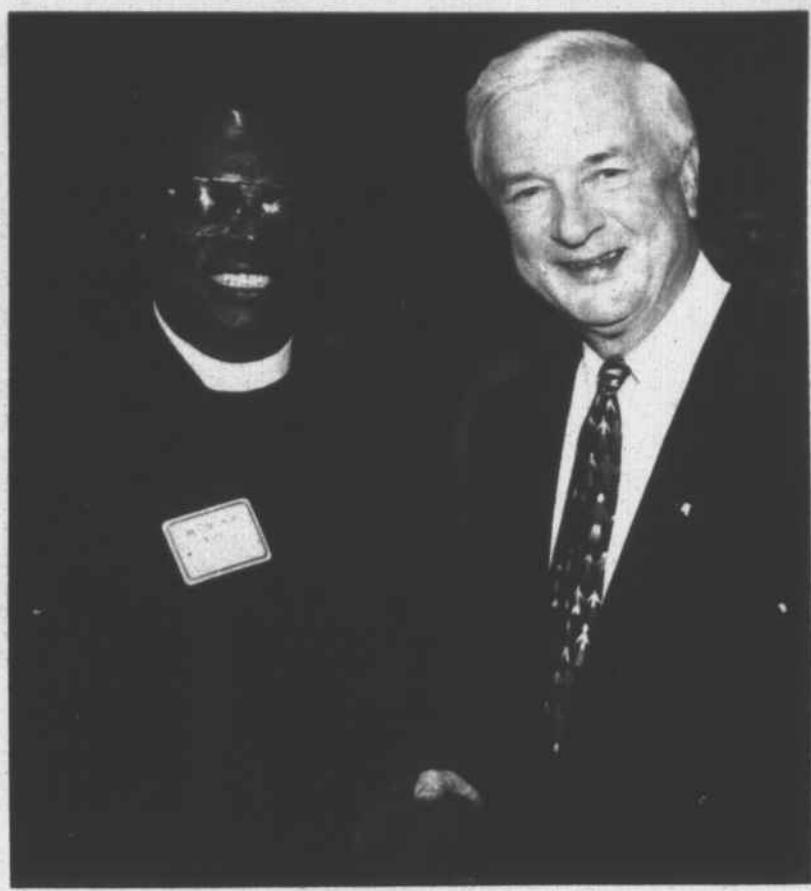




Front row, from left: Sallie Wilson, Rev. Dr. Seth O. Lartey, Gov. Jim Hunt, Jacqueline Williams-Lartey. Back row, from left: Pastor Rick Downs, Lloyd Booker, Marion Henderson, Jackie Moore, Flagge Stanfield and Lisa Jones.



Rev. Dr. Seth O. Lartey and Gov. Jim Hunt

Two congregations earn Governor's Award

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

All across the country, people of faith are pairing and caring in an effort to end racism. Dr. Martin Luther King once said the worship hour remains "the most segregated hour" in America. Daily, racism, hate violence and intergroup strife are on the rise. Through joint experiences of worship, fellowship and social action, congregations are striving to get to know one another better as a means of creating a world free of racial, ethnic and spiritual prejudice and fear.

Two such congregations from Forsyth County received the Governor's Award for Outstanding Volunteer Services on Nov. 22 for their efforts to achieve racial harmony in our state and local community. Gov. James B. Hunt was in Greensboro and presented the award to Rev. Dr. Seth O. Lartey and Pastor Rick Downs. Rev. Dr. Seth O. Lartey, pastor of Goler Memorial AME Zion Church, and Pastor Rick Downs of Redeemer Presbyterian Church have formed a partnership in Christ that not only helps to improve race relations, but sets a tremendous example that regardless of the color of our skin, we

serve the same God.

According to Dr. Lartey, the church is the key to, but not the only means of improving race relations. It is the church's responsibility to create a sense of real community among all citizens of our communities. "As a general rule, the church preaches deliverance; the way to know or determine deliverance from prejudices and racial tendencies is their willingness to work with others of a different category (denomination, race, creed, nationality, etc.)." As a body, the church has what it takes to create a community where people genuinely love and care for one another regardless of race.

Pastor Rick Downs is proud of the fledgling relationship that exists between the two pastors and their congregations. The two pastors are doing what the Lord has called them to do. Racial injustice means that we live to please ourselves rather than God!

Jesus loves all of us indiscriminately. Pastor Downs, who is a true missionary, comments, "We're all doing the same work, fighting the same battle for the same Commander."

Having recently accepted an appointment to pastor a church in Boston, Mass., whose congrega-

tion is four-fifths Brazilian, Rev. Rick Downs is committed to continuing efforts to further race reconciliation in more blended populations.

As people of faith, we can choose to be racially tolerant (meeting the requirements of law-abiding citizens), or we can choose racial reconciliation, which eliminates hatred and racial intolerance. About three years ago, two people met for breakfast over a period of time and formed a relationship that exists between two pastors who chose to respond to God's leadership and plan for racial harmony, subsequently motivating their congregations to form a relationship which is color-blind and based on self-sacrificing love.

Dr. Lartey reminds us that Christ, who ultimately wants to reconcile everyone to Himself, gave the ultimate demonstration of love. As Christians, regardless of the color of our skin, our denomination or ethnic origin, why can't we demonstrate love for our sisters and brothers? As new creatures in Christ, we can take the lead in living out the truth of the gospel and be part of the process of reconciliation, exemplifying our oneness in Christ in race rela-

tions. Racial healing has to occur one person at a time, one congregation at a time.

Just like evangelism, Pastor Lartey believes that racial reconciliation is the responsibility of every believer. No longer can we afford to claim to have the love of Jesus in our hearts and yet be afraid to cross 52. No longer can we allow the testimony of the church to suffer as we live Christ-like in our churches, but hate our neighbors of another race. We should make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Goler Memorial and Redeemer began their relationship as a study group utilizing Dr. Tony Evans' book "Getting To Know Each Other." Pastor Rick is not ashamed of admitting his need for salvation, nor does being white make him any closer to God.

The two congregations have shared numerous fellowship and worship experiences. They worked hand in hand to sponsor Forsyth County's first Kids' Cafe project. Volunteers from both churches eagerly feed the children from surrounding neighborhoods a balanced evening meal. They also share enrichment and Bible-based activities with the children. A



Pastor Rick Downs of Redeemer Presbyterian Church, left, and Rev. Dr. Seth O. Lartey of Goler Memorial AME Zion Church

Habitat House was a joint project completed by the two congregations. The two churches were also able to feed a rest home in Liberia for a whole year.

"Race relations can be improved when God's people work together," says Dr. Lartey. Both congregations look forward to

continuing their relationships. A seminar is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 19, 2000, from 9 a.m. until noon. The seminar will focus on "Building Real Partnerships Between Black and White Churches." For more information, please call Goler Memorial AME Zion Church at (336) 724-9411.

RELIGION CALENDAR

Dec. 3

Blankets for Princeville

Shiloh Baptist Church of Winston-Salem, at 916 East 12th Street, is collecting blankets to take to the flood victims in Princeville, N.C. We ask the community to help us by donating a new blanket for this cause. You can bring your blanket by the church by Dec. 3. We are also taking volunteers to Princeville on Dec. 4 for a day to help in any way we can. Please call the church by Dec. 3 between 11 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday if you would like to go to Princeville as a volunteer.

Dec. 4

Clothing give-away

The Christian Women's Fellowship of Middle Fork Christian Church is sponsoring a clothing give-away on Saturday, Dec. 4, from noon until 5:30 p.m. You are

welcome.

Dec. 5

Anniversary

The Messengers (missionary department) will celebrate their 27th anniversary on Sunday, Dec. 5, at 7 p.m. Dr. Paul Lowe and congregation from Shiloh Baptist Church will be the special guests. Ambassador Cathedral is at 1500 Harriet Tubman Drive in Winston-Salem. For more information, contact the church office at 336-725-0901.

Guest speaker

The Senior Usher's Board of Second New Bethel Baptist Church, located at 1900 New Walkertown Road, is proud to announce that Rev. Sam Cornelius of New Jerusalem Baptist Church will be the guest speaker on Sunday, Dec. 5. Services will begin at 4 p.m. in the sanctuary of Second

New Bethel. Master of ceremonies will be Songster Brother Ralph E. Meadows Sr. Everyone is invited for this glorious occasion.

Dec. 12

"100 Children in White"

The "100 Children in White" service, sponsored by the Euther Clark Sunshine Band Youth Missionary group of Bethlehem Missionary Baptist Church, will be held on Sunday, Dec. 12, at 3 o'clock. We are asking you to bring your children, with girls dressed in white and boys dressed in black and white, to help us worship the Lord for the many blessings He has given our children. We have planned a special program, which will include soloists' songs and personal testimonies, an interpretive dance group and children's choirs. Please plan to come and share in the services of "100 Children in White" marching together in Christ. Come and be blessed!

Dec. 19
Gospel Explosion

Father and Son Productions presents The Holiday Season Gospel Explosion, featuring Slim & the Supreme Angels, also starring The Christianaires plus Winston-Salem's own Rev. C.E. Gray and The Mt. Olive Baptist Church Mass Choir and The New Jerusalem Baptist Church Male Choir. Sister Carmen Russell Bonham will be the master of ceremonies for the evening. There will be a \$500 Xmas cash giveaway (must be present to win). The Holiday Season Gospel Explosion will be held Dec. 19 at Benton Convention Center. Showtime: 5 p.m. Doors open at 4 p.m. Ticket prices: \$15 in advance, \$18 at the door. Tickets on sale now at Father and Son Productions, 773-0701; Mt. Olive Baptist Church, 724-5842; and Miss Lady's Music Creations, 724-3047.

Concert to feature world-renowned musician

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

The Anointed Christmas Save the Youth and Family Concert presents Dr. Vernard Johnson, world renowned gospel saxophonist, with Rev. Charles E. Gray and the Mt. Olive Baptist Church Mass Choir and Pastor Melvin "Rip" Wilkins with the Community Outreach Choir combined with Union Baptist Church Young Adult Choir. Other featured guests: Steadfast Apostolic Church Step Team and The Victory Faith Dance Ensemble.

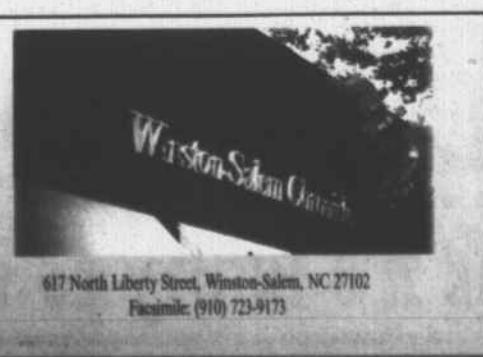


Johnson

The concert will be Sunday, Dec. 5, at 5 p.m. at M.C. Benton Convention Center, 301 W. 5th St., Winston-Salem. Mistress of ceremonies will be Minister Cassandra McCleod. All seats are free. Be sure to bring a liberal love offering. The person holding the

free green tickets will get in first, so invite people with your green tickets.

You don't want to miss this concert! Awesome things happen at Dr. Vernard Johnson's concerts. He can just blow his horn and hundreds of people get saved and healed. (Over 1,000 have already been saved.) In Kansas City, an entire street gang was saved. In concert, he was just blowing his horn and a lady shouted, "I have been blind for seven years but now I can see, I can see, I can see!!!"



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