

RELIGION

25th anniversary service to honor Pastor Hodge and wife

FROM FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
OF VENICE

First Baptist Church of Venice is hosting two celebration services Sunday, Jan. 28, to honor Senior Pastor Thomas Hodge and his wife, Tassie, for their 25 years of faithful service to the church and the community.

Service times are 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. at the church, 312 W. Miami Ave., to recognize the countless contributions and growth of the church under Hodge's leadership and direction.

The couple will be joined by three of their four children and will enjoy a combined musical presentation by the First Baptist Church Celebration Choir, Praise Team, Praise Band and Children's Choir. Several congregants will share testimonials and key groups will make a special presentation.

"We cordially invite both our members, visitors and our many friends from the community to come join us as we celebrate and honor the ministry of Pastor Tom Hodge," said Associate Pastor Dr. Christopher Cornette. "Pastor Tom has

led First Baptist faithfully for 25 years, and I'm sure he would love to have friends and colleagues from the community attend our very special Sunday morning services."

Deacons Chair John Larson said, "It is with great pleasure and enthusiasm that we celebrate Pastor Tom Hodge's 25th anniversary at First Baptist Church of Venice. Pastor Tom and his wife, Tassie, have been instrumental in the growth and long-term vision for First Baptist. His leadership has reinforced the vision of our earliest church founders more than 80 years ago, while envisioning and embracing our future including the acquisition of 21.4 acres at our lakefront property off of Jacaranda Boulevard.

"Through his tireless efforts and strong leadership, both of our church locations, on the island at Miami Avenue and the new lakefront property, are poised to provide a strong and continued spiritual foundation to benefit generations for years to come."

Hodge earned his Master of Theology

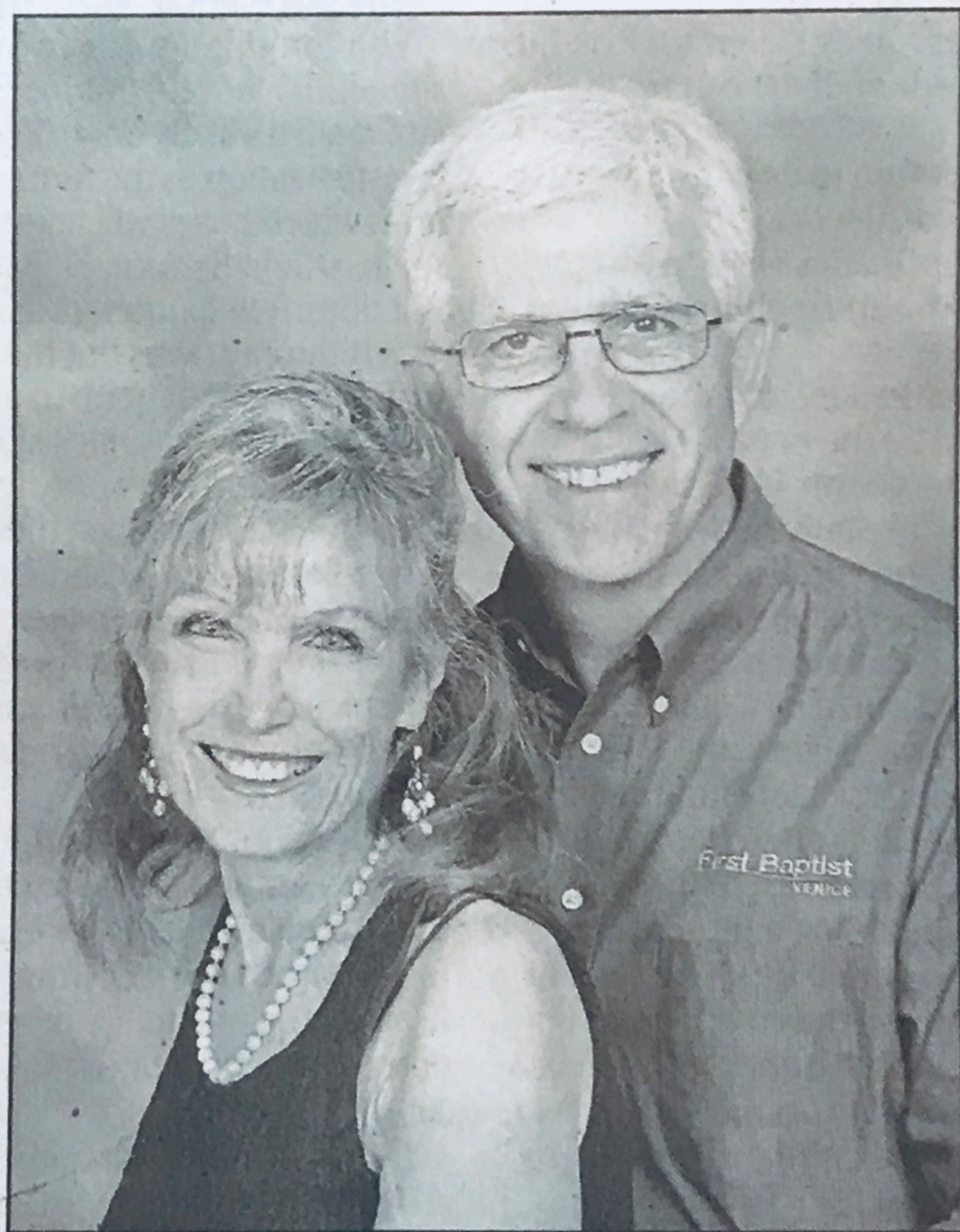


PHOTO PROVIDED

Pastor Tom and Tassie Hodge.

degree from New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Prior to settling in Venice, he served congregations in Kenner and Lafayette, Louisiana, and Scottsdale, Arizona.

In addition to his full-time ministry and counseling at the church, he serves as chaplain for the Venice Police

Department; is a member of the Venice Regional Bayfront Health board of directors; and is a longtime supporter of Venice High School sports programs.

The public is invited to attend either service on Jan. 28. For more information, visit FBCVenice.org.