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Focus On Religion

Easter committee is all seasonal

By SUSAN HUNT
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When Mrs. Velma Hopkins' mother died 27 years ago, Mrs. Hopkins and her friend, Mrs. Frances Gilmore, searched for a special way to pay tribute to loved one who were no longer alive.

"When I lost my mother," Mrs. Hopkins said, "it was close to Easter. I visited her gravesite. The cemetery seemed to be such a forgotten place for forgotten people. I thought that something should be done as a memorial to these dead, because they were from whence we came. I went to Mrs. Frances Gilmore and we came up with the idea of an Easter Sunrise Service."

Easter Sunrise Services previously had been held by Winston-Salem's Moravian congregations, but none were had been held for blacks before, so these two women were the originators of the first black Easter Sunrise Service. "The Moravians were not in favor of the blacks holding such a service," said Mrs. Hopkins, "but knowing me, they finally left us alone."

The first service was held at Evergreen Cemetery 27 years ago and was preached by the late Dr. R.M. Pitts. "And we really had a crowd," said Mrs. Gilmore. "It was a beautiful sight to behold." Many of the older ministers were there along with choirs. "Since that time, other churches have begun to hold their own Easter Sunrise Services," Mrs. Gilmore said with pride.

After the first service was held, Mrs. Hopkins wanted to make the services a traditional observance. That tradition was reinforced when the two women formed the Easter Sunrise Committee.

The second year, the services were conducted by the late Bishop W.M. Johnson.

"We continued to hold Easter sunrise services at Evergreen cemetery, until they ran us out," said Mrs. Gilmore. "They said we were walking on the graves."

Later services were held across the street from the cemetery until inclement weather forced the services to be moved inside. Now, the services are held at a different black church each year.

At 5 a.m. on Easter morning, the services begin. "We used to hold services about all night," said Mrs. Gilmore, "but we had to cut that out. After we began to get older, we couldn't stay up all night."

The services are broadcast on WAAA-AM radio about 6 a.m. "WAAA has been very cooperative over the years," said Mrs. Hopkins. "But we have gone to all the television stations in the city, and we have not received any coverage from any of them."

The Easter Sunrise Committee is active not only

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-- Frances Gilmore

during the Easter season, but also performs other community services, such as responding to the immediate needs of families and providing Easter, Christmas and Thanksgiving baskets to the city's needy and elderly.

This Thanksgiving, the committee prepared baskets to distribute to 12 needy families, as well as baskets for the Good Samaritan's Soup Kitchen and the Battered Women's Shelter. "The food baskets will contain a complete meal," said Mrs. Gilmore. "We are including such items as potatoes, peas, beans, ingredients for dressing, rolls and a hen or a turkey or turkey legs. This year we're also taking about 50 pounds of pinto beans to the Soup Kitchen."

Needy families are chosen by members of the group who know of someone in need. "We simply ask people, 'Who needs help?'" said Mrs. Hopkins. "We don't go and ask, 'Where do you work?' or



Pastor Sarah C. Rowdy, far left, and Mrs. Frances Gilmore, far right, both members of the Easter Sunrise Committee, present a Thanksgiving basket to Lloyd and Louise Hawkins (photo by James Parker).

"How much money do you make?" If someone tells us that this family needs it, we give them a basket. I was raised in the '30s and I know how it is to be in need. I don't like making people crawl for something."

The Easter Sunrise Committee purchases the food from money raised at Easter Sunrise Services and at the Seven Last Words, a service held on the Friday before Easter.

The committee is non-profit and non-denominational and all churches are invited to participate.

This year, the committee will begin its Thanksgiving by meeting on Monday at the Good Samaritan Soup Kitchen and the Battered Women's Shelter to deliver the food. The committee met at the Reynolds Health Center cafeteria on Tuesday to box up the food and deliver the baskets to the needy homes. On Wednesday, the committee members and their families had dinner together at the Reynolds Health Center cafeteria. After dinner, the group traveled to St. Matthews Apostolic Church at 3640 Apostolic Square, off U.S. 311, for its annual pre-Thanksgiving service, where the pastor, Elder Joseph Lowery, was the speaker.



Mrs. Frances Gilmore and Mrs. Velma Hopkins, members of the Easter Sunrise Committee, prepare Thanksgiving boxes of food for needy families in Winston-Salem (photo by James Parker).

Church Notes

King to speak at First Baptist

The Rev. Derek B. King, grandson of the late Dr. Martin Luther King Sr., will speak during 11 a.m. worship services at First Baptist Church at 700 N. Highland Ave.

King was educated in the public schools of Birmingham, Ala.; Louisville, Ky; and Atlanta, Ga. He is a graduate of Morehouse College and the Colgate Rochester Divinity School.

He is the recipient of numerous awards, including his selection by *People* magazine as a "Promising

Young American." In addition, he was selected by Outstanding Americans, Inc., an "Outstanding Young Man in America."

King has served as assistant pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Ga., pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in

Rome, Ga., and pastor of New Life Baptist Church of Christ, also in Rome, Ga.

Currently, he is a staff member of the Task Force on the Homeless in Atlanta, Ga.

The public is invited to hear Rev. King's address.



Rev. Roscoe D. Cooper Jr.

Cooper plans Shiloh revival

The annual fall revival of Shiloh Baptist Church will be held nightly from Nov. 26 through Nov. 30 at 7 p.m.

The Rev. Dr. Roscoe D. Cooper, pastor of Fifth Street Baptist Church in Richmond, Va., and executive editor of the National Baptist Voice (a Baptist newspaper), will be the revival evangelist. The public is invited to attend.

CHURCH CALENDAR

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 23

• Regular worship services will be held in the City of God Prayer Fellowship at 2201 N.E. 23rd St. at 7:30 p.m. and continuing through Sunday. The host pastor, Ann Lester, invites the public to attend.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 25

• The Prayer Band of Zion Hill Baptist Church will celebrate its fifth anniversary in the church at 2920 Greenway Ave. at 4 p.m. The guest minister will be the Rev. O.B. Pate, associate minister at the church. The public is invited to attend. The pastor is the Rev. O.B. Cook.

• The Rev. Peay and the Missionary Society of Reynolds Temple CME Church, located at the corner of 30th and Glenn streets, invites the public to see the play, "Behold, I Stand At The Door" at 5 p.m.

• The Shanta-Malia and Men's Chorus from Hanes CME Church will be in concert at 4 p.m. in the Goler Memorial AME Zion Church at 7th Street and Patterson Ave. The concert is sponsored by the Home Mission and Don't Be Idle Societies. The public is invited to an evening of sacred and inspirational music.

The Chronicle welcomes Church Calendar notices. Announcements should be concise and typed or neatly printed. They should 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 Monday at 5:30 p.m.

Deborah S. Patterson to present concert

Miss Deborah S. Patterson will appear in concert on Sunday, Nov. 25, at 7:30 p.m. in the Ambassador Cathedral at 1500 English St.

Miss Patterson has sung professionally with noted gospel artists James Cleveland, Myrna Summers, Keith Pringle and Mattie Moss Clark. She has recorded

"New Life," "Eternal Life," and "Count Your Blessings." She sings with the David L. Allen Singers.

She is the daughter of Bishop and Mrs. F.D. Patterson.

Bishop Patterson and the members of Ambassador Cathedral invite the public to this service.

Area Deaths and Funerals

Johnnie Hines Little

Mr. Johnnie Hines Little, of 3042 Patterson Ave., died Thursday, Nov. 15, at the N.C. Baptist Hospital.

Mr. Little is survived by his wife, Mrs. Rosa Little, of this city; one daughter, Mrs. Rebecca Scott, of this city; three grandchildren, two great-grandchildren and many other relatives and friends.

Funeral services were held on Tuesday, Nov. 20, at the Gilmore Memorial Chapel. Gilmore Funeral Directors was in charge of the funeral arrangements.

Daisy M. Foster

Mrs. Daisy M. Foster, 2633 N. Cherry St., died Monday, Nov. 12, at the N.C. Baptist Hospital. She was born in Rockingham County and was a member of the Red Rock Baptist Church.

Mrs. Foster is survived by her husband, Mr. Roland Foster, of the home; two daughters, Mrs. Macie Jackson of Bay Shore, N.Y., and Mrs. Dorothy Spencer, of this city; eight grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; two sisters, Mrs. Betty Taylor of Harrisburg,

Pa., and Mrs. Macie Hopkins of New York City; and one brother, Mr. Mose Hopkins of Harrisburg, Pa.

Funeral services were held on Saturday, Nov. 17, at the Gilmore Memorial Chapel. Burial was in the Evergreen Cemetery. Gilmore Funeral Directors was in charge of the funeral arrangements.

Otto Howard Gill

Mr. Otto Howard Gill, of 1532 Garfield St., died Tuesday, Nov. 13, at the Forsyth Memorial Hospital. He was an employee of the P.H. Hines Knitting Company and a veteran of the U.S. Marines.

Mr. Gill is survived by his wife, Mrs. Geneva Gill of Asheboro; three daughters, Sandra Gill of Charlotte, Paula G. Gill of Asheboro and Beverly Gill, U.S. Army, Fort Gordon, Ga.; two sons, Otto Gill, Jr., U.S. Army, California, and James Lewis, of this city; five grandchildren; her mother, Mrs. Elmonia L. Gill, and her father, Mr. Charlie Gill, both of Winston-Salem; two sisters, Mrs. Thressa Rowls of Charlotte and Mrs. Vasse Taylor of this city; two brothers, Cedric Gill, U.S. Air Force, Wichita Falls, Texas, and Garland Gill of Winston-Salem.

Funeral services were held at 2 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 16, at the Gilmore Memorial Chapel. Burial followed in Piedmont Memorial Garden. Gilmore Funeral Directors was in charge of the funeral arrangements.