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Elder and Mrs. B. W. Abney

“Theirs was the responsibility of leadership and example.”

COVER STORY



B. W. Abney, Sr.

PORTRAIT OF A PIONEER: ELDER BENJAMIN WILLIAM ARNETT ABNEY

"As thy days, so shall thy strength be." At ninety-six years old, Elder Benjamin William Arnett Abney radiates love, Christian piety, and strength. Most of his adult life has been devoted to the proclamation of the gospel which has taken him to many states in the union and around the globe to South Africa. His trust in God has led him to open the door for black Seventh-day Adventists to enter the mission field. Had it not been for Abney's willingness to leave his home, his relatives and friends, then the black missionary who leaves home today for parts unknown might never have been. He not only left his mark in South Africa, where the people still cherish his memory, but in small southern towns where other men dare not go, he readily went and preached the gospel and established churches. There are no limits to the usefulness of a man, when he allows the Lord to control his life. Even today he still looks to the future trusting in God. He remarked, "I just want to be faithful. I don't know what the Lord has in store for me. Sometimes the Lord may have things in store for you that you don't know about. So you have to live one day at a time."

Who is this Spirit-filled man? Benjamin William Arnett Abney was the youngest of seven children born to Delia Abney and Elder M. H. Abney, an African Methodist Episcopal minister of Edgefield County, South Carolina on November 30, 1883. He describes his

father as a man of many talents: a minister, school teacher, and social activist. "He (father) was quite an aggressive fellow for the race in those days. He was among the leaders in the colored race, that held up for principles, and spoke out against the injustices that colored people had to endure. He was always respected; they had confidence in him as a human being." His grandfather, Henry Abney, lived in South Carolina, a former slave turned farmer who married Priscilla Abney. Priscilla lived with the Abneys until she died.

Life in Edgefield County was simple and peaceful. The majority of the people were farmers; there was a local church that nearly everyone attended, and a school that ran about four months a year for "colored" children. He remembers, "when I was small, the school for colored ran for about four months. When cotton was all picked, the negro school would start around November and would run until March. When March came school ended and we planted crops."

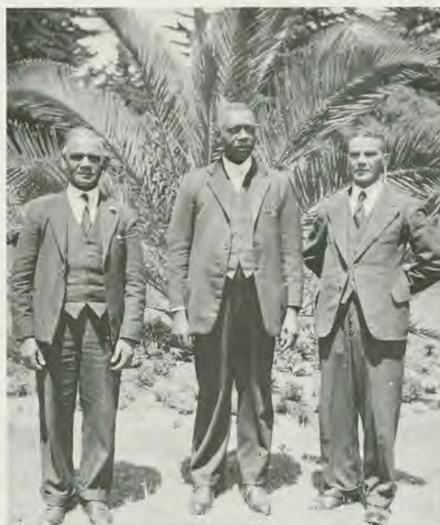
When Benjamin Abney completed the sixth grade, he was encouraged by his oldest sister to further his education at Allen University in Columbia, South Carolina. When he was a young man, "they would send people around to visit in the churches and make speeches. It awakened in me the idea of getting an education." These two motivating factors made Benjamin Abney leave home and work with great perseverance to become a teacher. "In those days, that was looked upon as something worthwhile."

In 1910, Elder Sidney Scott pitched a tent in Columbia, South Carolina, where Benjamin was a student at Allen University. He passed by the tent on his way from school to his job, where he worked as a butler to pay for his education. "I stopped by the tent one night to see what it was all about. My classmate and I had stopped by the year before when the Holiness had a tent. We didn't hear anything that interested us, so, we didn't bother to go back anymore. The next year, the Adventists had a tent on the same ground. I said, 'here's another tent. Let me stop and see what these people are talking about.' So, I stopped in there that night and heard the subject, 'Who Made the Devil?' I learned more about the devil than I ever did learn before. I learned so much that night, that I stopped in the next night. Finally, I stopped in every night." He was con-

vinced that the Sabbath was the Lord's day, but he decided that he would put off keeping the Sabbath.

"I had a mind that I might keep the Sabbath one day, but I didn't have the mind then. I was planning to leave Allen University and go to Howard University, where I could get a higher education. I was planning to leave the next day, so I went to return some books to the minister (Elder Scott), he had loaned me to read. He asked me where I was going and I told him. We began to talk and he told me something of the work and the organization behind him and his tent meeting. I was amazed! I didn't know that there was anything to his meeting except himself. He told me about Oakwood College. I asked him if it taught all the things he had been teaching. He said, 'yes! it teaches everything I've been teaching here and far more than I'll ever have time to teach.' Instead of going east to Washington, D.C., in the morning, I went south to Huntsville, Alabama. There I got settled in the truth."

Benjamin Abney's new-found faith was not received with enthusiasm among his family. "They thought it was an awful thing for me to leave the Methodist Church, where father and mother were raised. I saw something that they didn't see. And of course, I'm still in it and expect to stay in it until it triumphs! I know it is going to triumph according to Bible prophecy, and I want to triumph with it into the kingdom of God." Elder Abney's father died before he heard the message and the other members of his family never accepted the message.



Elder B. W. Abney and associates in Africa.

In September, 1910, Benjamin Abney arrived at the Oakwood Manual Training School. He describes the campus at that time, "W. J. Blake was the principal. It was called Oakwood Manual Training School. It had only seven buildings: the old Mansion, that's where I was told they used to sell slaves; Oaklawn, that's where the principal lived; Butler Hall was the boys' dormitory; the Orphanage; the Pines, that's where the Bible teacher lived; and the Stone Building, that was the Administration Building. Of course, all of these buildings are gone and replaced by modern buildings. We were awakened by the school bell at five o'clock; worship was at six; then breakfast, and after breakfast school was held from 7:30-8:30; at nine we went to work. We worked from nine to five with a lunch break at noon. When the bell rang at five, we quit work. We would go in and have supper at six; then school would be held from 7 to 8:30 at night. At 9 o'clock the lights went out. Some worked on the farm, some in the blacksmith shop, while others worked in the printing shop. At that time Oakwood was printing a little paper called the "Gospel Herald." This paper was the forerunner of the MESSAGE Magazine.

It was here at Oakwood, that Benjamin Abney was impressed to go into the ministry. How did he know he was called? "I didn't have any inclination for the ministry out there in the other schools. When I came to Oakwood I understood things I had never understood before. I felt that I had learned something, and I also had a desire to let someone else know about it. I believed the Lord was coming soon. People needed to know the facts of His soon-coming. So I studied the ministry. In 1912 I entered the ministry." In 1916, I became an ordained minister."

In the same year Benjamin entered the ministry, he also entered into a lifetime commitment with Celia Hart of Muncie, Indiana. Miss Hart came to Oakwood in 1909. Like Benjamin Abney, she had become estranged from her family because she had left the Methodist Church. In 1910, he came to Oakwood and they became friends.

The following school year, he did not return to Oakwood, because he had to pay a debt that he owed. When he returned, she had finished her studies and was working with Elder J. H. Lawrence in Louisville, Kentucky as a Bible Instructor. Benjamin got in touch with her and

they corresponded. On October 12, 1912, "we decided to spend the remainder of our lives together. We made it a matter of prayer. We took life's bitters and sweets together and we are still together."

From this union was born a son, Benjamin Abney, Jr., who is employed by the General Conference in Washington, D.C.; and a daughter, Celia Abney Cleveland, Bible Instructor and wife of world evangelist, Dr. E. E. Cleveland.

After completion of Oakwood he entered the ministry in Orangeburg, South Carolina assisting Elder J. F. Critchlow. After the tent effort closed, he became the pastor of the newly-organized church. The following spring, he states, "they did something to me I think they should have never done. They gave me a tent and told me to preach. I did and baptized eight people in Allendale, South Carolina. Then I returned to Columbia, S.C. and remained until the summer of 1914. I worked that summer with C. G. Mann in Sumpter, S.C."

Elder Abney did much to strengthen the work in Lumberton, Fayetteville, and Raleigh, North Carolina. He raised up the church in Raleigh and from there he went to Greensboro, where he also established a church.

In 1922, he became the union evangelist for the Southeast Union. He remained there for the next five years, until he was called to St. Louis, Missouri, to rebuild the church after it was

Elder and Mrs. B. W. Abney, Sr.



destroyed by a tornado. He remained there until 1931, when he was called to be the first black missionary to South Africa.

At the General Conference session of 1930, the call was presented to Elder Abney to go to South Africa to be a union evangelist. "Elder Branson, former president of the General Conference and then president of the South African Division had just returned from South Africa. He encouraged me to go because the colored people out there wanted a colored missionary. Elder J. A. Tucker, president of Oakwood College showed me the importance of accepting the call. Elder Tucker said, 'go because it would be a representative from Oakwood in the mission field.' So I told them I would go and talk to my family and if my family agreed, we would go. I talked with my family and they agreed to go."

Once the Abneys accepted the call, "there were three things that stood in our way of going. First, the physical test. We went up to Nevada, Iowa and took a physical examination. I didn't think he was going to pass my wife. The next day, the doctor said, 'I can't see any physical reason why you all can't go.' The first obstacle was removed. Second, it didn't seem likely that the South African government was going to permit an American Negro to go over and labor in that field." The South African govern-

ment permitted the Abneys to enter the country. The second obstacle was now removed. Now the third obstacle presented itself. Who would take care of my mother while we are in South Africa?

I wondered, what would my brothers and sister think if I went off to Africa and left them to take care of Mother. I didn't want to leave her. I wanted to stay here and support my Mother." In January, 1931, my Mother died." The last hindrance was moved. On July 16, 1931, the Abneys set sail for South Africa.

"I never anticipated going to South Africa. In geography I studied about Africa but I never had any idea I'd see Africa."

Leaving America, friends, and family the Abneys set sail to South Africa. Elder Abney had some doubt in his mind about his call, but his fears were calmed, "There was a little question in my mind but I made it a matter of prayer. There was experience I had out on the boat that helped to establish me and get out all the fear in mind. It was a question about how I was going to get along."

"When the boat was half way between New York and England, there on board the ship was a Seventh-day Adventist nurse. She learned of our being on board and she came to our cabin to visit us. Elizabeth Forest was her name. We talked for quite some time. Before she left, she presented us with a little box of a hundred and fifty Bible promises."

The next day or two, while I was standing on the deck, the ship was stirring up a spree. Whenever you are opposite a spree, you will see a beautiful rainbow. I was standing and looking at that rainbow when Noah's experience came to me. The Lord put the rainbow as a sign that he wasn't going to destroy the earth again with water, but by fire next time. I believed I was having Noah's experience. And I believed it was a sign to me just like it was to Noah, and God was standing back of the promises He made. So, after that I went down to South Africa and stayed down there. Those promises carried us down there and kept us down there. Those promises brought us back, and those promises are still keeping us."

The Abneys arrived safely in South Africa. Elder Abney was disturbed by the discrimination and the practice of apartheid. "But we made up our minds to adjust to it. I said, this has got to be our

home for seven years, so we must forget all about America. So, we got along just fine over there."

At the time they went to Africa, their son, Benjamin, and daughter, Celia, were school age.

Some of the ministers tried to get him to leave the children at home. "I said, we are all going or we are all staying. My children are just at the age when they need the counsel of their parents. We are all going to Africa or we are all staying in America. We are not going to separate. We all went and I don't regret the idea."

Because there was no church school in South Africa, the children had to attend public school. The children adjusted to their new environment and even learned to speak Afrikaans, the native language.

For seven fruitful years, Elder Abney, along with his wife, worked with the colored people in South Africa. Mrs. Abney worked as a Bible Instructor and made missionary visits with her husband. "She was right along with me in my line of work."

"Humanity divides itself up into three groups over there—Europeans, colored, and native Africans." Although he was the Union evangelist to the colored people, the opportunity did present itself to work with the natives. "Naturally, sometimes the native people would come into my line of work and I would never refuse them. I felt they were mine."

Elder Abney baptized a native African at a meeting held in a suburb of Johannesburg. "A young man named Peter Palumi got hold of one of our bills that I advertise over there. One of the subjects dealt with the Seven Seals. His mind began to turn and he thought about a dream he had when he was a boy. He had come home from school and while sitting on the doorstep, he fell asleep. He dreamed he heard the voice of God speaking from heaven telling his mother, 'I'm to show this son of yours the seven signs.' He awoke from his sleep and never thought about it any more, until he got our bill that day and saw the topic, the Seven Seals. It seemed like a voice spoke from heaven saying, 'Your dream.' Then he thought about the dream he had on the doorstep when he was a boy. However, he thought, 'Can this be the end of my dream?' He came to the meeting and accepted the truth. Both he and his wife were baptized."

Elder Abney was instrumental in establishing several churches in South Africa. In his success, he was totally dependent upon the Lord. "I went out in the bushes and spent two hours with the Lord. I came out of those bushes and held a meeting out there in Kensington, a suburb of Capetown. The Lord blessed that meeting, and today they have a church in Kensington. It is among one of the strongest churches in South Africa."

His evangelism had far reaching influence on many of his converts who became teachers, preachers, literature evangelists, Bible Instructors, and a conference president. In a meeting held in Winesburg, a suburb of Capetown, Douglas LaKing was converted. He told Elder Abney, "I'm going to take your place in South Africa as a worker. Today, he is doing just that. Recently, Elder LaKing sent Elder Abney some papers from a retirement program that was held for him.

In that same meeting, Kenneth Landers and his wife were baptized. He became an ordained minister and the first president of the colored conference in South Africa.

Elder Abney recalls many incidents of people in spite of friends, religion, and position, who gave them up to accept the message. He remembers a Catholic woman in the suburb of Retreat who visited his meetings every night and finally accepted the message. When the church heard of her conversion, three sisters came to visit and brought her practically new clothing for her children. They wanted her to give up her new-found faith and return to the Catholic faith. She refused and told the sisters, "You take back the clothes and tell them I thank them very much, but my soul is not for sale. I am not going to be bought for a bundle of clothes." As far as Elder Abney knows, she is still a faithful member.

When his daughter, Mrs. Celia Cleveland and her husband, Dr. E. E. Cleveland visited Port Elizabeth, they found P. Sinclair Marks, a convert of Elder Abney still in the church. Mr. Marks was a jeweler and a prominent man who accepted the message and became a Seventh-day Adventist.

After seven years Elder Abney's labor in South Africa had come to a close. He was asked to return for another seven years. "I was inclined to go back. It was better for me and the cause to educate my children with the whole of life before



Left to right: Elder and Mrs. E. E. Cleveland, Mr. and Mrs. B. W. Abney, Jr., Joy Abney and Earl Clifford Cleveland. Seated: Elder and Mrs. Abney and Mrs. E. C. Cleveland.

them, than it would be for me to go back and give another seven-year period at the age I was."

In 1938, the Abneys returned to America, where they sent their children to Oakwood, where they could be educated to enter God's work.

Elder Abney remarked of his experience in Africa, "I wouldn't give anything for the experience I had in South Africa. I look upon them as some of the best years in my life."

After a year's furlough, Elder Abney returned to his ministry in 1939, working the next twelve years in Miami, Florida; Mobile, Alabama; Jackson, Mississippi; Memphis, Tennessee; and Meridian, Mississippi. In 1957, Elder Abney retired at the age of seventy-four, after forty-five years of service.

Presently, Elder and Mrs. Abney lives in Huntsville, Alabama with their daughter Celia Cleveland and their son-in-law, Dr. E. E. Cleveland. Elder Abney still remains very active. He tends his garden, and is an avid reader of those "books that will build character." He

studies daily. "You should never get to the place where you think you've attained everything. You'll always see that there are higher heights to attain, and greater things to accomplish." Whenever the opportunity presents itself he preaches.

When asked what he attributes to their long life (both Elder and Mrs. Abney are ninety-six years old), he replies "living a simple, clean, and temperate life. Of the sixty-six years I have been married, my wife and I have never spent sixty-six dollars on flesh foods." Elder Abney has been a vegetarian for sixty-nine years. Elder and Mrs. Abney eats only two meals a day.

Looking back at his life, Elder Abney sees, "the highest goal one can attain to, is to win a soul for the Lord. If you've won a soul for the Lord, you've accomplished much! I baptized a few, but I wish I had done more."

Elder Benjamin William Abney is a symbol of loyal service, sacrifice, and commitment to the Advent message. He is a source of inspiration and strength to

those who have entered the Lord's work. He is a living example of God's ability to transform ordinary men into great men, when they surrender their lives fully to Him. His life gives encouragement to those who lack direction and have grown weak with discouragement and failure.

Many pioneers have made contributions, and left impressions on the lives of those who have followed in their footsteps, painting pictures with their lives which have inspired many to aspire to great heights and realize their visions and dreams. In spite of this, none have made such an eternal contribution or painted such a vivid picture to live on in the hearts and minds of the many lives that Elder Abney touched during his ministry. Elder Benjamin William Arnett Abney—The Portrait of a Pioneer!

Lord, when we are wrong, make us willing to change. And when we are right, make us easy to live with.

—Peter Marshall

PUBLISHER'S PAGE



Dr. C. D. Joseph

SPIRITUAL BENEFITS OF REGIONAL UNIONS

The "Negro work" as referred to time after time by Mrs. E. G. White was regarded for the most part to be the work among blacks in the southern part of the United States. This view forged during the 1880s and '90s was an understandable one. At that time, most blacks lived in the Southern States. The church naturally concentrated its missionary efforts for black people in the area below the Mason-Dixon line.

The Southern Missionary Society, formed by James Edson White in 1895, was the first organization set up by the church to promote the gospel among the nation's blacks. Edson White recruited white northerners to move south to help operate mission schools throughout the black belt. The beginning of the Adventist work in the south virtually coincided with the passage of the famous Jim Crow laws. These laws greatly reduced the black man's social and political rights and enforced a system of rigid race segregation. The first sustained ministry for black people began in the south in the 1890s which meant that the pattern of Adventist race relations was set in an area and at a time of strong hostility and conflict. This conflict severely hindered the work of the fledgling Southern Missionary Society. The leaders of the church struggled to avoid confrontation on the race issue to preserve the fragile beginnings they made among the black population. Gradually a system of separate

churches developed in the south among Adventist. Mrs. E. G. White commenting on this development said "The best thing will be to provide the colored who accept the truth with places of worship of their own in which they can carry on their services by themselves. Let them be shown that this is done not to exclude them from worshiping with white people, because they are black, but in order that the progress of the truth may be advanced. Let them understand that this plan is to be followed until the Lord shows us a better way." *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 206.

The organization of blacks in churches of their own proved to be a great blessing to the cause of Adventism. Mrs. White noted that there existed "workers to whom the Lord has given light and knowledge and who possess capabilities of no mean order." She stressed that "colored members of ability and experience should be encouraged to lead the services of their own people; and their voices are to be heard in the representative assemblies." *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 207.

In 1979, over 100 years after Mrs. White wrote this instruction to the church, there is not one single voice of a black person held in the assembly of the union presidents of North America. Consequently, when vital decisions concerning the finishing of the work are discussed at this level, the priority of the black work is not represented by one who is best fit to discuss it. All through the policies of our unions can be seen evidence that minorities are not considered to be an intricate part of the system. Currently, if the policies governing finances were followed by the black conferences, there could be practically no church building at all. Most large black church buildings are built outside of union policies and one of the policies clearly states that a conference administrator can be relieved of his office for doing this, yet there is no other policy in writing to accommodate the needs of blacks with 50 percent less income than our white counterparts.

Referring to the early stages of the black work, it did not take long for the church to see that the black work grew much faster when it was directed by their own people. Consequently, the

request for black conferences arose. The idea of black conferences was thoroughly debated. Some whites opposed the plan, desiring to retain the status quo. A number of blacks agreed with them. Some of these men favored integration at all levels and suggested that separate conferences would defeat that goal. However, in spite of the dedicated service of many whites, the black work in the Adventist church was generally regarded as an area of secondary importance. Its organizational structure was based on the southern experience.

Beyond the church level, conferences were rarely administered by blacks themselves. Black leaders wanted to reverse these trends. They appealed over and over again until the spring of 1944. With the support of the General Conference president, Elder J. L. McElhany, the black conference resolution was passed and a few months later black conferences were formed. Statistics will show conclusively that black conferences are the fastest growing work in the North American Division. Yet history shows that to gain them was a monumental struggle and many blacks opposed their formation.

For thirty-three years now we have had black conferences and the work has grown tremendously. Yet the design and priorities of the black work is not always under the control of black leaders. The combined talents of several conferences working together is prohibited by union lines. Consequently, there are no chances for blacks to combine their small resources and ideas with union approval and promotion. The lateral mobility of local conference officials and departmental secretaries is a practically impossible task. Problems unique to our needs have no stage upon which to be presented. Our counterparts in the current union structures do not understand or share our experience in departmental or administrative work.

The formation of black unions would eliminate the necessity of our well-meaning white leaders trying to force a black brother into a position of real leadership. Time and time again our best black leaders have been presented to nominating committees for consideration for the presidency. At no point has this approach worked even though it has been pushed by the strongest of our Christian white leaders. To do this is a most valiant and appreciated task, for

Mrs. White states "When the Holy Spirit is poured out, there will be a triumph of humanity over prejudice . . . and the color line will be regarded by many very differently from the way in which it is now regarded." *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 209. This condition of prejudice can only be cured by the outpouring of the spirit of God on the human heart and not by ecclesiastical coercions. Consequently, Mrs. White commented regarding a similar situation in her day by saying "We are not to agitate the color line question and thus arouse prejudice and bring about a crisis." *Testimonies*, Vol. 9, p. 209.

It is quite apparent that the context of this counsel referred to the organized structure of the church as it relates to the attitudes of the world. There are many of our brethren that simply feel that to place a black leader at the head of an already existing union would dull the Public Relations image of the church with the world and hold many from joining the truth who otherwise would. This explains how some of the brightest black leaders developed in this church were turned down when their names were presented as candidates for the presidency of some of the now existing unions. Such bright and tried workers as Elders Frank Jones, Willie Lee, Sr., C. E. Bradford and W. A. Thompson are cases in point.

Upon the occasions where blacks have been pushed for leaders of unions the voting countdown has been clearly along racial lines indicating prejudice in voting. Why should we continue this practice?

If black churches proved to be an organizational blessing, if Regional Conferences have proved to be an organizational blessing, if black publishing departments (F.H.E.S.) have proved to be an organizational blessing, why then should the question of unions frighten the church? The blessings of black organized unions in the Adventist church could prove to inspire our white counterparts, who now depend upon black conferences for statistical gains in baptisms, to greater achievements and thus along with Regional Unions hasten the coming of our Lord which is indeed finishing the work.

Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find, knock, and it shall be opened unto you.

—Matthew 7:7



R. W. Warnick

THANKSGIVING

It is most unfortunate that we should think of the many things for which we should give thanks only at one season of the year. Black Americans have so much for which to give God thanks. My mind goes back to the experience of Joseph and the way in which he was taken into Egypt. His brothers hated him because of their father's special regard for him, and because of the dreams he had that a time would come when he would have a superior place in the family to themselves. Thus when the opportunity presented itself that gave them the chance to get rid of him, they sold him into slavery which carried him into Egypt.

Years later when famine brought them into Egypt to buy food, they discovered that Joseph was the man in charge of affairs, and they expected revenge at his hands. Hear his words of consolation when he said to them: "I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now therefore be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves." "Fear not: for am I in the place of God? But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." So it has been with the Black man's experience in America, his persecutors brought him here to do him harm, but in the providence of God, it worked out for good.

Today, after years of slavery, jim-crowism, segregation and second class citizenship, we are in the providence of God, gradually finding our place in the sun. The freedom we enjoy, the jobs we

have, the positions we hold, the respect we have achieved, though grudgingly given, indicates that the God of our fathers, though He was ignorantly worshipped, has brought us to the vantage-ground of our present status in American society. This, then, is cause for thanksgiving.

The Black man's achievements in the religious world have paralleled his progress in the secular world. His simple faith in God was long used by his enemies as the means to keep him in bondage. His love for his "owners", and his loyalty for those who would do him harm, seemed to have destined him to forever remain the outcast of society, the butt of unending compromising jokes, the victim of other men's vile passions, and the "hewers of wood and the drawers of water." Yet this same simple faith in God has guided him from the ignorant plantation preacher to positions of honor and renown in the world of religion today.

Nor has his course of progress been different or less noteworthy in the ranks of God's remnant people. For it was a Black man who first received the call to be God's Messenger to His remnant church. Fear led him to reject this call. In the years following the Black man became the least educated, the poorest paid, the most discriminated against of all his brethren. He was the least consulted concerning the work for his people; he was asked to second actions already taken by his brethren; and asked to give to support a work that he had little or no voice in its direction. Yet his love for God, and his loyalty to his church, and his willingness to push forward under difficulties, has brought to him the approval of heaven, and success without measure, though only about half of his giving to the cause is permitted to be used to advance the work among his own people.

Yet the numerical growth of Blacks in the Advent movement in America has been phenomenal. Some of the largest churches are Black. Some of the greatest preachers are Black. Some of the most outstandingly successful evangelists are Black. This Black ministry has won to the faith some of the most loyal; some of the most faithful; some of the most orthodox; and some of the most fundamental believers in the doctrines of the third angel's message to be found anywhere. These Black believers give unsparingly of their money for the sup-

port of the cause from a far less income than others. Let us thank God, this Thanksgiving season, for a work so well promoted by our Black ministry, and so loyally supported by our Black laity.

We look forward to the future with high expectations to the time, when with hindrances removed, we can enter the vast areas yet unentered—cities, towns, and country regions of Black America—with the Third Angel's Message, and Jesus can come. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

R. W. Warnick
Pastor, Berean SDA Church
St. Louis, Mo.

Dear Editor:

Several weeks ago it was brought to my attention that you are the Editor of our new paper, on which I must congratulate you. I am looking forward to working side by side with you through releasing different church highlights and activities as it relates to our church.

Elder Brown, this is the best thing that could have happened, that we have our own church paper so that black Seventh-day Adventists can be kept informed. Elder Brown, it would be a good idea that we promote THE NORTH AMERICAN REGIONAL VOICE like we promote THE MESSAGE MAGAZINE. You'll be surprised to know how many black non-Adventist clergy and other professionals stereotype us as some little up-start organization.

Last year, while ingathering, I contacted two of the black professors here. In our discussions, one of them who happens to be a noted black music professor, Paul Warfield, a graduate of Columbia University and the London Conservatory of Music, had never heard of Oakwood College. Another, who was an undergraduate of Fisk University, had never heard of Riverside Hospital—in fact, he said he didn't know that there were blacks in the Seventh-day Adventist denomination.

You have my support in pushing the Regional Voice. I'm enclosing a \$5.00 check for my subscription.

Sincerely,

Henry V. Washington
Communications Director
Park Avenue SDA Church
Urbana, IL

THE EDITOR'S DESK



Mervin Lewis and mother.

THE REWARDS OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

My name is Mervin Lewis . . . I have attended R. T. Hudson Elementary School for eight years and now I am a sophomore at Northeastern Academy, in New York City.

I would like to give you my impressions of Christian Education:

- C—Christ first in my life
- H—Honor to whom honor is due
- R—Reverence in the House of God
- I—Insight into life
- S—Selection of right companions

T—Time to secure the best in education

I—Instructions in the highest order

A—Appreciation for my mother for her many sacrifices made to keep me in a Christian school

N—Neighborly love

E—Everlasting knowledge

D—Devotion to give praises to our Maker

U—Understanding teachers and fellow students

C—Christian teachers who care

A—Always ready to help others

T—Time spent in studying God's Word

I—Inviting God's presence with me throughout the day

O—Obedience

N—Nature which shows God's handiwork

Put it all together; it spells Christian Education. . . .

And if you think your child is important enough to walk in the footsteps that I have just described . . . don't delay; enroll your son or daughter in a Christian School.

SUNSET CALENDAR

| | November | 9 | 16 | 23 | 30 |
|----------------------|----------|------|------|------|------|
| Boston, Mass | | 4:28 | 4:22 | 4:17 | 4:13 |
| New York City | | 4:40 | 4:33 | 4:28 | 4:25 |
| Buffalo, N.Y. | | 4:58 | 4:51 | 4:46 | 4:42 |
| Atlanta, Ga. | | 5:39 | 5:34 | 5:31 | 5:29 |
| Miami, Fla. | | 5:35 | 5:32 | 5:30 | 5:29 |
| Charlotte, N.C. | | 5:22 | 5:17 | 5:14 | 5:12 |
| Birmingham, Ala. | | 4:48 | 4:44 | 4:41 | 4:39 |
| Jackson, Miss. | | 5:04 | 5:00 | 4:57 | 4:56 |
| Memphis, Tenn. | | 4:59 | 4:54 | 4:50 | 4:48 |
| Louisville, Ky. | | 5:36 | 5:30 | 5:26 | 5:24 |
| Detroit, Mich. | | 5:18 | 5:11 | 5:06 | 5:03 |
| Chicago, Ill. | | 4:36 | 4:30 | 4:25 | 4:21 |
| South Bend, Indiana | | 5:31 | 5:24 | 5:19 | 5:16 |
| Minneapolis, Minn. | | 4:51 | 4:44 | 4:38 | 4:34 |
| St. Louis, Mo. | | 4:53 | 4:47 | 4:43 | 4:40 |
| Kansas City, Mo. | | 5:09 | 5:04 | 4:59 | 4:56 |
| Denver, Co. | | 4:50 | 4:44 | 4:39 | 4:36 |
| Little Rock, Ark. | | 5:08 | 5:04 | 5:00 | 4:58 |
| Dallas, Texas | | 5:30 | 5:26 | 5:23 | 5:21 |
| New Orleans, La. | | 5:08 | 5:04 | 5:01 | 5:00 |
| Albuquerque, N.M. | | 5:05 | 5:00 | 4:57 | 4:55 |
| Oklahoma City, Okla. | | 5:29 | 5:24 | 5:20 | 5:13 |

Add one minute for each 13 miles west; subtract one minute for each 13 miles east.

THE CONFERENCES IN ACTION



Application to adopt a child, Ephraim and Charlene Pembleton III, Gayoso, Coruthersville, Missouri.

HOUSEWARMING FOR ELDER AND MRS. PEMBLETON

The members of Philadelphia SDA Church in Des Moines, Iowa welcomed their new pastor and wife, Elder and Mrs. E. A. Pembleton with a house warming.

They came to us from the Charleston, Sikeston, Howardville, Hayti-Caruthersville, Missouri district.

Elder Pembleton holds diplomas from London Chamber of Commerce in Short-hand and Typing; from the University of London in Accounting and Art; from Oakwood College in Theology and Business Administration. He received his Master's of Divinity from Andrews University.

We are confident he will trigger a spiritual growth and we are grateful to have them with us.

Vera Morrow

MV PROGRAM FOCUSES ON KANSAS HISTORY

Wanda McDaniel, Coordinator of the Pageant and Fashion Show for the "Black Exodus" to Kansas 100th Anniversary celebration spoke during the Missionary Volunteer program for July 21 at the College Avenue SDA Church in Topeka, Kansas. The fashion show featured the manner of dress dating from 1879 to the present time. In 1879 was the year that blacks got "Kansas Fever" and invaded the state forty thousand strong. This nondenominational interracial event was held August 3-5 in Topeka.

She opened with the story of Moses and the journey of the children of Israel from Egypt to Canaan, drawing a parallel between the Biblical Exodus and the Exodus of blacks to Kansas in 1879. The central theme of her address was the contribution blacks have made to Kansas history. Two musical selections were given by a trio with Sandy King, Amanda Mitchell and Leslie Sawyer; and a solo by Dorcelyn Bailey.

On July 13, Kansas Governor John Carlin signed a proclamation declaring July 30 through August 5 as "Kansas Fever Week".

The service ended with a closing hymn directed by Mrs. McDaniel. Closing remarks were given by acting MV leader, Kristal King.

Dorothy Woodson
Communication Secretary

BAPTISMS IN KANSAS

On August 2, 1979, Elder V. Lindsay, Pastor of Maranatha SDA Church, in Kansas City, Kansas, baptized another member of his Baptismal Class.

The baptism was held at the Shiloh SDA Church, of Leavenworth, Kansas, where Elder Mark McCleary is the minister. Regina Castello, a former Catholic, took her stand for the Lord through the Evangelistic crusade conducted by Roosevelt Williams.

This young lady has surrendered her all to the Lord. She has asked God to use her as an instrument in His service.

Anna M. Slaughter
Communication Secretary

EVANGELISTIC MEETINGS HELD AT SHILOH

Evangelistic meetings were held nightly, beginning July 18 at the Shiloh Seventh-day Adventist Church in Leavenworth, Kansas.

Elder Mark McCleary, pastor of the Leavenworth church was the speaker. The visitors and members were spiritually blessed as the prophecies of Daniel and Revelation were unfolded. Special music was provided by the members as well as guest artist of the city. Pictures were placed around the walls as well as shown on the screen, so the prophecies could be better understood by those in attendance.

On Sabbath, July 28, baptismal services were held at the close of the meeting, five precious souls were baptized.

Barbara Taylor
Church Clerk

YOUTH ON THE MOVE

The youth of Grove Heights SDA Church presented a program at the Lake Afton Boys' Ranch CA Detention Home. The program included music by Unlimited Love and a play. The message was presented by Stanley Hardgraves, a recent convert. He invited the young men to accept the love of Christ.

On July 27-28, a Spiritual Emphasis Weekend was held at Grove Heights with the theme "Youth Teaching Youth" and "Youth Taking the Message in the World?" The speaker Friday evening was Ronald Dawson who spoke about the Prodigal Son, inviting the youth to come to Christ before it is too late. The youth were in charge of the Sabbath activities. The speaker for the Divine Worship hour was Curtis Bates (a freshman ministerial student at Oakwood). At 6:00 P.M. the speaker was Robert Johnson, issuing the challenge for the youth to "Awake and Get to Work for Christ". Stanley Hardgraves inspired the audience with the 7:30 message "Jesus Christ Is the Way". The young people are involved and seek to further their involvement in the community.

Pearl Reed
MV Leader

STUDENT LITERATURE EVANGELISTS EARNS SCHOLARSHIPS

Twenty-three student literature evangelists working with the Central States Conference summer scholarship program have reached \$31,700 in sales for the summer season. They are \$20,000 ahead of the total for the entire summer in 1978. During the month of June, three young men in the Kansas City, Missouri area sold over \$7,000 worth of books and literature.

It is anticipated that the average student will earn over \$800 in scholarship money for the academic year 1979-80. The students this year came to Central States from Oakwood College. Many of the student workers are originally from the Central States Conference.

According to Publishing Director, Elder James Marshall, "the summer scholarship program gives students numerous opportunities to test their personal faith in God, distribute thousands of books and literature and be instruments toward the salvation of mankind."

LAKE REGION

DETROIT CENTER HOSTS VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

"Those who belong to the Lord's kingdom must work earnestly for the saving of souls. Christ's interests are the first and the highest of all interests. He has a property in this world that He wishes secured, saved for His everlasting kingdom."—*Colporter Ministry* p. 37.

With the above thoughts in mind, members of the Detroit Center Church under the leadership of Wessie Henderson went with fliers in hand, inviting youngsters to attend Vacation Bible School which was held August 13 through 25. Several persons asked the members "What took you so long? We thought that you were not going to have it this year." These words of encouragement proved to be a source of inspiration to the members as they continued from door to door.

The first day of Vacation Bible School found eighty-one in attendance and by Thursday of that week, there were one hundred and four present.



Student literature evangelists working in the Kansas City area.



Student literature evangelists working in the St. Louis area.

The Junior Department had the highest enrollment of forty-one students, the Primary Department's enrollment was thirty-eight, and the Kindergarten Department's enrollment was twenty-five. All the departments had ninety-five percent of their enrolled students in attendance daily.

Out of all the youngsters attending Vacation Bible School, ten percent were Adventists and the other ninety percent were non-Adventists. The majority of these students didn't attend any church. Therefore, they had to be instructed in regards to the proper attitude of worship. They failed to understand why they couldn't do or say certain things in church; but as the staff continued to solicit the aid of Jesus, the Holy Spirit began to impress their hearts so that by the time Vacation Bible School was over, a definite change had been made.

The Pathfinder Club donated scraps of fabric to the Kindergarten Department for the use of stuffed animals. Pastor J. P. Lewis made all the molds. The craft department received many compliments for its beautiful and unusual work.



Children participating in the closing exercises of Vacation Bible School.



Closing exercise for the Detroit Center Vacation Bible School.

During Vacation Bible School we had two days of heavy rainfall. This did not stop the youngsters. Some were wet, but they were there and on time. After Vacation Bible School had been dismissed, the staff found it difficult sending the children home. They would stay outside the church until the staff left. This exciting Vacation Bible School program,

under the leadership of Wessie Henderson, was conducted August 13 through 25 from 5:30 to 8:15 p.m.

Hearts were sad as we approached the final days of Vacation Bible School. The closing exercise was presented by the Pathfinders and the Vacation Bible School students. During the second phase of the program, Pastor Lewis spoke on the worldwide work of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Slides were shown of our 1978 camporee. The children were so impressed that six joined the Pathfinders while others expressed the desire to join.

The Detroit Center Vacation Bible School is an unusual one, because teenagers always express the desire to attend. Last year we had a youth class and this year the oldest one in attendance was 16 years of age.

Sometimes individuals ask whether Vacation Bible School is worthwhile? Are souls converted as a result? The Detroit Center Church can respond by saying "yes". There will be many persons in the kingdom who will trace their first encounter with Jesus through Vacation Bible School.

Elies L. Whitfield
Communication Secretary



The Voice of Hope music team.

THE VOICE OF HOPE IS HEARD

Radio Station WMUZ, 103.5 F.M. of Detroit, Michigan is the home of the Voice of Hope program. O. L. Fenison speaks every Thursday evening at 10:00 p.m. to the listeners in the Detroit area.

Bible lessons have been offered through this radio outreach resulting in letters and calls from those persons completing the Bible course and who are now keeping the Sabbath.

O. L. Fenison
Correspondent

TREATS FOR THE NEEDY

The Hanna Street Pathfinders, the Warriors, collected canned goods and clothing for the needy. This was a first for the club. Much preparation was given to make sure all things were in order and a special area was mapped out for this project.

Several merchants donated articles for the collection. Five hundred grocery bags were donated by a local merchant and a printing company donated self-adhesive stickers.

Special letters of explanation, Halloween tracts and the stickers were neatly placed on each bag by the Pathfinders and helpers.

Two nights before Halloween, twenty-five Pathfinders along with parents and adults placed the bags on the porch and in the homes of the people participating in the project. On Halloween night, the Pathfinders picked up the bags, filled with canned goods, and returned to the church. After counting and sorting the items, the Warriors were happy to find over five hundred cans.

The canned goods were turned over to the Dorcas Society who in turn along with the Investment Department prepared over twenty-five Thanksgiving baskets for the needy.

Because the Pathfinders worked so faithfully and cheerfully, the church planned a social for them on the following Saturday night. Over 65 boys and girls were present. A Pathfinder was overheard saying, "I like this project, treats for the needy better than trick or treat".

The Hanna Street Pathfinders are planning to have a larger collection this coming Halloween.

Ellen Tolson
Communication Secretary

BETHLEHEM EVANGELIZES FRENCH COMMUNITY

After three weeks of selective messages delivered by Elder B. P. Bernard, members of the French Bethlehem Church of Chicago, Illinois, were inspired with a new zeal to get ready for Jesus' soon coming.

The French community was thrilled with the inspired messages.

This crusade was followed closely



Elder B. P. Bernard translating the messages presented by Roscoe Brown, layman.

with a week of revival conducted by layman Roscoe Brown.

Roscoe Brown spoke with such power and conviction that at the last service entitled "Jesus Included Me", a young woman who had been resisting the intimate call of Jesus for a long time stood to her feet and proclaimed publicly the goodness of the Lord.

Special music was given by Mildred, Pamela and Keith Gill as well as the talented young ladies of the church.

As a result of the meetings, Elder Bernard is conducting a class on church doctrine each Sabbath morning at 10 a.m.

B. P. Bernard
Communication Secretary

STRAFORD EXTENDS A LIFELINE

The Straford Memorial Church of Chicago, Illinois began 1979 with the theme "Operation Lifeline."

Charles W. Drake, III, pastor, initiated a program of Bible study and evangelistic programs to continue throughout the entire year. He challenged the members to do their part. Every third Sabbath, the baptismal pool is filled and the faith and hard work of the members have been rewarded.

The campaign began with the church giving eighty Bible studies within the community. This was followed with a spring church evangelistic meeting.

With the beginning of summer, Straford joined hands with two area churches, Beacon of Joy and Morgan

Park. Tyrone Boyd is the pastor of these churches.

The summer crusade began with uncertainty as forces were put into motion to block the obtaining of a permit to erect the tent. A political figure even made a vow that he would see to it that this tent would not be erected in his district and personally tried to walk a bill through City Hall which would have ended all tent crusades in Chicago forever. The Lord overruled, and Mayor Jane Byrne gave a direct order that the permit be issued.

So with hearts filled with Thanksgiving, the effort was launched. Life changing messages were preached, hearts convicted and decisions made during the five weeks at the "Christ Is the Way Out Bible Crusade." Through the efforts of dedicated Bible workers, the earnest prayers of the members and the straight preaching of the pastors, entire families were ushered into a newness of life with Christ.

Lester Parkinson, Marcus Harris and Terry Giles, seminary students of Andrews University assisted in the summer meeting.

With the fall season approaching, the church is anticipating the Week of Prayer.

As a result of this ongoing program, seventy-two persons have been baptized thus far with many now attending the baptismal class.

Crystal R. Drake
Correspondent

FAITHFUL STEWARD

For twenty years William Sims served his country in the armed services and became known as "Serg".

In the nineteen thirties he was a boxer and so became known to many as a man with "fists of steel" when he won the lightweight championship from Archie Moore.

In 1965 he became a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church under Elder R. C. Brown and has since been known as a man of good deeds.

In his appointment as head deacon, Mr. Sims was noted for his faithfulness in fulfilling his post. Whenever he was needed or even called upon he would always say "I'll try."

Mr. Sims has now retired from his job and has bid farewell to his many friends



Christ Is The Way Out Bible Crusade in service.



Pictured left to right: Elder Clyde Lee, Pastor Terry Giles, Pastor Tyrone Boyd, Pastor Marcus Harris, Elder Charles W. Drake, III, Elder Douglas Taylor, Elder James Payne, Elder Charles Glanton and Elder Ted Kelly.

in East St. Louis. However, it is certain that he will continue in the Lord's service for years to come as he begins a new life in Three Rivers, Michigan with his wife and family.

Jayne Byrd
Communication Secretary

For the Lord God is a sun and shield;
the Lord will give grace and glory: no
good thing will he withhold from them that
walk uprightly.

—Psalm 84:14



Mr. William Sims, standing, at a farewell party given to him at the East St. Louis church.

NEWS RELEASE

The Faith Seventh-day Adventist Church recently announced the launching of a radio program entitled "Reach Out for Better Living." This broadcast can be heard every Sunday prime time 12:00 noon to 1:00 p.m. Faith Church will bring a brand of programs that promises to be unique as they broadcast from week to week. The radio broadcast will give to those who listen a plan to find a better way of life, positive alternatives by dealing with the relationship of diet to the development of body, mind and soul. Also will be included inspiring messages of love and hope and a variety of musical selections rendered by the different choirs and groups of the church.

Featured speaker is Pastor Raymond Saunders, announcer Edward J. Smith and producer Daniel Fider.

Faith Church has a great work to do for God in Hartford and they are hoping that hundreds will find their way to the truth through this radio ministry.

Pray for the success of the broadcast.

Joan M. Simmons
Communications Reporter

ELDER D. C. BATSON RETIRES

After forty-two years of unceasing labor to herald the Advent message, Elder Douglas Christian Batson retires. Ironically, it was never Elder Batson's goal to become a minister, but rather a football player. Through God's providential leadings he accepted God's commission.

Elder Batson was the first child born to Elisa and Amelia Douglas Batson in New Iberia, Louisiana. His parents accepted the Advent message through reading, "The Marked Bible". Their names were dropped from the Baptist church when it was known that they were keeping the Sabbath. Thus, the Batsons became faithful Seventh-day Adventists.

The Batsons believed in Christian education, they tried to persuade Douglas, an "A" student at Howe Institute and an abled athlete, to attend Oakwood College. After studying the brochure from Oakwood, he found they had no intercollegiate football team. So, rather than disrespect his parents wishes, he left to work in a saw mill in Bogalusa, Louisiana, a semester before graduation.



Elder D. C. Batson speaks as Mrs. Batson and President G. Earl listen.

He became dissatisfied with his job and went to Port Arthur, Texas and in 1930, enlisted in the army. It was here in the army that he met his wife, Barbara and played on the army's championship basketball team.

In 1937, the Batsons moved to Tucson, Arizona where he and his wife were baptized by Elder C. T. Everson in May, 1937. Later that year they moved to Phoenix, Arizona where Douglas became a literature evangelist.

While living in Phoenix, he completed his secondary education at Arizona Academy. In 1939, he bought his discharge from the army and made plans to enter La Sierra College in Riverside, California. In February, 1940, the Batsons left for La Sierra.

After completing his studies in May, 1942, he accepted a call from the Arkansas-Louisiana Conference to pastor in Louisiana, his home state. There he worked in Crowley, Rayne, Jennings, and Lake Charles, where he established a church.

In 1945, he moved to Shreveport, Louisiana where his district included: Texarkana, Texas and Taylortown, Louisiana. For the next five years he ministered in Houston, Beaumont, and San Antonio, Texas. He then accepted a call from Lake Region Conference to pastor in Gary, Indiana where he established a church. There he remained until September, 1962, when he was called to Indianapolis and Terre Haute, Indiana.

In 1965, Elder Batson went to pastor in Nashville, Tennessee. In the fall of 1968, he assumed the pastorate of the Chattanooga, Tennessee church. While pastoring in Tennessee, Elder G. R. Earle, President of Northeastern Conference called him to White Plains, New York to pastor and construct a church. In 1976, he was transferred to Bronx SDA church, where he remained until his retirement in September, 1979. The Lord has richly blessed the ministry of Elder Batson.

PATHFINDERS IN THE SPIRIT ON THE LORD'S DAY!

A sweet, sweet spirit hovered over the Faith Seventh-day Adventist Church in Hartford, Connecticut as the REACH OUT FOR BETTER LIVING CRUSADE was in progress. As the spirit moved throughout the tent many young people were doing some serious thinking. The young people were faithful in their service and attendance to God and the sweet spirit took hold of them as they attended from night to night. Many of those in attendance raised their hands to rededicate themselves to the Lord and when the day of baptism arrived twelve counselors and ten junior Pathfinders were baptized. God's presence could be felt by all those present as the sweet, sweet spirit continued to hover over Faith.

Joan M. Simmons
Communications Reporter

NEWS RELEASE

A second Bible was presented to Mrs. Jane Douglas for bringing twenty-seven guests to a Reach Out for Better Living Crusade in Hartford, Connecticut. The Bible is given to any adult member who brings twenty or more guests. This was the second time Mrs. Douglas had won the Bible. The first time was when she brought twenty-one guests to the tent services.

A young people's Bible was also given to 11 year old Marc Flowers for bringing seven of his friends to the service.

Mrs. Ruth Saunders, wife of Pastor Saunders, made the presentations.

To him who is determined it remains only to act.

—Italian

LIGHTHOUSE CELEBRATES FIRST ANNUAL DEACON AND DEACONESS' DAY

Sabbath, September 22, 1979—The First Annual Deacon and Deaconess' Day for Lighthouse Tabernacle SDA Church was celebrated today in Brooklyn, as nine local churches joined in the program's festivities.

Guest speaker for the Divine Hour of Worship was Pastor George Huggins from the Grand Concourse SDA Church of the Greater New York Conference, who directed our thoughts to the parables found in Matthew 13:44-46 of a man who found treasure hidden in a field and having discovered it he sold all that he had in order to purchase that field. Also of a man who was searching for goodly pearls and finding one of great price he also sold all that he had to possess that one. The admonition of the hour, we should search the hidden field of God's word in order to find the hidden treasure of salvation and be willing to give up all that we have in order to obtain eternal life.

The name Lighthouse could have been changed to "Full-house" as local church patrons from Hebron-French, Hanson Place, Shiloh, South Brooklyn, Brooklyn Faith, Solid Rock Far Rockaway, Queens, and Brooklyn Temple, to name a few, continued their day with us. A regal luncheon was served to our guests who delighted in Lighthouse's cuisine of vegetarian dishes.

The theme for the afternoon's celebration was "Prayer and Thanks for All." Each visiting church took part in the program by contributing songs, poetry and readings. The masterful Hebron-French Church's Senior Choir brought their testimony to us in their native language.

A full day at Lighthouse was brought to a close by Sister Ephie Powell, chairman of the Deaconesses, who expressed her deep gratitude to all in attendance. Sister Powell said with joy, "this program took a long time to plan and it is God's grace which has brought it about."

A day with God's grace shining abundantly on the Deacons and Deaconesses was Lighthouse Tabernacle's pleasure to enjoy in their new home.

Valarie Blyden
Communication Secretary

"LIFT HIM UP" CRUSADE BAPTIZES FIFTY-THREE

Those living in the vicinity of Sutter and Fountain Avenues, in the East New York section of Brooklyn, New York, on Sunday, July 15, at 7:45 p.m., could hear the sweet voices of a group of young ladies singing, "Lift Him Up, the Risen Saviour."

These young ladies were part of the "Lift Him Up Crusade," that was conducted for seven weeks by Elder William McNeil, Jr., Pastor of the East New York Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Fifty-three people were baptized as a result of the meeting. Follow-up services are being conducted in the Church. Elder McNeil expects to baptize many more.

Orley W. Anderson
Public Relations Secretary



Pastor McNeil



Candidate being baptized by Elder McNeil.

HARTFORD HOSTS BETTER LIVING PARADE

A parade was planned and organized by the Pathfinder Department that will long be remembered in the city of Hartford. This parade was set up to launch the REACH OUT FOR BETTER LIVING CRUSADE-TENT EFFORT that began on July 15, 1979. The parade was at least 45 minutes late . . . it seemed that the devil didn't want the parade to be for the residents of the route that the parade was to take opened the fire hydrants. The water flowed until it was ankle deep but together with the city fire department and police department a new route was set up to by-pass the water and put us back on our planned route within minutes.

It started out as a very small event blossomed into a very colorful and exciting affair that was enjoyed by all.

Community Service—They participated in full dress uniform and helped to carry temperance posters, banners, of bright, beautiful bold lettering and colors, displaying "I choose not to smoke" obesity, drugs, diet, nutrition, etc. . . .

Better Living Department—Props were made in the likeness of cheese, cigarettes, carrots, and tomatoes—these props were made by the young people and worn by some of the Pathfinders . . .

Golden Eagle Pathfinder Club—The Eagles led out in the parade in full dress uniform, flags, banners, etc. . . .

Reach Out for Better Living Team Members—The team carried a poster advertising the Reach Out for Better Living Broadcast . . .

Golden Eagle Pathfinder Drum Corp—The corp set the pace for the entire parade by beating out their most well liked beats that brought a lot of people to their windows to see what was going on—you know they did their thing!

Shining Stars from Springfield, Massachusetts—The presence of the Stars was most appreciated and their performance was excellent . . .

Connecticut Valley SDA School—A teacher (Deborah S. Richardson) and students marched with a colorful banner stating "Try it, you'll like it!" . . .

Soulsteppers of Faith—this is Faith's own drill team—who are shy in appearance but when such an affair is scheduled they manage to come through with flying colors . . .

Youth Marching Patrol From the Elks—they were the only outside guests who showed up for the parade . . . they looked very beautiful in their blue and white satin and they performed well.

Faith SDA Nurses' Corp—dressed in their white, van decorated accordingly . . . banners which said "Nurses for Jesus."

Debutantes 1979—Fifteen debutantes dressed in their flowing white gowns that they were presented in a few weeks before, with white gloves, white parasols, white crowns . . . plus the queen and her court rode in an open convertible. . . they all smiled lovely and waved to the crowd as they move along . . .

E-Z Rider Motorcycle Shop—shop owned by a church member loaned the church many mopeds and bicycles in many colorful hues . . . counselors and Pathfinders rode the vehicles in the parade. . .

Church Members—walked along side the parade and passed out handbills regarding the opening of the tent effort . . . they were received well by all they came in contact with . . .

At the end of the parade the different drill teams and Faith's drum corp performed in the lot where the tent was located . . . after which the drum corp marched approximately 400 persons inside the tent to begin what we hope will be a summer long to be remembered.

Joan Simmons
Reporter

WORLD-CHURCH-PEOPLE MUST COME TOGETHER!

This is our world and the problems thereof

But in the beginning if we had only listened
To our guidance from above.

There would only be joy and laughter
No tears, sorrow or even pain
Down from heaven God's love would reign.

If we had listened we all would live together
One for all and all for one—right from the start
But, since we didn't—it has caused us all to come apart.

This is our world and it's time for a change

But only through God's power this could be arranged.

People have changed and so has the time

And so has this world—in sin it's at its prime.

Things are only getting worse day by day

So take your neighbor's hand and tell him of
God's love in a very special way.

There are all types of people and that's no surprise

Now look at it from God's point of view
We're all the same in His eyes.

People come to church to show their face,

Their clothes and even their cool
Many people think God is a fool.

He's my number one, and He's cool with me

Because He sent His Son to set me free.

He's my beginning right through to the end

Because alone I couldn't stand against sin.

Time is running short, don't you think
It's time you took your stand
And join in the Christian band.

Don't take your time for it might be too late

I wouldn't want to see you
On the wrong side of the gate.

So, let's find the people who have not heard

And tell them of our Father's word.

Tell them to trust in Him—for He can't tell a lie

He's preparing our home in the heaven on high.

It's time to go out into the world and roam

To try and bring our brothers and sisters home.

written/composed by Michael Daniel
Faith SDA Youth Member
who is concerned about the world,
church and people coming together!

J. Simmons
Reporter

HANSON PLACE BIDS FAREWELL TO MRS. WEIR

Mrs. Audrey Weir, former superintendent of Hanson Place Sabbath School, in Brooklyn, New York was presented with a gift by the members in appreciation for her work in the Church over the years. Mrs. Weir, along with the other members of her family, will reside in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.

Lloyd G. S. Goodridge
Public Relations Secretary



The Weirs smile for the camera before leaving Brooklyn for Fort Lauderdale. Left to right: Wesley Sr., Wesley Jr., Lisa and Audrey.

HIGHER HEIGHTS

Ms. Jolene Brimmage, who recently received a B.S. in Home Economics at Oakwood College, is pursuing a master's degree in Family Life Education at Andrews University in Berrien Springs, Michigan.

During the summer months she was a featured soloist and Bible Instructor for an evangelistic crusade in Yonkers, New York, under the direction of Elder Robert Lister, Secretary of Lay Activities for Northeastern Conference.

She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Leroy Brimmage of St. Albans, New York, and a member of the Bethel SDA church in Brooklyn, New York.



Ms. Jolene Brimmage

SOUTH CENTRAL CONFERENCE YOUTH CONGRESS 1979

In time, content, and location Youth Congress 1979 was the most unusual in the history of South Central. It was held in the Mississippi Coast Coliseum and Convention Center in Biloxi, Mississippi. It began on a Thursday evening and ended Saturday night on a beautiful white sand beach. The theme for the Congress was a single word "GO". Enough has been said about the gospel commission. The times demand that we get going right now!

The objective of the congress was to address ourselves to some issues crucial to the survival of our youth and young adults. In order to help prepare our youth to meet the challenge, three seminars were planned. One in the area of careers, another in the area of the child, and the third was planned for adult singles and friendship dating.

The careers seminar was staffed by Mrs. Judith McCoy of Brentwood, Tennessee; Pastor J. Paul Monk from Allegheny East Conference, Pottstown, Pennsylvania; Mr. Edward Woods from Benton Harbor, Michigan; and Mr. Charles Colbert from Chicago, Illinois. These capable individuals exposed our youth to information covering the following:

- How to prepare for an interview.
- Women in non-traditional vocations.
- An Adventist view of the all volunteer army.
- The non-denominationally employed Adventist and his role in community services, on his job and in his church. The emphasis was on how the job and the church should benefit from their experience.

The child seminar was staffed by Mr. John McCoy, Jr., from Santa Maria, California. The emphasis was juvenile delinquency. The objective was to make those present realize that we are having a real problem in this area and to provide some workable solutions.

Pastor Byron Dulan and his wife, Linda, staffed the singles seminar. The objective was to assist singles with the problem of surviving in a family oriented church society. The emphasis was preparing the person to accept himself and understand himself in the light of the all power love of God.

The preaching was done by Pastor Ivan Warden from Andrews University and Pastor Emanuel Jackson from Augusta, Georgia. Pastor Warden presented three messages and a final message on Sabbath entitled "All Systems Go." Each message profoundly exposed the theme "Go". Pastor Jackson was the speaker for the Friday morning devotion.

The Sabbath School hour was conducted by Pastor Monk and Pastor Joseph McCoy, Director of Youth Ministries for South Central Conference. Sabbath School was unique in that it exposed and discussed common cliches and their meaning: "Just leave it in the hand of the Lord"; "There aren't enough men in the Adventist Church"; "The worse church school is better than the best public school" were just a few of the cliches discussed with lively audience participation.

Finally on Saturday night, there was a music festival which featured two non-Adventist choirs, one of which was the Keesler Airforce Base soul choir. The Choraliers from Ephesus SDA Church in New Orleans, Louisiana also sang many beautiful numbers. Guest soloist, Dwayne Hamilton, from Nashville, Tennessee did a magnificent job of raising our sights to heaven.

The Congress ended with a splendid beach party on the sands of the Gulf of Mexico.

The Spirit of God was present in everything that was done. The objectives were reached and the people were happy in the Lord.

KOINANIA

Koinania is a Greek word meaning sharing, unity, communicating, togetherness, and closeness. Since there is no single English word to define Koinania, it can best be interpreted by the phrases, "together we share" or "sharing with others."

This was the theme of the Fourth Annual Youth Retreat of the Louisville Magazine Street SDA Church. The four day retreat was held at Camp Carlson, a secluded, but modern camp on the Fort Knox, Kentucky Military Base.

Forty youths attended the retreat, which was sponsored by the church MV department. During Spring, the department also sponsors an annual retreat/-

seminar for married couples and has plans for a senior citizens retreat next summer.

Elder Joseph McCoy, the South Central Conference Youth Director, and Sarah Smith, the Louisville Church MV leader, conducted the activities at the retreat, which included recreation, nature hikes, and awareness sessions.

The main emphasis was on unselfish sharing of oneself, an ideal continually expressed in the awareness sessions as a trait which exemplifies a Christian.

PRESIDENT DUDLEY HONORED

Dr. C. E. Dudley, President of the South Central Conference was honored in Columbus, Mississippi at the Air Force Base, in September. Pastor L. E. Blackwell is pastor of the district and his wife teaches at the West Point College.

Dr. Dudley was honored by the North Eastern Mississippi Community Development Corporation, a unit of a national organization whose object is to inspire citizens to build better communities with more beauty, comfort, safety, and development. The plaque given to President Dudley complimented him for "Outstanding community service."

The Black Adventist Medical and Dental Association presented a plaque to Elder Dudley at its annual meeting in Detroit, Michigan, because, as the BAMDA spokesman put it, "Dr. Dudley was largely responsible for the organizing of this unique group."

Dr. Dudley, a member of the board of directors of Oakwood College, was also honored by the college at the graduation ceremony in June of this year. In looking around the walls of Dudley's office one may see some 15 plaques and trophies honoring him from being, "The Father Of The Year" to being the president of South Central Conference while it tripped its membership.

TEACHERS TO TOUR SPAIN

As part of a growth and development program for the teachers of the South Central Conference, Professor Joseph F. Dent and some of the teachers will be joining with other teachers of the Southern Union Conference on an educational trip to the countries of Spain and Morocco during the Thanksgiving holidays.

NEW CONGREGATIONS ORGANIZED

The gospel continues to be preached throughout the South Central Conference territory and new congregations continue to come into being. Between eight and ten new groups have or will be organized into churches before the end of the year. Churches organized thus far in Granada and Woodville, Mississippi, Dechard, Pulaski, East Knoxville and North Memphis, Tennessee. Others to be organized will be at Huntsville, Alabama as a result of the summer crusade held by Elders E. C. Ward and D. B. Reid and in Panama City, Florida by Pastor Lawrence Hamilton.

One of the interesting features of the church which was organized by Pastor Roland Hill in Pulaski, Tennessee is this group was organized in and meet every Sabbath in the Catholic church.



New congregation at Pulaski, Tennessee.



New congregation at Dechard, Tennessee.



Congregation at Church opening at West Point.

EDITORS OF MESSAGE MEET

Quite an historic event took place when three of the editors who have worked for the *Message* magazine met in Nashville, Tennessee a few weeks ago. Elders L. B. Reynolds, W. R. Robinson and James E. Dykes were three of the four editors who have served as editor for this journal during its lifetime of over forty years. Dr. G. J. Millet also served as editor at one time.

DR. AND MRS. E. E. ROGERS TOUR AROUND THE WORLD

Dr. and Mrs. E. E. Rogers, ministers of the Berean Church in Jackson, Mississippi are on a tour around the world which will take them to Germany, Italy, Egypt, Israel, India and Africa. Pray for their safe travels.

HURRICANE RAVISHES MOBILE

Pastor B. E. Jones of Mobile announces that all of the members and the church endured the storm of Hurricane Franklin quite well, but there is much destruction that is witnessed throughout the city which includes a community named Prichard (a predominantly Black area). Homes were destroyed, properties damaged by trees and water. It will take many dollars and much time before the area will be the same again.

CHATTANOOGA TO OPEN NEW CHURCH

The pastor, Dr. P. E. Vincent, and the members of the Chattanooga church will open the doors of a new facility during

the month of October. The joy of it all is that they just opened a newly constructed educational plant two years ago. It is paid for. The new church building is located on Orchard Knob St.

NASHVILLE PLANS FOR A NEW SCHOOL BUILDING

The F. H. Jenkins school board announces plans to erect a \$660,000.00 plant during the next twelve months in Nashville, Tennessee. This new facility will place the school facilities all under one roof. Three separate campuses are presently being used. The school was named for the late F. H. Jenkins, former superintendent of education for the South Central Conference.

NEW CHURCHES OPENED

New church buildings have been erected or purchased at Overton Park, Memphis, Tennessee (4th church), West Point, Mississippi and at Decatur, Alabama. Others under construction are in Knoxville, Tennessee, Franklin, Tennessee, Gulfport, Mississippi and Jackson, Mississippi.



W. J. Mitchell, Mrs. R. Lee, L. Blackwell at church opening at West Point, Mississippi.



V. L. Brooks, Mrs. J. Jenkins, S. Sims in front of new Overton Park Church in Memphis.

SOUTHWEST REGION HOLDS ITS ANNUAL WORKERS MEETING

One of the highlights of the year for the ministers of the conference is Workers' Meeting, which was held at Lake Texoma Lodge, Kingston, Oklahoma, September 16-19. This is the time of the year to rejuvenate the whole man. We were privileged to have as our guest Chaplain J. L. Butler, Hadley Hospital, Washington, D.C., and Dr. W. E. Coopwood, Department of Psychiatry, Meharry Medical College, Nashville, Tennessee. They dealt with the "Minister and Stress Management"—conducting three two-hour sessions.

Our evangelistic report during the third quarter equal two hundred twenty-three, and we have prospects to reach our goal of four hundred fifty-two before the year ends, and climb to a new plateau of 8,000 constituents. Our Ingathering crusade is off to a good start with four districts over and a total of \$25,000. There was tennis, horseback riding, boating, basketball, ping pong, golfing, and other sports for recreation.

One of the enjoyable features was the Sweetheart Banquet—which the Shepherdess members presented a token of love to their husbands. The meals were delicious, the weather was excellent and the atmosphere delightful.

The stay at Lake Texoma was refreshing to each worker and his family. They left with a refreshed mind and new zeal to return to their responsibilities with renewed vigor.

Doris Jones



R. W. Bates, General Conference Lay Activities Department, demonstrating the latest techniques on soul-winning.



Youth Director, B. E. Wright, plans recreation for the workers. Left to right: A. Booker, J. L. Butler, B. E. Wright at the desk, and W. E. Coopwood.



Chaplain J. L. Butler and Dr. W. E. Coopwood conducted sessions on "The Minister and Stress Management."



Four districts reported their Ingathering goal over, among whom were Pastors M. V. Singleton and A. R. Carethers.



The members of the Shepherdess Club presented a token of love to their husbands at the Sweetheart Banquet. Our president, W. C. Jones, birthday was on the same day. We also honored him at this affair.



W. C. Jones giving keynote address to elders and deacons on Friday night, September 21.

ELDERS' AND DEACONS' RETREAT

September 21-23 will long be remembered by the First Elders' and Head Deacons' around the conference circle. This historic weekend was the summons of the conference officials, to clarify the mission of the church, and to establish a better rapport between the ministry, and the Lay Leadership. This first time event at the campground, would have been measured successful had a minimum number appeared. However, when seventy (70) excited men from all directions of the conference registered, and over one hundred (100) gathered for Sabbath morning

service, we knew a blow was struck for the onward progress of the gospel.

Our president, W. C. Jones, delivered the keynote address Friday evening entitled "Every Believer a Minister." R. W. Bates, General Conference Lay Activities Department, conducted a Seminar on Techniques of Soulwinning and gave the Spoken Word during the 11:00 o'clock hour. J. C. Hicks, Conference Lay Activities Director, planned well for this splendid occasion, and the other departmental secretaries harmonized to make the weekend profitable. Pastor C. M. Bailey of the Cleburne district, spoke Sunday morning for the Devotional Hour, charging all the men with the knowledge of God's desire to



Brother Jesse Mayfield was one of the 70 lay leaders that registered for the Elders' and Deacons' Retreat. He has served in leadership capacity for over 50 years. He is 100 years young. How significant it was to have a pioneer of the cause to be present at such a historic gathering.

use them, and their several abilities for a "Finished Work."

Since this will be an annual gathering of the Elders' and Deacons' at Lone Star, we expect more representation next year as the word spreads of the relaxed mood, fellowship, and spiritual benefits of the sessions.

The men departed with a firm determination to be of greater service in their local and committed to stand shoulder to shoulder with district leadership to declare with one voice the message of a crucified, risen and soon coming Saviour.

Doris Jones, Reporter



Fight one more round. When your feet are so tired that you have to shuffle back to the center of the ring, fight one more round. When your arms are so tired that you can hardly lift your hands to come on guard, fight one more round. When your nose is bleeding and your eyes are black and you are so tired that you wish your opponent would crack you one on the jaw and put you to sleep, fight one more round—remembering that the man who always fights one more round is never whipped.

—James J. Corbett

IN THE NEWS

STEWARDSHIP DAY 1979

CHRIST IS THE ANSWER CRUSADE BAPTIZED NINETEEN

Evangelist Willis Reed, pastor of the Springfield Gardens Church, held the last of six weeks of spirit-filled revival meetings on August 26th. He is a powerful speaker who is striving to spread the news of how Christ died so that man would have a second chance at eternal life.

The nightly meetings were held in the Big Tent which was erected in the parking area of the Springfield Gardens Church. The hot and humid air of the evenings was lightened by spirited singing and the refreshing reminder that the reward of a home in Heaven is waiting for all who will believe on Jesus.

Evangelist Reed was assisted by Pastor Martin Benjamin. Irene Brown, Lena Hamill, Eunice Reid, and Sheila Middleton were Bible Instructors. The Music Department was under the leadership of Clara Reed and Owen Alford. A host of dedicated church workers and friends worked diligently to bring the message of salvation to relatives and neighbors.

Nineteen precious souls came to a knowledge of God's truth and were willing to follow Him all the way to the watery grave of baptism.

Although the Crusade has come to a close for this year, Evangelist Reed vows that he will continue to proclaim that "no matter what the needs are, no matter what the circumstances are, and no matter what the conditions are . . . IN TIMES LIKE THESE WE NEED JESUS."

Marlene Evans
Communications Secretary
Springfield Gardens Church

IN TRANSITION

Dr. W. W. Fordham, formerly of the General Conference's Regional Affairs Department has assumed pastoral duties at the Coatesville, Pennsylvania Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Oakwood science complex has almost reached its goal! Over two hundred and twenty thousand dollars has been raised. This is the largest Oakwood College offering in the history of the church.

WEDDING BELLS

Susan Metters and Jesse Bevel, Jr. were joined in holy matrimony, October 7, 1979 at the Jamaica Seventh-day Adventist Church, Jamaica, New York. They are both faculty members of the Northeastern Academy in New York, where they reside.

Erica Johnson and Marcus Harris were united in holy wedlock on August 26, 1979 in Chicago, Illinois. Marcus and Erica will be residing in Berrien Springs, Michigan while he attends Andrews University Seminary.

Looking for a place to stay for General Conference?

Mr. Charles A. Colbert, Jr.
C.A.C. Meeting Planners, Inc.
4 North LaSalle, Suite 2001
Chicago, IL 60603
(312) 726-0937

Oakwood recently received a two hundred thousand dollar grant from the Kresge Foundation. This is the largest grant Oakwood College has received from a private foundation.

EVANGELISTIC CAMPAIGN IN SPANISH WEST CHURCH

April and May were months of revival for the Spanish West Church.

William Morales, layman, joined Pastor Julio Astacio in a successful campaign of evangelism. Together they worked hard with Mr. Morales traveling from Aurora to Chicago three times a week.

The church cooperated with the campaign through visitation and prayer.

During campmeeting several candidates were baptized as a result of this effort.

The church is still working with prospects that are expected to be baptized in the next baptisms.

The Spanish West church is planning to continue their evangelism with a fall meeting supported by two other Spanish churches in the area.

Julio Astacio
Communication Secretary

The Lord of heaven challenges those whom He has supplied with His bounties to prove Him. A faithful steward proves his stewardship by doing all he possibly can to enlarge upon His Master's goods, so every Christian in partnership with God will want to do all possible in carrying out his service for God.

The faithful steward realizes that the message of truth is to be given, not only in his own city and neighborhood, but in regions beyond. He realizes that those who cherish a benevolent spirit toward God's work will not fail to identify themselves with the needs of His cause, and will not refuse to give themselves in love to His service, trading upon goods entrusted to them. The faithful steward will exercise frugality and self-denial, recognizing the Lord requires a return of all that He has given.

"The Lord requires His tithe (and offerings) be given to His treasury. Strictly, honestly, and faithfully let this portion be returned to Him." (*Counsels on Stewardship*, page 82.)

Sabbath, December 8, is Stewardship Day. A day planned to make sure the record reveals that you have been a faithful steward cooperating with God to the utmost of your ability, in properly relating to Him with that He has entrusted to your care. We are living in a time of solemn privilege and sacred trust, a time in which our destiny and the destiny of thousands of others is being decided for life or for death. These times demand that we remember the Lord and faithfully discharge our responsibility with talents He has entrusted to us, and upon which we are to trade diligently for Him. Our tithe and our gifts are to be brought to the altar so that through us and our gifts, Christ may reveal the beauty of His truth. Plan now to have your account with God reconciled by December 8, and thus render a good account of your stewardship.

"To defraud God is the greatest crime of which man can be guilty." (*Counsels on Stewardship*, page 86.)

T. W. Cantrell
Associate Secretary
Southern Union Conference

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

—Phillipians 4:19



Enter to learn;

depart to serve.

OAKWOOD COLLEGE: THE STUDENT FINANCIAL AID PROGRAM

*By A. G. Montague,
Director of Student Finance*

During the past decade of the 1970's, student financial aid has become synonymous with higher education. The idea of financial aid is nothing new, however, its uniqueness today is more or less attributed to its high degree of sophistication and complexity. The student financial aid function is no longer an afterthought and haphazardly administered activity, but it is now a necessary, well-planned and operated integral part of the college and university setting. Matriculating students and their families are very much dependent on some type of financial aid during some phase of their educational program. Prior to enrolling at an institution of higher learning it is highly advantageous for the prospective student to seek as much counsel and information as possible concerning the financial aid program at the contemplated institution of attendance.

Traditionally and historically Oakwood College is, and has been a predominantly "black college." It has served as the mecca for the cultural and educational affairs of black Seventh-day Adventists. Because of Oakwood's heritage and tradition, it has been very sensitive and responsive in meeting the needs and helping to achieve the goals and aspirations of black Adventist youth. The uniqueness of these problems are manifested in special considerations extended, as financial aid is provided for those students expressing a need. Based on the identified needs of the students, Oakwood College has approximately ninety per cent of its enrolled students receiving some type of financial aid.

1. **Philosophy of Financial Assistance:** Financial assistance at Oakwood College is not given automatically upon

request. According to basic biblical and religious principles, parents have an obligation to pay for the education of their children. Parents are expected to continually provide the basic essentials of life whether the student lives at home or on the college campus. The student should provide a reasonable part of the total amount required to meet college expenses by accepting employment, a loan or both. The primary purpose of the financial aid program is to provide assistance to students who, without such aid, would be unable to attend Oakwood College.

2. **A Program Overview:** Over the past two years, Oakwood College has administered financial aid to its students in amounts of approximately three million dollars per year. This assistance has been administered in the form of academic scholarships, federal and state grants, loans, and work-oriented scholarships. It is very likely that during the present academic year, the total financial aid awards administered will exceed the three million dollar mark.

3. **Student Employment:** Oakwood College presently has a student enrollment of approximately 1,300 students. In keeping with one of the basic principles of Adventism, these students are encouraged to work in one of the many college departments or industries to help defray the cost of their expenses, as well as to personally develop usable skills. There are approximately nine hundred students employed on a part-time basis at the college. These students are

employed in skilled, semi-skilled, professional, and technical capacities. They work in such entities as the Oakwood College radio station, laundry, bakery, dairy, physical plant, agricultural center, literature evangelism, library, office locations, college store, Harris Pine Mill furniture manufacturing plant, and other work locations. The furniture manufacturing plant is one of the most promising industries affiliated with the Oakwood College complex.

The future looks bright for Oakwood College as it relates to the student financial aid program. There is an ever growing list of scholarships and aids being made available to the college. The principle concern of Oakwood is to administer all financial aid funds in an equitable and fair manner. In selecting students to receive financial assistance, the college will also place emphasis on academic achievement, character, and future promise.

The financial aid office is a department of the Oakwood College business office. Students accepted for enrollment may apply for aid through the following programs:

- Student Guaranty Loan Program
- National Defense Student Loan Program
- College Work Study Program
- Educational Opportunity Program
- United Negro College Fund Scholarships
- Church-Conference-College Matching Scholarships
- The Tuition Plan

Applications for the Guaranty Program should begin with the applicant's home state. The tuition plan address is:

The Tuition Plan, Inc.
400 North Michigan Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611

For any of the other aids listed, the applicant should contact the:

Director of Student Finance
Oakwood College
Huntsville, Alabama 35806

And I gave them my statutes, and showed them my judgments, which if a man do, he shall even live in them. Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.

—Ezekiel 20:11, 12

BLACK ADVENTIST BUSINESSES—IN ACTION

JOHN WILLIS, THE EXECUTIVE WITH INTEGRITY

Success is often measured by one's acquisition of wealth, the number of degrees accumulated, and the status achieved in society. Integrity, honesty, and character seem to have no place in a world obsessed with wealth and power. Daily we read of the rise and the fall of a financial baron whose unethical methods has caused his ruin. It is good to know that in this day of stock manipulations, hush money, and ruthlessness, that God has still Christian men who have not compromised their principles and standards.

One such businessman is John Willis, Executive Vice President of Citizens Federal Savings and Loans Association, who believes that honesty and integrity are paramount if one is to succeed in business. Since early teens John Willis, one of the six children born to Mr. and Mrs. James Willis of Birmingham, Alabama has always had an interest in business. He attended the local public schools and received his business training at Booker T. Washington Business College. Completing his training in 1957, he became an accountant for Booker T. Washington Insurance Company. In that same year, he became the accountant for the newly-established Citizens Federal Savings and Loans Association.

The association grew rapidly and within four years John Willis became assistant Vice President and Loan officer in charge of Real Estate loans. He actively promoted the idea of thrift, savings, and home ownership among blacks, by visiting high schools and using radio and television to get the message across.

The Citizens Federal Savings and Loan Association is the creation of Dr. A. G. Gaston, black entrepreneur who started the association with \$350,000 in assets and today it has approximately \$26 million dollars in assets. The association has been listed in Black Enterprise (June, 1979) "Leading Black Business in America." Dr. Gaston has founded a financial empire upon two principles, thrift and industry.

In 1969, Mr. Willis became Executive Vice President and assumed the total responsibility of managing the day to day



John Willis at the White House with President and Mrs. Carter.

operations of the association. Like Daniel, he has proven to be a solid example of honesty and integrity. He has been a strong, silent witness for the truth.

For the past twenty-one years, he has been conspicuously absent from work on the Sabbath. The employees are aware of his absence on Saturday, not because it is his day of fishing or golfing, but rather it is his day of worship.

Mr. Willis sees his Sabbath witness as a great blessing. "For God has put it in the heart of Dr. Gaston to have a tremendous respect for the Sabbath." He recalls, "Dr. Gaston visited Riverside Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee years ago and was deeply impressed by the Seventh-day Adventists." About two years ago, Dr. C. E. Dudley, President of the South Central Conference in cooperation with the Ephesus Church in Birmingham, Alabama presented him with an award for the contribution he has made to black people. Dr. Gaston serves as a business adviser to Dr. J. Price Pearson, an SDA Podiatrist. He is well acquainted with the church beliefs.

Mr. Willis contributes his success to God and his lovely wife, the former Doris Mickel of Newark, New Jersey. He describes her as "a friend and companion. She is my right arm, it would have been impossible to reach the goals I have obtained if it were not for her love and support." He attributes twenty years of happiness to "having God in the home and the heart, valuing your companion and putting the other person's interest first." Mrs. Willis is a graduate of Oakwood College in Huntsville, Alabama. She received her M.A. degree in Education from the University of Alabama in Birmingham. Presently, she is furthering her education on a doctoral level. For many years she served as a principal and teacher at Ephesus Junior Academy and is now a Guidance Counselor at Hayes High School.

It has been twenty-six years since Elder C. Sampson Myles baptized Mr. Willis. He has remained faithful. Both he and his wife are active in church affairs. He is a local elder, Sabbath School teacher, associate treasurer, and member of the church and school



Mr. John Willis, Vice-President of the Citizens Federal Savings and Loan Association.

boards. She is the minister of music, president of the Birmingham chapter of the Oakwood College Alumni Association, and during the past summer, a Bible instructor for Dr. E. E. Cleveland.

On June 13, 1978, Mr. Willis was one of the top one hundred black businessmen invited to the White House to dialogue with President Carter regarding the concerns of black people. He describes the visit as a "once in a lifetime honor. I felt a sense of awe as I stood in the White House."

The occasion was historic for it was the first time ever that such a large group of black businessmen had gathered to meet with a president. Some of the cabinet members that spoke were: Juanita Krepps, Secretary of Commerce; Robert Strauss, U.S. Envoy to the Middle East; and G. William Miller, former Chairman of the Reserve Board.

Mr. Willis is an avid reader who daily reads business journals, several newspapers, and doctrinal books with a special interest in the Spirit of Prophecy. He loves hiking and for the past summer he ran three miles a day.

He is a licensed Real Estate broker for Vulcan Realty and Investment Corporation. He received his training at Samford University in Birmingham. He hopes one day to open a real estate business so that he can employ Adventist youths. Among his other dreams is to open a fast food vegetarian restaurant. He has been a vegetarian for the past twenty years. "When adequately balanced it is super." He cautions against the over abundant use of sugars, starches, and protein to compensate for the lack of meat. His diet mainly consists of fruits, nuts, and vegetables prepared in various ways.

Asked what guidelines would assure success in business, he stated, "be faithful to God and man. I don't see how you can advance if you do not pay an honest tithe. I don't stress overly ambitiousness because you claw up people on your mad scramble to the top. You become discontented at every stage. Just be ready when the door opens." Success according to him is, "having good health, being loving and loved in return."

In this age isn't it inspiring to know that God has Christian men like John Willis in high positions who value integrity and honesty above wealth and prestige.

Stephanie Johnson



Citizens Federal Savings and Loan Association.



Mr. and Mrs. John Willis view the portrait of Dr. A. G. Gaston, black entrepreneur who started the Association.

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