

Local Churches Embark On Ten Year Missionary Project

By Loretta Richardson
Post Staff Writer

On Saturday, December 5 at 10 a.m. the Seversville Partners Program will sponsor a community WALKAROUND starting at Clinton Chapel AME Zion Church, 1901 Rozzelles Ferry Road.

The principals involved in the Seversville Partners Program are expecting Seversville residents, local businesspersons, clergy and members from the media to participate in the walk, hoping that it will serve as a visibility tool for a 10 year project that five local churches, CN Jenkins Memorial Presbyterian Church, Covenant Presbyterian Church, First United Presbyterian Church, Grier Heights Presbyterian Church and Statesville Avenue Presbyterian Church have recently launched.

It took several interviews with a cross section of the community before the five churches reached the consensus that if they were to embark upon a poverty mission, then they would need to work with blacks living on the Westside.

After studying neighborhood demographics, the Seversville Community, encompassing the area of Rozzelles Ferry Rd, Tuckaseegee Road and Trade Street, was identified as the area the churches would concentrate on.

dahl estimates that there are 300 families.

In the next 10 years, the Seversville Partners Program, with the involvement and participation by Seversville families will support and encourage the Seversville Community Organization, maintain neighborhood cleanup and upkeep, assist in employment, housing, counseling, education and deal with crime and crime related matters.

"Our emphasis will be in advocacy and empowerment. We're not aiming to do for people things they can do for themselves. We are taking the William Raspberry's approach of raising oneself from poverty."

A prime goal of the Seversville Partners Program is to focus on existing resources in the community and to utilize those agencies to assist Seversville residents.

"We want to assure that the neighborhood receives its fair share from the City in funds, especially when it comes to advocating neighborhood beautification."

By the time the project has

expired, the Seversville Partners Program hopes to establish a permanent headquarters in the community where a director will be retained to conduct the program.

Funded by the partner churches, the Seversville Part-

nere needs involvement on all levels from individuals, businesses, civic organizations, foundations, educational organizations and neighborhood churches. To be a part of this exciting project call John Offerdahl at 552-0899.

According to Seversville Partners, Inc. president, John Offerdahl the project came into existence as another 10 year old missionary project in Haiti his church was involved in was coming to a close.

"Covenant Presbyterian, a member of the Mecklenburg Presbytery, began looking for another missionary effort. This time we wanted to focus on the community."

While Covenant was still searching, CN Jenkins, First United, Grier Heights and Statesville Avenue, members of the Catawba Presbytery had similar ideas of community service.

The two Presbyteries joined alliances, marking the first time that the two factions had worked cooperatively since the groups split over the issue of slavery and rejoined as one association three years ago.



The shaded area represents the neighborhoods to receive assistance from the Seversville Partners Program over the next 10 years. Instrumental Presbyterian churches include Grier Heights, C.N. Jenkins, First United, Statesville Ave. and Covenant.

Thirty-Seventh Annual Vesper Service To Be Held At Johnson C. Smith University

It was the fall of 1950, when a third year assistant professor of music at Johnson C. Smith University came up with the idea for a special project which would showcase the talents of his choir.

Thirty-seven years ago Christopher W. Kemp, professor of music, decided that the special project would be a Christmas vesper service and that he would hold it in the beautiful and stately old University Church. He busied himself posting notices around campus and he sent invitations to area churches and ministers urging their congregations to attend the special service.

The JCSU Choir had already earned a reputation for its fine music but there was apparently in Professor Kemp's mind, some new musical realm to explore and master. The presentation of sacred music, at such a special time of year was his motivation and he instilled the feeling, the mood as he calls it, in each one of his choir members. They knew, as has all of Professor Kemp's choirs, that he expected,



C. W. Kemp

vesper service is not a concert in the true sense, but a service of sacred music," explains Kemp. "Our selections consist of music that expresses the mood and spirit surrounding the birth of Christ."

Sunday, December 6, Professor Kemp will once again direct the Johnson C. Smith University Choir in their annual presentation of the Christmas Vesper Service in the University Chapel. Nearly four decades have passed since the service was begun but over the years the quality of the service has remained constant. The service truly stands out among the hundreds of seasonal performances that are given around the Queen City during this sacred holiday. Indeed, you will not hear the usual department store jingles, but an outstanding blend of carols, anthems, folk and classics. Each year Professor Kemp designs the services to be different and although he has never really promoted the vesper service the Charlotte community has at-

tended and supported the service.

A Johnson C. Smith tradition has always been to open service with a half hour organ recital. This year the recital will be performed at 4:30 p.m. by Ms. Cassandra E. Shuford. The choir will follow at 5:00 p.m. The concert is free and open to the public.

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