

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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Stewart, L. G. (d. 1967) was a native of Pensacola. He served as pastor of Pleasant Home Baptist Church, Holt, Poplar Dell Baptist Church and Ensley Memorial Baptist Church. Stewart and his wife, Mary Jean Stewart had four children.



HISTORY OF HEIGHTS BAPTIST CHURCH

Heights Baptist Chapel began as a mission of East Hill Baptist Church in 1947 under the pastoral guidance of W. G. Stracener. Eighty-five members from East Hill formed the nucleus of the new congregation. This work was self-sustaining almost from the day it opened. The mission was the first church of any kind to be erected in the East Pensacola Heights area.

In October of 1949, 249 members of Heights Baptist Chapel were organized into Heights Baptist Church, and called Willard A. Brown, Sr., as first pastor. After the church was organized, the Chapel property with a total value of \$45,000 was given by the East Hill membership to the new church without any indebtedness.

Construction of the first educational building was begun in 1951, allowing the young church to increase its Sunday School enrollment and other ministries. This was soon outgrown and in 1955 plans were formulated for another educational building. This same year the auditorium was refurbished with new floor, pews and other additions.

Ground breaking for this building was in 1957. Also this year, the church sponsored the organization of the New Hope Mission into Scenic Bay Baptist Church. In November 1957 additional property was purchased for desired future expansion.

The George V. Axelson Building was dedicated June 13, 1958. This provided not only additional class room space, but much needed space for recreation and a dining-fellowship hall. The building was named for one of the East Hill deacons whose faith helped to establish this church and whose perseverance helped to uphold it in its beginning years.

Six times during the period from 1957 through 1965, Heights Baptist Young People represented the association at the State Sword Drill Eliminations. In 1968, two of our young people were sent by the church to British West Indies to do summer mission work there.

Also in the sixties and early seventies, other remodeling work was done and the building air-conditioned. During 1977, the Sanctuary was remodeled.

Other pastors have been: James L. Knight, Jr., called 1953; Richard E. Roberts, called 1958; Chaplain Wallace Whatley, called as interim pastor 1965; Fred J. Martin, Jr. called 1966; Thomas L. Lide, called as interim pastor 1977; James G. Hamacher, called December 1977 and is presently serving.

HISTORY OF POPLAR DELL BAPTIST CHURCH

In 1910 people in the Poplar Dell community, near Century, gathered together to erect a church building. On June 4, 1911, the Poplar Dell Baptist Church was organized, with nine members. The church became a part of the Elam Baptist Association.

The name of the church was suggested by Gertrude Seymour, because of the poplar trees in the branch head located behind the school house in which she taught.

In 1914 they petitioned the Pensacola Bay Association for membership. In the October, 1915, associational meeting held at Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, Poplar Dell Baptist Church was accepted as a member of Pensacola Bay Association. Our church continues to take an active part in the work of the association.

The following men have served as pastor of the church:

W. B. McCreary
H. W. Rumbley
H. G. Roley
J. J. Nelson
A. S. J. Countryman
D. W. Bosdell
J. T. Fillingim

Rev. Noblet
W. A. Adams
H. S. Higdon
C. C. Eiland
Leo B. Roberts
Billy Forte
Frank Booth

C. R. Beal
R. B. Davis
O. A. Forehand
L. J. Watson
L. G. Stewart
F. M. Mote
F. O. Robison

James E. Copeland
C. C. Morris
Wilson Adkinson
George Kell
Jere Hendricks
Nathan Little
Lanier Singleton

The present pastor, J. B. Wells, has served since February, 1975. In June, 1977, our church called Charles Davis as minister of music and youth.

The present church building was erected in 1946. Later, an educational building was added and the sanctuary was enlarged. In 1963 a pastorium, next to the church, was completed. Through the years the membership of the church has grown to 211.

In 1976 the history of Poplar Dell Baptist Church was written and, since then, the written history has been brought up to date with the printing of two supplements. Copies of these history books have been presented to the Director of Associational Missions of Pensacola Bay Association, to be placed in the associational office.

In May, 1978, our church was recognized by the Florida Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Convention for being in the top twenty-five churches in the Southern Baptist Convention in doctrinal study courses. We were twenty-second in SBC and sixth in the Florida State Convention.

Our minister of music and youth led in the formation of the North Pensacola Bay Baptist Youth Association, which is made up of ten churches in the north end of our association.

Our prayer is that our church will continue to be a beacon in our community, drawing men and women to Christ, and that our future will be even greater than our past.

Pensacola Bay

1978

Pleasant Home Holt

Due to incomplete records we are unable to give an accurate list of the faithful pastors who have helped to make Pleasant Home Church. Each of the following, and others, played an important role, however, they are not in chronological order:

PASTORS

Rev. John Senterfelt	Rev. Alvin C. Higdon
Rev. D. Anderson	Rev. Grover Key
Rev. C.C. Eiland	Rev. George Pugh
Rev. E.T. Pitts	Rev. John Smith
Rev. P.M. Scott	Rev. B.L. Shirley
Rev. A.W. Langley	Rev. Ralph J. Noles
Rev. James Sutley	Rev. Theodore Smith
Rev. J.C. Floyd	Rev. J.C. Shell
Rev. W.W. Clifford	Rev. C.C. Morris
Rev. C.L. Perry	Rev. H.G. Thornton
Rev. J.B. Ward	Rev. Eric Arrant
Rev. J.J. Cooper	Rev. L.G. Stewart
Rev. H.D. Wilson	Rev. Chas. B. Sansom
Rev. G.C. Eubanks	Rev. Harold A. Anderson
Rev. L.L. Henderson	

The record of deacons, ordained to aid these worthy ministers since August of 1900, is also incomplete:

DEACONS

John T. Cooper, Charter deacon
E.M. Pitts
Hatley T. Pierce
W.W. Parker
L.B. Cooper
J.D. Pitts
J.W. Gilmore
Raymond Andrews
Dewie F. Pittman
Clifford R. Parker
James E. McDonald

The Church Trustees Are: W.M. Ivey, L.B. Cooper and Mason Howard

It is not feasible to attempt to enumerate the conversions and other additions to this church. Our present enrollment is 182. Mrs. Ella H. Pitts is our only Charter member.

The Rev. Lanier G. Stewart, a native of Pensacola, has been called as pastor of Ensley Memorial Baptist Church.

Pensacola News Journal
Wed, Oct 11, 1967 · Page 2

FISHER-POU FUNERAL SERVICE

Rev. Lanier Grady Stewart

Funeral services for the **Rev. Lanier Grady Stewart**, 48, of 3917 Idlewood Drive, who died Tuesday morning in a local hospital will be at 2 **a.m.** Thursday in the Ensley Memorial Baptist Church with the **Rev. David W. Gray** and the **Rev. Henry Marlow** officiating.

Honorary pallbearers will be Earl Ferris, Frances Vincent, Herbert Hurdle, Virgil Payne, Elmer Peterson and C. C. Foust.

Active pallbearers will be Archie Levins, Jack Griffin, Archie Hall, Doe Chavers, Louis Godwin Marvin Griffey.

He was minister of the Ensley Memorial Baptist Church, was a lifelong resident of Pensacola, was a civil service employee at the Pensacola Naval Air Station and was a veteran of World War II.

Survivors include the widow, Mrs. Mary Jean **Stewart** of Pensacola; two daughters, Mrs. Louwanda Mitchell and Miss Trwanda **Stewart** both of Pensacola; two sons, Lanier **Stewart** Jr. and James Edward **Stewart** both of Pensacola; the mother, Mrs. W. M. **Stewart** of Pensacola; four brothers, George **Stewart**, **Rev. H. M. Stewart**, Lamar **Stewart** and V. R. **Stewart** all of Pensacola; four sisters, Mrs. Dora Brady, Mrs. Lucille Zerr, Mrs. Luverne Cooper and Mrs. Loree Nellums all of Pensacola; and four grandchildren.

Burial will be in the Union Hill Cemetery with Fisher-Pou Funeral Service directing.

Mary Jean Stewart, age 106, passed away in her sleep at her home in Dothan, Alabama. Mary was born July 22, 1916 in Rossiter, Pennsylvania to Tony and Ester Sgro of Sicily. Mary's parents immigrated from Italy and after going through Ellis Island, Tony worked a short time mining in Pennsylvania. The family then moved to New Jersey outside of New York City to open a vineyard and a farm. Mary and her sister, Jenny worked in a factory in New York City making slipcovers for automobiles.

Mary met her husband at Radio City Music Hall while he was on tour as an RCA country singer. The couple later married and moved to his hometown in Pensacola, Florida to begin a family. They had five children, Lanier Jr., Mary Karlene, Jimmy, TruWanda and LouWanda. Mary spent the rest of her life interior decorating for many well know families in Florida.

Mary is survived by the following: her daughter, LouWanda (Larry) Mitchell and her children: Wendy Mitchell, Allen Mitchell and spouse, Paula; Bruce Mitchell, Samantha Wilcox and spouse, Dennis; daughter in law, Patti Stewart and children; Jeanetta Reston and spouse, Rodney; Jimmy Stewart and spouse, Donna. She also has several great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren; one sister, Grace Buffa, and her children, Ronnie and Johnnie; and numerous nieces and nephews.

She was pre-deceased by her husband Lanier, and children, Mary Karlene, Jimmy, Lanier Jr. and TruWanda and numerous siblings.

Everyone would ask her how she lived so long, and she would say she owed it to making and eating plenty of spaghetti and meatballs, and allot of garlic.

<https://www.fcfls.com/obituaries/Mary-Jean-Stewart?obId=46216212>