

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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Strickland, E. P. (-1961) was a native of Ozark, Alabama. He served as pastor of churches in Alabama and Florida including Highland Park Baptist Church, Panama City; Olga Baptist Church and Curry Baptist Church. He and his wife, Valeria Strickland had three children.

Rev. Strickland, Of Everglades Baptist, Dies

(Special to the News-Press)
EVERGLADES, July 5 — Rev. E. P. Strickland, who followed an egret "sign" here seven years ago to establish a Baptist church, died early this morning in Naples Community Hospital.

Rev. Strickland, 45, suffered a cerebral hemorrhage and was taken to the hospital last night. He died at 2:25 a.m. Rev. Strickland, victim of a massive heart attack two months ago, had planned to resume the pulpit at Everglades Baptist Church Sunday.

Rev. Strickland, a native of Ozark, Ala., was pastor of a Baptist church in Andalusia, Ala. On the Sunday he handed in his resignation, an egret, rare in that part of the country, walked into the church and down the aisle.

A few days later, he noted that an egret was pictured on a map beside the town of Everglades, which he had learned was seeking a pastor for a community church. He took that as a "sign" and immediately moved here.

Rev. Strickland was initially

and immediately moved here. Rev. Strickland was initially employed by the Collier Corp. as pastor of the community church. Later, he became pastor of the Everglades Baptist Chapel, founded under a sponsorship of the First Baptist Church in Fort Myers. The Chapel under his leadership became an autonomous church.

Rev. Strickland is survived by his wife, Mrs. Valeria Strickland, two daughters, Brenda Lorraine, 14, and Judy Yvonne, 8, and a son, Jimmie P. Strickland, a student at Georgia Tech. He had three brothers and four sisters living in North Florida and Alabama.

Funeral services at 10:30 a.m. Friday will be conducted at the Richard A. Pittman Funeral Home in Naples with Rev. A. F. Minshew, pastor of Fort Myers Baptist Church, officiating. He will be assisted by Rev. Robert Martin, pastor of the Naples Baptist Church and moderator of the Royal Palm Baptist Association, of which Rev. Strickland was a member of the executive committee.

Burial will be at 2 p.m. Sunday in Evergreen Memorial Gardens in Panama City, with Smith Funeral Home of Panama City in charge.

Pallbearers will be E. M. Brown, W. G. Price and James A. Franklin Sr. of Fort Myers; Fred Williams and James O'Quinn of Everglades; and Rev. George Alderman of Bonita Springs.

Friends may call at Pittman Chapel between 4 and 9 p.m. Thursday. The First Baptist Church of Fort Myers will provide floral arrangements for the Panama City interment. Friends may make contributions to the First Baptist Church in Fort Myers or the Everglades Baptist Church to help the family defray hospital expenses in lieu of

PEACE RIVER ASSOCIATION

Moderator: Rev. W. Kline Williams, Immokalee, Fla.

Association No. 23 Reported in Associational Minutes Year ending Sept. 30, 1956

Clerk: Rev. J. F. Price, 2050 Cortez Blvd., Ft. Myers

Next Meeting: Nocatee, Oct. 16-18, 1957

Contributions Through

State Mission Office

Oct. 1-Sept. 30, Inclusive

Index Number	CHURCHES	PASTORS (See Roll of Ministers for Addresses)	Sundays of Meetings	Baptisms	Present Membership	Sunday School Enrollment	V. B. S. Enrollment	Training Un. Enrollment	W. M. U. Enrollment	Brotherhood Enrollment	Total Value All Church Property	All Pledgings of Churches for the Year for All Causes	Pastor's Salary	Cooperative Program	Miscellaneous Designated Gifts	Total Gifts Through State Office
23-00-00	Association at Large Arcadia:										\$	\$	\$	\$	10 00	10 00
23-1-1	First	B. R. Blankenship	4	61	836	620	179	152	92	40	225,000	40,816	4,900	6,500 00	2,936 40	9,436 46
23-1-2	North Hillsboro	O. K. Collier	4	11	159	98	0	29	0	12	17,000	3,223	1,987	319 36	00	319 36
23-2-1	Boca Grande	W. R. Jones	4	2	133	79	29	56	34	0	25,714	5,724	2,600	543 34	147 13	690 47
23-3-1	Bonita Springs	B. C. Collins	4	4	152	70	88	21	18	0	13,000	5,567	2,860	200 50	146 40	346 90
23-4-1	Brownville	J. K. Manley	4	3	78	91	46	52	17	10	6,000	2,825	1,045	272 81	67 27	330 08
23-5-1	Charlotte Harbor	E. T. Earnest	4	7	154	58	0	28	12	0	25,000	9,175	3,138	111 00	00	111 00
23-18-1	Curry	E. P. Strickland	4	3	21	30	0	0	0	0	1,200	585	520	25 00	15 00	40 00
23-6-1	El Jobean	J. A. Rainey	4	11	39	59	0	33	0	0	15,000	1,980	560	138 36	23 91	162 27
23-7-1	Felda	J. M. McKay	4	0	41	40	0	0	0	0	1,500	203	90	60 00	8 25	68 25
	Ft. Myers:															
23-8-1	First	A. P. Minshew	4	20	1,173	997	251	267	197	0	350,000	63,555	5,775	11,075 33	3,631 96	14,707 29
23-8-2	Riverside	E. S. Anderson	4	85	823	847	349	367	145	61	139,000	40,299	4,195	6,274 05	986 98	7,261 03
23-9-1	Ft. Ogden	H. B. Davis	4	16	155	60	51	48	23	0	9,500	3,965	2,438	73 50	62 05	135 55
23-10-1	Immokalee	W. K. Williams	4	83	509	523	175	83	50	10	100,000	16,479	4,360	1,577 43	188 05	1,765 48
23-1-3	Mt. Ephraim	Dow Durrance	4	10	157	67	42	0	19	0	26,500	4,464	2,316	541 42	422 85	964 27
23-1-4	Mt. Pleasant	E. K. Albritton	2	5	62	27	0	0	0	0	1,500	630	240	37 40	00	37 40
23-17-1	Naples	U. C. Walton	4	14	294	347	317	100	146	44	100,000	33,269	5,650	1,646 66	693 89	2,340 55
23-14-1	Nocatee	W. E. Witte	4	11	309	159	86	39	12	0	125,000	8,601	2,760	666 82	195 65	862 47
23-8-3	North Ft. Myers	C. I. Edge	4	19	209	164	96	68	18	10	21,000	6,699	2,400	25 00	28 02	53 02
23-1-5	Oak Hill	J. D. Hartfield (resigned)	4	6	88	57	50	31	8	0	5,000	5,391	1,210	535 31	107 08	642 39
23-15-1	Pine Island	Chas. Miller (resigned)	4	4	91	98	0	51	0	0	15,000	6,108	2,833	226 63	31 32	257 95
23-16-1	Punta Gorda	Geo. N. Wehrman (new)	4	5	389	247	126	57	67	0	75,000	16,044	3,900	882 00	245 45	1,127 45
23-13-2	Sandy	Samuel Douglas	1	0	14	0	0	0	0	0	1,000	270	200	12 00	00	12 00
	22 Churches	TOTALS		380	5,886	4,733	1,885	1,482	858	187	\$1,297,914	\$ 275,921	\$ 55,807	\$ 31,743.92	\$ 9,937.72	\$ 41,681.46

The **Rev.** and Mrs. **E. P. Strickland** and daughters, Judy and Brenda, left Sunday evening for a two week vacation. They stopped in St. Petersburg for a visit with Mrs. **Strickland's** mother, Mrs. Esther Williams. Then they will go to Panama City to visit relatives and friends.

The **Rev. E. P. Strickland** will hold a revival at the Mill Creek Mission of the First Baptist Church in Andalusia, Ala. next week after which he will join his family for the trip home.

W. L. Gray and son from West

Rev. E. P. Strickland and son, Jimmy Paul, made a business trip to Miami Tuesday.

Rev. E. P. Strickland announces ground breaking services to be held Sunday at Olga at 3 **p.m.** This is for the first unit of the Baptist Church building, which is estimated to cost approximately \$10,000. Olga church is a mission of the First Baptist Church of Fort Myers. **Rev. E. P. Strickland** has been serving there as pastor.

The vacation Bible School held at Lee Cypress Baptist Church last week under the supervision of **Rev. E. P. Strickland** was a great success. The white school had an attendance of 28 pupils. Commencement was held for them Sunday afternoon at 6:30. Each pupil received a certificate.

Teachers were **Rev. Strickland**, intermediates; Mrs. Jack Oquinn, juniors; Mrs. H. Oquinn, beginners; Mrs. T. Tomlinson, pianist; and Mrs. H. O. Terrell served refreshments daily.

The colored Vacation Bible School had an attendance of 40. The pupils were awarded certificates Friday afternoon at their commencement exercises.

Teachers were Miss Opal Terrell, juniors; Miss Virginia Smith, beginners and **Rev. Strickland**, intermediates.

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EVERGLADES
Baptist
Building on School Grounds
Rev. E. P. Strickland Sunday:
school 10 a.m., worship 11 a.m.
and 8:15 p.m., training union 7
p.m. Wednesday, prayer 7:30 p.m.
FELDA

Baptist Church at Everglades Plans Big Expansion Program

By RUFE DAUGHTREY

EVERGLADES, April 14—An expansion and improvement program costing several thousand dollars is being launched by the Baptist Church, founded only five years ago and grown into a membership of 150 with a handsome church, a modern parsonage and a property occupying the entire end of a city block.

The new project is for a building that will serve for Sunday school classes and a center for social activities. As a nucleus for the new center, the church bought the old Chokoloskee school for \$500, will spend more than \$1,000 to have it moved, and will spend several thousand more in enlarging and remodeling.

The church has grown up as a mission of the First Baptist Church in Fort Myers but is rapidly becoming so self-sufficient that it is expected to be accorded independent status by the end of the year.

months later showed there were 84 Baptists in town. Rev. Strickland resigned from the Community Church to hold services for that group in the school auditorium.

"There was some feeling at first because of the division but I think that has disappeared now since it appears that the membership of the Community Church has not been decreased," said Rev. Strickland.

There was tough sledding at first for both church and pastor with collection plate returns slim from the small congregation. Rev. Strickland worked, first at the Jerome sawmill town grocery store, then at driving a bread truck, and the church raised money to buy a \$1,150 church site on School Drive.

When the Jerome mill closed, Owner C. J. Jones gave the church building there to the new Everglades Baptist congregation which paid \$1,525 to have it

felt the call to the ministry. He sold the business in 1948 attended Howard Baptist College at Birmingham, pastored his first Church at Highland Park near Panama City, then moved to Andalusia where he was pastor of the First Baptist Church for four years until he resigned.

Mrs. Strickland is originally from Panama City and although they had never visited in Everglades before moving here, she had relatives who had lived for many years in Everglades. It was an aunt, Mrs. Ruby Garrett, since moved to Georgia, who sent the message that there was an opening for a pastor at the Community Church.

Mrs. Strickland's maternal grandfather, W. L. Pridgen, was for a brief time a pioneer resident of Bonita Springs, opening the first store and post office there in 1901 and credited as first to capitalize on Bonita Beach's seashells, sending out circulars and selling them by mail. He later returned to his old home at Panama City.

The Stricklands have a daughter, Judy, 7, another daughter, Brenda, 13, and a son, Jim, now in his second year at Georgia Tech after graduating from Everglades High School.

corded independent status by the end of the year.

The new church started under leadership of an Alabama preacher who saw an egret as a sign that he should come to Everglades.

The egret, plentiful here but rare in Alabama, walked into the Andalusia, Ala., Baptist Church just as the Rev. E. P. Strickland was resigning, feeling that he was needed in other fields but not knowing where.

The bird was shoed out but Rev. Strickland couldn't forget the incident. A few days later he heard there was an opening at the Community Church at Everglades, an area he had never been near.

"I looked for it on the road map and there beside the name of the town was pictured an egret," said Rev. Strickland.

He immediately got in touch with trustees of the Community Church, which is non-denominational but employs pastors of various faiths, and a pact was sealed, Rev. Strickland moving to Everglades with his wife and three children in August of 1954.

When a religious census eight

Everglades Baptist congregation which paid \$1,525 to have it moved. Another \$2,000 has since been spent to remodel it into an attractive building. The interior is finished in pecky cypress.

On Dec. 23, 1956, the Everglades Church was adopted as a mission by the First Baptists of Fort Myers who in 1957 bought two more adjoining lots, bought the section foreman's dwelling from the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Co., moved it to church property fronting on Copeland Avenue and spent considerable remodeling it into a dwelling for the pastor.

Rev. Strickland returned to full-time status as a pastor, preaching Sunday morning at Everglades and driving 170 miles roundtrip to preach Sunday evenings at the Baptist Church at Olga, also a first Church mission, and also during the week for prayer meetings. Olga now has its own pastor and is an independent church.

The new addition is expected to front on Ventura Street, midway between the church and parsonage. All Easter Sunday collections at the church here have been allocated toward this

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By IMA LEE EVANS

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Hazen left this week for their home in Unionville, Ohio after spending the winter here at the Green Wave Court, Palm Beach Boulevard.

Mr. and Mrs. Rudy Deinert have returned to their home in Brigantine, N. J. after spending their third season here at Harrelson's Cottages, Palm Beach Boulevard.

Mr. and Mrs. Dan Smolnick have returned to their home in Long Island, New York after a stay here at the Green Wave Court. They plan to visit relatives in Alabama before returning home.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles Istenes, Orange River Boulevard, are spending the weekend in Cairo and Thomasville, Ga., with relatives.

Mr. and Mrs. E. K. Chaffin have returned to their home in Miami after a visit here with her

parsonage. All Easter Sunday collections at the church here have been allocated toward this project. Further financing will be provided through sale of interest-bearing bonds, Rev. Strickland said.

The new church operates on a \$7,500 annual budget, is nearly self-supporting now and is expected to be fully solvent when granted independent status at the end of the year, Rev. Strickland said.

Originally from Ozark, Ala., Rev. Strickland was operating a prosperous furniture store business at Panama City when he