

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

Strickland, Eugene served as pastor of churches in Mississippi and Florida including Five Points Baptist Church, Fernandina Beach, 1971-1975 and First Baptist Church, Chattahoochee. He served as director of missions for the Okaloosa Baptist Association, 1988-2025. Strickland and his wife, Marcia Strickland had two children.

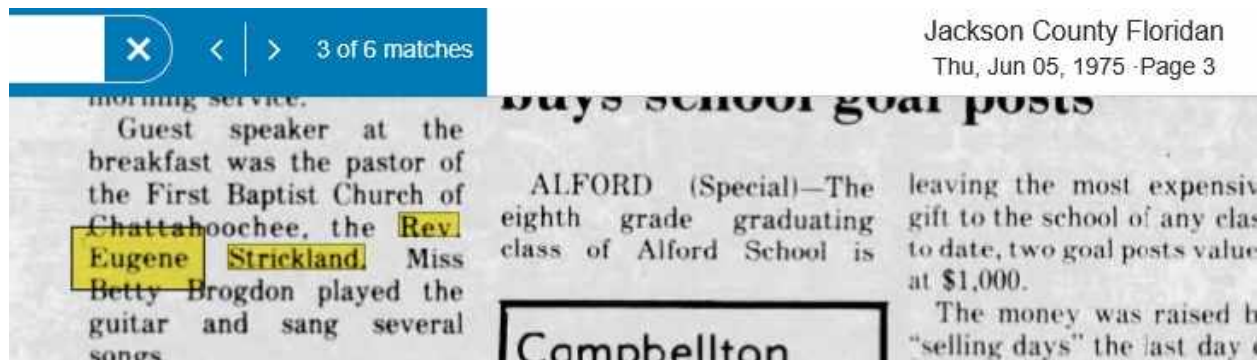


Five Points, Fernandina Beach

MINISTERS WHO HAVE SERVED

* Rev. W. H. Oellerich	October 1947 – December 1951
Rev. F. L. Murphy	May – December 1951
Rev. R. J. Johnson	January – May 1952
Rev. D. W. Griffin	May 1952 – June 1953
Rev. J. M. DeVette	September 1953 – March 1954, interim
Rev. Hugh Eberhart	March 1954 – October 1955
Rev. James W. Keen	November 1955 – February 1964
Rev. Thomas Hicks	May 1964 – March 1966
Rev. William Thirlwell	April 1966 – February 1967, interim
Rev. Henry L. Schol	February 1967 – March 1971
Rev. Gus Johnson	August – October 1971, interim
Rev. Eugene Strickland	October 1971 – April 1975
Rev. Gus Johnson	April – October 1975, interim
Dr. Earl Baughman	October 1975 – May 1978
Rev. Vernon Clifton	July 1978 – October 1985
Rev. James Thorntonberry	December 1985 – February 1986, interim
Rev. Larry Demakowski	May 1986 – April 1992
Rev. John Temoshchuck	April – July 1992, interim
Rev. Richard Murray	July 1992 – July 1995
Rev. Wallace Jernigan	September 1995 – August 2002
Rev. Glenn Wilson	November 2002 – June 2003, interim
Rev. Rick Lawrence	September 2003 – January 2004, interim
Rev. Glenn Wilson	January 2004 – January 2005
Rev. Noel Roberts, Jr.	July 2005 – July 2007
Rev. Buddy Jones	October 2007 – October 2008, interim
Dr. Alan Brown	October 2008 – March 2012
Dr. Bill Yeldell	May 2012 – May 2013, interim
Rev. Frank Camarotti	June 2013 - present

* Leave of absence in 1951



Director of missions retires After 37 years of faithful leadership and service to the Lord

Home Stories Providing Director of missions retires After 37 years of faithful leadership and service to the Lord

Written By: Brooke Mannion

September 16, 2025

Gene Strickland, who recently retired from Okaloosa Baptist Association, “loves the Lord, and getting people to know the Lord, and know Him better, has always been his goal, it seems, in all he does,” says Wendy Goetzke, ministry assistant, Okaloosa Baptist Association.

OKALOOSA COUNTY—“He would frequently travel around the area counting new homes and praying for each soul moving in, that they would find a church home,” said Wendy Goetzke, ministry assistant, Okaloosa Baptist Association. This is just one of many examples of faithful service that Gene Strickland provided during his 37 years as director of missions in the association.

Strickland officially retired in August and plans to continue being available as pulpit supply and interim pastor as needed.

His wife, Marcia, who passed away in August, served faithfully alongside him in ministry as the Okaloosa Baptist Association’s records secretary for 25 years. She also filled in for local churches anytime a pianist was needed. “Mrs. Marcia was a tremendous helpmate to Mr. Strickland in ministry and marriage,” added Goetzke.

Prior to serving as director of missions, Strickland served at three churches in Mississippi, as well as Five Points Baptist Church in Fernandina Beach and First Baptist Church of Chattahoochee.

Known for his silly sense of humor and exhorting pastors, Strickland has created a legacy of service to the Lord and bringing the Word of God to others near and far. “I encourage pastors to be patient, be kind, be faithful and be deliberate,” said Strickland.

Aimee Imparato served with Strickland in various missions projects through the years. Noting his impeccable sense of humor, she added, “He was always a cheerleader for supporting missions and service groups, ministries that reached out into the local and distant communities showing the hands and feet of Jesus.”

Ronnie Sells, pastor, Red Oak Baptist Church, added, “Brother Gene has a heart for pastors and churches that makes me glad to serve in association with him.”

“Gene encouraged us to try different strategies and not give up, but to bathe everything in prayer, believe God and simply walk by faith,” said O Randall Jenkins, interim pastor at First Baptist Church Milligan and lead minister of TwoTwentyFive. “He is eager for the cause of Christ and I’m a better minister because he let me sit with him over a cup of coffee many times and ask the hard questions.”

Strickland has been an avid supporter of Florida Baptist Disaster Relief. “With his support, guidance and mentorship, we were able to restore a trailer and equip it with new chainsaws and tools in time to respond to the hurricane season of 2020,” said Rodney Nobles, Blue Hat Unit 121. “We now have a trained response team of 15 to 20 people logging hundreds of hours serving and sharing the love of Christ since 2020.”

For the next associational missions strategist, Strickland has a few words of wisdom: “Be aware of the possibilities for existing churches, new churches, future churches, and be aware of the challenges and possibilities for pastors and church staff. Be prepared to be the ‘model servant’ for them.”

Goetzke shared, “I have known Mr. Gene since my youth and have served with him in ministry for the last 16 years. He has a very unique sense of humor and is always ready to share a few new jokes. Joking aside, he loves the Lord, and getting people to know the Lord, and know Him better, has always been his goal, it seems, in all he does.”

<https://flbaptist.org/gene-strickland-retirement-okaloosa-baptist/>