Billy and Michael.

A public funeral will be held at First Baptist Church, Winter Garden on Monday, November 16, 2020 at 11:00 a.m. preceded by a visitation starting at 10:00 a.m. A graveside service will follow. All are welcome to attend.