



Dr. Joseph Bethea: candid Christian

Church visitor

Dialogue works

by Tricia Hairston

Belles received an early Christmas present when Dr. Joseph Bethea spoke Nov. 22. Dr. Bethea is the administrative assistant to the Bishop of the North Carolina Conference of the United Methodist Church. Despite the imposing title, Dr. Bethea is a down-to-earth likeable man. He spoke on various topics ranging from love to the financial gains of black churches. At the social chat in Cone Hall, it seemed as if the audience was inspired by his answers.

The topic of love was heavily questioned by many people and Dr. Bethea gave his opinions on the subject in a way that was easily understood.

He explained, "Genuine and true love is more than sexual. Falling in love is sexual. You see something you like and pursue it. Somewhere along the line you have to make up your mind if you are going to give yourself to a person for growth and development." He continued, "Love on the feeling level can't last. It's not right or wrong but in order for it to be genuine, it must be real."

When the subject came around to homosexual love and marriage, Dr. Bethea said, "A homosexual marriage is the misuse of the marriage vows. The love could be true but it is still at a feeling level and this is a relationship without genuine love."

Speaking on the decline of the black church, he said, "Some churches are growing and some are declining. The membership has not kept up pace with the growth of our race. During the late '60s and early '70s, the church sort of slipped away from the younger people. Part of this was due to the failure of the black church to involve itself in meaningful ways of liberation. The other reason was the growing young black middle class family. They began to take on the ways of the larger culture, acquired two or three jobs, worked hard and partied all night Saturday. On Sunday, they mowed their lawns and washed cars in suburban America. Therefore the percentage of blacks participating in the life of the church decreased."

Bethea believes that strong ministers like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. reinforce the humanity of the black church. "Dr. King's preaching brought blacks together, and at one time we were really united. A minister must have the quality of leadership and that takes a strong person to do it. Some ministers get too much praise and it goes to their heads. We don't need that. We need strong people to help our brothers and sisters," he said.

Controversy over ACS

by Bernice Scott

To go or not to go? That is the question many Belles ask concerning the ACS programs.

This controversial issue has been the topic of many discussions by those who are for and against them.

Many find that they are boring and very time-consuming. These students usually produce books, magazines and radios to entertain themselves. Others simply yawn.

The fact that the ACS programs are required does not help change these students' minds. A few of them said if the student's heart is not in the program, she does not learn anything.

"The ACS program, as conducted by Bennett College, is useless due to the fact that it is mandatory. Students attend out of duty instead of want. Therefore, they come out with the same thing they go in with—nothing!" said

a student who requested anonymity.

Although many students resent being forced to attend, there are others who appreciate these programs. These students feel that through them, Bennett is showing how much it really wants students to know about life.

"I think ACS programs are good. Not only does Bennett prepare us academically but ACS programs help prepare us culturally, thus making us well-rounded young ladies. That's the Bennett ideal," said freshman Audrey Speights.

Many other students feel that without cultural experiences, people are unadaptable.

Still other students have mixed feelings concerning these programs. According to this group, ACS programs are good; however, they should not be mandatory.

"I believe the ACS programs are an important part

of the Bennett tradition. However, I feel that students should not be required to attend. After all, we are supposed to be mature women, and we should be capable of making our own decisions," said freshman Camille McCoy.

Mrs. Mary Scarlette, director of special education, says things have changed since she graduated from Bennett.

When she was in college, Belles were required to attend 100 percent of the vespers that were scheduled every Sunday afternoon at 4. Today's Belles, however, have the opportunity to miss a few programs.

Mrs. Scarlette said past programs have been successful. Belles have the opportunity to hear "outstanding people who they would not normally hear." She also said that these programs are "not only a spiritual experience but a learning experience."

Hero's influence: disinherited shall be "free at last"

a column

by Karen R. Taylor

I realize every black man, woman and child in this country—indeed, every black person on earth—has benefited from the Civil Rights Movement and the leadership of Dr. King and has tried hard to make his dream a reality.

I am forced to be reminded of the "March on Washington" in August 1983. It was a different march than the one in 1963. There were some of the same people but a different march. They didn't come on squeaky, sweaty school buses or in the backs of rusty pickups. The 1983 protesters flew in, rode Scenic Cruisers and drove their Benzes, Volvos, Winnebagos, Caddies and Toyotas to the march.

The demonstrators knew the importance of marching and demonstrating because they were, in fact, those who had benefited from the gains of the Civil Rights Era.

Celebration was obvious as the people who formed the core of civil rights activists during the '60s met friends and allies from a bygone era. As they shared recent history, they realized through one another that the spirit of the '60s had not died but had only been in metamorphosis. The march's theme of "Jobs,

Peace and Freedom" was a demand which expressed the concerns of each protester. They all saw the same enemy—the philosophy of Reaganomics.

What may have struck deep fear into the present administration was the fact that this march was not a demonstration by a single group but a collection of concerns. Represented on the speaker's platform and in the body of the march were blacks, women, Hispanics, labor leaders, anti-nuclear activists, gays, the elderly and the handicapped.

Leaving the march, each marcher brought home a renewed spirit. After all, they had come together again. Those who received the spirit second-hand in 1963 came in 1983 to experience the collective soul-bond and to renew for themselves the spirit of positive action.

The huge crowd that took part in the 1983 march did much to influence passage of a bill making Dr. King's birthday a national holiday.

At Bennett this year, although classes were not suspended all day, celebration was obvious as the mention of Dr. King's name penetrated every heart, soul and mind that gathered in the chapel to partake in such a

meaningful and enlightening ceremony in remembrance of such a great man. I was deeply touched by the service and the presence of the faculty members and Bennett sisters.

My mother always told me that Dr. King was a struggler for freedom, justice and equality, peace and jobs. He was a minister who preached the Bible. He motivated in us positive action. Dr. King wanted America to rise up and live out her creed, that creed that says all people are created equally. He wanted America to judge by value and contribution and not by the color of skin. Dr. King, along with some other prominent black leaders such as Malcolm X, was on the team that has brought us this far. It is up to the black leaders that are left in the black community to continue the struggle from here.

Whether America overcomes or not, we the poor, we the oppressed, we the black, we the Hispanic, we the disinherited, we the rejected and the despised, will overcome and then together we will be able to say in the words of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "Free at last, free at last."

Thank God Almighty, we have united and made Dr. King's dream of freedom a reality at last.

Student march: a proper remembrance of Dr. King

a column

by Vicky Dunn

A few weeks ago, we celebrated the birthday of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. not with the usual pomp of the Opening of the College or Matriculation ceremonies, mind you, but with the simple dignity the occasion deserved.

If not for the usual accolades, the chapel service, gospel selections and inspirational "prose," the day might have otherwise passed unnoticed. We have exhausted, so it seems, all sources of biographical information on Dr. King. We have recited numbers of poems and have composed an apparent myriad of songs in his memory. However, in the true light of such an overwhelming personality as Dr. King's, all tributes seem to pale.

He was in the true sense of the word "awesome." Should we then abandon our at-

tempts to elevate Dr. King's memory to sacred status? Perhaps we need only to redirect our actions. By all means, we should continue to respect him as a civil rights leader. But, as Dr. Durley stated in the chapel dedication of even a great man serves no positive purpose.

Something in our yearly commemoration fosters continuity, the very basis of the survival of our race. So, my point is not that Dr. King is not one worthy of honor. That would be a ludicrous assumption! I merely suggest that in our zeal, we may sometimes become desensitized to the real purpose of our celebration. After all, the essence of a life like King's is quite a bit for the ordinary commemorator to fathom. It is not impossible, however, to have both a thoughtful and powerful movement at once.

In the rich tradition of college students who love and

passionately support their causes, many Belles expressed their displeasure at being requested to attend morning classes on Dr. King's birthday. They displayed unity the evening prior in a march around campus. The brisk walk was made shorter and warmer by songs which served to unify the mini-throng.

The songsters became tired and cold but not disenchanted. As we saw it, we were extenders and carriers of the dream. Fortunately, some were able to see the significance and to commemorate despite all. I am certain that more than pure zeal and excitement motivated some 125 students to openly protest.

The movement had both the sensitivity from which poetic thought flows and the creative tension which brings progress. That cold January evening, I really began to believe once more, the words to "We Shall Overcome."

King is eulogized

by Avanti Allen

Belles, questioned about their readiness to carry the light left by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., paid tribute to him during a service of remembrance on his birthday.

"The birthday celebration was an attempt to rekindle the memory of Dr. King," Dr. Gerald Durley, intern consultant to the president at Clark College, said.

Durley spoke on the subject of "Are you prepared to carry on?" He reflected on the history and important dates in King's life.

Durley attributed King's success to the fact that he prepared all of his life to live for something greater than himself.

"King prepared at an early age for his future because he did not know his purpose in life or what the future held for him," Durley stated. Because of King's preparation, life has been made better and we should be ready to carry out his legacy. "Dr. King gave us a reason to go on," according to Durley.

Durley also referred to a march in Nashville, Tenn. that he participated in while attending college at Tennessee State. Dr. King told him that it was his last march because he was not prepared. Durley had lost his cool and beaten a menacing white boy.

"That was the worst feeling in the world when the opportunity was there for me to make a change and I was not prepared," Durley commented.

Being able to follow the lifestyle of King was also stressed. He emphasized how King wasn't sidetracked by worldly things, peer pressure or trends set by society.

Durley challenged the Bennett family to follow in the light as King did because darkness is beginning to engulf black people. "Today we are satisfied with mediocrity and forgetting from whence we have come," he commented.

"Bennett is the seed for planting your future crop," Durley told students. "The world is not giving anything if you are not prepared because you have got to be better." Durley pointed out how King prepared to be better but remembered that he was the least.

Ending his speech, Durley stated, "Dr. King is dead but he left the light burning, so let's pick up where he stopped."

Course—from page 1

impact of World War I. Then we'll get into the migration of blacks to the North, the Harlem Literary Renaissance, the New Deal for blacks, World War II, the Brown decision in 1954 and at the end of the semester a look at the '60s with Martin Luther King Jr. and Stokely Carmichael," according to the teacher.

Addo feels that blacks do not have to be ashamed of their past because "We have survived in spite of slavery and Jim Crow. We've kept our identity, religion and a stable family."

Some of the books Mrs. Addo recommends for any curious readers are *Roll, Jordan, Roll* by Eugene Genovese, *Before the Mayflower* by Lerone Bennett Jr., *The Slave Community* by John W. Blassingame and *Black Women in White America* by Gerda Lerner.