

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

Spears, W. L. (1880-1960) served as pastor of churches in Alabama, Georgia and Florida including First Baptist Church, Cottondale, 1921-1922; First Baptist Church, Graceville, 1922; First Baptist Church, Callahan and First Baptist Church, Okahumpka. He and his wife, Mary Lou Spears had three children.

This, That and the Other

SMITH BEGINS PASTORATE AT FORT WALTON BEACH



H. Talmadge Smith, for the past two years pastor of Westview Church, Opp, Ala., has accepted a call to Cinco Church, Ft. Walton Beach, effective April 7.

A native of Montgomery, Ala., Smith is a graduate of Howard College, Birmingham, Ala. and of Southwestern Seminary. Before going to Opp, he was associate pastor of Oakdale Church, Mobile, Ala.

Mrs. Smith is a native of Mobile. They have one son, Tal, Jr.

BARTON SHORES, ORLANDO CALLS BAUGHMAN PASTOR

W. Cecil Baughman has accepted a call as pastor of Barton Shores Church, Orlando, effective May 8.

Baughman has been pastor of Sorrento Church, Sorrento for the past three years, during which time the church purchased new building site and adopted plans for a new church plant.

W. L. SPEARS, MINISTER, DIES IN BRADENTON

On April 1 W. L. Spears, 80, died suddenly of a heart attack at his home in Bradenton, where he had lived since retiring from his active ministry 15 years ago.

During 40 years of active pastorate, he served churches in Florida, Georgia and Alabama.

Spears is survived by his wife; daughter, Mrs. Bob Storr of Bradenton; two sons, Rev. Julius L. Spears of Chatham, Va. and Buford L. Spears of Houston, Texas.

Frink Church, near Clarksville, will observe Homecoming Day on May 1 with a roll call of all members. Wayne D. Bryan, professor at Baptist Bible Institute, Raceville, will be guest speaker.

Dinner will be served at noon, followed by a song service. Otha Martin is pastor.

CARMICHAEL ORDAINED TO MINISTRY AT LIVE OAK

Billy Carmichael, a student at Norman Junior College, was ordained to the Gospel ministry on April 10 by First Church, Live Oak.

On April 2 Carmichael was examined by six ministers, who unanimously recommended his ordination.

Participating in the ordination were: Charge to Candidate, J. M. Sullivan, Live Oak; Charge to the Church, C. M. Gresham, Norman Park, Ga.; Presentation of Bible, Rees Mills, chairman of deacons; and Ordination Sermon, Cornelius Davis, pastor of First Church, Live Oak.

Carmichael was recently called as pastor of Salem Church, near Tifton, Ga.

REVIVAL REPORTS

During a week of revival services at Southside Church, Apopka, there were 16 additions (14 by baptism), one volunteered for mission services, and one surrendered to the ministry, according to Pastor Bob Scurlock. Bob Crowe, pastor of Northside, Miami, was evangelist and Ralph Smith was song leader.

There were 74 additions (46 by baptism) to North Jacksonville Church, Jacksonville during revival services March 27-April 3 with Billy Walker preaching and Leroy Summers singing. Pastor R. Wilbur Herring reports record attendances in Sunday school and Training Union on April 3.

George Palmer, senior at Baptist Bible Institute, Graceville, was evangelist in revival services, at Napier Field Church, Dothan, Ala., where Steve McKinley, a graduate of Baptist Bible Institute, is pastor. There were 15 additions (ten by baptism).

Robert G. Witty of Central Church, Jacksonville led in revival services March 20-27 at First Church, Hialeah, R. Perry Tomlinson, pastor. Music was under the leadership of Gratten E. Tomlinson, minister of music at Hialeah.

Mt. Pisgah Church, McAlpin will observe Homecoming on April 17. Former members, pastors and friends are invited to attend the services and basket dinner at noon. W. C. Hall is pastor.

Thos. V. McCaul, pastor emeritus of First Church, Gainesville, preached in revival services March 20-27 at First Church, Cross City, Richard Gardner, pastor.

"What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us."

CARVER SCHOOL ALUMNI TO MEET IN MIAMI BEACH

Dr. Winston Crawley will speak to the alumni of the Carver School of Missions and Social Work in their meeting in Miami Beach on May 18. Dr. Crawley, secretary for the Orient of the Foreign Mission Board, is married to an alumna of the Carver School, the former Margaret Lawrence.

Dr. Nathan C. Brooks, Jr., Carver School president, will report on current plans of the school.

Mrs. Rice A. Pierce of Nashville is president of the Carver School Alumni Association and will preside over the Miami Beach meeting.

The annual meeting is to be a 7:15 a.m. breakfast in the Surf Room of the Shore Club Hotel. Miss Margaret McKinney, manager of the Baptist Book Store in Miami, is chairman of the committee for local arrangements. Miss McKinney is a former president of the Alumni Association.

NEW ORLEANS SEMINARY ALUMNI PLAN MEETING

The annual alumni meeting of New Orleans Seminary will be at 7 a.m., Thursday, May 19, at Hotel Seville in Miami Beach, according to Leo A. Hebert, Tallahassee, president of the Florida Alumni of the Seminary. Dr. H. Leo Eddleman, president of the Seminary, will be the principal speaker.

An attendance figure must be furnished the Hotel 48 hours prior to the meeting. Those expecting to be present should send for tickets immediately. Order tickets at \$2.00 each from the Office of Public Relations, 3939 Gentilly Blvd., New Orleans 28, La.

MARTINEZ MUSIC DIRECTOR AT TALLAHASSEE CHURCH



Harry Martinez, music major at Florida State University, is the new music director at University Heights Church, Tallahassee, Charles L. Phipps, pastor.

A concert pianist and cadet director of the Army ROTC band at FSU, Martinez succeeds Ervin Gatlin, who was music director for five years.

MRS. J. T. WILLIAMS, MISSIONARY TO CHINA, DIES

Mrs. Laurie Smith Williams, 74, emeritus Southern Baptist foreign missionary, died Friday afternoon, April 1. Funeral services and burial were held Tuesday morning, April 5, in Lakeland, Fla., where she and her husband, Dr. J. T. Williams, were making their home.

Mrs. Williams did educational and evangelistic work in China for 39 years before her retirement

Jewish Evangelism Clinic

More than 500 persons were in attendance at the annual Jewish Evangelism Clinic sponsored by the Miami Baptist Association. This clinic, held at Central Baptist Church on March 28, began with a dinner meeting at which J. Ray Dobbins, Supt. of Missions, urged those in attendance to make use of every available opportunity for winning the more than 100,000 Jews of Miami to Christ.

During the conferences, which followed the dinner, specific ways of using the organizations of the church in Jewish evangelism were pointed out by various associational leaders. Also serving as conference leaders were Mr. and Mrs. William B. Mitchell of the Department of Jewish Evangelism, Baptist Home Mission Board. At the conclusion of the conferences, Mitchell pointed out the fact that the Convention is looking to Miami to set the pace in winning the 5,500,000 Jews of America and indicated some of the ways this may be done.

The Clinic was brought to a close by Don Brandeis, a converted Jew and outstanding young Baptist evangelist whose headquarters are in the First Baptist Church, Tallahassee. His message was preceded by a solo by Mrs. Max Cohn, whose husband is also a Hebrew Christian and pastor of the Emmanuel Baptist Church, Miami. Morris Elliott, Director of Jewish Work for the Association, was responsible for the Clinic, which was planned under the direction of the Associational Jewish Committee John Buell, chairman.

in 1952. During this time she taught in various Baptist schools and directed a kindergarten. She was also acting director of a school for the blind.

A native of Ivey, Ga., she attended Georgia State College for Women, Milledgeville, the University of Louisville (Ky.), the University of Georgia, Athens, and received the bachelor of arts degree from Howard College, Birmingham, Ala. She did further study at Woman's Missionary Union Training School (now Carver School of Missions and Social Work), Louisville, and the University of Alabama.

Before her appointment by the Foreign Mission Board in 1913 Mrs. Williams was a teacher in the Georgia public schools and principal of a Baptist school for Spanish-speaking people in Tampa, Fla.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by three children.

Black Mountain, N. C. big country style, 6 bedroom, sleep 15 to 20, 2 baths, cooking facilities. Furnished except towels. \$7.00 per person per conference. Reservations taken now. 1950 S. W. 27 Ave., Miami, Fla.

(Chipola)

**A SHORT HISTORY OF
THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF COTTONDALE**
Jackson County, Florida

By Doyle Reeves



In 1894 a group of 18 men and women were led to organize a future Baptist Church in the newly developing community which later, in 1905, came to be called Cottondale. For 17 years this church was known as the Baptist Church of Christ. Then the name was changed and for 41 years it was called Cottondale Baptist Church. Finally, in 1935 it became the First Baptist Church of Cottondale.

Twenty-seven years after the building of the first church, three Sunday school rooms were added to the auditorium. In 1947 the present brick building was built. Homecoming 1948 was the first service in this new building. In 1962 Grace Hall was added. The present Fellowship Hall was added in 1982, and an extension to Fellowship Hall is now under construction.

The church has had 27 pastors over its 106 years. It is located at 3172 Main Street. The mailing address is P. O. Box 128, Cottondale, FL 32431.

The founding members were as follows: Mr. A. F. Thomas, Mr. W. A. Walling, Mr. W. T. Graves, Mr. D. F. Cox, Mr. A. C. Thomas, Mr. G. M. Thomas, Mr. G. A. Fellows, Mr. J. L. Massey, Mrs. J. L. Massey, Mrs. R. A. Walling, Mrs. Levey, Mrs. Ada Graves, Mrs. J. L. Massey, Mrs. Benie Thomas, Miss Lula Massey, Miss Eunice Massey, Miss Eula Walling, and Miss Gussie Padgett.

The pastors of the church are as follows with two pastors serving at two different times:

1897-1899 W. A. Bryan: 1900-1901 G. W. McRae: 1901-1902 no pastor: 1902-1906 J. W. White: 1906-1907 no pastor: 1907-1909 C. L. Burns: 1909-1912 J. G. Black: 1912-1913 B. B. Blitch: 1913-1919 P. M. Jones: 1919-1921 R. W. Stuckey: 1921-1922 W. L. Spears: 1923-1924 R. W. Stuckey: 1924-1927 P. M. Jones: 1927-1928 O. B. Harris: 1928-1929 D. W. Hodges: 1929-1946 F. C. Hawk: 1946-1949 L. J. Larkins: 1949-1951 J. F. Hall: 1951-1953 W. A. Frye: 1953-1955 Joe L. Kaiser: 1956-1957 Frank Farris: 1957-1960 Ernest Olds: 1960-1961 W. C. Graves: 1961-1966 Pratt Dean:

FBC Callahan

continuous growth, all to the glory of God through Christ Jesus, our Savior.

Among former pastors beginning in the 1900's were: Rev. D. C. Andress, Rev. J. C. Forter, Rev. L. W. Kickliter, H. C. Pellman, A. E. Caulkins, C. M. Button, A. Z. Carswell, D. J. Sikes, C. E. Saunders, W. L. Spears, J. N. Davis, DeWitt Jackson, Rev. Burke, J. D. Pindexter, Thurmond Spell, W. C. Rice, Paul Carmichael, Jr., A. L. Bonner, Willard Brown, David Lundin, and Samuel C. Lee.

1979

Rev. Lynn Hyatt and wife Peggy became pastor in July, 1979

1980

Renovation of the auditorium was completed in December 1980.

1986

The Family Life Center was completed on July 6, 1986 – almost debt free.

1989

The church had outgrown her present auditorium and a second morning worship service was begun in the main auditorium starting at 8:30 a.m. to make room for more growth.

1994

A new worship facility was completed in the spring of 1994 and was paid off in four years. This building accommodates 1,700 people. The goal of First Baptist is that Callahan and the surrounding area may know Christ. The vision to reach the lost and disciple the saved.

1998

The new worship facility was paid off on December 27, 1998.

In recent years, this church has been impacted by the strong growth patterns in the Callahan area. This church believes that where the population is growing, the church should be growing. As long as there are people to reach, a church can grow. An aggressive outreach program has been the single greatest factor contributing to the growth of First Baptist. Each week the body of First Baptist has been involved in outreach visitation in the community carrying forth The Great Commission.

2004

The church is in the planning stages of building a new education building and parking spaces.

The Florida Times Union, Jacksonville, Florida, July 10, 2004.

Forty Fruitful Years

By

P. V. Nelson

HISTORY LAKE COUNTY ASSOCIATION of BAPTIST CHURCHES 1924 - 1964

HISTORY OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF OKAHUMPKA, FLORIDA

The First Baptist Church of Okahumpka was organized November 12, 1923, with ten charter members. Five of the ten charter members are deceased, two are members of the Largo Baptist Church, Largo, Florida. Both are teachers in the Sunday School. One is a member of Central Baptist, Leesburg, Florida, and serves as a Sunday School teacher. Only one is still a member of the First Baptist at Okahumpka, and takes an active part in all the church activities. He serves as adult men teacher, church treasurer and deacon. The other charter member has been gone several years, but has never called for her letter.

Rev. T. J. Knight, Green Cove Springs, Florida, helped to organize the church and supplied as pastor until May 1, 1924, when Rev. B. M. Anderson was called and served until October 1, 1924. Until this time the church had been a member of the Alachua Association. In 1924, the church became a charter member of the Lake County Association. Rev. L. A. Donnelly was called as pastor and served for one year. Rev. B. F. Johns was then called and served for one year. In October of 1926 Rev. G. T. Hinton was called but resigned in March 1930. Reverend Raymond Strickland was called again and served until May 1932. Reverend C. C. Long

supplied then until October 1933. Then Maurice Brantley was called. He was then a student at Stetson University. He served until December 1935.

Reverend Brantley was ordained soon after being called. In March, 1936 Reverend Rufus Kenney was called and served until September of the same year. In October 1936, Reverend W. L. Spears was called and served until September 1939. Reverend C. L. Crissey was called in January 1940 and served until June 1942. Reverend Crissey was ordained in April 1940. Reverend Raymond Strickland was called again in 1942, and served until October 1943. It was during this time, under the leadership of Brother Strickland, that the present educational building was built. Robert Clark, a ministerial student at Stetson, supplied as pastor from January 1944 to August 1945. Mr. M. R. Avery supplied as pastor from October 1945 to September 1948. The church grew rapidly under his leadership and it was during that time that the present church building was erected. Reverend Rufus Kenney was called in October, 1948 and was ordained shortly after he was called. Under his leadership the church bought a parsonage and paid off all debts.

Also the church had 146 additions, of which 75 were by baptism. He resigned in September of 1958. Reverend Joe Speight was called October 1958 and served until September of 1960. Brother J. T. Forrest supplied for church from November 1960 until April 1961. At this time Reverend Albert Whitehead was called and served until June 1963. During his ministry the church was air-conditioned and parsonage re-modeled. Reverend Paul Hofmeister was called in November of 1963 and is serving the church as pastor at the present time.

The church has a present enrollment of 96 resident members and 66 non-resident members. Church services include Sunday School, B.T.U., worship services both morning and evening, and Wednesday night prayer service.

FBC Cottondale

Approved by The Baptist Church of Christ in conference January 23, 1897

Reverend W.A. Bryan, Moderator

W. C. Graves, Church Clerk

From 1897-1909 four pastors were called to serve the church: W.A. Bryan, 1897-1899; G.W. McRae, 1899-1901; J.W. White 1902-1906; and C.L. Burns, 1907-1909. For two of those years, the church had no pastor. Many factors played an important role in the short services of these dedicated God-called men: the salary was so small, and the amount of work to be done was disheartening with insufficient funds. However, the survival team was stimulated by their trust in God, so perseverance prevailed!

Pastors

† 1897-1899	W. A. Bryan
† 1899-1901	G. W. McRae
† 1901-1902	No pastor
† 1902-1906	J. W. White
† 1906-1907	No pastor
† 1907-1909	C. L. Burns
† 1909-1912	J. G. Black
† 1912-1913	B. B. Blitch
† 1913-1919	P. M. Jones
† 1919-1921	R. W. Stucky
† 1921-1922	W.L. Spears
† 1923-1924	R. W. Stucky
† 1924-1927	P. M. Jones
† 1927-1928	O.B. Harris
† 1928-1929	G. W. Hodges
† 1929-1946	F.C. Hawk
† 1946-1949	L. J. Larkins
† 1949-1951	J. F. Hall
† 1951-1953	W. A. Frye
† 1953-1955	Joe L. Kiser
† 1956-1957	Frank Farris
† 1957-1960	Ernest Olds
† 1960-1961	W. C. Graves, Interim
† 1961-1966	Pratt Dean
† 1966-1969	Harry Powell
† 1969-1978	Dan Thomas
† 1978-1982	Dr. W. Wiley Richards
† 1982-1983	Dr. Judson Vaughn, Interim
† 1983-1985	Bob Anderson
† 1986-1987	Thomas L. Melvin, Interim
† 1987-Present	Jack H. Brock

(Chipola)

FBC Graceville, FL Pastors List

1896	J. W. Johnson	1982-1991	Jerry M. Windsor
1897	J.T. Register	1992-1993	George Anderson
1898	S.W. Lack	1994-1998	Ron M. Perry
1899	N.A.	1999	Mark Rathel
1900	W.H. McIntosh	2000	Kenneth Harrison
1901	J.J. White	2001-2005	Bob Johnson
1902	N.A.	2006	Mark Long (interim)
1903-1907	J.J. White	2007	Wiley W. Richards (interim)
1908	C.L. Matthews	2008-2018	Timothy A. Folds
1909	D.C. Bard	Present	Naethan Hendrix
1910	N.A.		
1911	J.W. White		
1912-1916	N.A.		
1917	J.H. Gunter		
1918	N.A.		
1919	C.A. Cozart		
1920	N.A.		
1921	B.C. Glaize		
1922	W.L. Spears		
1923-1932	J.W. White		
1933-1935	F.L.Dykes		
1936-1937	N.A.		
1938-1939	H.E. Ridenour		
1940	Koy Peterson		
1941	N.A.		
1942	Ernest R. Vincett		
1943	N.A.		
1944	A. B. Higdon		
1945-1946	H. Clyde Harless		
1947-1953	R.W. Waterman		
1954	J.D. Freeman		
1955-1965	Berger E. Howard		
1966-1974	J. R. (Joseph) Nanney, Jr.		
1975-1980	J. David Carter		
1981	Jerry Lee(interim)		

REV. WILLIE L. SPEARS

Rev. Willie Lee **Spears**, retired 80-year-old Baptist minister, died at his home Friday. He resided at 2604 12th Ave., **W.**

Rev. Spears came here from Leesburg 15 years ago. He was a native of Vienna, Ga.

He is survived by his wife, Mary Lou **Spears**; a daughter, Mrs. Robert Storr, Bradenton; two sons, **Rev.** J. H. **Spears**, Chatham, Va., and B. L. **Spears**, Houston, Tex.; two brothers, and a sister; three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held Monday at 4 p.m. in Shannon's Bradenton Chapel with **Rev.** Bennett Hall of the Southside Baptist Church officiating.

Interment will be at Manasota Burial Park.