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Focus On Religion

Four generations serving church

By SUSAN HUNT
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A family that continues to survive with five living generations is a rarity these days.

Not surprisingly, Mrs. Jessie Frieson of Locust Ave. is proud that her family has survived for five generations.

But what is surprising is that four of those generations are serving on the Usher Board of Shiloh Baptist Church.

Nearly 80 years old, Mrs. Frieson is exceptionally able for her age and is proud of the fact that so many of her family members have chosen to serve the church as ushers.

Mrs. Frieson joined Shiloh Baptist Church in 1930. When she joined the church, she also joined its Usher Board and has been active in the life of the church for those fifty years. "I want to get up there now sometimes and usher, but my health won't permit it," says Mrs. Frieson. "I just love ushering. There's just something about showing people to their seats that I just love to do. I think that it was just God's plan for me to be an usher."

Mrs. Frieson is now retired from active duty; however, she is always there to lend a hand whenever the other members of the usher board need her. "I still serve on the telephone committee and do whatever I can," she said. "I just love doing church work."

Mrs. Frieson's eyes sparkle with pride as she smiles and lists her descendants -- one daughter, 10 grandchildren, 14 great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. "We have always been a very close family and all the children have been raised up at Shiloh," she said.

Mrs. Frieson's daughter is Annie McIlwaine, who is also proud of the relationship that she and her

mother share. "We are a very close family," McIlwaine said. "I have tried to follow in my mother's footsteps in the church. I love ushering just as much as she does. I like to work with people. I'm also on the choir, but my favorite thing to do is always ushering."

"Shiloh church loves the Frieson family as much as they love the Church," says Betty Berry, vice-president of the Usher Board on which they serve. "They are always very dependable and dedicated to the church. I depend on them quite a bit. I've been knowing 'Miss Jessie' for a long, long time."

"She and my mother worked together at R.J. Reynolds and I used to deliver her checks to her every week. She has always been a very religious, family-oriented and strong-willed person. She has a lot of influence on her family. You can tell that because they all work in some capacity in the church."

Ushers are an important part of the church organization. It is important that everyone is seated in a pleasant manner and is given the seat that they prefer. And, being able to escort people to seats with a friendly greeting and smile is very important to the Frieson family.

"Being an usher has not changed much from what it was 50 years ago," says Mrs. Frieson. "It is all still about the same, except the number of people has grown larger and larger. When I joined the church, I joined the usher board. I loved it then and I still love it just as much today."

Mrs. Frieson is especially proud of the fact that her family has followed in her footsteps without any coercion on her part. "I just hope that the family will keep up the tradition," she said.

The Rev. J.R. Butler, pastor of Shilo Baptist Church, says, "The Frieson family and the McIl-



A family tradition for the five generation family of Mrs. Jessie Frieson, center, has been to usher. Four generations from the family are ushers at Shiloh Baptist Church (photo by James Paker).

waine families are among the most dedicated families at Shiloh Baptist Church. They are very active in many facets of the church, but they are most visible on the Usher Board because there are so many of them. They are a unique family because they are so close-knit. The Frieson's set an example for others in the church to follow.

"Although Mrs. Frieson is not very outspoken,

she is very motherly; not only to her own children, but she takes an interest in everyone in the church. I appreciate the entire family for their cooperative relations. They never offer division or criticism."

Fifty years is a long time to serve one church, but if Mrs. Frieson has her way, she'll spend another 50 years at Shiloh. "I just love Shiloh," she said. "I love all the people there, especially our pastor and his wife."

Church Notes

Rev. John Mendez to lead First Baptist revival

First Baptist Church at 700 N. Highland Ave. will hold its annual Fall Revival with devotional services led by the Rev. John Mendez at 7:30 nightly beginning Monday, Oct. 22 and continuing through Friday, Oct. 26.

Rev. Mendez is a native of New York City, where he received his primary education, is a graduate of Shaw University in Raleigh and the Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C. He also has studied at the Morehouse School of Religion in Atlanta, Ga.

Rev. Mendez serves on many

religious boards, including the Home Mission Board of the Progressive Board of the General Baptist Convention, the General Board and Executive Board of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, the Board of Directors of the General Baptist Foundation, the Christian Education Committee of the Rowan Baptist Association and the National Congress of Black Clergy.

He also serves as associate professor of Old Testament Studies at Shaw Divinity School and is an advisor to the schools vice presi-

dent of academic affairs.

He recently led his church in a voter registration campaign and recently returned from a fact-finding tour in Central America, which included such countries as Nicaragua, Honduras and El Salvador. Following the completion of this mission, he testified before a tribunal on U.S. war crimes in Central America, where evidence was presented to the United Nations in New York City. He is also a member of the Carolina Interfaith Task Force on Central America, whose aim is to advocate peace in that region

through negotiations and not war.

Rev. Mendez has lectured to various political, religious and civic groups, including the Black Family Task Force in Winston-Salem, the Paul Robeson Festival, sponsored by the N.C. Humanities Committee; a memorial service for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. at N.C. State University in Raleigh, a Black History Month observance at Delaware State College in Dover, Del.; the lectures for Religious Emphasis Week at Shaw Univer-

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Area Deaths And Funerals

Ernest Dias Goodwin

Mr. Ernest Dias Goodwin, of 810 West Fourth St., Apt. O, died early on Sunday, Oct. 7, in Forsyth Memorial Hospital. He was a native of Columbia, S.C., and had lived in Winston-Salem for 55 years.

Mr. Goodwin was a member of Kimberly Park Holiness Church and was a retired employee of Keith Lowery Furniture Company. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mildred W. Goodwin, of the home; three daughters, Mrs. Mildred Williams, Mrs. Shirley Sowell and Mrs. Trevia Sturdivant, all of this city; three sons, Luther Williams, Napaluis Williams and Milton Goodwin, all of this city; five sisters, Mrs. Kate Watson and Mrs. Elena Mitchell of Columbia, Mrs. Sylvia Hale, Mrs. Janie Martin and Mrs. Rosa Thompson, all of New York City; two brothers, Willie J. Goodwin of Columbia and Wade D. Goodwin of New York City; twelve grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; two daughters-in-law; three sons-in-law; three sisters-in-law; and a host of nieces, nephews and other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held at 4 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 10, in Clark S. Brown & Sons Funeral Home. Burial was in the Evergreen Cemetery. Clark S. Brown & Sons Funeral Home was in charge of the funeral arrangements.

Lillie Wade Hall

Mrs. Lillie Wade Hall, of 1318 East Third St., died on Monday morning, Oct. 8, in Forsyth Memorial Hospital. She was a native of Lancaster, S.C., and had lived in Winston-Salem for 60 years.

Mrs. Hall was a member of Goler Memorial AME Zion Church, where she served on the Senior Choir. She is survived by five daughters, Mrs. Mary E. Thompson, Mrs. Alma Clement, Mrs. Madie Caldwell, all of this city, Mrs. Lillie H. Gibson of Rochester, N.Y., and Mrs. Florence H. Brown of California; five sons, Henry Wade, of the home, James T. Hall and Marion E. Hall, both of this city, Willie E. Hall of Boston, Mass. and Vernon F. Hall of Detroit, Mich.; forty-two grandchildren; forty-two great-grandchildren; four sisters, Mrs. Christine Stewart and Mrs. Sarah Johnson, both of this city, Mrs. Nannie Spraggy of New York and Mrs. Eula Mae Johnson of Concord; and several other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held at 3 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 12, in Goler

Memorial AME Zion Church. Burial was in the Piedmont Memorial Gardens. Clark S. Brown & Sons Funeral Home was in charge of the funeral arrangements.

Mildred Ann Sims Wilson

Mrs. Mildred Ann Sims Wilson, of 620 Devonshire St., died on Wednesday, Oct. 10, in N.C. Baptist Hospital. She was a native of Winston-Salem and attended Atkins High School.

Mrs. Wilson was a member of Nelson's Chapel Holiness Church, where she served in the Pastor's Aide. She is survived by her husband, the Rev. Henry M. Wilson, Sr., of the home; four daughters, Wanda C. Wilson, Juanita E. Wilson, Valerie L. Wilson and Almetrius D. Wilson, of this city; three sons, Henry M. Wilson, Jr., of West Germany, US Army, Fred C. Wilson and Kenneth M. Wilson of this city; two sisters, Mrs. Mary S. McMahan of this city, Mrs. Nathlia L. Little of Charlotte, N.C.; three brothers, Lawrence Smith of Lexington, Charles C. Smith of Virginia Beach, Va., and George E. Sims of the US Navy, stationed in Virginia Beach; five grandchildren; several aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, one daughter-in-law, five sisters-in-law, four brothers-in-law and other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 14, in Nelson's Chapel Holiness Church. Burial was in the Evergreen Cemetery. Clark S. Brown & Sons Funeral Home was in charge of the funeral arrangements.

Mattie Caldwell Peay

Mrs. Mattie Caldwell Peay, of 1441 Underwood Ave., died on Wednesday, Oct. 10, in N.C. Baptist Hospital. She was a native of Charlotte and had lived in Winston-Salem for 60 years.

Mrs. Peay was a member of Kimberly Park Holiness Church, where she served as an usher, president of the Missionary Circle and Pastor's Aide. She was also a Sunday school teacher. She was a retired employee of R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Industries.

Mrs. Peay is survived by her husband, Willie Peay, of the home; two nieces, Mrs. Bernice McCuthoen of this city and Mrs. Emma Peoples of North Braddock, Pa., and one nephew, Mr. Gerald Caldwell of this city.

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CHURCH CALENDAR

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20

The Youth Department of New Hope AME Zion Church will sponsor a fall fry from 3 p.m. until 8 p.m. Everyone is invited to attend. The church is located at 7080 Shallowford Rd. in Lewisville.

Church Women United of Winston-Salem/Forsyth County is sponsoring a bake sale at Sears in Hanes Mall (Ground floor near elevators) from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. Brownies, breads, sliced pies, cakes, cookies, etc. will be available.

The Black Political Awareness League will hold a voter education workshop from 10 a.m. until 1 p.m. at New Bethel Baptist Church. The speakers will be Earline Farmon and Jeffery Simpson.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21

The Christian Men's Fellowship of Antioch Christian Church at 1833 Underwood Ave. will observe its annual Men's Day at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. The speaker at 11 a.m. will be the pastor, Rev. G.W. Wilson. At 2 p.m., Bishop W.D. Keys and the congregation of Zion Grove Disciples of Christ Church from Columbia, N.C., will be in charge of service. The public is invited.

The Ushers' Guild of Zion Hill Baptist Church at 2920 Greenway Ave. will celebrate its 15th anniversary at 11 a.m. The speaker will be Rev. William W. Williams, past president of the Usher's Convention. The speaker at 4 p.m. will be the Rev. F.O. Bass with the congregation of Mt. Vernon Baptist Church in High Point, N.C. The public is invited.

The Rev. Melvin Parks and the members of Herring Grove First Baptist Church of Kinston will worship with the New Hope Baptist Church at 2 p.m. The church is located at 7080 Shallowford Rd. in Lewisville, N.C. The pastor is Rev. Paul Williams.

The United Methodist Church in Pineville will observe Women's Day at 11 a.m. worship service. The pastor is Rev. Paul Williams. The public is invited.

The United Presbyterian Women of Grace Presbyterian Church in the congregation of Butterfield and Carver roads will present the Sunday Choral Group directed by Dr. P. Denton 3 p.m. The pastor is Rev. L.V. Lassiter Jr. is the pastor.

The Women's League Men's Day annual observance of Shiloh Baptist Church will be held at 10:55 a.m. and 6:15 p.m. Dr. William Beverly, pastor of Mt. Gilead Baptist Church in Washington, D.C., will be the speaker at the 10:55 a.m. service. Dr. Quincy A. Caldwell, pastor of the United Progressive Baptist Church, will be the speaker at the 6:15 p.m. service. The public is invited.

The 15th anniversary of Bethania AME Zion Church will be celebrated at 11 a.m. The service will be conducted by the Rev. Paul Williams.

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