

Religion

Focus On Religion

Mitchell prefers working in field

By AUDREY WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

Inside a barbershop, where older men gather to talk about when they were young, and the younger ones gather to talk about when they get older, four-letter words are likely to be heard, as well as talk of women, wine and song.

The Rev. John O. Mitchell, a barber at the Delight Barber Shop on Liberty Street, would rather it stay that way.

"I am me," he says, "and I don't want to be treated in a special way. I like respect, but people are going to be people and I don't expect them to conform to my beliefs. There was a time in my life when I wasn't exactly considered a saint."

Mitchell, who has been in the ministry four years, says he would rather be referred to as an evangelist because he claims no particular denomination, heads no church and carries the gospel wherever it leads him.

Amid the R&B music station that can be heard in the distant, Mitchell, 31, a husband and father of a 14-year-old daughter, shifts his attention away from the appointments ahead and talks about his work as an evangelist.

"Going into the ministry wasn't something I desired myself," he says. "It was a divine call and I was obedient. I've always been a believer because I was brought up in the Holiness Church."

"But I'm not concerned with denominations now and I don't claim one because it has caused so much division in the body of Christ," says the Winston-Salem native. "I'm only concerned with what God wants me to do."

Mitchell says after he received the calling to enter the ministry, he became one of five associate pastors at Phillips Chapel Baptist Church on Patterson Avenue.

"I was just there," he says, "and I was there for only a short time. But I knew that God had a more forceful purpose for me, and I knew it was God's will for me to work in the field."

He's had offers to join other churches as pastor or associate pastor, but he says that along with the final decision being left up to God he has no desire to become a "stationary minister."

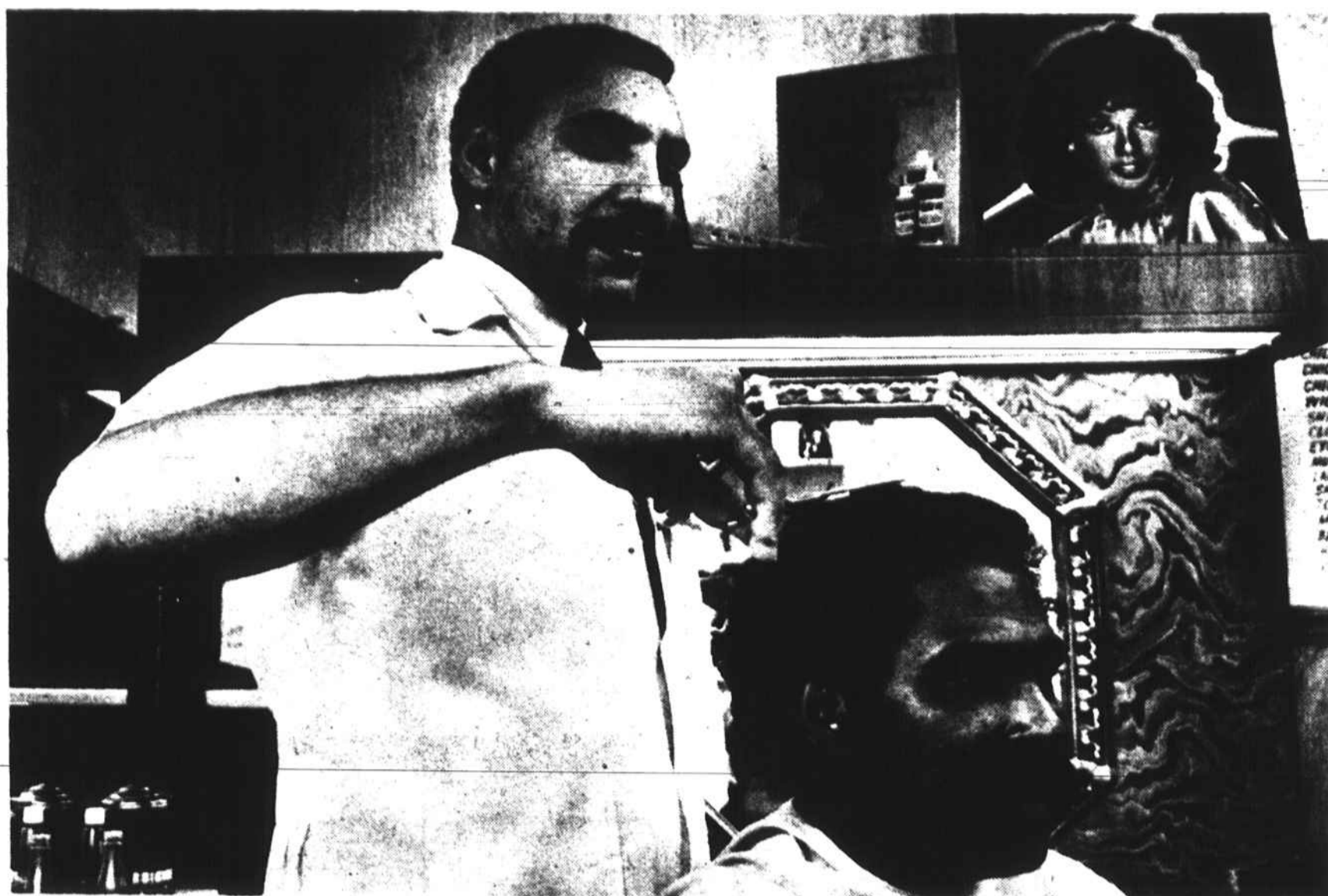
"I'm very happy with my choice," says Mitchell, "and I like traveling to other churches. But the only way I would pastor at another church would be through the spirit of the Lord."

Mitchell, who says the barbering business seems more like semi-retirement because of the not-so-strenuous work, also sees it as an outlet to helping others. But, he says, of the many customers he encounters throughout the day, 90 percent of them aren't aware of his active role in the ministry.

"I don't broadcast it," he says. "I would rather for the way I live speak for me instead of using words to let people know who I am."

It's hard to pick Mitchell out from the rest of the other barbers he works with daily, and he says that's one of the added conveniences of helping others who might not otherwise seek advice or encouragement while sitting in the barber chair.

"Barbering gives me a great opportunity to meet, greet and minister the word of God to different individuals



Being a barber and a traveling evangelist is second nature to the Rev. John O. Mitchell (photo by James Parker).

without them knowing that I'm a minister," he says. "That way, people are themselves."

"The public really tells his barber things that he wouldn't tell his close friends or family," Mitchell says, "and my ability to give them the word of God and en-

couragement is part of the gospel."

The last chair in the back, on the right belongs to Mitchell and there, he says, he waits for customers to come in who are not only in need of good grooming, but good words of encouragement from the gospel.

Church Notes

Men's Day held

The men of Hanes Memorial Christian Methodist Episcopal Church at 819 Highland Avenue will celebrate its annual Men's Day observance beginning Saturday, Feb. 25.

On Saturday, the men of the church will sponsor a prayer breakfast at 8 a.m. followed by a Men's Day service at 9:30 a.m. Warren J. Smith will be the speaker. Smith, a member of Hanes and president of the Lay Council, is a native of Winston-Salem and he and his wife Georgia, have three children. He is also a Sunday school teacher, chairman of Steward Board No. 3, a member of the Board of Christian Education, the Commission on Membership and Evangelism, treasurer of the Chancel Choir and numerous other church organizations.

George Evans Jr. will be the worship leader for Saturday's service, with Hazel McGriff and Charles Baucum leading the prayer and scripture. John S. Hampton and Frank McKissick will lead a special segment on the meaning of prayer. Guest soloist will be Robert Tate.

Chairpersons for Saturday's service will be Charles Patrick, Baucum and Evans.



Warren J. Smith

At the Sunday morning worship service, the Rev. George Oliver Bell, Jr., will be the guest speaker. Bell is pastor of Reynolds Temple CME Church. He is a native of Burlington, N.J. and studied at Lincoln University in Oxford, Pa. and the School of Religion at Temple University. While serving in the United States Air Force in England, Bell studied philosophy and child psychology at Oxford University. After returning to the states, he began a teaching career and also worked in his family's mortuary business. In 1960, Bell began his ministry in Wilmington, Del., under the leadership of the late Bishop George F. Brown at Bethel AME Church. He also served as associate pastor of Halsey CME Church in Philadelphia, Pa., as well as several other CME churches and civic organizations in the northeast. Bell is married to Barbara Easley.



Bishop Phillip R. Cousin

Cousin speaks at service

The Rev. Phillip R. Cousin, bishop of the Ninth Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in Alabama and president of the National Council of Churches will be the guest speaker Sunday, Feb. 26

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Benson is featured

Donald Benson will be the guest speaker for the Men's Day service at Cleveland Avenue Christian Church at 945 N. Cleveland Avenue, Sunday, Feb. 26, at the morning worship service.

Benson, assistant to the chancellor of student affairs at Winston-Salem State University and former dean of men, is a native of Winston-Salem and attended the public schools here.

He is also a graduate of WSSU and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, where he received his

In a church news item titled, "Officers installed," in the Feb. 16 issue of the *Chronicle*, we inadvertently omitted Miss Naomi C. McLean as one of the officers installed at Wentz Memorial United Church of Christ. McLean is director-pianist of the Inspirational Choir. The *Chronicle* regrets the error.

Funerals

Funeral services held for C. W. Knox

Mr. Charles William Knox

Funeral services for Mr. Charles William Knox, of 3714 Carver School Rd., were held Feb. 9, at 2:00 p.m. in First Baptist Church with Dr. David R. Hedgley officiating. The body remained in the Clark S. Brown & Sons Funeral Home until 1:00 p.m., at which time it was placed in state in the church until the funeral hour.

Interment followed in the Gardens of Memory.

Clark S. Brown & Sons Funeral Home in charge of services.

Mr. Eliza Matthews Little

Funeral services for Mrs. Eliza Matthews Little, of 200 Wheeler St., were held Feb. 11, 1984 at 3:00 in Goler Metropolitan AME Zion Church with Rev. Jerry A. Quick officiating. The body remained in Clark S. Brown & Sons Funeral Home until 1:00 p.m., at which time it was placed in state in the church until the funeral hour.

Interment followed in the Cedar Hill AME Zion Church Cemetery in Yadkin County.

Clark S. Brown & Sons Funeral Home in charge of services

Mrs. Mary W. Williams

Funeral services for Mrs. Mary W. Williams, of 1415 Oak St., were held Feb. 14 at 4:00 p.m. in New Bethel Baptist Church with Dr. Jerry Drayton officiating. The body remained in Clark S. Brown & Sons Funeral Home until 3:00 p.m., at which time it was placed in state in the church until the funeral hour.

Interment followed in the Evergreen Cemetery.

Clark S. Brown & Sons Funeral Home in charge of services.

Mr. Daniel Webster Cuthrell

Mr. Daniel Webster Cuthrell, of 3015 1/2 Glenn Ave., died at his home Feb. 13. The body remained at Clark S. Brown & Sons Funeral Home. He was a native of Mocksville, N.C. and has lived in this city for the past seven years. He was a construction worker and was of the Baptist faith.

Surviving relatives are four sisters, Mrs. Mildred Lyons of this city, Mrs. Madilene Eaton, Mrs. Harriett Richmond, Mrs. Lelia Lawrence all of Mocksville, N.C.; one uncle, three aunts and

master's. Benson also studied at Wayne State University, Bennett College and the American Management Associate Institute in Chicago, Ill.

He is a member of Mount Pleasant Baptist Church, where he serves as a Sunday School teacher, assistant superintendent of the Sunday School, a member of the Young Adult Choir and the Usher Board.

Benson and his wife have a four-year-old daughter.

Church hosts Assembly

New Faith Chapel Holiness Church at 1419 Woughton Street will hold its Quarterly Assembly Sunday, Feb. 26 through March 4, with services beginning 7:30 p.m. nightly.

The Rev. Frederick L. Gilbert, associate minister of Tiredstone Missionary Baptist Church in Columbus, Ohio, will be the guest speaker for the assembly. Gilbert, a native of Tampa, Fla., is a student at Eastern Union Bible College, which is affiliated with the Eastern Union District of the Ohio State Baptist General Convention.

CALENDAR

Compiled by Lucille Douthit

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 25

The Evangelists of Ambassador Cathedral at 1500 English Street will sponsor a three night revival beginning at 7:30 p.m. nightly. Local evangelist and missionaries will serve as guest speakers.

The Forsyth County Union Adult Department will meet at Union Baptist Church at 406 Northwest Blvd. at 3 p.m. The theme for the meeting is "Emphasis On Black History Month."

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26

United Daughters of Christianity will sponsor a seasonal tea at Mt. Olive Baptist Church at 4 p.m. Mrs. Mary Brice will be the guest speaker.

The Senior Choir of St. Mark Baptist Church at 1100 Minty Street will sponsor an old fashioned meeting at the church at 7:30 p.m. The Rev. Waldo Hunter of Freedom Baptist Church will be the guest speaker.

The Rev. Horace Walser, presiding elder of the North Charlotte District of the AME Zion Church and former pastor of Goler Metropolitan AME Zion Church, will be the morning worship service speaker at Mount Zion Baptist Church on the corner of Ninth and Pile Streets.

The Yadkin County Branch NAACP of Yadkinville will sponsor a Mother of the Year contest at Pleasant Grove Baptist Church at 4 p.m. The Rev. Jerry Quick of Goler Metropolitan AME Zion Church will be the guest speaker.

The Rev. Michael Friday of Mercy Seat Holiness Church will be the guest speaker at Kimberly Park Holiness Church at the Young People Holy Association 3 p.m. service in memory of the association's founder, Deacon John Wesley Gore.