Rev. Wilson Padgett

The Rev. Wilson W. Padgett, 71, of 326 Circle View Drive, Shelby, died Thursday, March 29, 1990, at Cleveland Memorial Hospital.

A native of Rutherford County, he was the husband of the late Hillary Magness Padgett and the son of the late George H. and Minnie Wilson Padgett.

He was a member and former pastor of Eastside Baptist Church for 26 years and pastor of McAdenville Baptist Church for 10 years. He was the former Chaplain at Shelby Fire and Police Departments for 25 years.

He was a graduate of Boiling Springs Junior College, Wake Forest and the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas.

He was a former member of the Board of Trustees at Gardner-Webb and a recipient of the Governor's Award for distinguished meritorious service to the people and state of North Carolina.

Services will be conducted at 3 p.m. Saturday at Eastside Baptist Church by Dr. Harold Fite, Dr. Gene Watterson and the Revs. Ronald Arndt and L. A. Howard. Burial will be in Lattimore Baptist Church cemetery.

The family will receive friends tonight from 7 until 9 at Clay-Barnette Funeral Home.

Memorials may be made to Eastside Baptist Church, 1165 Wyke Road, Shelby, 28150.
Memories of McAdenville theme of Christmas song

By Jean H. Sparks
Special to The Star

“Christmas Town USA,” otherwise known as McAdenville, springs to life each yuletide.

Some 365,000 red, green and white lights are stored in boxes until early September when crews start checking bulbs, wiring and circuits.

About the third week in September, crews begin stringing the lights on the 375 trees. Their job is not completed until a day or two before the lights are turned on in early December.

In taller trees, the lights stay up,” Bill Miller, chaplain at Stowe-Pharr Mills, says. “The other lights are taken down and stored until next year. It takes them until April to get all the lights down, stored in boxes and labeled.

In addition to the lights on the trees, residents decorate their doors according to individual preference. More than 200 wreaths, each with a hand-tied red velvet bow, adorn lamp posts throughout the town.

A favorite spot is the lake situated near the heart of town. Seventy-five trees, ranging in size from 11 to 15 feet, ring the lake. The reflection of the lights in the water adds to the beauty of the scene.

A fountain, located in the center of the lake, jets water 75 feet into the air at a rate of 3,000 gallons per minute. Lights shining on the fountain go through a sequence of red, green, blue and amber about once every 10 seconds.

The scene is a giant Christmas greeting to the more than 370,000 vehicles that drive through the town during the Christmas season.

Other decorations include a 9-feet tall, 70-feet long display of Santa and his reindeer and a set of Chrono-Chime bells, hand crafted in Holland, that play Christmas carols.

The tradition began in 1956 by the McAdenville Men’s Club. With permission of town and officials of Stowe-Pharr Mills, the club decorated nine trees around the town's community center the first year.

From the beginning, the management of Stowe-Pharr Mills, including two of the founders of the company, Daniel J. Stowe and the late William J. Pharr, supported the program. The cooperation of the company officials and town people alike has been instrumental in the development of the Christmas lighting display to its present level.

The late Rev. Wilson W. Padgett, who was pastor of McAdenville Baptist Church from 1948 to 1958 and who served as pastor of Eastside Baptist Church in Shelby for more than 25 years, helped with the decorations and the festivities.

The Rev. Padgett and Pharr became friends and worked together to see a new church built in the town as well.

Christmas was always a very special time for the Padgett family. Theirs was the largest tree in town, and music was played constantly throughout the household. Both the late Rev. and Mrs. Padgett studied music at Gardner-Webb College and both sang, while the late Rev. Padgett played the piano.

The couple’s daughter, Hillary Elizabeth Padgett, remembers her parents as “real Christmas people.” Because of her memories, Hillary was drawn back “home” to McAdenville from Florida. She now teaches at both McAdenville and Lowell elementary schools.

When Hillary returned to McAdenville this past summer, it was then she discovered a letter written by her mother, the late Hillary Magness Padgett, entitled “My Favorite Christmas.”

From her mother’s letter, Hillary wrote her own song, “Christmas Town.” The song was performed by the McAdenville Elementary Chorus at the annual Yule Log Parade Dec. 21, 1990. Hillary accompanied the group on the piano.

While in Shelby, the late Rev. Padgett served as chaplain for the Shelby Fire Department from 1978-1982. While in this position, he received the Governor’s Award from Gov. James B. Hunt for counseling and related work during the city’s recovery from the downtown Shelby fire in May 1979 — a tragedy that claimed the lives of local firemen and injured many officers.

A graduate of Gardner-Webb College and Wake Forest University, the late Rev. Padgett completed his education at Southwestern Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas; where he graduated in the 1940s. He later led members of Eastside Baptist Church in the construction of a new building on Wyke Road in Shelby.

Jean H. Sparks is a freelance writer living in Shelby. Star Lifestyles editor Jackie Bridges contributed to the story.

Christmas Town

Hillary Elizabeth Padgett wrote the following song in memory of her father and mother, the Rev. and Mrs. Wilson W. Padgett.

Christmas Town

Christmas Town in my hometown

My own special touch of heaven

There’s no other town that can compare

To this beautiful fairy land.

Twinkling lights line every tree

Traveler’s can’t believe

The beauty their eyes now see

In this “Winter Wonderland.”

It must have been like my Christmas Town

The night the angels really sang

That first Christmas so long ago

When Heaven’s bells really rang

Christmas Town is my hometown

My own special touch of heaven

I’ll love you forever and ever my home

My beautiful “Christmas Town!”

The late Rev. and Mrs. Padgett were “real Christmas people,” says their daughter, Hillary Padgett. Ms. Padgett wrote a song about McAdenville in honor of her parents. School children performed the song last year at the annual Yule Log Parade in McAdenville.
REV. LEON HOWARD HOLLINGSWORTH
Our Twenty-Third Pastor - 1942

Rev. L. H. Hollingsworth lives in Winston Salem, North Carolina. He is married to the former Bess Walker of Spindale, North Carolina. They have three children: twins, Nancy and Pat, and Linda. Rev. Hollingsworth graduated from Wake Forest College and attended New Orleans Theological Seminary,Southeastern and Union Theological Seminaries. He was a Chaplain in World War II. Dr. Hollingsworth has served as president of the General Board of the Baptist State Convention. He received the Honorary Degree of Doctor of Divinity from Wake Forest University. He has been pastor of Emerywood Baptist Church in High Point since 1970. Dr. Hollingsworth offers the invocation before each home football game at Wake Forest. These prayers are published in a book, God Goes To Football Games, A Book Of Uncommon Prayers. This book is available on Wake Forest University campus or may be ordered directly from Dr. Hollingsworth.

REV. WILSON W. PADGETT
Our Twenty-fourth Pastor - 1943

No pastor reported in Raleigh Baptist Association minutes in 1944.
DEDICATION

By recommendation of the Resolutions Committee at the Tuesday evening session of the annual meeting, 1990 Minutes of the Kings Mountain Baptist Association are dedicated to the Memory of Rev. Wilson Woodrow Padgett and Rev. William Valentine Tarlton.

IN MEMORIAM

Wilson Woodrow Padgett was born December 9, 1918, in Rutherford County, son of Mr. and Mrs. George H. Padgett. Educated in Harris (Chase) High School, Boiling Springs Junior College, Wake Forest University and Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He was married to the former Hillary Magness. They had four children: Rebecca Wilkinson, Paula Sutherland, Wilson Woodrow, Jr., and Hillary Elizabeth (Beth).

He was a member of the Board of Trustees of Gardner-Webb College, pastored churches in McAdenville, Raleigh, Rutherfordton, and for twenty-seven years pastor of Shelby's Eastside Baptist Church leading that congregation in the construction of its beautiful new facility on Wyke Road. He was for twenty-nine years chaplain of the Shelby Fire Department, for which he received the Governor's Award for outstanding service.

A beloved husband and father, a loving and compassionate teacher and pastor. A friend of rich and poor. God bless the memory of Rev. Wilson Woodrow Padgett.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. W. Marion Adams
Eastside Baptist Church was organized in December, 1921, with thirty-one charter members. The first pastor, C.O. Johnson, led in building the first auditorium and was pastor for one year. Others who have served as pastors are: Reverend W.G. Camp, Reverend H.E. Waldrop, Reverend R.P. Hamby, Reverend W.P. Biggerstaff, Reverend E.B. Hicks, and the present pastor, Reverend Wilson W. Padgett, who has served for twenty-one years.

The church was moved eight years ago from Buffalo Street to its present site at 1165 Wyke Road. The $600,000 church plant and facilities is located on a nine-acre site opposite the Jefferson Elementary School. The Kings Mountain Baptist Association Office site is adjacent to it.

The average length of pastorates for the church's seven pastors is eight and one-half years. The present resident membership is about six hundred.