

Bynum Chapel to dedicate Family Life Center

By HEATHER BARR
Staff Writer

Anything from basketballs to educational speakers can be seen at the new Fellowship Center at Bynum Chapel AME Zion Church. Already recreation, educational workshops and fun nights for families have begun. Official dedication will be Sunday, September 12 at 2:30 p.m. Bishop Cecil Bishop, Senior Bishop of African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, will speak.

The addition is 8,000 square feet with four classrooms, a conference room, two offices, a commercial kitchen, a gymnasium and storage. It was completed in May.

The project began in 1998 with the idea coming from Stelle Jackson, presiding elder of Lincolnton district.

Educating the church to help its members is nothing new. Bynum Chapel AME Zion Church was organized in 1889 with a determination to provide a place for worship and education for African-Americans. The founders of the church established the first school for black children in Kings Mountain.

The fellowship center was organized after church members saw the need for today's youth to have a place to teach life skills for development academically and socially. Many of youth today they concluded may not have the opportunities because of impoverished backgrounds or parents who lack the knowledge or skills to train or help their children develop the necessary attitudes and be-

haviors to function successfully in and out of school. So in an effort to help children and families learn, they wanted to have a place for families to come and have positive interaction and associations with good role models.

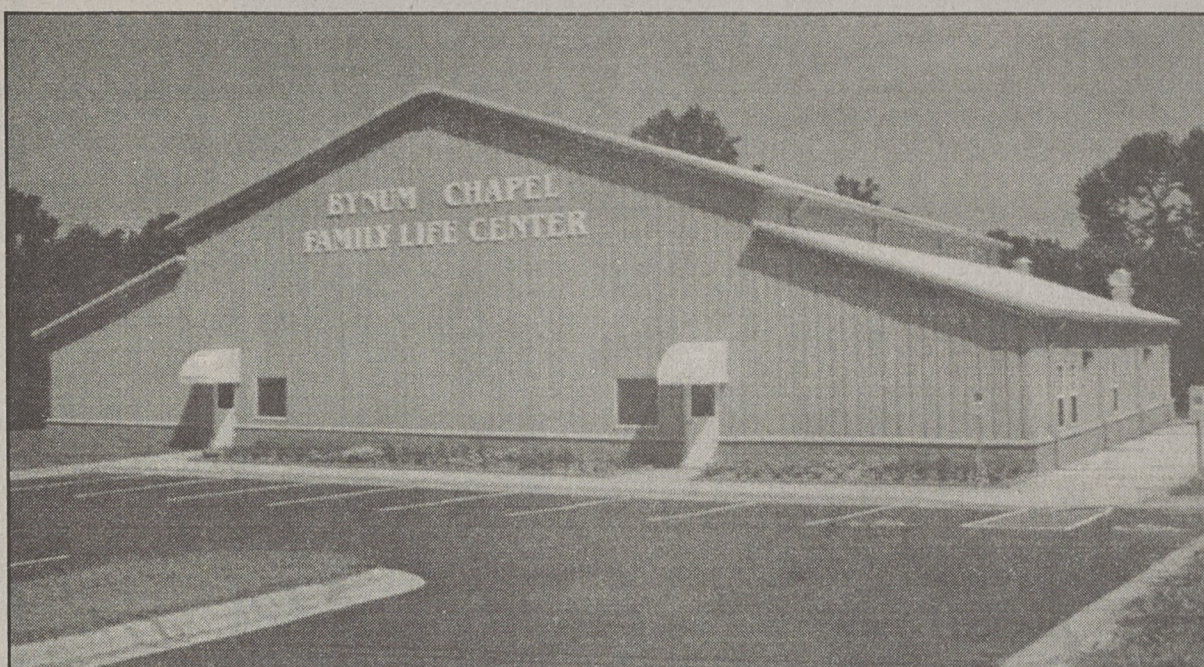
"This is such a great opportunity to be a major player in assisting families and youth in the community. We feel fortunate and a tremendous sense of humility to help impact the church and community," said Reverend Reginald McClean.

Programs for the facility include recreation programs, educational and wellness programs, fun night activities for family and youth and outreach programs. A fun night, basketball and recreation nights have already been held with good turnout from the youth.

"On Thursdays we have recreation for the kids. This Thursday we had around 50 kids. It makes you feel good to see the look of enjoyment on their faces. It makes the project so worthwhile," said Phil Hager, Chairman of the Board of Trustees.

The first wellness program on hypertension and treatment was held which brought in Dr. Costa Androus of Mid Carolinas Cardiology to speak. The next speaker scheduled will talk about diabetes.

The outreach programs will be offered to the area surrounding Bynum Chapel AME Zion Church where low and middle income homeowners live. Church members will distribute information about the outreach



New Family Life Center at Bynum Chapel AME Zion Church will be dedicated during special worship service Sunday, September 12

programs door-to-door throughout the community.

Currently the church has two collaborating partners to support the efforts, United Family Services (UFS) and Communities In Schools (CIS) of Cleveland County. Each will help with supplies, technical assistance, expertise, training and financial support. UFS will support the programs for birth to five year olds and CIS will support programs for school age children. The church will provide transportation, facility, Internet connection, volunteers and meals.

Programs will be once a week from 4 - 6:30 p.m. beginning in

the first week of November. They will include a meal, child-care for pre-schoolers, homework supervision and tutoring for school age children.

Computers purchased from funding will be used for homework, skill development, and Internet access research. In January they will offer the child-care and tutoring/home-work program twice a week.

The Bynum Chapel congregation has numerous volunteers and teachers to help with the programs. They have members who are retired educators with skills in anything from biology, special and elementary educa-

tion to doctors. They also have members who are equipped with a AA or BA's in computer science to aid in showing youngsters and adults about computers and new technology.

The church has a family of support with an active Board of Trustees, a qualified minister, a Family Life Center steering committee and volunteer Center director Ina Hager who helps coordinate and organize all of the activities in the new fellowship center. She has a Master's Degree in elementary education and is a retired elementary school teacher after 34 years. She also spent 10 years

teaching adult learners for Cleveland Community College.

"Seeing all I have in the school system I know of the tremendous need for this project. I think any kind of innovation like this will make a great difference to help even one child to have an opportunity. We are only scratching the sole of giving the community what they need in terms of knowledge and power," said Ina Hager.

The facility has been built from numerous fundraisers, donations, and grants. Now the church is seeking funds of \$3,100 from the Cleveland County Community Foundation to purchase three computers and printers for an outreach program for school age youth. The computers will help teach children skills for technology and life skills to help them find jobs in the future.

"We encourage the Kings Mountain community to come out and enjoy the new fellowship center. We want this to be part of our new strategy that the church gives to the community. Our goal is to make this like no other place that provides warmth through fellowship, depth through discipleship and strength through worship. We want to build partnerships with other churches in the community as well," said Reverend McClean.

Any adult or child interested in the program can contact 730-0027, or the church at 739-2606 or Ina Hager at 739-3975 for information.

CHURCH BRIEFS

Family Worship Center Church of God

Ladies Ministries will sponsor a hot dog sale at the church, 1818 Shelby Road, Friday, September 10, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Plates will be \$5. Eat in or carry out. Deliveries will be made for plates of five or more. Call 739-3517 for more information or for orders.

Dixon Presbyterian Church

Benefit car wash and hamburger hot/dog sale Saturday, Sept. 11 at church and Dixon School, 602-603 Dixon School Road, Kings Mountain. Begins at 10 a.m.

First Presbyterian Church

"The Cotton Patch Gospel," will be performed Sunday, September 12, at 7 p.m. by members of First United Methodist Church of Gastonia. Contact the church for information.

Oak Grove Baptist Church

The movie "A Vow To Cherish" will be showing Sunday, September 12, 6 p.m. The movie is about one Christian family's touching story of leaning on God when the mother is diagnosed with a devastating illness. For more information call 739-4833.

People's Baptist Church

People's Baptist Church, 1010 Groves Street, Kings Mountain, will have revival September 19-23 at 7 p.m. The speaker will be Rev. Clinton A. Feemster. The public is invited.

Calvary Way Holiness Church

Calvary Way Holiness Church, 310 Long Branch Road, Kings Mountain, will be in revival September 12-17. Sunday services are at 11 a.m. and 6 p.m., and week night services are at 7 p.m. There will be special singing each night. Rev. Clifton Morgan, pastor, invites the public.



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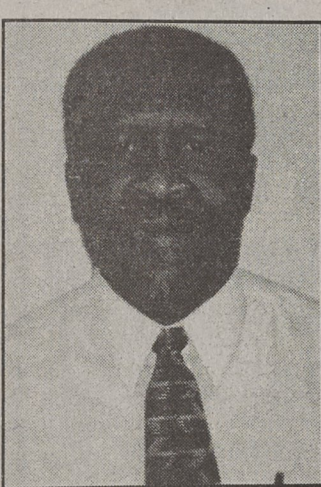
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