

Religion

FOCUS ON RELIGION

Sir Walter Mack Jr.: Making the most of setback

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As Sir Walter Mack Jr. lay on the football field waiting for trainers to attend the sprained ligaments in his knee, he knew that his football career was probably over. But somewhere in the back of his mind, he felt confident that another career was about to begin.

"When I found out I couldn't play football, I felt my identity was gone. I didn't know who I was. But I learned that there is more to life than a leather ball. When one door shuts another opens."

-- Sir Walter Mack Jr.

Mack, an All-America during his freshman year at Elon College, saw his football career come to an abrupt end one Saturday during a morning practice session. The ligaments in his knee were severely damaged, and Mack was told that his chances of playing football again were slim. Though initially devastated, Mack says he soon realized that he had talents to develop off the football field.

"I was depressed for a while because I knew I

wouldn't be able to play football," says Mack, a junior at Elon. "Then I realized that God had blessed me with other talents and dreams. I realized I couldn't be happy unless I fulfilled those dreams. I realized I was worthy of doing other things than playing football."

While recovering from his injury, Mack says he began to explore the talents he has in other areas. One of his first discoveries was that he had a knack for radio announcing, so he went to work for radio station, WSOE. He was the only black announcer at the independent station and was the announcer for the station's first black gospel program. Though he enjoyed the experience, he says the task was far from easy.

"I had to overcome sometimes having my albums missing," he says. "We didn't have but about 25 gospel albums, and sometimes I would come in and some of them would be missing."

His work at the station, however, helped him land a job at Winston-Salem's WAAA as a Sunday gospel announcer.

Mack also was one of the founders of the Kappa Alpha Psi chapter at Elon.

Mack, whose father was the late Dr. Sir Walter Mack, the pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church for 33 years, also faces the decision of whether he will follow his father's footsteps into the ministry.



Sir Walter Mack Jr.: Gridiron injury has forced him to discover his gifts in areas away from the football field.

"Everyone always asks me, 'Are you going to follow your father's footsteps?'" Mack says. "But I want to be sure that my calling is from the Lord. One day I'd like to go into the ministry. I'd like to preach. I've always had a desire to be a minister because I realize the help the world needs."

Mack says he has "not received my calling yet, but if I do, I'm going to be sincere with it."

As a youngster, Mack says it was sometimes difficult to live up to the expectations that people had

for him as the son of a minister well-known in the community. However, as a young adult, he says he is happy for the guidance he received from his parents and for the goals which they set for him.

"Sometimes there was a lot of pressure because my father was a minister," he recalls. "I came up through grade school with certain things expected of me. I couldn't act like 'Joe Blow' because of my father's image. But it was a blessing. It taught me

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CHURCH CALENDAR

THURSDAY, JUNE 25

• The outreach ministry of Ambassador Cathedral, 1500 English St., will present the Atlanta Interdenominational Mass Choir at 7:30 p.m. Bishop F.D. Patterson is the host pastor. For more information call 723-1965.

SATURDAY, JUNE 27

• Christ Rescue Temple Apostolic Church, 1500 N. Dunleith Ave., will hold dedication services in the parking lot of Christ Rescue Temple Arms Apartments Building No. 2. The congregation will celebrate the dedication of limousine services for the church's senior members, a picnic shelter for the church's day care center and their newly-purchased bus. Church officials from throughout the church organization will share in the thanksgiving. The CRT Jr. Mass Choir will provide music for the ceremony. Bishop Willie Davis Jr. is the host pastor. Bishop J.R. Ziglar is chairman of the UCJA; Bishop U.I. McCall is the vice chairman. For more information call 722-9841.

• The C.C. Turner Inspirational Mass Choir of Calvary Hill Apostolic Church, 2411 Urban St., will celebrate its 5th anniversary at 7:30 p.m. The Rev. Al Caesar, associate minister of St. Mark Baptist Church, will be the guest speaker. Sunday, June 28, choirs from around the city will be the guests. Elder Claude C. Turner is the host pastor. For more information call 784-4961.

SUNDAY, JUNE 28

• The Dreamland Park Baptist Church Gospel Choir, 2340 Dunbar St., will present an evening of songs, love and praise at 4 p.m. featuring the Jackson Family and the Upward Way Singers. For more information call 767-1728.

• The Senior Choir of Greater United Progressive Baptist Church, 1122 Quincy Caldwell Circle, will sponsor The Singing Disciples of Baltimore at 7:30 p.m. Dr. Quincy A. Caldwell is the host pastor. For more information call 724-1266.

• The Senior Choir of Zion Memorial Baptist Church, 101 N. Dunleith Ave., will present a play titled, "Wake Up Dad" at 4 p.m. Also, Vacation Bible School will be held at the church nightly from 6 to 8:30. The Rev. Joseph Jones is the church's pastor.

• Reynolds Temple CME Church, 2935 Glenn Ave., will hold its annual Men's Day services at 5 p.m. The Rev. Marcus S. Durham, a retired minister, will be the guest speaker. He is a member of Hanes Memorial CME Church, a Sunday school teacher and a member of the ministers' alliance.

• The First Calvary Baptist Church Vocal Choir, 401 N. Woodland Ave., will celebrate its 50th anniversary at 2:30 p.m.

• St. Matthew Apostolic Church, 3640 New Walkertown Road, will celebrate its third homecoming at 4 p.m. The guest speaker will be Elder William Koger, pastor of Faith Ministry Apostolic Church. Elder Joseph P. Lowery is the host pastor. For more information call 724-1378.

• The S.L. Hodges Inspirational Choir of New Hope Missionary Baptist Church, 1119 N.E. 18th St., will sponsor "100 Men in Black" at 4 p.m. The Rev. Verlyn Crawford, associate minister of White Rock Baptist Church, will be the speaker.

MONDAY, JUNE 29

• Emmanuel Baptist Church, 1075 Shalimar Drive, will hold its annual Vacation Bible School through July 3. The school will begin at 6:30 nightly and end at 8:30. The theme is "Hallelujah, Jesus is King." Classes range from nursery to adults, the Rev. John Mendez as the instructor for the adult class.

• St. Stephen Baptist Church, 2071 Bowen Blvd., will hold Vacation Bible School from 6 to 9 nightly through July 10. Alma Barber is the director.

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CHURCH NOTES

Goler Memorial congregation plans tribute to pastor

Goler Memorial AME Zion Church will host its annual pastor's appreciation services in honor of its pastor, the Rev. James A. French, Sunday, June 28, at 4 p.m.

The Rev. Jerry A. Quick and the congregation of Goler Memorial AME Zion Church will be the special guests.

French, a native of Albermarle, spent most of his life in Salisbury, where he attended school. The son of Beatrice H. French and the Rev. Edgar N. French, he received his bachelor's degree at Livingstone College, his master of divinity degree at Hood Theological Seminary and a master of religious education from Hood Theological Seminary.



James French

French has been actively involved in the work of the AME Zion Church since his youth. As a teen-ager, he served as presi-

dent of his local church's youth council and was later elected as president of his district. He was finally elevated to the position of president of the National Christian Youth Council of the AME Zion Church.

French's involvement in the activities of the Zion Church continued to broaden after he accepted the call into the pastoral ministry. Since that time, he has served as the pastor of Piney Grove AME Zion Church and Zion Hill AME Zion Church in Concord; Pleasant Ridge AME Zion Church in Gastonia; and Southern City Tabernacle AME Zion Church in East Spencer.

Under his leadership, Goler Memorial has purchased a new parsonage, 14 and one half acres

of property for construction of a new church, doubled financial receipts, doubled congregational attendance, purchased new furnishings and equipment, established weekly bible study classes and other programs.

French has served as district director of Christian education for the Concord District and currently serves as a member of the finance committee and the board of trustees for Camp Dorothy Walls in the Western North Carolina Conference.

He serves as secretary of the budget committee and as the administrative assistant to the presiding elder of the Winston-Salem district.

French and his wife, Juletha, have two sons.

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Twin City Baha'i community to join national picnic celebration events

Members of the Baha'i Faith of Winston-Salem will join other members of their faith from around the country in hosting picnics that will celebrate the oneness of humanity and commemorate the 75th anniversary of the first "unity picnic" held in Teaneck, N.J. June 29, 1912.

The Winston-Salem picnic will be held at the Rupert Bell Park and Center from 11 a.m. to 3

p.m. with a short program from 11:30 to 12:15.

The host for the 1912 gathering was Abdul-Baha, son of the prophet and founder of the Baha'i Faith. Abdul-Baha traveled across America after 40 years of exile and imprisonment in Palestine (now Israel) for his religious convictions.

When asked why he had undertaken his journey to America,

Abdul-Baha said, "I have come to America to raise the standard of universal peace and to bring unity among mankind."

He addressed many groups and organizations such as the NAACP, the Theosophists and audiences at Columbia and Stanford universities. He met with leaders of the day, including President Theodore Roosevelt

and Alexander Graham Bell. He visited the poor and downtrodden, proclaimed the equality of men and women and championed the cause of racial amity. Abdul-Baha, who declined offers to travel in comfort and luxury, placed the dedication stone for the Baha'i House of Worship near Chicago.

South African choir schedules Winston-Salem concert performance

The African Methodist Episcopal Church of Swaziland, South Africa, will present a concert performance in Winston-Salem Thursday, June 25, at 8 p.m. in the Kenneth R. Williams Auditorium.

The choir will be touring the area through June 30.

The 32-member choir is directed by Africa Twala. During its seven-week tour of the United States, which began in May, the members have been accompanied by the Rev. Fred Harrison of the AME Missions Department.

The choir's music is performed in English and in siSwati. It con-

sists of religious music, both European and indigenous. Part of their repertoire is sung a capella and part with organ or piano accompaniment. Rhythmic music plays a large part in their performance.

The tour is part of the 40th anniversary celebration of Church

World Service and is an attempt to personalize the service and partnership of Church World Service with those who have made those 40 years possible.

The tour is being accomplished in cooperation with the AME Church, which is celebrating the

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Lifting Every Voice

The Junior and Intermediate choirs of Union Baptist Church combined to sing "El-Shaddai" at their anniversary celebration held recently at the Stevens Center (photo by James Parker).