

Modest African pastor shares his many triumphs

The Rev. Jackson Senyonga has built a colossal ministry in Uganda

BY LAYLA FARMER
THE CHRONICLE

"I am not a great man; I just give glory to God, and He does the rest."

That is what Ugandan Pastor Jackson Senyonga told a group of local religious leaders at a luncheon in his honor Friday afternoon. It was a humble statement for a man with such accomplishments.

Senyonga and his wife, Eve, founded New Life Ministries in Kampala, Uganda, 11 years ago, with just seven members. Within two weeks time, that membership had swelled to a whopping 2,000.

"I was not aware this was going to happen so quick, so big," he admitted.

Now home to more than 40,000 members, New Life Ministries continues to grow, with nearly 1,000 churches already operating in four African countries.

"The area was ready and God was ready, and we stepped into it," Senyonga said.

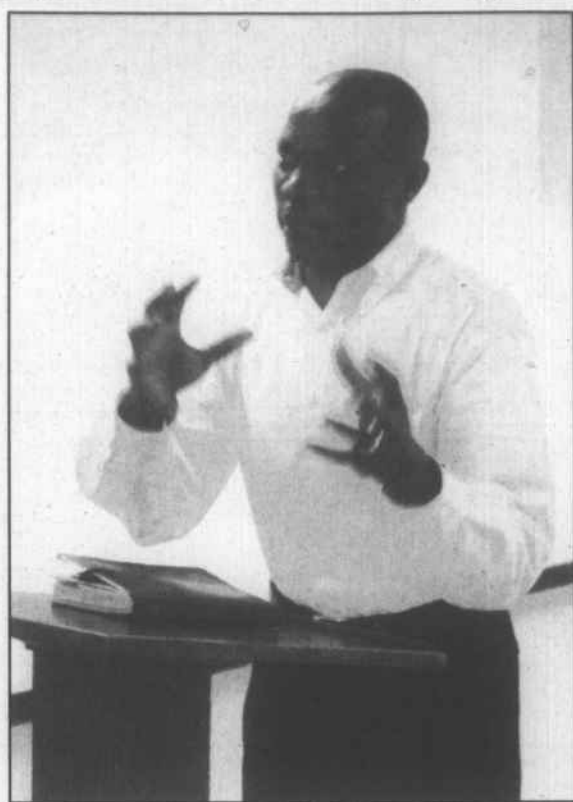
The speech at the pastor's luncheon was one of many activities Senyonga will take part in while he is in Winston-Salem. He spoke at a meeting of the New Canaan Society - the Christian men's group that is credited with facilitating his visit - last Friday morning. He attended the Wake Forest/Army football game on Saturday, and led two services at First Assembly of God on Sunday. And rounded out his time in the city with an appearance at a Men's Ministry event at River Oaks Community Church on Monday evening and a speech in Wait Chapel on the campus of Wake Forest University.

Bill Leonard, dean of Wake's Divinity School, said he was glad his students would have the opportunity to hear from Senyonga.

"When folks like Rev. Senyonga come, it's just very good, if we possibly can, to give him a forum to talk with our students," Leonard commented. "They learn about how he and the Christian community in Uganda functioned in a time of difficulty when there was a great deal of conflict and struggle and people were being killed, even martyred, for their political and religious views."

Leonard secured his church, First Baptist Church on Highland Avenue, as the location for the pastor's luncheon Friday.

Senyonga's topics ran the gamut, from life in Uganda after the fall of ruthless dictator Idi Amin, (Senyonga's father was



The Rev. Jackson Senyonga delivers a passionate message.

Photos by Layla Farmer

murdered during Amin's regime), to the direction of his ministry and the secrets of its success. He is well known in his homeland for working to improve not only the spiritual condition of his congregants, but the physical and social aspects of their lives as well.

"God has not called us to only pastor great churches, but also to see our cities transformed," he remarked. "It is not fair to have a growing church in a decaying city."

The church's existence has undoubtedly boosted spirituality within the nation, but New Life Ministries is credited with doing much more than that.

"Uganda as a country used to have a 33 percent HIV / AIDS infection rate. The World Health Organization projected that Uganda would be wiped out," explained New Canaan Society member Jay Helvey, who was instrumental in bringing Senyonga to Winston-Salem. "Jackson Senyonga and other pastors in the country have led a revival in Uganda, that now has dropped the AIDS / HIV infection rate down to five, six percent."

Senyonga remains humble about his impact and that of his church, maintaining that his success comes from a higher source.

"Wonderful, tremendous things are happening in Uganda not because we are smart people," he said. "I just happen to be in a place where God is doing His thing."

He went on to add that the church is growing so quickly that it is constantly under con-

struction and sports "God-made, original carpet," i.e.: dirt. Yet, it continues to thrive.

"I am one of the loudest preachers that there is," he related with a smile. "... but still every Sunday people are coming to church ... because God is there."

News Clips

City Attorney Seeber stepping down

City Attorney Ronald G. Seeber will retire from his position effective Dec. 1, concluding 37 years of service to the city. During his tenure Seeber successfully defended every major

lawsuit challenging the governance and operation of the city.

Seeber said he is pleased to be leaving the city with an accomplished legal staff with significant tenure and expertise. Mayor Allen Joines said Seeber will be remembered as a "consummate professional with the highest level of integrity."

Seeber joined the city as deputy planning director in January 1971 and was named city attorney two years later. During his tenure as city attorney he has been honored to serve five mayors, thirty-five aldermen/council members and four of the five city managers who have served Winston-Salem.

Before coming to Winston-Salem, Seeber worked five and a half years for the Durham Redevelopment Commission and the Durham Planning Department.

Seeber said that following his 42 years of public service, he intends to engage in long-deferred travel, reading and hobby activities, and spend significant quality time with his wife, Sandy, his three children

and their spouses and his nine grandchildren. He has also agreed to perform contractual work for the city, both during the time it takes for the new city attorney to arrive and thereafter, on a consulting basis.

Whitaker makes list of Great Nurses

Dr. Von Best Whitaker, clinical associate professor of nursing at North Carolina

Agricultural and Technical State University, has been selected as one of the Great 100 Nurses of North Carolina for the year 2007.

Recipients of this professional excellence award were selected from a field of nominees representative of more than 58,000 practicing Registered Nurses within North Carolina.

Prospective business owner encouraged to attend "Downtown 101"

The Downtown Winston-Salem Partnership will hold a seminar called "Downtown 101" on Tuesday, Sept. 25, in its offices at 500 West Fourth Street in the Loewy Building. It will begin at 8 a.m. and end at 11 a.m.

Downtown 101, sponsored by Baldwin Properties, is for anyone interested in opening a business in downtown Winston-Salem or knowing more about the downtown market.

Presenters include repre-

sentatives of the Inspections Division and Development Office of the City of Winston-Salem; the Forsyth County Health Department; Fire Marshall's Office; a real estate professional and a general contractor.

There is no charge to attend the seminar which is held bi-monthly. To register or receive more information, call 336. 354-1500 or e-mail admin@dwsp.org.

Site acquired for Davie County hospital

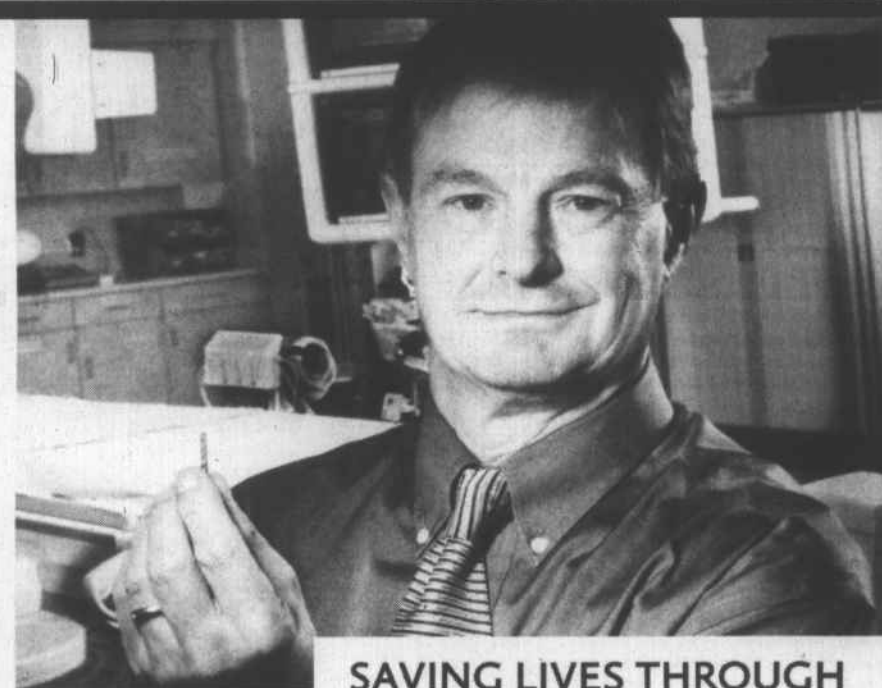
Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center has completed the purchase of a 25-acre site in Hillsdale where it plans to build the replacement for Davie County Hospital.

The land is on N.C. 801 north of the I-40 interchange in eastern Davie County, opposite the Kinderton Place shopping center at Yadkin Valley Road. The land was purchased from J.B. Harrison Properties.

"We are delighted with this site," said Donny Lambeth, interim president of North Carolina Baptist Hospital. "The site is close to growing communities in the Advance area and the Lewisville-Clemmons area and is easily accessible to all of Davie County."

Last month, Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center announced plans to invest \$125 million in the hospital and a primary care center in Mocksville. The hospital will have 81 beds and will be approximately 225,000 square feet. The Medical Center will engage the community in planning for the hospital and primary care center.

Davie County Hospital will remain open until the new hospital is built.



SAVING LIVES THROUGH INTERVENTIONAL CARDIOLOGY

IF YOU ARE FACED WITH CARDIOVASCULAR DISEASE, it's reassuring that cardiologists at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center's Heart Center can help. These experts keep your needs in mind when recommending the best treatment plan for you.

Sometimes that plan may call for a drug-eluting stent. Although not an option for everyone, it may be right for you.

A drug-eluting stent is a device that keeps your artery open after dangerous blockages are removed. This polymer-coated stent time-releases medicine exactly where and when it is needed.

A leader in interventional cardiology, the Heart Center was one of the first in the nation to conduct clinical trials using this breakthrough therapy. What's more, our specialists proactively tracked long term outcomes and found favorable results. Said lead investigator Dr. Robert Applegate,

"Coated stents have significantly reduced the need to perform repeat stent or angioplasty procedures compared to non-coated stents."

To learn more about our Heart Center's cutting-edge research and procedures and how these may help you, visit wfubmc.edu/heart. And whatever your insurance, chances are we take it.

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