

Religion

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Focus On Religion

Preaching and politics do mix

By ROBIN ADAMS
Chronicle Staff Writer

When other young boys were busy shooting marbles or playing cowboys and Indians, Dr. Jerry Drayton was in the neighborhood cemetery preaching to the tombstones. "I have always felt that I was born for that (preaching)," Drayton says. "I knew I was born to be a preacher."

Almost a half a century later, Drayton, 65, is still preaching. Not to the dead, but to the members of New Bethel Baptist Church.

But Drayton didn't move smoothly from the cemetery in his hometown of Savannah, Ga., to his church on Trade Street. First, he had to "con" his way into getting an education.

"I left Savannah, Ga., with 50 cents in my pocket," Drayton says. "I conned the president of Moorehouse (College) into letting me enroll with the understanding that I would pay so much per month."

"At the end of most months I couldn't pay my bill," he says. "I never took my final exams on time because my bill wasn't paid up. But somehow I managed to finish and when I left there my luck changed. I went to Howard (University) on a scholarship and maintained an A average."

During his second quarter at Howard, Drayton, at the insistence of a friend, visited Winston-Salem, spoke at New Bethel as a visiting speaker, and subsequently was asked to become the church's pastor.

He accepted, and on the second Sunday in June, Drayton will be celebrating his 40th year as New Bethel's pastor.

As he leans back in his corner desk, barely able to be seen behind stacks of books, Drayton says it has been a good 40 years. Many of those years have been spent tending to his pastoral duties and fulfilling the spiritual needs of his congregation, but many others have been spent gaining a reputation as one of the state's most vocal and active citizens.

Although he has not been personally criticized, Drayton says many people assume that a minister belongs in the pulpit and should not concern himself with worldly matters.

"My job as a minister is to save the whole man," Drayton says. "Man is more than spirit. You can be spiritually saved and socially and economically lost. There is no way you can serve the whole man and not get involved in politics."

"As blacks, it's stupid to just talk about spirit and serving Jesus. That's stupid," he says. "We got to live down here on earth. I want to go to heaven, just like everybody else, and I'm working on going to heaven. But I'm in no hurry to get there. I want to enjoy myself down here."

And he practices what he preaches. For example, every Monday, Drayton delivers food gathered the previous Sunday to the Crisis Control Ministries. He daily en-

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-- Dr. Jerry Drayton

courages people to register and vote and his church built a low-income housing project.

"I also try to teach people to learn self-help," Drayton says, "and not to be completely dependent on anybody."

Drayton's formula for becoming a successful minister and a civil rights activist has worked for him. He has weathered three mayors in Winston-Salem, has the distinction of holding the title of many firsts, is a member of numerous boards of directors, including Wachovia Bank and Trust Co., serves as chairman of the Political Action Committee of the General Baptist State Convention and was appointed by Gov. James B. Hunt Jr. to head the state's Human Relations Commission.

"What I have accomplished is due to the philosophy of Moorehouse," says Drayton as he lights one of the many cigarettes he smokes. "They taught the graduates to go into a community and to never be second, but to always



At age 65, Dr. Jerry Drayton, pastor of New Bethel Baptist Church, has earned a reputation as one of the state's most politically active citizens. What's next? A "slowing down," he says (photo by James Parker).

be in the forefront."

Like all other movers and shakers, Drayton is not without his critics. To today's organizers, Drayton's way of advocating changes for black and poor people is outdated and ineffective.

"You can't force those in power to do what they don't want to do," says Drayton. "If you do, it will only be temporary. Going in and negotiating is the best method. My way is the most effective and the most stable. You just note us (negotiators) and see how much is achieved. Then see how much is achieved through demanding."

But as can easily be seen by the graying, thinning hair on the top of his head, the time is shortly approaching when Drayton will have to slow down. One look at his calendar, crammed with at least three appointments a day, the quickness of his tongue and his fleeing feet lets one know that that time won't be too soon.

"In time, I will start winding down," he says. "I have been involved in so many major changes that I don't know of anything now but winding down. I finally got in the position where I could do officially some of the things I wanted to do."

CALENDAR

Compiled by Lucille Douthit

FRIDAY, MAY 4

•Saint Paul's Episcopal Church at 520 Summit St. will celebrate May Fellowship Day at the church from 10:30 a.m. to noon. The event is to observe and celebrate the customs of Spanish-speaking families in the community.

SUNDAY, MAY 6

•The Nurse's Board of Zion Memorial Baptist Church at 101 N. Dunleith Ave. will present its annual Fellowship Tea at the church at 4 p.m.

•The Forsyth County Missionary Union will hold its annual mass meeting at Mount Zion Baptist Church on File Street at 3 p.m. The Rev. J. Donald Ballard, pastor of United Metropolitan Church, will be the guest speaker. All missionaries are urged to wear white for the occasion.

TUESDAY, MAY 8

•The Winston-Salem Day Chapter of the Women's Aglow Fellowship will meet at the Central YMCA from 9:30-11:30 a.m. The guest speaker will be Elaine Berryhill, a teacher of God's word.

The Chronicle welcomes church calendar notices. Announcements should be concise and typed or neatly printed. They should also include the day, time, place and sponsors of the event, plus a number to call for additional information. Announcements should be addressed to the Winston-Salem Chronicle Church Calendar, P.O. Box 3154, Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102. The deadline for announcements is Mondays at 5:30.

Church Notes

First Lady honored

The Hospitality Club of Macedonia True Vine Pentecostal Holiness Church Inc. honored their First Lady, Mrs. Gwendolyn M. Johnson, at a First Lady's Brunch in the fellowship hall of the church Saturday, April 28.

The decor consisted of a spring theme. First ladies Mrs. John Adams, Mrs. H.L. Moore, Mrs. J. Ray Butler and Evangelist Lois Moore paid tribute to the honoree.

The club also presented Mrs. Johnson with an arrangement of spring flowers and a monetary gift. Mrs. Melinee Lytle is president of the club.

Choir to mark 25 years

The Young Adult Choir of the Mt. Calvary Holy Church at 930 E. 14th St., where Bishop H.I. Williams and Evangelist Shirley Ceaser are co-pastors, will celebrate its 25th year of service Friday, May 4, at 7:30 p.m. at the church.

The program will feature the Celestial Singers, the New Day Ensemble, C.C. Turner Calvary Hill Church Choir and the Mt. Calvary Youth Choir.

The anniversary will continue Sunday, May 6, beginning at 4 p.m. Featured guests will include the Gospel Stylistics.

Ceasar will also take part in the anniversary celebration.

The choir is under the leadership of Lenora Eldridge. Hazel Archie serves as the director.

Concert to be presented

The Chancel Choir of Wentz Memorial United Church of Christ at 3435 Carver Road will present a concert Sunday, May 6, at 4 p.m. to culminate the church's Red and Blue Pew Rally.

The concert, which is dedicated to Mrs. Olivia B. Brown, will include music by composers Undine S. Moore, John W. Work, Tallis, Mendelsohn, Lovelace, Katherine Davis, Ron Nelson, Virgil Thompson and Leonard Bernstein.

Maryma Holmes of Chillum Heights, Md., will be the guest soloist. Guest accompanist will be James Kinchen.

John Newman is choir director and organist. Dr. Marion Blair serves as pastor.

Rev. Leak to speak

Fellowship services will begin Friday, April 4, at 7:30 p.m. at the City of God in Prayer Fellowship at 2201 23rd St. N.E.

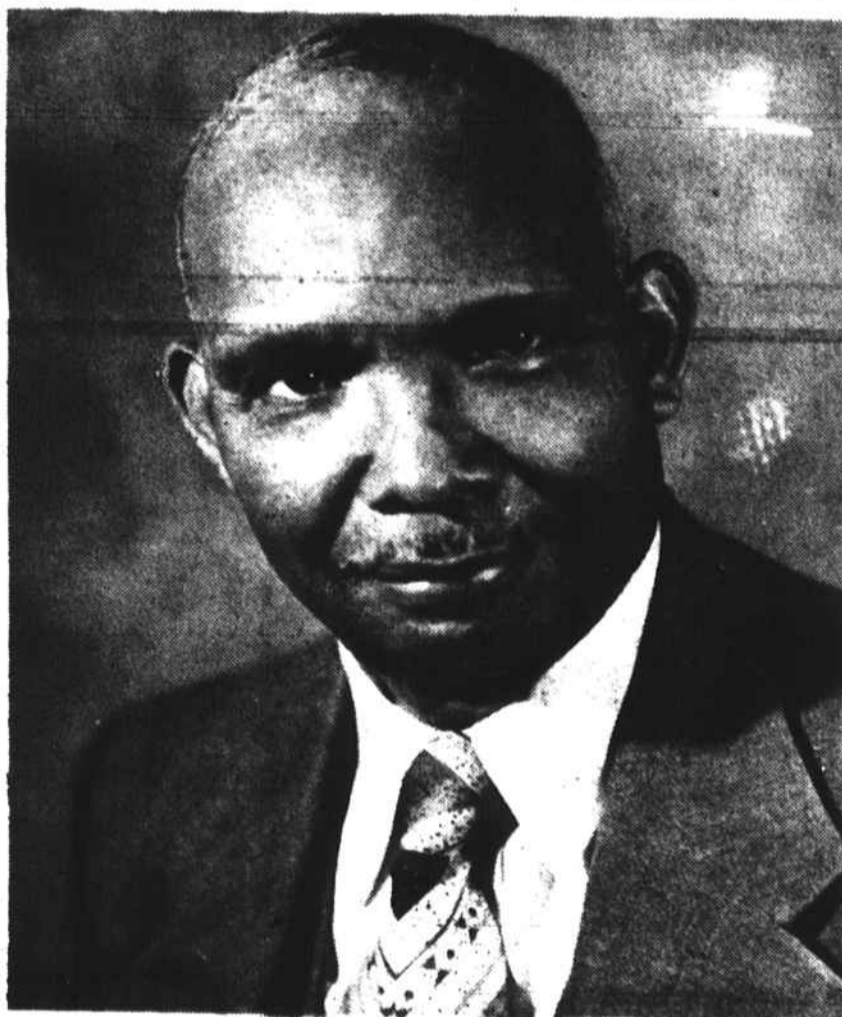
The Rev. Gwat Leak will be the guest speaker at the Friday evening service.

On Saturday, May 5, evangelists Barbara Nash and Annette Thompson will be the guest speakers.

The Rev. Charlie Clemmons will be the guest speaker at the 11 a.m. worship service and on Sunday night, the Revs. Lewis Hunter, Larry Gordon and Larry Butler will be the guest speakers.

All nightly services will begin at 7:30 p.m.

The Rev. Anna Carter Lester is pastor.



Bishop J.C. Richardson

Council to convene

The United Council of the Apostle Church of Christ in God will convene today through Sunday, May 6, at St. John Apostle Church of God in Christ at 1131 East 21st St., where Elder Harry E. Millner serves as pastor.

Dr. J.C. Richardson of Martinsville, Va., is the presiding bishop and Dr. W.J. Jackson of Winston-Salem serves as the vice-bishop.

This year's convention theme is "Bless The Lord O My Soul And All That Is Within Me, Bless His Holy Name."

Included at the convention will be an inspirational hour, business sessions, seminars, a fashion show, a missionary program on Friday night and panel discussions. Dr. Lelia Vickers, professor of education and coordinator of reading at Winston-Salem State University, will be the guest seminar leader.

On Saturday from 1-2 p.m., Mrs. Nancy Carree Wilson will be the gospel concert soloist and beginning at 2:15 p.m. The youth program will include singing and preaching.

The Saturday night program beginning at 7:30 p.m. will be held at Christ Rescue Apostolic Church at 1500 N. Dunleith Ave., where Bishop Willie Davis Jr. is pastor. All other services will be held at St. John's.

The presiding bishop, James Collins Richardson, is a native of Newberry County, S.C. He and his wife, Frances, are the parents of five children.

He attended Piedmont Bible College, Aneon Bible College in Columbus, Ohio, and earned his bachelor of theology degree at Virginia Seminary and College in Lynchburg, Va., where he also received an honorary doctorate degree.

Ordained in 1933, Richardson began his pastoral career at St. Peter's Church of God (Apostolic) in Winston-Salem in 1931 under the late Bishop Eli Neal. He presently serves as pastor at Mt. Sinai Apostle Church of Christ in God in Martinsville, Va., where he has been for over 40 years. The bishop also hosts a radio ministry on WMVA-AM and FM radio at 10 a.m. Sundays.

He was co-founder and past vice president of the Martinsville Christian Civic League, a member of the Martinsville-Henry County NAACP and is a past board member for the Community Hospital of Martinsville.

Special events to begin

In observance of the National Week for Peace and Justice, several events are scheduled in Winston-Salem today through May 13.

The Winston-Salem Church Committee on South Africa will sponsor a forum on South Africa tonight at 7:30 p.m. at Shiloh Baptist Church at 916 E. 12th Street. The speakers for the forum will be Dr. G. McLeod Bryan, professor of religion at Wake Forest University and author of several publications on Africa, and noted writer, poet, playwright and professor at Wake Forest, Maya Angelou.

Bryan will focus on the origins of apartheid, resistance to it and the current situation in South Africa. Angelou will read some of her award-winning poetry and reflect on the life and people of Africa. Introducing the two educators will be Dr. Elwanda Ingram, professor of English and communications at Winston-Salem State University, and the Rev. William E. Gramley of the Moravian Church.

The Revs. J. Ray Butler and Carlton A.G. Eversely, chairman of the local committee on South Africa, will also take part in the program.

Ministers of synagogues and churches in the Winston-Salem community are urged to help their congregations observe Peace Sabbath during the May 4-6 weekend by including prayers and sermons on the topics of peace and justice in their worship or study discussion times.

The Committee on South Africa aims to educate the community about the oppression of blacks in that country and offer solutions to Winston-Salem and Forsyth County about what they can do as Americans to help.

On Monday, May 7, the Community Alliance for Nuclear Disarmament (CAN-Disarm) will sponsor the film "U.S. Versus U.S.S.R." at 7:30 p.m. at the Main Library at 660 W. Fifth St.

Michael Landen, a representative of CAN-Disarm and the Piedmont Physicians for Social Responsibility, will introduce the film and Dr. Mark A. Cichock, assistant professor of political science at Wake Forest, will discuss the Soviet Union and answer questions on the Russian approach to foreign policy.

On Tuesday, May 8, Dr. and Mrs. James Clapper, who chair the program committee for CAN-Disarm, will present a "Beyond War Orientation" at First Christian Church at 2430 Country Club Road at 7:30 p.m. They will present the short film "Beyond War -- A New Way of Thinking" and explain how technology has made war obsolete. Dr. Clapper is the associate dean of the Babcock Graduate School of Management at Wake Forest.

Vern and Esther Mock will present slides and make a presentation about their February trip to Nicaragua on Friday, May 11, at 7:30 p.m. at the Main Library. The Mocks participated in the "Witness For Peace" project along the Nicaragua-Honduras border that was coordinated by the Carolina Interfaith Task Force on Central America and other Protestant and Catholic organizations across the country.

The final event of the National Week for Peace will take place on Mother's Day, May 13, at 4 p.m. in Grace Park at the corner of Fourth and Glade streets. Dr. Daniel Jungkuntz from the School of Pastoral Care of Baptist Hospital will discuss hope and later involve participants by having them give their own sense of hope. Music will be part of the program. The Parenting for Peace Committee of Winston-Salem, coordinated by the Revs. Linda Kusse-Wolfe and Marilyn Taylor, is sponsoring the event.

For further information, contact the Rev. William E. Gramley at 722-8126 or 748-8588.

Founder's Day to begin

On Sunday, May 6, Zion Hill Baptist Church will begin a week of services in observance of their fifth annual Founder's Day at the church at 2920 N. Greenway Ave. at 7:30 p.m.

The initial service will feature the Rev. Joseph R. Samuels and members of St. Stephens Baptist Church as guests.

Zion Hill was first organized in April 1979.

The founders and charter members of the church are the Rev. Oscar B. and Mrs. Pansy Cook, Deacon Troy and Mrs. Queen Bradley, Deacon E.T. and Mrs. Leola Fowler, Deacon Theodore and Mrs. Ruby Welch, Deacon Lara W. Browning, Mrs. Elaine S. Grant and Mr. James Watlington.

Guest churches and pastors for the remainder of the week will be the Rev. J.T. Miller of Beulah Baptist Church on Monday, the Rev. W.F. Sheppard of the Community Baptist Church on Tuesday, the Rev. John L. Adams of St. John CME Church on Wednesday, the Rev. Kenneth Davis of Spencer Memorial Church of Christ on Thursday and the Rev. E.L. Clark Jr. of Second New Bethel Baptist Church.

The final service will be held Sunday, May 13, at the 11 a.m. worship service.

The Rev. Oscar B. Cook is host pastor.