

Who was Governor Farris Bryant?

Governor Bryant graduated from the University of Florida with a BA in Business Administration in 1935 and Harvard Law School in 1938. He and Julia Burnett were married in 1940 and had three children. His commitment to public service was first recognized by his election in 1941 by Marion County to the Florida House of Representatives. Days later, he waived his military exemption as legislator, resigning his seat to serve in the Navy for the duration of World War II. After the war, he returned to Ocala to practice law and serve in the legislature in 1946 and for four successive terms. He was elected 34th Governor of Florida in 1961.

During Bryant's term as Governor, Florida was the pivot point on national issues: the Bay of Pigs Invasion, Cuban Missile Crisis, Cuban Boat Lift, and the Civil Rights March. All were national issues affecting Florida's future that required Bryant's leadership and called upon him to work with national and military leaders. Bryant's own agenda as Governor was visionary. He led Florida to establish four universities, founded the Council of 100, campaigned successfully for a constitutional amendment to provide capital funds for public higher education, expanded the state and interstate highway system, and campaigned successfully for a constitutional amendment to permit the state to acquire lands to preserve Florida's environment.

After his term as Governor, Bryant was appointed by President Lyndon Johnson in 1966 during the Cold War to serve on the National Security Council. In 1970, Bryant returned home to Jacksonville to practice law and head Voyager Life Insurance Company. Farris and Julia joined the Ortega United Methodist Church where Farris served on several church committees. Farris and Julia were members of the church for over 25 years. After 57 years of marriage, Julia passed away in 1996; Farris passed away on March 1, 2002. Both of their funeral services were held at Ortega United Methodist Church. Both services were honored by the presence of lifelong friends, many dignitaries, and current and past Governors of Florida.



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For More Information
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Bryant Leadership Fund



"In a highly developed democracy such as we inherit and enjoy, the true function of leadership is to stimulate the people themselves so that their reach exceeds their grasp."

Governor C. Farris Bryant



How did the Farris Bryant Fund Begin?

In 2012 Ortega Church celebrated its 100th year with the theme, "Lifting High the Cross for 100 Years." One of the ministries lifted up was the church's Endowment program. The Endowment campaign was a great success. Two new Permanent Endowment Funds were created. One of the funds was the Governor Farris Bryant Christian Leadership Fund. Cecilia Bryant, along with her husband Dr. Richard Lipsey, established the Governor Farris Bryant Christian Leadership Permanent Endowment Fund in 2012 to honor her father and to help persons develop their Christian leadership skills. Cecilia and Richard have been members of Ortega United Church since 1987.



"Principled and skillful leadership is needed more than ever. The generosity and vision of the Bryant family creates a wonderful opportunity for North East District clergy and laity to develop and deepen leadership skills for ministry within the church and the communities we are called to serve. I encourage you to apply."

Tim Smiley, Former NE District Superintendent

What is the purpose of the Farris Bryant Leadership Fund?

The fund was created to support Methodist Pastors, Methodist Ministry Professionals and Staff, and Methodist Laity in the development of their Christian leadership skills. Grants and/or scholarships awarded from the Bryant Leadership Fund shall be used primarily by non-degree-seeking ministry professionals and laity seeking Christian advance course-work, training, or continuing educational experiences for personal development and growth as Christian leaders of the Church. To a lesser extent, the Fund may be used by those with a proven track record of ministry leadership who are seeking post baccalaureate degrees.

Who Can Apply?

Members of a church within the North East District of The Florida United Methodist Conference or of Ocala United Methodist Church.

Applicants may be:

- Staff
- Pastors
- Laity

How to Apply

The Bryant Leadership Fund application can be found online at ortegachurch.org.

- Each application shall be accompanied by a letter of recommendation from a sponsor.

A sponsor shall be the active Senior Pastor of the church where the applicant is a member. If the applicant is a Pastor then the sponsor shall be his/her District Superintendent along with a written recommendation from a representative of Church Council or the Staff Parish Relations Committee of the church where he/she serves. The application shall highlight the history of the applicant's Christian leadership commitment, the name, date, cost and a description of the program or course to be taken and how that will further help the applicant in Christian growth and leadership.

- Seal the completed application and all attachments in an envelope and mail or deliver to:



Bryant Leadership Fund
ORTEGA CHURCH
4807 ROOSEVELT BLVD.
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32210

