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Focus On Religion

The blessings continue to flow

By AUDREY L. WILLIAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

From February until about two weeks ago, people were smiling in 43-year-old Martha Oliver's face and cooking up something behind her back.

The members of the Prince of Peace Baptist Church, along with her four children and her husband Cecil, were making plans to make her the woman of the hour at a "This Is Your Life" testimonial roast, recognizing the longstanding church worker for her dedication and service.

"I don't know why they did it to tell you frankly," says Oliver, who periodically blares her big brown eyes in wonderment of all the attention.

Oliver, a radiological technologist at North Carolina Baptist Hospital, is a member of her church's gospel choir, the organist for the Tot Choir, a member of the Missionary Circle and a member of the Pastor's Aide Club. Growing up in Zion Memorial Baptist Church is where Oliver got her first taste of church work. It was there that her mother introduced her to the labors of love. After becoming an adult, she says, the lessons she learned in church didn't seem to hold her attention anymore.

"I grew up in the church," she says, "and like all people you tend to stray away and pretty quickly you find out and I found out that the grass isn't greener on the other side."

"I really can't say what prompted me to come back to the church," says Oliver. "All I can say is I'm glad I did."

She joined Prince of Peace six years ago when it was first organized. It was also then that Oliver says she rededicated her life to God and decided to get to work for Him.

"I just feel like life is so short," she says, "and we need to do what we can in service for the Lord."

In her living room is a bouquet of flowers from the gospel choir honoring Oliver for her dedicated service to the church. Still, she really doesn't seem to think she deserves any credit for anything.

"When they did all this for me I thought it was very nice," she says, "but I was very embarrassed and devastated."

"They did it out of love," Oliver says, "because I am in no way an accomplished musician."

Adele Scott, a local private piano and organ teacher, however, doesn't agree with Oliver's self-evaluation. Over 15 years ago, Scott realized that Oliver displayed musical talent and it was then that she took the 5-11, born-again Christian under her wings to study.

Even though Oliver hadn't yet realized the whole evening of dinner was just for her, the gospel choir sang one

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-- Martha Oliver

of her favorite songs and one that reflects on her life in the church. The selection was "This Little Light of Mine."

Spending at least eight hours of her week in church, working in one capacity or another, Oliver says she believes that everyone can have a place in the church instead of just coming to hear the Sunday morning sermon.

"I call those people bench warmers," she says. "No two people can have the same talents, but you can never find out what they are if you just come in and sit down."

"Everybody can't participate in the service," says Oliver, "but there are organizations and other sectors of the church that you can be a part of."

A lot of people have told Oliver that she needs to document her work. The work they speak of is the gospel



The grass really wasn't as green on the other side as Martha Oliver had thought, which is why she went back to the church and reaffirmed her faith (photo by James Parker).

songs she has written for her church choir. "Grace," a song she wrote, was also chosen as a selection in her honor.

Taking her place at the dark brown Lowery organ in her living room, Oliver warms up and goes over a few chords and says, "This is sort of my testimony."

The first chorus goes:
Yesterday I was lost just walking around in sin, but the Lord, He came and took me right on in."

She has also written what she calls "a real jumpy tune" titled "What Do You Do When the Holy Ghost Comes." Other compositions of Oliver's include "Pass It On" and "The Master Touched My Soul."

Oliver says she's happy with her life, her family and glad that she's a member of a very progressive church, all of which she accredits to God.

"You know that song, 'Count Your Blessings One By One?'" she asks. "I don't know how I can do that."

Church Notes

Two are honored

Mrs. Mamie C. Rennick, pastor of Ishi Penecostal Holiness Temple, was crowned queen of the Love Fellowship Banquet, Saturday, April 7, at the Holiday Inn North. Jack Nelson, a local musician, was crowned king.

Last year, a group of concerned Christians banded together to fellowship with one another as an expression of love and concern for all Christians regardless of denominations. Thus, the Love Fellowship Group was organized with Jack Nelson of St. Peter's Apostolic Holiness Church as its president.

The group has held several banquets with keynote speakers giving talks on love, the theme of the group. A family picnic was also held at Tanglewood Park. With the feeling that so many things going wrong in society, Nelson, his wife Delois, Mrs. Rennick, Vernell Butler, Elder Joseph Lowery and others decided to form the group to get to get others to express love for one another.

Love Fellowship is a non-profit organization with all proceeds received used to sponsor activities. All Christians of any faith with a desire to reach out and express their concerns for others are welcome to attend promotions by the group.

Winners of the king and queen contest were chosen on the basis of having the largest number of people present at the banquet.

Said Mrs. Rennick: "It is a joy to see people coming together and working for the Lord. Nelson offered his crown to any man bringing the largest number of persons to a planned event of the group."

Keynoting the banquet was the Rev. Conrad Douthit. He urged the audience to express more family love and not be concerned with stereotyped roles, but rather that husbands and wives work toward creating a loving caring atmosphere.

Choir presents program

The Chancel Choir of Dellabrook Presbyterian Church will give its annual rendition of Johannes Brahms' "A German Requiem" Palm Sunday, April 15, in the church sanctuary at 6 p.m.

Soloists will be Mrs. Deitra E. Arrington, soprano, of Durham and Winston-Salem native Daniel Andrews Jr., baritone. Several guest singers will join the group for this presentation.

Mozelle H. Johnson is the organist and Rudolph V. Boone Sr. is the choir director. Host pastor is the Rev. Carlton A.G. Eversley.

Holy Week begins

The St. Paul United Methodist Church's department of education will present a Walk-Through Holy Week, Sunday, April 15, at the church at 2370 Dellabrook Road from 9:45-10:30 a.m.

At 6 p.m., the guest speaker will be Dr. Wallace Chapel, evangelist and assistant secretary for the Board of Evangelism in Nashville, Tenn.

From Monday, April 16, to Wednesday, April 18, at 7 p.m. the guest speaker will be Dr. J.G. Grier Jr., evangelist and pastor of Warren United Methodist Church in Atlanta, Ga.

On Thursday, April 19, the Holy Communion Service will be directed by Dr. J. Lawrence McClesky, district superintendent of the Winston-Salem district.



Pastor Mamie Rennick

McCullough celebrates fifth pastoral anniversary

The 5th pastoral anniversary of Essie C. McCullough continues tonight through Sunday at J.A. Coleman Memorial Chapel at 614 Patterson Ave.

Services tonight through Friday will begin at 7:30 p.m. Tonight's guest speaker will be Evangelist Betty Hash of Kimberly Park Holiness Church. Friday's guest

Choir sings Sunday

The Chancel Choir of Hanes Memorial CME church at 819 Highland Ave. will present its annual presentation of Theodore DuBois' "The Seven Last Words" Sunday, April 15, at 7:30 p.m. at the church.

Soloists will be Mrs. Pansy Reddick Wilkerson, soprano; Frank E. McKissick, tenor; and the Rev. Anzo Montgomery, baritone. Musicians will be Marion Thomas, organist; John Litaker, pianist; and Gerard Reid, timpanist.

James D. Smith serves as organist and director of the choir.

Wilkerson is a native of Miami, Fla., and a graduate of Robert E. Lee High School in Huntsville, Ala. She is also a graduate of Bennett College in Greensboro, where she majored in music education with a minor in mathematics. Wilkerson also received her master's degree in counseling from North Carolina A&T State University.

A native of Winston-Salem, McKissick is a graduate of Reynolds High School and Forsyth Technical Institute, where he received a degree in business administration.

Montgomery, presently the pastor at Hanes Memorial, is the former general secretary of evangelism for the CME church. He is a native of Jackson, Tenn.

speaker will be Bishop Jake J. Johnson of Mt. Nebo Holiness Church.

Services on Sunday will begin at 4 p.m. The Rev. Cora W. Plowden of Old Time Penecostal Holiness Church will be the guest speaker.

Senior Choir to sing

The Senior Choir of Bethania A.M.E. Zion Church will present "No Greater Love," an Easter Cantata by John Peterson, at 5 p.m. in the church auditorium Sunday, April 15. The Rev. Bobby Smith is the pastor.

The choir is under the direction of Varnard Bowie. Mrs. Evelyn E. Shouse is the organist and Mrs. Louisa L. Foy is the guest pianist.

Bethania A.M.E. Zion is located on Highway 65 in the Bethania community. The program is open to the public.



Millie S. Fowler

Fowler marks 25 years

Millie S. Fowler will celebrate her silver anniversary in music, Sunday, April 15, at the Oak Grove Baptist Church in Walkertown at 4:30 p.m.

The Rev. I.L. Anthony is the host pastor. The guest speaker will be the Rev. Gary Walker of Friendship Baptist Church. Musical entertainment will be provided by the Male Chorus of Friendship Baptist Church. Also, the Young Adult Choir of Oak Grove Baptist Church will render musical selections.

Galilee to host revival

A youth revival will be held April 15-18 at Galilee Baptist Church on Claremont Avenue, with services beginning nightly at 7 p.m.

At the 11 a.m. worship service on Sunday, the Rev. Michael Dowby of Raleigh will deliver the opening message.

On Monday night, the Rev. Dennis T. Pinkney will deliver the message and music will be rendered by the Galilean Choral Ensemble.

Pinkney is currently a student at Southeastern Baptist Seminary in Wake Forest and an associate minister at Galilee.

The Rev. Darryl Robinson will deliver Tuesday night's message. He is also an associate minister at Galilee and a graduate of Wake Forest University. The youth choir of Emmanuel Baptist Church will render the music.

On Wednesday night, Dwayne Pinkney, associate minister of Galilee and currently a student at North Carolina A&T State University, will be the guest speaker.

CALENDAR

Compiled by Lucille Davis

THURSDAY

The church will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the birth of Dr. J. Ray Brown, today through Sunday. On each evening at 7:30 p.m. there will be a special service. Sunday will be the Rev. Charles Brown, pastor. The public is invited to worship with the congregation. The speaker will be Dr. J. Ray Brown, located at 417 Burton St.

SUNDAY

The Cedar Creek Church in Mocksville will present a special service at 7:30 p.m. The public is invited to worship with the congregation.

Holy Week Services at Calvary Church will begin today at 4 p.m. and will continue through the week at 7:30 p.m. each evening. Different speakers will be featured.

The members of the Calvary Church will celebrate its eighth anniversary. Special guests will be the University Interscholastic League Choir, the Rufus Bell Singers and the Gospel Chorus. The church is located at 1100 Drive.

The guest speaker for the service will be Dr. J. Ray Brown, pastor of Calvary Church, located at 417 Burton St.

An appreciation service for Dr. J. Ray Brown will be held at Full Gospel Deliverance Tabernacle, 1000 E. Main St., in Winston-Salem, N.C., at 7:30 p.m. The Rev. R.C. Williams will be the guest speaker. Pastor Charles Brown will be the host.

The Young Adult Missionary Department of Zion Baptist Church will present a musical praise drama, performed by the Young Adult Missionary Department members and guests, including Jackie Brown of the First Assembly of God. The program will begin at 8:30 p.m. and is open to the public. Admission is free. The church is located at the corner of Ninth and Pine streets.

The Senior and Junior Union Bands and the Board of Mt. Olive Baptist Church at 3110 St. will observe their anniversary today. The Rev. R.C. Williams will be the guest speaker. The church is located at 3110 St.