

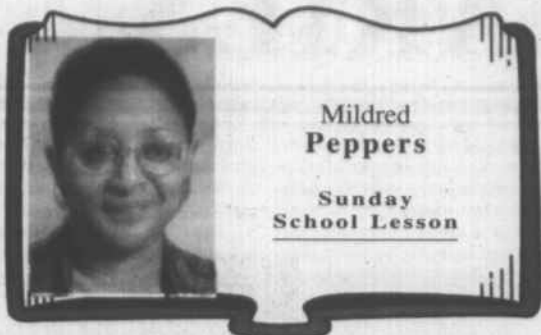
God wants bold soldiers for His army

Lesson Scripture: Acts 4:1-4, 23-31

Lesson Aims: to understand the events that led to the believers' prayer, to recognize that adversity reveals our true character, and to depend on the Holy Spirit to do His will.

Background: Once the lame man is healed, word spread in the Temple like wildfire! At Solomon's Colonnade (porch), a crowd gathers to hear an account of what happened. Peter delivered his second sermon, revealing the elements of preaching. Most of them knew something about Jesus.

Peter informed them that they are the ones who rejected Jesus, which led to His Crucifixion and ultimately His Resurrection. He connected those events with the prophecies in the Scripture. Because of His Resurrection, He is God's Messiah! All who believe on Him will be saved and given power by the Holy Spirit. The apostle's powerful preaching



Mildred Peppers
Sunday School Lesson

alarmed the Sanhedrin.

The Sanhedrin, composed of 70 men, was the highest court and governing authority for the Jews. Rome granted them local control as long as they were no threat to her. The 70 men are divided into three groups: the elders (tribal or family heads), the scribes (experts in the oral and written Law), and the priests (rulers). A second division was based on interpretation of the Law.

Made up of wealthy landown-

ers (aristocrats), the Sadducees were the chief priests. They believe in the Pentateuch, the first five books only. Those books are also referred to as the Torah. They deny the existence of angels, demons and a bodily resurrection.

Their opponents, the Pharisees, were the conservative nationalist leaders who believe that they can keep the Law perfectly. Supernaturalists, they also believe the opposite of the Sadducees. Most of the Jews respect-

ed them highly as model keepers of God's word. They tended to be more vocal against Jesus than the Sadducees. However, when threatened with a common foe, unity is the order of the day.

The Sanhedrin enjoyed autonomy and was not about to allow anyone (Jesus) and His followers to jeopardize that status. The Sanhedrin monitored His followers very closely.

Peter's initial sermon was apparently in the marketplace. His second one, however, was in the Temple, where Jews and Christians meet. Too many people are listening to the apostles. Something must be done!

Lesson: As Peter continues to preach, the Temple guards arrest him and John. The Sadducees feel threatened as more men turn to Jesus for salvation. Once again a quick trial is held. Boldly, they respond to the questions from the Sanhedrin. Caught in an uncomfortable position, they tell Peter and John not to preach in the name of Jesus anymore. The apostles

openly announce that they will do what is right in the sight of God. They really can't punish them because they are unsure what the people will do.

Upon their release from jail, the apostles return to their people and report everything that has happened since the day before. The community of faith then turns to the only One who is able to handle this situation. They pray from their hearts. "Sovereign Lord" implies that He is over all of creation, including the kings and rulers of the earth.

Herod and Pilate met with the Gentiles and people of Israel to conspire against Jesus. Have you ever heard people say, "They meant it for bad, but God made it good?" Such is the case here. The leaders conspire to get rid of the rebel. Yet His horrible death and Resurrection bring salvation to all who believe. Their petition is for God to recognize that threats facing the apostles and to continue to heal in the name of Jesus. The Holy Spirit comes by once again and things are stirred up, not just

for the apostles but the entire assembly.

Application: Christians today need that same boldness of yesterday. Boldness brings certain consequences with it. There will be threats, lies, imprisonment, and, very possibly, death. We are to be bold anyway! Wasn't Jesus bold on our behalf as beggars? Facing a powerful foe, the community of faith prays. Why? They know beyond a shadow of a doubt, prayer changes things!

Don't depend on your power and don't rely on your knowledge. Both will fail you. To stand boldly for Him, ask the Lord to give you power and boldness to stand for Him no matter what. A witness for Him is needed from the White House to the "po" house, from the mountaintop to the lowest valley, and from the peaceful shores to the war-torn nations. We must stand when we're scared and threatened. God wants bold soldiers for His army. Our boldness comes only from the Lord! Rely on Him alone. Amen.

Greensboro church starts new season

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

It's a Season of New Beginnings at Saint James Presbyterian Church in Greensboro as it prepares for powerful days of preaching at Fall Revival 2005 and its new pastor's installation. The revival is being planned for Sept. 25-28. The pastor's installation will be held on Sunday, Sept. 25, at 3 p.m.

The featured preachers are the Rev. Dr. Diane Givens Moffett, the dynamic pastor of Saint James Presbyterian Church, and the Rev. Robert N. Burkins Sr., senior pastor of Elmwood United Presbyterian Church in East Orange, N.J.

Moffett, an Oakland, Calif., native, is the author of "Beyond Gifts and Cornbread: Reflections of African American Christian Identity," published by Judson Press (January 2002). Moffett's sermon "Giving Birth" is featured in Outstanding Black Sermons, published by Judson

Press (June 2001); and her sermon "Mustard Seed Faith" was recently published in "Those Preachin' Women, Volume 4," Burkins Press (June 2004).



Moffett

Burkins is the pastor of one of the largest African-American Presbyterian churches in the nation. Known for his inspirational messages and powerful preaching style, he is a highly sought-after preacher who delivers life-transforming messages in pulpits throughout North America.

The spirited worship will commence with two Sunday services at 8:30 a.m. and 11 a.m. Three additional sermons and inspiring music will be experienced at 7 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday.

For more information about the church's revival, contact the church at 820 Ross Ave., Greensboro, or call (336) 273-6658.

Conference

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coordinator, director and teacher of pro-family ministry, assistant director of altar counselor ministry, member of the counselors ministry, pastoral escort ministry and director of prayer ministry. For several years she led the congregation in a weekly hourlong prayer meeting as well as monthly and quarterly special seasons of prayer.

She was also the coordinator, training instructor and head prayers session leader for the National Church and the Annual International Conference. She has ministered in prayer conferences, women's conferences, Bible studies, crusades, seminars, workshops and worship services in North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania and New Mexico. In 1995 she was the Winston-Salem city coordinator for "March for Jesus." She has also taught prayer in Bible schools in Nigeria and Ghana, Africa, and has ministered several times at the women's conferences at the Billy Graham Center, Asheville.

She is currently a member of Phillips Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. Under the pastorate of the late Dr. Stephen Thornton, she taught a 12-week school of prayer, coordinated the development of the prayer chapel, and ministered chapel hour every week, a ministry that was started by Thorn-

ton. Williams is an 1969 graduate of Atkins High School. She earned an A.A.S. in business administration and accounting from Forsyth Technical College and a degree in business administration and management from Winston-Salem State University. She completed real estate

sales and brokerage courses at Dan Mohr Real Estate Institute, and formerly owned Morganatha Properties Real Estate Co. She is a licensed broker and certified real estate instructor.

She has been married to James for 33 years. They have two children, James of Los Angeles, Calif., and Christie of

Atlanta, Ga.

Faye C. Carter is president of the deaconess ministry. To pre-register and for further formation, contact Bernese Sullivan Cason at (336) 767-6155, Diane Hightower at (336) 993-6797, or Sheila Astrop at (336) 775-6705. The preregistration deadline is Sept. 28.



Dr. Seth Lartey



Dr. Michael Bell

The Pastor, Officers and Members of Goler Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church
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Cordially Invite the Faith Community to the Installation of Church Officers and Dedication of Clubs, Boards and Ministries and the Families of the Church on Sunday * September 25, 2005 * 5:00 pm

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Rev. Dr. Michael S. Bell
St. John A.M.E. Zion Church
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Rev. Dr. Seth O. Lartey, Pastor
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Wednesday Bible Study - Noon & 7:30 P.M.



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Winston-Salem, N.C. 27101
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Email SteadfastM@aol.com

Now Faith Ministries, Inc.

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Winston-Salem, NC 27113-5472

E-mail: benfaith@earthlink.net or
E-mail: BILGUL7@cs.com



Apostle Brenda E. Nelson

Service Times
10:30 AM Sunday Morning Worship
5:00 PM Sunday Evening Worship
7:00 PM Tuesday - Faith Lessons
7:00 PM Friday - Healing & Deliverance

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

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For Further Information
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