

Mechanics & Farmers Bank Recognizes Galilee Baptist Church



Pastor Robert L. and First Lady Terry McGowens

By Paula McCoy
Mechanics and Farmers Bank recognizes Galilee Baptist Church for its spiritual leadership and guidance to the Winston-Salem community for almost 40 years. From humble beginnings in 1964, when a group of people who got together in the home of Cora Montgomery to organize the church, Galilee has grown to become a church that is firmly rooted in the community with a deeply spirited, dedicated and enthusiastic congregation of about 500 members. "Rev. Robert L.

McGowens and the members of Galilee are to be applauded for being that 'church on the corner' that reaches out in the community to meet the needs of seniors, youth, families and singles to create a whole family atmosphere", says Evelyn Acree, city executive at Mechanics and Farmers Bank. "Though they have done good work over these years, we believe their best is yet to come".

Galilee Baptist Church has been like a 'tree planted by the water'. There were several events in the church's history that could have precipitated a move, but the church remained in its location. The church, presently located at MLK Boulevard and New Walkertown Road, once faced Locust Street. When the city decided to close Locust Street, the church decided not to move. Instead, they changed the front of the church from Locust Street to MLK Boulevard. There was also a fire at the church. Again, rather than move, the church met at Clark Brown Funeral Home while the church was being restored. "The church has made a conscious decision to remain in this location," says Carolyn Gray, special events coordinator for the church and lifelong member; "we feel what we want to do as a church we can do where we are".

Galilee is doing a mighty work! Seeking to serve the 'total man', Galilee 'opens wide its doors to all who hunger for God and his righteousness'. Galilee offers two services on Sunday morning, 8:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. and a Wednesday evening service at 8:00 p.m. Prior to the Wednesday evening service, bible study classes are taught and classes for children ages 5 - 11, and teens 12 years and older are offered. Mentoring activities are provided for male teens and a special group meets for teen girls.

Galilee has a 'genuine spirit of interest in youth'. "There are a lot of things going on for young people," says Gray. In addition to the Wednesday evening activities for teens, the church supports them in other activities such as attendance at plays, basketball games, and other social events of sororities and fraternities. There is a focus on education and 'helping youth to get a step above'. The Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) was given on site with teens from thirteen churches in attendance and a total of 70 teens tested. While the teens were in the education building, the parents attended a workshop on "the parents' role in arming their kids for success". The church's Scholarship Day, presents graduating seniors with the W. C. Hay Scholarship that is available to Galilee students as well as other community students. "Our Pastor really believes in our youth," says Gray; "he meets with the church

scholarship students when they come home for holidays and attend most of the events of which they are a part." This year, a youth revival brought over 300 youth and parents together and featured youth pastors Waymon Monroe (Mt Olive Baptist), Keith McDaniels (Union Baptist) and Kedrick Lowery (Greater Cleveland Baptist). Training for junior deacons and deaconess helps interested teens to become servant leaders.

Galilee has something for everyone. The seniors get together monthly and enjoy activities that might involve trips on the train, trips to the mountains, plays or speaking events on issues of concern or topics that help them adapt to their environment as they age. A Family Ministry offers classes in understanding the bible and classes for married couples as well as regular Sunday school classes. A Prison Ministry sponsors prisoners and invite them to regular worship. Worship services and bible study are also done at the prisons. A Bereavement Ministry provides service that starts when people are ill and last for up to one year after they die. Training is provided through hospice and some individuals are trained and certified as grief and trauma counselors. A support group is also available for those who have loved ones who have died or who have been incarcerated. A Media Ministry offers tapes and video to the sick and shut-in and anyone who wants to purchase them. The Evangelism Ministry goes into the community to spread the good news of the gospel to those who aren't saved.

Galilee strives to do more. The church is planning for a major renovation project that will signify its intent to remain the 'church on the corner'. In the summer of 2003, Galilee will seek to serve children whose parents have difficulty finding a place for their children in the summer. A summer enrichment program will be offered for kindergarten through age thirteen that will help children with reading, math and test taking skills that will help them improve in school. The program will offer a nurturing as well as culturally enriching environment. For more information, call the Galilee Baptist Church office.

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