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

Swaringen, Steve (1927-2020) was born in Southern Pines, NC, the son of Martha and C. S. Swaringen, Sr. Swaringen retired from the U. S. Navy in 1967. He attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Swaringen served as pastor of St. Johns Baptist Church, Palatka. His first wife Carolyn V. Vredenburg Swaringen died in 2006, they had two children. He remarried Shirley Jamieson Swaringen.

REV. TED RODDA, JR.



Rev. Ted A. Rodda, Jr. went to the First Baptist Church of Hastings as their pastor in June of 1984. He was born in Palatka where he lived for only the first few years of his life. His father, Rev. Ted A. Rodda, Sr., was called into the pastoral ministry which resulted in many moves as Rev. Rodda, Jr. grew up. He accepted Jesus as his Lord and Savior at the age of 8 and as would be expected grew up as an active part of the church. In 1968 he graduated from the Leesburg High School and began work at the Polk Junior College in Winter Haven, FL on his A.A. degree. After completing his degree at Polk Junior College he married a fellow student, Donna Carol Oswald in August of 1970 and moved to West Palm Beach. At West Palm Beach both entered Palm Beach Atlantic College. In 1972 as part of the first graduating class, they both received their B.S. degree in Elementary Education.

Following college, Rev. Rodda, Jr. served almost four years in the U.S. Army as a Chaplain's Assistant. It was during this time that he accepted God's call into the pastoral ministry. During the final year and a half of his military service he entered the University of Northern Colorado where he earned a M.A. degree in Psychology. Upon leaving the military, Rev. Rodda, Jr. moved his family to Fort Worth, Texas where he continued his preparation to pastor by entering Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. In 1978 Rev. Rodda, Jr. was called to his first pastorate, Antioch Baptist Church in Bartow, FL. It was after serving there for six years that God led him to Hasting.

During his ministry in Bartow, Rev. Rodda, Jr. served as Adult Church Training Director, Media/Library Director, Petitionary Letters Committee member, and chairman of the Time, Place & Preacher Committee. He also presently serves the Florida Baptist Convention as a Special State Worker with the Church Training Department leading conferences on Church Training and is actively working in MasterLife Workshops. He is currently being trained as a Co-Leader for MasterLife and MasterBuilder Workshops.

STEVE SWARINGEN



Rev. Steve Swaringen, pastor of the St. Johns Baptist Church of Palatka, was born on July 30, in Southern Pines, North Carolina. He served for twenty-two years in the U.S. Navy, twelve as an enlisted man, and ten years as an officer. He was an Avionics Officer and flew as a navigator/bombardier on an A-3 Sky-Warrior. He retired from the Navy in August 1967. He attended Del Mar Junior College and the University of Corpus Christi, Texas. In 1967 he attended Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Ft. Worth, Texas.

He served the following churches as Minister of Music, Youth, and Education; the First Baptist Church of Lindale, Texas; the Riverview Baptist Church of Jacksonville, Florida; the First Baptist Church of Fernandina Beach, Florida; and the Southside Baptist Church of Lake City, Florida. He served as associate pastor of the Lemon Heights Baptist Church of

Palatka; and pastored the First Baptist Church of Carmichael, Pennsylvania; and the Pennyroyal Baptist Church of Franklin, Ohio; before coming to the St. Johns Baptist Church of Palatka, in August 1983. Rev. Swaringen and his wife, Carolyn, have a son and a daughter.

HISTORICAL SECTION

HISTORICAL EVENTS

BETHANY: Purchased a new Sunday School Building.

BEULAH: Constructed new Educational/Fellowship building, 4240 sq. ft. , largely with volunteer labor under the direction of Al Wade, one of our members for whom the building will be named.

BUNNELL, FIRST: Opened Mission Cottage for visiting missionaries, evangelists, etc.

CALVARY, PALATKA: New building, new deacon - Thomas Lamon.

CALVARY, ST. AUGUSTINE: Celebrated 50th Anniversary, October 1984. Completed and paid for total renovation of the Sancturary, also carpeting hallways and offices. A successful visitation program started with our Youth.

COLLEGE PARK: Held the 20th Anniversary Homecoming on September 15, 1985.

CRESCENT CITY, FIRST: Full time Minister of Youth and Music hired this year.

FREEDOM: Construction on church building started.

LEMON HEIGHTS: Licensed Kennedy Brown to preach the gospel. Observed 60th Anniversary of church.

PALATKA, FIRST: Started ministry to the blind.

POMONA PARK, FIRST: Church voted to use pastorium as home for missionaries on furlough.

ST. JOHNS: Educational Building raised and dried in.

TABERNACLE: Completion of new 6,528 sq. ft. multi-purpose building, new 50 car paved parking lot. Additional office and library facilities. Remodeling of old fellowship hall into Pre-School Department. New furniture and applicances.

TRINITY: Ordained Robert Napier as a deacon.

WHITECASTLE: Dedication of new building on U.S. One, March 31, 1985.

Steve Swaringen's obituary. Please accept Echovita's sincere condolences.
1927-2020

It is always difficult saying goodbye to someone we love and cherish. Family and friends must say goodbye to their beloved Steve Swaringen of Fernandina Beach, Florida, born in Southern Pines, North Carolina, who passed away at the age of 93, on December 29, 2020. You can send your sympathy in the guestbook provided and share it with the family. You may also light a candle in honor of Steve Swaringen or send a beautiful flower arrangement to the funeral service.

He was predeceased by : his former wife Carolyn V. Swaringen; his parents, C. S. Swaringen, Sr. and Martha Swaringen; and his great grandchild Cody Blackburn. He is survived by : his wife Shirley Jamieson Swaringen; his children, James B. Swaringen (Deborah), Susan Swaringen Geoghagan (Robert) and Suellen Jamieson Blackburn (Bill); and his grandchildren, Kelly Swaringen Smelser (Richard), Gregory B. Swaringen (Erica), Andrew M. Swaringen, Shane A. Geoghagan (Emily), Megan Blackburn Hanna (Alex) and Kacy Blackburn Salter (Daniel).

STEVE SWARINGEN
Lt. Steve Swaringen, United States Navy (Ret.), 93 of Fernandina Beach passed away Tuesday, December 29, 2020 at his residence following an extended illness.
He was born in Southern Pines, North Carolina and had been a resident of Fernandina Beach for the past four years, coming from Palatka where he had lived for more than 30 years. Bro. Steve, as many called him, graduated in 1945 from Sanford High School in Sanford, NC. He served honorably in the U.S. Navy for 22 years retiring as a Lieutenant. He was a veteran of World War II, Korea and Vietnam.
After retirement from the military he served as Minister of Music/Youth at Bishop Avenue Baptist Church in Dallas, TX, First Baptist Church in Lindale, TX, Riverview Baptist Church in Jacksonville, First Baptist Church in Fernandina Beach, Southside Baptist Church in Lake City, and the former Lemon Heights Baptist Church in Palatka. He served as Senior Pastor at First Baptist Church in Carmichaels, PA, Pennyroyal Baptist Church in Franklin, OH, and St. Johns Baptist Church in Palatka. He had also served as Interim Pastor at several churches. He had lived much of his life serving the Lord.
Preceding him in death were his first wife of 58 years, Carolyn V. Swaringen; his parents, C.S. Swaringen, Sr. and Martha Swaringen; and a great grandson, Cody Blackburn.
Surviving are his wife of 14 years, Shirley Jamieson Swaringen; children, James B. Swaringen (Deborah), Susan Swaringen Geoghagan (Robert), and Suellen Jamieson Blackburn (Bill); six grandchildren, Kelly Swaringen Smelser (Richard), Gregory B. Swaringen (Erica), Andrew M. Swaringen, Shane A. Geoghagan (Emily), Megan Blackburn Hanna (Alex), and Kacy Blackburn Salter (Daniel); 15 great grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews and a host of friends.
The family will begin receiving friends 10:00 a.m. Tuesday, January 5, 2021 at Masters Funeral Home in Palatka. Funeral services will follow at 11:00 a.m. at the funeral home with Dr. L.D. Osteen officiating. The service will be live streamed at www.vimeo.com/mastersfuneralhome. Burial will follow in Palatka Memorial Gardens with military honors bestowed by the U.S. Navy.