

CHURCH NEWS

•First Baptist-West 1801 Oaklawn Ave.

The child care will host a Black History Soul luncheon Feb. 7 at noon for parents.

•New Vision Full Gospel Baptist 101 S. Hoskins Road

The church will host "First Friday Live" Feb. 7

•St. Luke Missionary Baptist 1600 Norris Ave.

The Royal Light Gospel Chorus will be in concert on Feb. 9 a 6:30 p.m. The special guest will be Joyce McMillian and A.B. Sutton Inspirational Choir.

•Reeder Memorial Baptist 3725 Beatties Ford Road

The Youth Department will host a youth celebration for Black History Month Feb. 15 and Feb. 23.

•Salem Baptist 5318 Salem Church Road

The church will celebrate the 16th anniversary of the Rev. Anthony Jinwright Feb. 10-13, at 7 p.m. The event kicks off Feb. 9 at 5 p.m. and ends Feb. 16. A banquet will be held Feb. 15 at 6 p.m. The speaker will be the Rev. Henry J. Lyons, president of the National Baptist

Convention USA. For more information, call 399-5448.

•New St. John Baptist 2000 St. John's Church Road

Sunday's theme will be "The Uniting of Men to Help Wins Souls to Christ." At 6 p.m. the men's choir, under the direction of Ronnie Gilliam, will host its annual concert.

•Rose Hill Missionary Baptist 216 Rice Street Kannapolis

The church will host Friends Day, Sunday at 11 a.m. The speaker for the event will be the Rev. J.W. Wallace. Elected officials, including the mayor and members of city council, have been invited to attend. Music will be provided by the J.W. Wallace Singers.

•Shepherd's Fold AME Zion 428 West Blvd.

A Black History Month program will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday. The speaker for the event is the Rev. Herb Crump of Tabernacle Church. Ash Wednesday services will be held Feb. 12 at 7:30 p.m. The Rev. William Jordan of Rockwell AME Zion Church will lead worship.

•Hood Memorial AME Zion Corner of Sacco and Todd streets Belmont

The Men's Choir will be in concert Sunday at 3 p.m.

•Greater Moore's Chapel AME Zion 1009 East Main Street Lincolnton

The Annual Singing Trustee's Program will be held Sunday at 2:30 p.m.

•The Mecklenburg General Baptist Association Usher's Auxiliary will meet Saturday at 5 p.m. at Galilee Baptist Church, 2935 Shady Lane. All adult and junior ushers are asked to attend.

•Greater Bethel AME 201 Grandin Road

Founder's Day will be celebrated Sunday at 11 a.m. Gilbert Harper will be the guest speaker.

•Rocky Ridge Baptist Heathcliff Road Gastonia

The church will host a gospel program Sunday at 3 p.m. Several local choirs will be featured.

•First Mayfield Memorial

Baptist 901 Oaklawn Ave.

The church will begin a week long celebration for the Rev. C. McArthur Sanders Monday. The guest speaker for the week is the Rev. J. Wendall Mapson, pastor of Philadelphia's Monumental Baptist Church. All services are 7 p.m. A banquet will be held Feb. 15. The speaker will be the Rev. Paul Drummond of St. Paul Baptist Church. For more information, call 334-4525.

Upcoming events

•The Layman's League of the Mecklenburg General Baptist Association will present 200 Men in Black, Feb. 16 at 5 p.m. The program will be held at Chappell Memorial Baptist Church, 110 Bradford Drive. The speaker will be the Rev. Norman E. Kerry.

•Clement Memorial AME Zion 2207 Newland Road

The Christian Education Department will host the 48th church anniversary program Feb. 16 at 3 p.m. The speaker will be the Rev. John G. Gerald III, pastor of Gethsemane Baptist Church.

The Post is looking for ministers to write for "The Pastor's Study." To participate, please submit an essay on the religious topic of your choice to P.O. Box 30144, Charlotte, N.C. 28230



William M. Jordan III, Pastor

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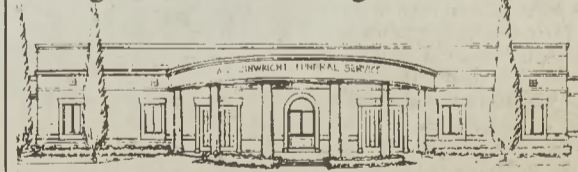
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The Prophet's Column

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THE PROPHET'S COLUMN NEWSLETTER- 1997 PART III

Abraham went on to tell the rich man that no one could cross the gulf from either side there in eternity. As my old late pastor used to say, "as death finds you so shall eternity hold you." Have you ever thought about that? You are an eternity-bound soul. You are going to live forever. Where will you spend eternity? So far we see that the rich man has made two requests of Abraham; first, he asked Him to have mercy on him, and second, to send Lazarus to dip the tip of

his finger in water and cool his tongue. There is no water in Hell! Abraham denied these requests from the rich man. Then the rich man made another request; "...I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him (Lazarus) to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment." In hell, the rich man did not want his five brothers to join him in hell. What was Abraham's response to this request? "..., They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. And he said, Nay, father

Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. But Abraham said; "..., If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." And the Holy Spirit closes the curtain there on that rich man, for him to remain in hell and he is there this day My friends, you can deny this story all you want to, but if you do you will see and acknowledge it when you, too, lift up your eyes in Hell. As I said, we are visiting eternity at this time. When I received word lately that a certain man had died, this was part of my response; "he cannot be nasty to anyone anymore on this earth, it is good that that man is

dead." That was one of the most arrogant and nasty men I had ever known. "Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD." (Obadiah 1:4). I have seen this man exalt himself as the eagle and be so nasty to individuals.

But I knew my Lord would bring him down. God brought him down! He was a fool just like the rich man. When he lifted up his eyes in hell he cried for me to be sent to warn others in his family. SON REMEMBER! You had your good things in this life. I cannot warn the members of your family.

Black Episcopalians carve out niche

Continued from 12A

The church lost its institutional support and membership started to dwindle. A crushing blow was dealt the church when it was reduced from a parish to a mission in 1968. Then in March 1968, the worst happened. Citing the church's lack of membership, the diocese sold St. Michael's lot to Knight Publishing Company, owner of the Charlotte Observer newspaper. Members watched in horror as their sanctuary was torn down and a parking lot constructed.

In less than a decade, the church had lost its priest, its independence and its home of 85 years.

"I came at that time," Sessoms said. "It was rough for everyone. The most difficult thing was our records. They were scattered to the four winds."

For 16 years, St. Michael's congregates were nomads, worshipping where they could find space. St. Michael joined Christ the King Center, another Episcopal mission, sharing space on Caldwell St.

A 4-acre lot was given to them, but the building never materialized. Members decided it would be prudent to buy an existing church later. In 1983, church leaders learned Thomasboro Church of the Nazarene was for sale. They began meeting in the church's fellowship hall and applying for loans. But no takers were found. The N.C. Episcopal Foundation, which provides low-interest loans to in-state churches turned them down.

"They didn't think we were strong enough," Sessoms said. "Our membership was increasing, but we had problems with our book keeping. So many records had been lost."

The church also did not have a priest.

In early 1984, the Rev. Edward King took the helm, becoming

the first full-time priest in 16 years. King led the church until his death in 1993.

Under King's leadership, a loan was secured and St. Michael was able to meet Thomasboro's \$200,000 asking price.

Members moved in, turning the church into home. Artifacts, including an altar from the old church, found space in the new church.

"We have the chapel from the Good Samaritan in the basement," Sessoms said. "In the near future we hope to erect it and use it for small services."

The future looks bright for St. Michael. Membership is up and finances are in order. The church celebrated its 113th anniversary last summer.

But members say they still have a way to go. The church is still considered a mission and lacks autonomy. They are also without a priest.

"We should have a priest within the next few months," Sessoms said. "And hopefully by next year, we will once again be a rectory."

It has been a struggle, but members look to the future.

"Whenever the church doors opened, that committed core of people were there," Sessoms said. "They kept the church going. They were the difference between the church surviving or dying."



PHOTO/SUE ANN JOHNSON

Members of St. Michael and All Angels have turned their small church into a home.

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