

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

Steven, Don served as pastor of Oak Grove Baptist Church, Escambia County.

✓ 1982 Pensacola Bay

leadership of Rev. Emory Rogers. Under the leadership of our present pastor, Rev. Robert E. Lowery, who has been with us for six years, we have installed central heat and air, installed cushions on the pews, painted, and taken care of needed repairs. Our big project was the purchase of land for future growth, a ball park, and a playground.

Klondike Baptist Church has been blessed and we ask our fellow Christians to pray for us as we continue to grow. Our prayer is to be a beacon in our community to draw men and women to Christ and that our future will be greater than our past.

The following pastors have served our church: E. E. Rice, R. L. Scott, H. J. Ramsley, I. I. Roberts, M. J. Peters, L. N. Brock, Willy Martin, J. S. Worley, L. E. Roberts, R. R. Beal, Ernest Handrop, Kirby Chapman, I. I. Roberts, Walter Dean, E. E. Roberts, Henry E. Marlow, Jess Allen, Lazelle Owens, L. L. Rawson, R. B. Pullen, A. M. Smith, Emory Rogers, W. W. Burlison, and our present pastor, Robert E. Lowery.

HISTORY OF OAK GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH

In 1860 the Jacob A. Godwin family homesteaded on the land that is now owned by Mr. & Mrs. Jess Godwin. The family saw a great need for a church building; therefore, they gave part of their land on which to build a church.

In 1883 the church was organized in an old log school house with a membership of eight persons. The membership consisted of Mr. Jacob A. Godwin, Mrs. Jacob A. (Aunt Sis) Godwin, Mrs. Caroline Godwin, Mrs. Rebecca Godwin Weekley, Uncle Jim Merritt, Aunt Sarah Godwin Merritt, Mr. Enoch Bray and Mrs. Elizabeth Bray.

No words are adequate to describe the struggle that these eight members had in completing the building. The original building faced the south and was located farther down toward the creek than the present building.

The first church was part of the Old Elim Baptist Association and remained part of that association for several years until Judge E. D. Beggs came to the church and drew up the necessary papers to transfer the church to the present Pensacola Bay Baptist Association.

The first funeral held in the church was for Mr. D. J. Buchanan, grandfather of Mr. Willis Buchanan.

In 1909 Oak Grove Church was host to the Associational meeting and has been many times since.

Mr. Jacob A. Godwin, Mr. Jess Godwin's daddy, was the first Sunday School Superintendent followed by Mr. Alex Hall.

The Reverend John McAnally was the first pastor of the church. He helped to get the church organized and served as pastor for about six years. At that time, services were held only once a month.

After the Reverend John McAnally left, the church was fortunate to get Reverend J. T. (Tom) Fillingim for pastor. He was a member of the House of Representatives, president or moderator of the Associational meetings for many years and was leader in many other responsible positions. The church paid Reverend Fillingim \$65 a year. By this time the church was having services twice a month and Brother Fillingim drove from Bluff Springs twice a month for services. He remained pastor of the church for forty years.

In 1927, Mrs. Louise Godwin invited Mrs. Mae Wemier to help organize a Women's Missionary Union. Mrs. Godwin became the first president of the W.M.U. organization and remained president until ill health made it necessary for her to give up some of her duties. This organization was so dear to Mrs. Godwin's heart that she traveled to Tallahassee on many occasions to attend workshops to make W.M.U. better. She was very careful always to have blue seal teachers and leaders in the organization. She remains a very active member to this day, and she is the oldest living President of W.M.U. in this entire association.

In 1939, the present church, which is the third building, was built. Mr. & Mrs. Jess Godwin gave the deeds to the land for the church house and parsonage. Times were hard and nobody had any money, but the members had faith and a willingness to work to get a new church. Every Sunday, Aunt Susan Buchanan would ask the congregation to sing "Jesus is All the World to Me," and she would take up an offering for the building of the church. Then she would ask the group to sing "God Will Take Care of You." Aunt Susan Buchanan, Mr. Lee Rigby and Mr. Alex Steele seemed to push the hardest and encourage everyone the most until the building was finished.

The church has had its share of pastors. Following Rev. Fillingim was Rev. C. E. Stewart, then Rev. Charlie Beal who was the first pastor of the present church. He drew the blue prints for the building.

Coming after Rev. Beal the following have served: Rev. Carl Byork, Rev. Ruben Davis, Rev. T. R. Odenaph, Rev. Peyton Taylor, Rev. Q. E. Wells, Rev. L. F. Watson, Rev. Cleve Ellis and Rev. Claud Higdon, who was the first pastor to get the church organized on the eight-point record system, Rev. Bill Irvin, Rev. Earl Tew, Rev. Jimmy Brock, Rev. **Don Steven**, Rev. John Hedgepath, Rev. Ed Lewis, Rev. Emory Rogers, Rev. Charles Clark, Rev. John Stamps, Rev. R. L. Kirkland, Rev. Terrell C. Lanton, and Rev. James Gardner. Rev. Jesse Wood, Jr. is presently serving as interim pastor.

Of all the pastors who pastored the church, Bro. Lanton is the only one that preached his first sermon in this church. During the pastorate of Bro. Bill Irvin, Bro. Lanton substituted for Bro. Irvin one Sunday and delivered his first sermon.

In the late 1960's there was a great need for more space so again the members prayed and worked until they added Sunday School rooms, a baptistry and a choir loft. Since then new furniture has been added and Mr. & Mrs. Jess Godwin and Mr. & Mrs. Jack Liles gave an organ which has added so much to the church services.

HISTORY OF WARRINGTON BAPTIST CHURCH

Warrington Baptist Church had its start in 1938 when a Mission Sunday School was organized by the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church. Rev. J. T. Gore was the pastor at that time. The church was formally organized on August 17, 1939, with nineteen charter members. Since that time the following men have served as pastor: Thomas J. Anderson, E. Y. Soileau, E. R. Anderson, Ernest S. Owens, Jr., James L. Monroe, J. Larry Mayo, and Randy G. Atkinson, present pastor.

The first meeting place was at Jackson St. and Barrancas Ave. in a rented building. On March 1, 1940, the meeting place was transferred to Turner Lee