

# Religion

## FOCUS

### Lovefeast ceremony marks 165th anniversary of St. Philips Moravian

By ANGIE MARTIN  
Chronicle Staff Writer

The congregation of St. Philips Moravian Church gathered last weekend to celebrate what, understated, can be called a milestone. Young and old alike assembled to mark the special occasion of an event that happened 165 years ago, the founding of their church.

The church celebrated its 165th year anniversary and the 20th year of its present location with a special observance known to Moravians as the Lovefeast ceremony, which is similar to communion. The ceremony, according to Moravian teaching, rekindles the missionary minded vision of the church.

While there are not a large number of black Moravians in this area, the Rev. Cedric Rodney, pastor of St. Philips, says they have greatly influenced global missionary work. It is a misconception, says Rodney, to believe there are only a few black Moravians worldwide who take part in the church's uncomplicated but structured form of worship. Some, he adds, consider black Moravians an "oddy."

"In Jamaica, 11,000 (members), in South America, 47,000, in the West Indies, 16,000, in Honduras, 16,000," Rodney says, his speech garnished with his native Guyanese accent. "That's a lot of Moravians."

The Moravian influence in the Twin City is obvious and dates to the founding of the city. Old

Salem was founded by Moravian missionaries in 1822. That same year, the women's mission of the church opened St. Philips as the Negro Congregation, a small school and church for blacks. Safe within the sanctuary's brick walls blacks were taught to read and write despite laws prohibiting the practice.

Rodney says that the worship practices of black Moravians do differ from their counterparts at the more traditional black churches. One difference, he says is that the flavor of the Moravian church is liturgical.

"There is order. If you go to any other Moravian

*"You see, the focus of the Moravian church is unity. We believe that Jesus Christ died for us -- that is the essential thing. We all are one, from east to west and north and south. That is the essential thing."*

- - The Rev. Cedric Rodney

church you'll find the same order," he says, reviewing a book which lists the pre-scheduled Bible texts for the entire year. "You see, the focus of the Moravian church is unity. Unity in the essentials, liberty in nonessentials and charity in all things. We believe that Jesus Christ died for us -- that is the essential thing. We all are one, from east to west and north and south. That is the essential thing."

Another "essential" that Rodney has undertaken



is the creation of a museum in the church's deserted building in Old Salem, which has stood as a silent testimony of the black Moravian presence.

Rodney, also an assistant professor of history at Winston-Salem State University, plans to preserve a portion of his church's legacy. He says he wants to convert the old building where the believers worshipped until 1949. The congregation later moved to Happy Hills home and eventually to its current location on Bon Air Avenue.

The museum Rodney visualizes will be a place in Winston-Salem where blacks can experience a kind of kinship with the black Moravians of far away black homelands.

"This is my dream," Rodney says. "I want to open the museum so people in Winston-Salem will see what people did in St. Thomas, in Tanzania, in South Africa...they believed like you believe. We have a rich heritage. We introduced music to the church, and we

love to sing!"

Although he has pastored St. Philips for nearly 20 years, he says the idea for the museum was not revealed to him until recently.

"I feel in some way it may be in God's plan for me to do this now," says Rodney. "It never occurred to me before, but then when I got into the building I felt committed to do something. I feel as though this is my burden."

It will be a burden, indeed, to restore the old church building. Talks are underway with the Salem Congregation, a group of Moravian churches here, to help make the project a reality. Estimates for repair of the church will be about \$21,165, Rodney says. Carpentry repairs, painting, window glass replacement, pest control and tree trimming will need to be handled.

Then there are the artifacts to be collected. To

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## Church Celebration

The Rev. Cedric Rodney, top photo, pastor of St. Philips Moravian Church, stands at the front of the present church building on Bon Air Avenue. The church recently celebrated its 165th anniversary. At left, the old church building stands in Old Salem (photos by Mike Cunningham).

## CHURCH CALENDAR

SUNDAY, NOV. 1

• White Rock Baptist Church will celebrate the 38th anniversary of the Senior Usher Board. at 4 p.m. Dr. C. V. Owens, pastor of First Mount Zion Baptist Church, will be the guest speaker.

• The Winston-Salem State University Choir will be in concert at 5 p.m. at Hanes Memorial CME Church., 819 N. Highland Ave. The Rev. William S. Fails is host pastor. For more information call 724-7151.

• St. Stephen Baptist Church will host its Annual Honor Day for Deacons at 3 p.m. The event, sponsored by the Pastor's Special Committee, will honor the Rev. Wendell A. Johnson of First Baptist Church as guest speaker.

• The Class Leader of Goler Metropolitan AME Zion Church will present "The Seven Keys to Heaven" at 4 p.m. Ozie Clark is the leader and the Rev. Jerry A. Quick is host pastor. For more information call Bernice-Davenport at 725-2654.

• Union Baptist Church will celebrate its 47th Annual Men's Day and its 38th Women's Day observances at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m., respectively. The Rev. Wallace F. Gaffney Jr., pastor of Green Creek Baptist Church in Spartanburg, S.C. will be the guest speaker for the Men's Day program. Carolyn Coleman of Greensboro will be guest speaker for the women's program. The Rev. Benjamin F. Daniels is host pastor.

• The Voices of Deliverance Choir of Macedonia Holiness Church of God will observe its 13th choir anniversary at 4 p.m. The celebration is dedicated to Dr. Robert L. Wise, pastor and general overseer, for 21 years of broadcast ministry on WAAA radio. The master of ceremonies will be Robert Wise Jr., minister of music at Macedonia.

FRIDAY, NOV. 6

• Christ Rescue Temple Apostolic Church will fellowship with Macedonia Apostolic Church of Raleigh on their week of Pastor's Appreciation service. Bishop Willie Davis Jr. will be the speaker with music furnished by the CRT Mass Choir. Elder Tommie Smith is host pastor.

• Bishop F. D. Patterson and the Ambassadors Cathedral Congregation will sponsor an appreciation ceremony for the Ambassadors for Christ Choir music director David L. Allen at 8 p.m. Pastor Robert Taylor of Fellowship Tabernacle in Philadelphia will be the guest speaker. Detroit recording artist Thomas A. Whitfield will be special musical guest. For more information call 725-0901 or 723-1965.

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## CHURCH NOTES

### George Gibson to deliver sermon at Galilee Baptist

The Rev. George E. Gibson Jr, a 1977 Winston-Salem State University graduate, will deliver the 11 a.m. sermon at Galilee Baptist Church, 575 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Nov. 1.

Gibson received his B.A. degree from WSSU in intermediate education. He also holds the master of divinity degree from the Lutheran Theological Seminary.

Because of the athletic prowess he exhibited at WSSU, Gibson was chosen in the NBA draft by the Philadelphia 76ers.

After attending camp, he decided to play for Athletes in Action, an international basketball league which is an extension of Campus Crusades for Christ.

After returning to Philadelphia in 1978, he taught science and social studies at Gillespie Junior

High School.

After teaching for one year, Gibson accepted a position at the Institute for Scientific Information where he remained until December 1982, when he became a full-time minister.

Gibson was ordained into the Baptist Ministry in 1983. He is currently a member of the Baptist Ministers Conference of Philadelphia and Vicinity, the Baptist Pastors Missionary Conference of Philadelphia.

He is also a member of the Executive Board of the Pennsylvania State Convention and Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.

He is married to the former Franki L. Reddick, a Temple University graduate and flight attendant for United Airlines.

Dr. Warrick C. Hay is the host pastor.



Gibson

Wise

### Voices of Deliverance to celebrate 13th anniversary at Macedonia Holiness

The Voices of Deliverance Choir of Macedonia Holiness Church of God Inc. will celebrate its 13th choir anniversary on Sunday, Nov. 1, at 4 p.m.

The celebration is being dedicated to the pastor and general overseer, Dr. Robert L. Wise Sr. in

recognition of his broadcast ministry. Wise's radio ministry spans 21 years on WAAA radio.

Robert Wise Jr is the minister of music at Macedonia.

The church is located at 4111 Whitfield Drive.

## U.S. black Catholics seek more decision-making roles

BY STEPHEN R. WILSON  
Associated Press Writer

VATICAN CITY -- A delegation of black Roman Catholics from the United States said Friday it told the worldwide synod of bishops the church should grant more decision-making positions to "often ignored" black lay people.

Also Friday, a U.S.-based group of conservative Catholic women presented a petition to the Vatican expressing support for the church ban on women priests, saying women were not meant to be ordained "just as men cannot be mothers."

"Women for Faith and Family"

presented a document to Cardinal Edouard Gagnon, president of the Vatican's Pontifical Council for the Family, and asked that he turn it over to Pope John Paul II.

The group said the document, called "Affirmation for Catholic Women," expresses backing for traditional church teaching on reproduction, marriage, the family and the role of men and women in church and society.

The group, which is based in St. Louis, Mo., said the document was signed by 40,000 women from several countries including the United States, Canada, and Australia. It said Mother Teresa of Calcutta, the

Nobel Peace Prize winning nun, was among those who signed.

Walter Hubbard, chairman of the National Office for Black Catholics, said his group submitted a document to the bishops' synod that he hopes will raise awareness of the problems facing the 1.3 million black American Catholics.

The synod, an advisory body that counsels the pope on major issues facing the Roman Catholic Church, is examining the role of lay people in church and society. More than 200 bishops from around the world are attending the monthlong assembly, which ends Oct. 30.

The delegation's report said that black lay people will play an

increasingly important role in the church since no significant increase is expected in the number of black clergy.

Hubbard said there are about 300 black priests in the United States, with an average age of 45 to 50. There are 11 black bishops in the U.S. church. Only one, Bishop Joseph Howze of Biloxi, Miss., heads a diocese.

"Our goal is the inclusion of black lay Catholics in responsible positions in church affairs," the report said.

"Indeed, qualified lay people must be considered for responsible positions in the local church that are not only directly related to black affairs."