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



Messinger, Phil graduated from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He was ordained by New Haven Baptist Church, Kentucky. Messinger served as pastor of churches in Kentucky and Florida including Coral Park Baptist Chapel, Miami, Bowe Gardens Baptist Church, Melbourne and Hickory Grove Baptist Church, Green Cove Springs.

The Kentucky Standard
Thu, Aug 08, 1963 · Page 20

Visiting Ministers Take Part In Ordination Service

The Service of Ordination for Rev. Phil Messenger, pastor of the New Haven Baptist Church, was held at 3:00 p. m. Sunday, July 21, at the church. Rev. Messenger is a student at the Southern Baptist Seminary, in Louisville.

Six visiting ministers participated in the Ordination Service: Rev. Jerry Stubblefield, pastor of the Victory Baptist Church, Shepherdsville, gave the invocation; The Ordination Sermon was presented by Rev. Glenn Hinson, assistant professor of Bible History at the Southern Baptist Seminary; Charge to the Candidate was given by Rev. Glenn Armstrong, of Mt. Sterling; Charge to the Church was given by Rev. Arland Benningfield, of Meadow Hill Baptist Church; the Ordination Prayer was offered by Rev. Jerry Martin, pastor of the Dry Valley Baptist Church, Mystic, Ky.; the benediction was given by Rev. Bobby Asge, pastor of the Rolling Fork Baptist Church.

Rev. Messenger was presented with a gift of a Bible from the congregation, by Mr. J. O. Ford.

Attending the Ordination Service were Rev. Messenger's parents and grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Messenger, Sr. and Mr. and Mrs. J. P. Messenger, Jr., of New Jersey.

Florida Today
Sat, Jun 05, 1976 · Page 32

Baptist Ch

Clergy Meet

The South Brevard Ministerial Association will install 1976-77 officers at its last regular monthly meeting Tuesday at 11:30 a.m. at the Harbour Inn restaurant in Melbourne.

The association, representing about 110 churches in South Brevard, have elected the Rev. Charles Schmidt, pastor of Peace Lutheran Church as president, and the Rev. Leland Hall, pastor of First Baptist Church of Melbourne, as vice president.

The Rev. Fred Spencer, pastor of St. Mark's Methodist Church was elected secretary, and the Rev. D. R. Strandlund, pastor of St. Timothy's Lutheran Church is the treasurer-elect.

The association will resume meetings in September.

The association, under current president, the Rev. Philip Messinger of Bowe Gardens Baptist Church, is planning a July 4 Bicentennial program.

The Miami Herald
Sat, Feb 07, 1970 · Page 29

AN EXCHANGE of pulpits between the Rev. Phil Messinger, of the white Coral Park Baptist Church, 95000 SW 16th St., and the Rev. Joseph Coats, of the black Glendale Baptist Church which meets in the Frank C. Martin Elementary School in Richmond Heights, will mark the observance of Race Relations Sunday during the 11 a.m. services.

Indian River Press Journal
Sat, Sep 08, 1984 ·Page 20

King's Baptist

A pastor-led Sunday school Enlargement Campaign will begin today, 6:30 p.m., in the church social hall, with a covered-dish dinner for all Sunday school workers, and church leadership and interested members of the Sunday school.

An enlargement blitz will be today at 9:30 a.m. and early Sunday afternoon following a covered-dish luncheon at the church. Virginia Gilbert, church outreach director, will lead the special effort to enroll prospects in the church's Bible study program.

The Enlargement Campaign will involve not only enrolling new members in the Sunday school, but a study of "Growing and Winning Through the Sunday School," taught by the pastor, the Rev. Raymond Coppage.

Velma Coppage heads the records committee and Deborah Gaffney is the publicity chairman. A goal of 608 has been set in enrollment for the Sunday school this year. The present enrollment is 488.

Super Sunday, Sept. 15, will be a high attendance Sunday and all workers will seek to have a record number present in Sunday school.

Rev. Phil Messinger, pastor of Hickory Grove Baptist Church at Green Cove Springs, Fla., will be the speaker this Sunday at the 11 a.m. worship service. It is Single Adult Day and the single adults will have charge of the evening worship service. Kevin Ross will be the speaker.

Ch
Metho

Christ Ur
by the Sea
side highw
Boulevard
A1A betwe
wood Roads
at 9 and 11
John F. Fev
Go Astray.'
cilities at a
ing Sunday
10 with clas

The adul
Dr. Arthur
bled for the
of the early

A coffee
the 11 a.m.
for all wors

The T.L.
meet tomor
cliff Hall. T
of single a
are invited

The pray
at 9:15 a.m
Parlor to li
from the c
ty.

The Arts
meet at 1
workroom.
join in the

On Tues
mittee wi
beginning
Committee

The Bradenton Herald
Sat, Apr 29, 1967 ·Page 4

Rev. Phil Messinger To Deliver Final Sermon Here This Sunday



REV. PHIL MESSINGER

The Rev. Phil Messinger, intern pastor of the First Baptist Church of Bradenton, will preach his final sermon here this Sunday evening at 7:30. His sermon topic will be "A Parting Prayer."

Rev. Messinger read his resignation to the congregation on April 9, adding that he has accepted a call to be pastor of the Coral Park Baptist Chapel in West Miami.

Immediately following the 7:30 service a reception will be held in the recreation hall of the church in honor of the Rev. and Mrs. Messinger. The membership and friends of the church are invited to attend.

The Rev. Jim Marsh will be in the pulpit this Sunday morning during the 11 a.m. service. He has been conducting revival services at the First Baptist Church in Prichard, Ala., and has reported that the results of the services have been most gratifying.

Wednesday evening at the 7:30 service the congregation will have an opportunity to express its views on the Sunday morning worship hour and on the continuance of the Wednesday evening fellowship suppers.

New Church

Florida Today
Sat, Feb 20, 1971 Page 13

Bowe Gardens Baptist Church Regains Life Under New Pastor

By RAY FAGAN
TODAY Religion Writer

"The cross has been lighted once again on the front of the building where Bowe Gardens Baptist Church meets," according to its new pastor, Rev. Phil Messinger.

"This is a symbol of what I hope our church will be," he said, as he noted the cross had not been lighted during a period of several months when the congregation had been without a regular pastor.

"The cross must be central in the belief and life of any New Testament church. If it were not for the fact that Jesus is the son of God and that He died on the cross and rose again, there would be no Christian church.

"I believe the church is a group of people who love one another because they have experienced the love of God for them in the death of Jesus on the cross — a fellowship of disciples who are taking up their own crosses each day as they choose to think and act as Jesus did, rather than the selfish way man so often naturally chooses."

Pastor Messinger is a native of Somerville, N.J., with degrees from Murray State College, Ky., and Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, Louisville.

each Sunday evening at 6:15, under the direction of William Booth, while Arlie Wheeler, Sunday School director, takes a new hard look, says the pastor, at that phase of teaching.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Messinger, with Mrs. Wallace Haight, has started a nursery program for children under four, during worship services, to provide them with good concepts and security as they share books, and pictures, stories and songs.

A strong mission program and one of evangelism are goals of Pastor Messinger, who says he hopes to place another plaque in the narthex based on Acts 1:9, "Go into all the world preaching the Gospel."

Bowe Gardens Baptist Church was just a dream of a missions committee of First Baptist Church of Eau Gallie in 1959, when a group of men began to lay donated concrete block for a chapel on three acres of land they had cleared on Sarno Road, which once ended at the winter quarters of Kentucky Military Institute, overlooking the Eau Gallie River.

The original church building was subsequently enlarged and remodeled into a 400-seat contemporary sanctuary. A second story was built over it for classrooms, which connect with another two-story education building and fellowship hall.

The young pastor believes his joy in music and in track, golf and other active sports will help guide him in programs geared to the young people.

Favorite hymns, requested by those attending evening worship, add their comfort to the fellowship of the church as does each one clasping the hand of the other, even across the aisles, following the closing hymn at morning worship.

A special church training program has been inaugurated

The Orlando Sentinel
Fri, Apr 12, 1974 · Page 66

Effective teaching stressed

THE BOWE Garden Baptist Church, located on Sarno Road in Melbourne, seeks to teach the Bible as God's word in an effective way.

They believe the church is a group of people who love one another because they have experienced the love of God for them in the death of Jesus on the cross — a fellowship of disciples who are taking up their own crosses each day as they choose to think and act as Jesus did, rather than the selfish way man so often naturally chooses.

THEY BELIEVE the cross must be central in the belief and life of any New Testament church. That Jesus is the son of God and that He died on the cross and rose again.

Bowe Garden Baptist held its first services in 1960 and is still serving the community and teaching the word of God.

They have a strong mission program and a special church training program each Sunday evening.

Florida Today
Sat, May 27, 1978 -Page 1D

and screens pastors, but they don't direct pastors to churches, Heaton said.

"Ministers aren't assigned," he said. "It's up to the choice of the pastor and congregation. When a church becomes vacant a pastor nominating committee is formed. It's similar to the Baptist system except the Baptists aren't as organized; they don't approach it as systematically."

Southern Baptist system churches are very autonomous. When a church needs a pastor it usually finds him already serving at another church. If the vacant church's pulpit committee feels that someone is God's man for their church, they invite him to take the job, leaving the other church pastorless until it does the same thing to another church.

The Rev. Phil Messinger recently resigned as pastor of the Bowe Gardens Baptist Church to become pastor of another Baptist church in Green Cove Springs. Messinger, who has been at Bowe Gardens for 7½ years, said he is leaving because he feels that it is what God wants him to do.

"I didn't particularly want to go," he said. "We have a lovely house and we love the people . . . it's difficult to know exactly why and how I feel."

He said money wasn't a factor, and that it wasn't discussed until the very last. Messinger said he's getting a "modest raise, almost a cost of living kind of thing."

In the Jewish faith, it's strictly a matter of negotiation between the Rabbi and the Synagogue, according to Rabbi David

See PASTORS, 4D, Col. 1

Florida Today
Sat, Mar 10, 1973 Page 5B

ing to everyone.

Bowe Gardens Baptists Ordain Arlie Wheeler

MELBOURNE — Bowe Gardens Baptist Church will celebrate its 11th anniversary Sunday.

There will be a 3 p.m. ordination service for Arlie Wheeler, former Sunday School director and chairman of deacons.

The pastor, Rev. Phill Messinger will preach the ordination sermon. Rev. Robert Rowe, pastor, First Baptist Church, Satellite Beach, will give the charge to the candidate and Rev. Mitchell Maddox of Cocoa, will give the charge to the church.

Rev. Mr. Wheeler will preach his first sermon at the 7:30 p.m. service.

Wheeler has been called to the ministry of education and youth at the First Baptist Church, Delray Beach.

time music director. The 75th anniversary of the church was celebrated, and a youth revival was led by a Stetson University revival team.

On Oct. 1. 1964, when the education building plans were announced, a Bradenton Herald editorial stated:

> "Members of the First Baptist Church have met the challenge of their church's need for expansion and improvement of physical facilities with an interesting combination of spiritual and business approaches. They have met it overwhelmingly in such a manner as to indicate the emphasis was upon the spiritual...Churches in general are growing here. But there is something particularly rewarding about the continued progress of a Downtown church as the community continues to grow - geographically speaking - away from it. First Baptist has sponsored and nourished several other churches in the community....Yet it goes right along, growing itself. With its new facilities it will grow still faster. And its growth, nurtured from its own dedicated membership, will make that increase both sounder and more valuable to the community.[14]

In 1965 Clarence Bussell joined the staff as custodian, Gene Ziegler served as summer youth director, and Philip Messinger was hired as intern pastor for a two-year period.

As had happened previously, in the 19-year ministry of E. H. Jennings, there developed a power struggle between pastor and lay leadership; pastor and people became disenchanted with each other, and Rev. Frank Anderson ended his ministry to First Baptist Church in its 20th year, on June 1, 1966. The Andersons moved to Hazelwood, N.C. where he was called as pastor to the First Baptist Church. There is no question about his favorable impact on the church and the community, reflected in the February 2, 1966 article, "The Good Work Will Go On," in the Bradenton Herald:

> "The resignation of the Rev. Frank Anderson as pastor of First Baptist Church comes as a surprise to the community as it did to the congregation. And it will leave a tremendous record for his successor to match.
>
> "The Rev. Mr. Anderson's 20-year tenure at First Baptist has covered great physical growth in the church and the community, and great spiritual growth as well. First Baptist is a far larger church, in membership, function and wide-spread influence, than it was when he came; and yet it has founded three other churches which also are growing and serving well their areas.
>
> "Such a record is something for both pastor and people, and the community as a whole, to view with appreciation and even pride, for it speaks well for dedication to both pew and pulpit. But a church is not one man, or one group of men and women. A church is an institution, and if firmly based and dedicated as is First Baptist, it will continue to grow and function and fill its vital role in the community when a new leader takes the pulpit.
>
> "So First Baptist will go on. And we are confident that the ministry of Frank Anderson will continue wherever in the Lord's vineyard he decides next to labor. He is that type of minister, and his talents and abilities are to be shared, not hoarded.

"It has been a fruitful and valuable relationship for the community as well as the church and its pastor. Certainly the community shares in the hope that he will continue as vigorous workers for those things which matter most."[15]

The good work did go on. Carol Yeagley was hired as a church secretary when Mrs. A. L. Zipperer resigned, a youth-led revival was followed by a youth retreat, and a recreation committee was appointed for the first time. The annual church summer picnic was held as usual at Kiwanis Park.

In January 1967 Rev. Charles Jim Marsh was called as pastor, and in April Phil Messinger completed his two-year internship and accepted a call to Coral Park Chapel in Miami. Grace Hatcher, a Stetson sophomore, was hired to serve as summer youth director as well as youth choir director. In September it was voted to have catered Family Night Suppers with reservations made in advance. Mrs. H. C. Rowell was elected church clerk.

In 1968 David Goodroe, a student at Carson-Newman College, was hired as summer youth director. and Mrs. Harold Soules was the new church clerk, replacing Aubrey O'Pry.

There was some experimentation in the 60's with alternate time schedules. In December 1963 a 6:00 evening worship hour, with 7:15 Training Union hour was tried, and morning worship was 9:00 with Sunday School at 10:15. In April of 1964 those morning hours were continued, but the congregation voted for traditional evening hours. In May 1967 the alternate morning hours were used again.

At the end of the decade church membership was 784, with 17 baptisms and 38 other additions reported during the previous year. The membership had decreased by 762 since 1960, many of whom transferred to the new mission churches.

The Music Ministry

During the two-year ministry of Al Washburn the music program thrived, as he worked toward the goal of attaining the Standard of Excellence for Music Ministry. In April 1960, with 146 members enrolled, six choirs participated in the Associational Music Festival with four choirs going on to the State Festival in Tampa, where they received superior ratings. At Easter the Church and Chapel Choirs combined to present "The Crucifixion". During the summer, when the younger choirs "furloughed," 118 members remained active, and one Intermediate Choir member was sent to Music Camp.

After Washburn resigned to attend the seminary at Louisville in August 1960, Dr. E. D. McKissack from Manatee Jr. College accepted the job as part-time music director, but by December his college schedule made it impossible for him to continue. Choir enrollment had reached 205. In the absence of a music director, member Jim Ward often served as song leader during worship services.

About that time problems with the organ arose, and it was found that fall-out from the plaster in the organ room was the culprit. Remedial steps were taken by the house committee.

In October 1961 B. F. "Buck" Littlefield was called as Education/Music Director. After a survey