

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

Stephens, Bunyan (1880-1965) was born in Gordon County, Georgia the son of Frank and Julia Dickson Stephens. He attended Mercer University and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and was awarded the doctor of divinity degree by Columbia College, Lake City, Florida in 1917. Stephens served as pastor of churches in Kentucky, Georgia and Florida including First Baptist Church, Plant City, (1912), First Baptist Church, Ocala, First Baptist Church, Bradenton (1919), and First Baptist Church, Tallahassee (1919-1929). He and his wife, Helen Barton McClure Stephens had one son.



First Baptist Church

Each Sunday at 11:00 am and 7:00 pm

1306 Manatee Avenue West

Bradenton, Florida

Pastors Past and Present

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1. **Rev.** J. L. Eddings - May 12, 1889 - October 1889
2. **Rev.** H. H. Norris - 1889 - 1890
3. **Rev.** R. H. Whitehead - 1890 - 1895
4. **Rev.** L. W. Simmons - 1895 - 1897
5. **Rev.** J. D. Harrelson - 1897 - 1898
6. **Rev.** R. H. Whitehead - part 1889
7. **Rev.** J. P. Smith - 1899 - 1901
8. **Rev.** H. H. Norris - 1901 - 1903
9. Dr. A. J. Beck - 1904 - 1911
10. Dr. J. T. B. Anderson - 1911 - 1913
11. Dr. A. Preston Boyd - part of 1914
12. Dr. J. S. McLemore - 1914 - 1918
13. Dr. E. J. Bingham - part of 1918
14. Dr. Bunyan Stephens - part 1919
15. **Rev.** Roger L. Clark - 1919 - 1922
16. **Rev.** E. H. Jennings - 1922 - 1942
17. **Rev.** A. Judson Burrell - 1942 - 1945
18. **Rev.** Frank Anderson - 1945 - 1966
19. **Rev.** Phil Messinger - 1966 - 1967
20. **Rev.** Charles Jim Marsh - 1967 - 1971
21. **Rev.** Richard R. Lloyd, Int. - part of 1972
22. **Rev.** A. R. Fagan - 1972 - 1974
23. **Rev.** Richard R. Lloyd, Int. - part of 1974
24. **Rev.** James M. Metts - 1974 - 1978
25. **Rev.** Richard R. Lloyd, Int. - 1978
26. Dr. Samuel D. Reeves - January 1979 - present

The Ocala Evening Star

Sat, Jul 26, 1913 · Page 6

Baptist

(Rev. Bunyan Stephens, Pastor)

9:30 a. m.—Sunday school.

11 a. m.—Preaching by the pastor.

Subject, "The Lord's Supper at the Close."

REV. BUNYAN STEPHENS'

IDEA OF REST

(Baptist Witness)

Our genial brother, **Rev. Bunyan Stephens**, of Ocala, has been "resting" up in Georgia holding protracted meetings. How like a preacher is that. What other class of men on this earth would take a vacation that way. Brother **Stephens** is to fill his pulpit in Ocala the first Sunday in September, as usual. Georgia is a dangerous place for a good preacher to visit, holding a meeting. They covet earnestly the best gifts over there, and several of our best gifts have gone to them. We warn them again concerning our John **Bunyan Stephens**. Hands off. We do not wish him to make so many a "Pilgrim Progress" to Georgia, he might find a "delectable land" and fail to return home.

REV. BUNYAN STEPHENS CELEBRATES TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY AS MINISTER



REV. BUNYAN STEPHENS



Smith's Weekly
Fri, Oct 16, 1925 - Page 6

Twenty years ago tomorrow **Rev. Bunyan Stephens**, pastor of the local Baptist church was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry. He was a student of the Southern Baptist Theological seminary at Louisville, Ky., at the time and Dr. Geo. B. Eager of the seminary faculty was chairman of the ordaining council. For about two years following his ordination Mr. **Stephens** was pastor at Butler, Ky. In June 1908 he came to Kissimmee, Fla., where he served for three and a half years. He has been pastor in Plant City, Ocala and Bradenton.

He came to Tallahassee in Oct. 1919 following **Rev. J. Dean Adcock**. The past six years have been years of progress and harmonious work in the Baptist church. Additions to the church have considerably exceeded four hundred during that time. As a token of esteem and appreciation the church presented a new Ford sedan to Mr. **Stephens** last Sunday. No special program has been arranged for Sunday but the friends of Mr. **Stephens** will doubtless turn out in large numbers to rejoice with him on this anniversary occasion.

KIWANIS CLUB IN WEEKLY MEETING

Adopts Resolutions Against Removal of Rev. Bunyan Stephens

At the usual weekly meeting of the Kiwanis Club on Tuesday last the following business was transacted. Committee on nomination of officers for ensuing year. R. T. Mickler, chairman, reported the names of two candidates for each office who received the largest number of votes at the primary ballot held during the week. Final election was ordered for next meeting.

Secretary Ben Meginnis informed the club that he had heard that Rev. Bunyan Stephens, pastor of the Tallahassee Baptist Church, had received a unanimous call to the pastorate of the First Baptist church in Rome, Georgia, and inasmuch as the removal from Tallahassee of this earnest preacher would be a serious loss to the intellectual and religious life of the community, he hoped that the Kiwanis Club would take some action to induce Rev. Stephens to remain. Upon motion President Louie W. Strum was instructed to send the following day letter to Mr. Stephens:

Tallahassee, Fla.

November 13, 1928.

Rev. Bunyan Stephens,
Care of First Baptist Church
Rome, Ga.

Tallahassee, Fla.

November 13, 1928.

Rev. Bunyan Stephens,
Care of First Baptist Church
Rome, Ga.

It is the earnest hope of the Kiwanian of Tallahassee expressed by unanimous and vigorous vote at our meeting today that your decision may be to remain with us. To lose the inspiring influence of your personality and labors would be a disastrous loss not only to the spiritual life of Tallahassee but to that of our Colleges and Schools as well. We realize that many factors must be considered in formulating your answer to those who have called you to other fields of service, and while we do not wish to hamper your own good judgment, nevertheless the Kiwanis Club cannot refrain from an expression of the earnest hope that the people of our community and the students of our College and Schools may enjoy a continuation of your inspiring spiritual guidance and able civic leadership for many years yet to come.

Kiwanis Club of Tallahassee,
By Louie W. Strum, President;
Ben A. Meginnis, Secretary.

THE ARMY WANTS

REV. BUNYAN STEPHENS

Rev. Bunyan Stephens has just received the following dispatch:

Camp Gordon, Ga., Dec. 5.

Bunyan Stephens, Ocala, Fla.:

Can you accept army Y. M. C. A. brigade physical directorship for the length of the war. State the minimum salary, and the earliest date of acceptance.

George Hyman, Chaplain.

Ocala would hate to lose Mr. **Stephens**, but we all know he is a splendid man for such work.

Former Plant City Pastor Alive And Well In Georgia

It now seems definitely established that **Rev. Bunyan Stephens** is still alive and active in the service of the Lord, to which he has devoted his long life. **Rev. L. Don Miley**, pastor of the First Baptist Church of Plant City, in the history of the church recently published on this page, listed the pastors who had served it in the 88 years of its existence. Of the 28 pastors who have served the church prior to his appointment 12 years ago, **Rev. Miley** said "The only living former pastor is Dr. James W. Parrish, now pastor of the Riverside Baptist Church in Miami."

Miss Mae Sikes, of Tallahassee, soon after the publication of the article by **Rev. Miley**, advised that **Rev. Bunyan Stephens**, who served the Plant City church in 1912, is now residing in Rome, Ga., though retired; and this week I received a note from Attorney Niel Ferguson of Ocala stating that "**Bunyan Stephens**, retired Baptist minister, is living in Rome, Ga. We

Rev. Bunyan Stephens, formerly pastor of the Plant City Baptist church, and who is now located at Ocala, was a welcome visitor in Plant City for a short time on Monday and Friday while on his way to and from Lakeland this week. **Rev. Stephens** is a minister of marked ability and it is gratifying to his host of friends to know that he is succeeding in his present work.—Plant City Courier.

McClure Stephens Ordained

Special to Times-Union.

TALLAHASSEE, Sept. 14.—McClure Stephens, son of the Rev. Bunyan Stephens, for several years pastor of the First Baptist Church here, has been ordained a Baptist minister. The charge to the candidate was delivered by his father at ordination services in the First Baptist Church in Rome, Ga., Sunday night, according to information received here.

McClure Stephens is a graduate of Leon High School, Tallahassee. The Rev. Bunyan Stephens is pastor of the church in Rome.

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Heads Rotarians



Rev. Bunyan Stephens, of Rome, who Tuesday was elected governor of Georgia Rotary at the convention held in Macon.

Dr. Bunyan S. Stephens, Baptist Leader, Is Dead

Constitution State News Service

ROME, Ga.—Funeral services for Dr. Bunyan S. Stephens will be at 10 a.m. Friday in Rome's First Baptist Church of

Dr. Stephens, 84, died Wednesday in a Rome hospital.

Long active in Floyd County church and civic affairs, Dr. Stephens had served as a member of the executive committee of the Georgia Baptist Convention for 15 years.

Dr. Stephens, a native of Gordon County, formerly resided in Atlanta. He attended Mercer University and the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and was awarded the doctor of divinity degree by Columbia College, Lake City, Fla., in 1917.

Dr. Stephens came to Rome as pastor of the First Baptist Church in 1929. He was long active in Rotary Club work and had served as president of the Rome club. He also had served as Georgia district governor of Rotary.

He was active in Boy Scout work and was presented the Silver Beaver Award.

Survivors include his wife; a son, McClure Stephens, Tallahassee, Fla.; two brothers, R. M. Stephens, Atlanta, and Julian Stephens, Miami, Fla.; and one grandchild.

Dr Bunyan Simeon Stephens

Birth

15 Jul 1880

Gordon County, Georgia, USA

Death

7 Apr 1965 (aged 84)

Rome, Floyd County, Georgia, USA

Burial

Myrtle Hill Cemetery

Rome, Floyd County, Georgia, USA

Son of Frank and Julia Dickson Stephens.

Family Members

Spouse

Helen Barton McClure Stephens

1888–1968