BISHOP WALTER "SWEET DADDY" McCULLOUGH, Spiritual leader of the 3-million-member United House of Prayer For All People on reviewing stand during Band Competition last Sunday at the religious sect's 50th Annual Holy Convocation. Mrs. McCullough and grandchildren also enjoyed the musical performance . Photo by Peeler

House Of Prayer's Holy Convocation Attracts 8,000

By James Peeler
Post Staff Writer

A crowd, far in excess of the 8,000 expected, was present for the concluding day of activities of the 50th Annual Holy Convocation of The House of Prayer For All People in Charlotte last Sunday.

According to Mrs. Claude Wilkerson, wife of the Mother House of Prayer pastor, Bishop Walter "Sweet Daddy" McCullough baptized more than 1,800 persons last Sunday during the Annual Mass Baptism in the church pool at the rear of the church; and apparently the Spiritual Leader of the 3-million-member sect and his aides passed out more Blessed Holy Water than in previous years.

Mrs. Wilkerson also said more bands than had been expected participated in the band competition in the afternoon.

Richard Maxwell, Titus Ledbetter, Marvin Davenport and Donnell Cooper were judges for the band competition. They awarded First Place in the band division to Virginia's House of Prayer Band and First Place in Drum and Bugle competition of New York state's Bugle Corps.

During the band competition, members from local churches displayed paper banners depicting the growth of the church from its tent-housed beginning in 1919 to the present Byzantine structure on Beatties Ford Road where the Holy Convocation was held.

Numerous vendors plied a wide variety of wares to satiate appetites during the long day of activities. Eatable items offered for sale included water melon, hot dogs, hot sausage, fired chicken, cakes and pies, soft drinks, pickles and snowballs, to mention a few.

For the band competition, the final activity of the day, Church Leader Bishop Walter "Sweet Daddy" McCullough wore an impecably tailored, vested white suit, with matching tie and handkerchief, and white hat and white shoes as he occupied the reviewing stand with his wife, grand children, attendants and other members of the church heirarchy.

NAACP Raises $5,100; Sets 33rd Convention

With a successful $5,100 fund raising drive to his credit, Kelly M. Alexander Sr. will go to Wilmington next Thursday for the October 14-15, 33rd Annual Convention of Branches of the NAACP.

Alexander, president of the N.C. State Conference of Branches, will head the convention which will be headquartered at the Wilmington Hilton Motor Inn. A recent statement from the conference said its theme is "Utilizing the Black Vote for the Realization of Equality and Justice."

Kelly Alexander Jr.
...NAACP president

The convention comes at a time when NAACP officials across the country are trying to raise enough money to avoid destruction. A Mississippi judge has awarded 12 white merchants in Port Gibson, Mississippi $1.25 million in damages for holding a 10-month boycott against them in 1966 and 1967.

About $5,100 was raised in Charlotte at Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, Sunday, October 3.

Keynoting the 33rd Annual Convention will be Clarence Mitchell, Jr., noted and celebrated Director of the NAACP Washington Bureau, on Friday evening, 7:30 p.m., October 15th, at the St. Stephen AME Church. He has served in the Washington Bureau of NAACP for 30 years. He has been Director of the Bureau since 1950. Mr. Mitchell is one of the great fighters for civil rights and human justice in the history of the United States.

On January 26, 1976, Democratic and Republican leaders of the United States Senate and House of Representatives offered resolutions honoring Mr. Mitchell for 30 years of legislative service and "expressing gratitude for his contributions to the enhancement of life in America." The resolutions were passed in both Houses. President Ford also sent a message of commendation.

Ends 131-Day Fast

Rev. Chavis Returns To McCain Prison Unit

Special To The Post

Rev. Benjamin Chavis, Jr., the imprisoned North Carolina civil rights leader, was returned to McCain Prison Unit for tubercular and mentally unstable prisoners on the morning of September 28, after a 31 day fast to protest his treatment in prison, said a statement released by the National Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression.

The Alliance, which has been leading the defense campaign of Chavis and his co-defendants known as the 'Wilmington Ten', charges that the North Carolina authorities are willfully conspiring to kill the 28 year-old minister of the United Church of Christ.

"This is barbarian," said Charlene Mitchell, Alliance executive secretary. "Rev. Chavis is wrongfully imprisoned in the first place. After threats on his life by guards at another prison, they placed him in McCain among tubercular prisoners and those with mental problems. When he fasted to protest those conditions they isolated him in a prison hospital. When he ended his fast they returned him to McCain. We can only conclude that they are willfully conspiring to kill this heroic leader."

Rev. Benjamin Chavis
...Imprisoned leader

The Alliance is urging that letters and telegrams be sent to Gov. James Holshouser, State Capitol, Raleigh, N.C. 27602, demanding that Rev. Chavis be transfered to a "Normal" prison environment. They ask that copies be sent to the National Alliance Against Racial and Political Repression, Room 804, 150 Fifth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10011.

Chavis, who is a vice-chairperson of the Alliance, has been held in recent months at Central Prison Hospital in Raleigh. He ended his fast on September 7, the day after the March For Human Rights and Labor Rights in Raleigh, at which thousands of demonstrators demanded the freedom of the 'Wilmington Ten'. The Ten, besides Rev. Chavis, are eight Black former high school students and a white mother of three, who are sentenced to 282 years in prison for defending a church in Wilmington's Black community from a four-day armed siege by the Ku Klux Klan and other groups during the school desegregation struggle.

Dr. Helen C. Othow, Rev. Chavis' sister, said "The Alliance is continually urging all interested persons to continue the fight to free the Wilmington Ten, who were convicted on framed up charges. Also please write to the members of the Wilmington Ten."

For further information about their addresses and about how to join the North Carolina Alliance, write Dr. Helen C. Othow, 1304 Hunter Oaks Lane No. 1, Charlotte, North Carolina 28213.

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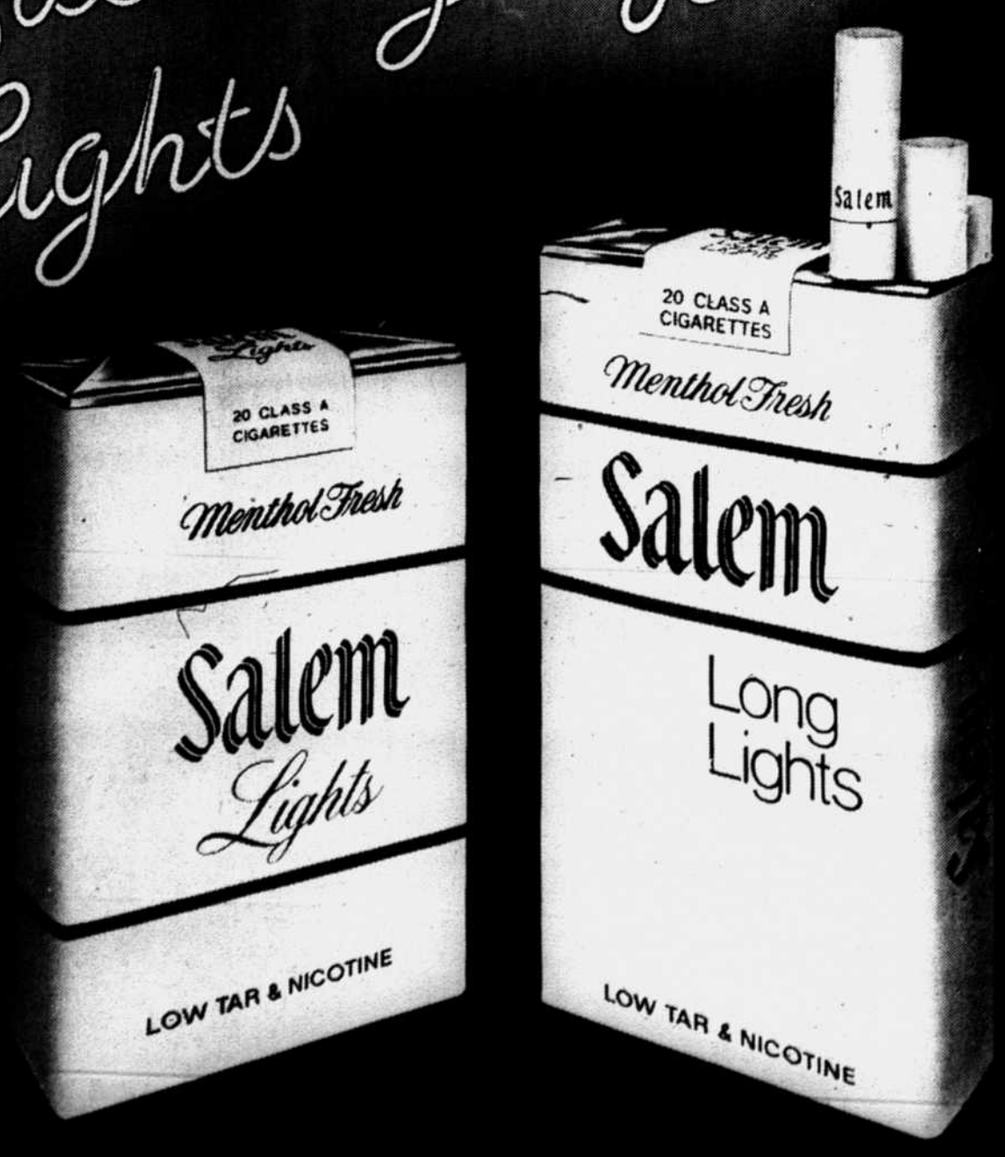

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