Church notes

Items for the Friday religion pages should be turned in no later than noon the previous Wednesday. All services printed in the church calendar are free and open to the public. Events that charge admission will not be published in the religion pages, but in the Cabarrus Calendar. Articles with freewill donations are acceptable, however. Return of photos is not guaranteed.

FIRST BAPTIST: At 4 p.m. Sunday First Baptist Church, on the corner of Chestnut and Tournament streets, a special service will be held to honor Mary Allison Pearson.

A life-long resident of Cabarrus County, Pearson is a retired school teacher. She is remembered for her teaching at the former Logan High School. Under the direction of the late Rev. H.H. Hawkins, she was an organist, pianist and organizer of the Cradle Roll Choir at First Baptist.

Pearson

She also served as a Sunday school teacher and in various other church and community capacities. Friends and former students of Mrs. Pearson are urged to attend the service.

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Tension tears at Logan’s spirit

By JIM WRINN
And DAVID PERLMUTT
Staff Writers

CONCORD — Zenobia Nelson saw it coming.

Just last month, she and other members of Concord’s human relations committee were on a bus tour of the predominantly black Logan community.

Police Chief Robert Cansler was a guide.

That house over there, Cansler was saying, is used by drug dealers. The group rode by houses in need of paint. Some with poor plumbing. Some with no plumbing, with leaky roofs.

Nelson, a Logan resident, turned to Tom Ramseur, president of the Concord-Cabarrus Chamber of Commerce.

“The community is a time bomb waiting to go off,” she said. “I’m just afraid that one incident is all it will take to trigger something.”

Sunday, the bomb went off.

The fuse was the death of 24-year-old Angelo Robinson, who will be buried today after a 4 p.m. funeral. He died in police custody after Robinson and a Concord officer fought at a nearby Waffle House early Sunday morning.

Please see Logan/page 4A

Black and white ministers pray for unity and calm/4C

In the neighborhood: Todd Nelson, 9, (left) and his cousin Ryan Murray, 7, play in the Logan community of Concord.

Racial tension tears at Logan’s spirit

The death of Angelo Robinson tapped into long-standing frustration, long-standing pain and long-standing hurt.”

— The Rev. Fred Hedt, Grace Lutheran Church

Concord neighborhood struggles to heal itself

In the neighborhood:

Todd Nelson, 9, (left) and his cousin Ryan Murray, 7, play in the Logan community of Concord.
Concord neighborhood struggles to heal itself

Logan

Grog Stewart (left) and the Rev. Clary Phipps look out over the Logan community from the steps of the First Baptist Church. Says Phipps: "All people want to be treated fairly, and to be talked to respectfully. There are certain officers who don't respect the race, but they completely apparently set it up. When Concord made changes against racism, there was a feeling of security. We said, 'We made progress, then we started backing off.'" And Phipps said the Rev. Bob Wess, a pastor at All Saints' Episcopal Church, said that strides had been made to feel less confrontational.

Searching for answers

Logan生活 Control Officer was removed Monday, had a partial car wash. It was a slow, long and tiring process. In Logan, the community is in a state of transition. Drug dealers moved in. By 1989, some residents slept on their front porches. Police had sprayed Robinson, a black man, with pepper spray. "That only incited more rage."

The Logan neighborhood

Concord Police Department

Concord city

91 total officers

12% black 14 officers

80% white 77 officers

SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau, Concord Police Department

Staff graphic

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Project service

Baptist church members help others hands on

By Serena Haneline
Staff Writer

CONCORD — More than 160 volunteer church members gave up a Saturday to do some hard work.

On April 8 members of the First Baptist Church, Branchview participated in a project called Operation InAsMuch. Among the projects completed included roof replacement, paneling replacement, painting, yard and garden work, window washing, housekeeping, preparing Easter baskets for local institutions and cooking, baking and delivery to law enforcement agencies and fire departments.

Jim Langford, intentional interim pastor of First Baptist, said this ministry is a hands-on ministry led by lay people of the church. He said they want to show their neighbors that Christians have a mandate to serve their fellowmen who are in need of help. Langford said that sometimes the message doesn't get out.

Approximately 675 hours total were spent working in the community. The Cabarrus County Department of Social Services and Cabarrus Meals on Wheels helped the church to identify some of the real and pressing needs of folks in the area.
LOCUST — First Baptist and Carolina Presbyterian churches here will cosponsor a "Gospel Film Festival" Wednesday through Saturday evenings at 9 o'clock and the movies will be shown in the First Baptist Church parking lot.

The series will include devotional films, family and youth films and films concerning eschatological subjects.

The Wednesday night program will feature "Sounds of Love" and "He Restoreth My Soul"; Thursday, "TV and Thee" and "Bobby Richardson"; Friday, "Flipside" and "So Long Joey"; and Saturday, "Final Hour" and "Rapture."

All programs will be open to church groups and the public, and nursery facilities will be provided.

The Rev. Wayne Riddle and the Rev. Tom Cheely are pastors of the host churches.
Concord says its farewells to Robinson

By TONYA JAMESON
Staff Writer

CONCORD — The Logan community came together to say goodbye to one of its sons Saturday afternoon.

More than 500 people, including Concord Mayor Bernie Edwards, mourned Angelo Darcel Robinson — as the community remained under the partial curfew that resulted from his death.

The First Baptist Church, at Tournament and Chesnut streets, could not accommodate the mourners who filled the pews and aisles and spilled into back rooms and a parking lot.

In the front row, relatives held Robinson’s two children, Desmond, 5, and Austin, 3.

“That’s what really hurts,” said Lyndia Russell of Logan’s Concerned Citizens, as she watched a hysterical Austin carried from the church. “This is hard on them.”

Robinson’s death was hard on the entire city.

Robinson, 24, died in Concord police custody early last Sunday morning, sparking events that led to a riot.

Robinson’s friends eulogized him Saturday as a peaceful person who would not have wanted his death to incite violence.

“At one point, he said, ‘I’m going to sue the police,’ ” said Clement Fleming, assistant football coach at Concord High, where Robinson played defensive end in 1987. “If you had any strange mannerisms, he’d let you know.

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Police transcripts leave key questions

By JIM WRINN
Staff Writer

CONCORD — In the early morning hours of last Sunday, Concord police radioed their dispatcher three times they were taking Angelo Robinson to the Cabarrus County Jail.

Then, after radioing they had arrived at the jail, they took Robinson to the Concord Police Department, where almost 11 minutes elapsed before another radio transmission calling for an ambulance.

Transcripts of audiotapes of police transmissions released Saturday, at the request of The Charlotte Observer, don’t make it clear what happened between the time the officers left the jail and when they arrived at the police department, where they called for an ambulance.

Robinson died in police custody after officers used pepper spray to subdue him at a restaurant. A preliminary autopsy said Robinson choked on his own vomit, but a final report is not expected until late next week.

On Saturday, police said they had made a total of 11 arrests, including three Friday, in connection with last Sunday’s rioting that followed Robinson’s death. It caused more than $135,000 in damage and injured 11 people.

Questions remain about the circumstances surrounding Robinson’s death, and the radio tapes shed only some new light on what happened. The State Bureau of Investigation is looking into Robinson’s death. Civil rights activists, including Jesse Jackson in Concord on Saturday, have demanded a U.S. Justice Department investigation.

Concord police wouldn’t dis...

Please see Police/pen 76
Police

Police transcripts shed little light on incident

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The transcripts, prepared by Concord police Officer D.A. Frazer, do provide some details of the 90 minutes during and after the incident.

At 3:27 a.m., Officer Jimmy Maner radioed for assistance at the Waffle House. Authorities say Maner and Robinson, 24, a former Concord High football player, argued near the front of a long line of people wanting to get into the restaurant.

The N.C. Medical Examiner's Office said Robinson's blood-alcohol content at the time was 0.13%. In North Carolina, the legal threshold for drunken driving is 0.08%.

Maner asked for help again at 3:28 and 3:29, saying the "situation is urgent." Someone inside the Waffle House called 911 at almost the same time and told Concord police dispatcher Terry Starnes: "We need the cops. . . . We need the police, four or five cars up at the Waffle House, immediately!"

Starnes: "OK, what you got going on out there?"

Caller: "A couple of your officers in fights with bunches of guys."

Starnes: "All right. How many people's in the fight?"

Caller: "I can't even really tell there's so many inside, it's blocking the view, but I see a big guy about . . . well, we got a bunch of units here."

Outside, four Concord police officers had arrived. Moments later, three more drove up.

Lt. N.C. Cameron radioed for help at 3:33 a.m. and, four minutes later, Sgt. John Hatley radioed, saying: "They're shooting now."

But by 3:40 a.m., Officer Glen Hinson told the dispatcher the situation was no longer urgent. At 3:41, Hinson reported he had a person (Robinson) in custody and was en route to the Cabarrus County Jail.

3:45 a.m.: Hinson tells Officer T.M. Combs that he has the key to the Concord Police Department car No. 62 and that he is en route to the jail.

3:45 a.m.: M.E. Wilson agrees to meet Hinson at the jail.

3:46 a.m.: Hinson arrives.

3:47 a.m.: Hinson advises he is transporting the subject in custody to the Concord Police Department.

3:48 a.m.: Wilson arrives at the nearby police department. Hinson states he is also arriving, just turning onto Market Street. They agree to meet in the basement.

3:54 a.m.: Cabarrus County unit advises two cars of people en route to the Concord Police Department, upset over the fight.

3:55 a.m.: Officer Richard Smith reports another person in custody at the Waffle House and en route to the jail.

3:59 a.m.: Officer Brandon Eggleston requests an ambulance in the basement of the Concord Police Department. Moments later, Combs asks if the ambulance is "for the subject who was Maced."

After a silence, Eggleston "advises emergency traffic."

Minutes later, a Cabarrus County Emergency Medical Services ambulance arrived and took Robinson to Cabarrus Memorial Hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Police transcripts shed little light on incident
100 MEN & BOYS — The 100 Men & Boys program held its kickoff breakfast Saturday morning at First Baptist Church. Above from left are, front row, Kannapolis City Councilman Ken Geathers, George Goodman, who presided over the meeting, publicity chairman David Smoutherson and Amos McClure; back row, Robert Freeman, president; Monroe Washington, third vice president; Ron Leeper, guest speaker; The Rev. C.L. Phelps, vice president, and the Rev. Fred Hedt. At right, Maurice Johnson, 8, was one of the youngsters who enjoyed breakfast and fellowship with community leaders. The purpose of the program is bring 100 or more men and boys of the community together to positively impact the lives of young men and boys.
Pastor aims to keep the peace

By KEN GARFIELD
Staff Writer

CONCORD — Amid stormy cries of racial injustice, the Rev. Clary Phelps delivered a gentle message Sunday morning.

Love your enemy, he told worshippers still tense two weeks after Angelo Robinson’s death in police hands triggered a night of rioting in Concord.

Keep the peace.

Strive for justice.

Put your trust in God.

"The days are evil," Phelps preached at the top of his lungs at First Baptist Church in the predominantly black Logan neighborhood. "We thank you, Jesus, that you were able to calm the storm.

"Now is the time in which we need to be united, with what this community has gone through the past two weeks," he proclaimed over a chorus of hallelujahs rising from the pews. "God needs to be at the forefront of our meetings, the forefront of our discussions. God needs to be at the head of our homes."

From the moment he witnessed the July 11 rioting that resulted in 11 injuries, 19 arrests and $135,000 in property damage, Phelps has preached calm in a city desperate for it.

"Like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. said, 'I was thrust into this position,'" the Winston-Salem native said from his study before Sunday's 2½-hour service. "The preacher's got the gospel on his side."

First Baptist Church members, though, said Phelps and other clergy are responsible for keeping Concord from tearing itself apart.

"A lot of people wanted to know somebody cared, somebody's listening," one member said.

Phelps, 39, said he's simply doing what generations of black preachers before him have done when a civil rights crisis hits town.

"I was thrust into this position," the Rev. Clary Phelps strives for justice and unity amid trouble in Concord. Please see Concord/page 4A
Concord

Logan community pastor preaches calm

Continued from page 1A

ing. The church is always open," said Frances Carter, 39.
"They give peace and ask every­
body to keep peace," added An­
drea Walker, 16.

While the U.S. Justice Depart­
ment investigates whether Robin­
don's civil rights were violated the
ight he died after his arrest out­
side a local restaurant, Phelps
continues pressing the case of
dissatisfied black residents.

He welcomed Jesse Jackson to
town, though he believes Concord
is capable of solving its problems.

"I think sometimes
left alone,
you can work out your differ­
ences," said Phelps, who has led
First Baptist for six years.
He helped organize Saturday's
Day of Healing service.
He fields calls from an average
of six reporters a day, including
one from a New York radio station.
And he is trying to convince
Concord's white leaders the recent
riot was spawned by discontent
that goes beyond Robinson's
death.
"That was a spark," said Phelps,
who believes many blacks in Con­
cord and beyond can't speak out
as loudly as they want because
they work for whites. "There are
people in the community who are
hurt physically, socially, eco­
nomically, most of all spiritually."

Phelps carries a list of Logan
requests he is pushing in the wake of
Robinson's death — more street
lights, traffic signals, police foot
patrols, a branch library, commu­
nity swimming pool and jobs
posted in the black part of town.

He is also counting on the
Justice Department getting to the
bottom of Robinson's death,
which occurred after the 24-year­
old was sprayed with pepper gas
by Concord officers outside a
Waffle House.
"That'll be the real key," he said.
Until the case is closed, Phelps
will continue climbing the pulpit of
his 200-member church, answer­
ing the call he hears now more
than ever:
"To be a pastor at a time of
crisis," he said. "Not to try to be
any more. To be concerned, to
care, to be visible, to listen to their
problems, their grief. Just be a
pastor."

Dedicated to his community and congregation:
The Rev. Clary Phelps (right) hugs Celia Brown
as other churchgoers wait to greet him Sunday
at First Baptist Church in Concord. He has
become one of Concord's leading advocates for
the black community.

Clary Phelps

• Job: Pastor of First Baptist
Church in Concord.
• Age: 39.
• Background: Raised in
Winston-Salem by a strict
United Methodist father and
Baptist mother, he was in the
first integrated class at East
Forsyth High in 1970. Played
defensive end at Winston-
Salem State University, grad­
uated in 1976 with a bachelor
of arts in sociology. Ordained
in 1978, he led a Henderson­
ville church before coming to
Concord in 1987.
• Family: Wife Thresa is a
nurse at the veterans' hospi­
 tal in Salisbury. Three daugh­
ters — Liz, 18, Terea, 16,
and Maria, 14.
• Quote: "Right now in Con­
cord, although we've had the
meetings, asked for calm,
called for peace, there's still
a lot of fire that can erupt at
any time. ... If we are the
children of God, we ought to
act like our father. We can
only do that by loving one an­
other."

— Ken Garfield
It was 30 years ago this March that Doris Caton decided to go into a business all her own and opened a dress shop in an extra room at her Spring Street home.

The 18x30-foot room was added onto the frame house by Caton’s husband, Bailey, with the help of some friends.

And Caton was in business. She named her store ‘The Lynne Shop’ after her then-toddler daughter, but, she laughs, “Everybody called it Dorie Mae’s anyway.”

The shop stayed in the house only five years. That room is now a kitchen and den.

But the friendliness and consideration that comes from allowing customers into a part of your home has followed Caton and become a traditional part of her business as she moved the business to Union Street in downtown Concord.

When she first started out, Caton says she loved clothes and sewed quite a bit, making almost all of her family’s clothing.

“But I didn’t know anything about the retail business.”

With the advice of a few good friends, Caton soon learned.

She remembers the first time she went to the buyers’ market:

“‘At that time there wasn’t a market like we have now. There were smaller shows in the Radio Center on South Boulevard (in Charlotte) or at the Coliseum. They’ve evolved into the Carolina Market.

“It was fascinating. Women came draped in their furs with plumed hats and jewels like they were going to Sunday meeting.

“And there I was in my homemade suit. But I was there to work and I still go there to work. ‘I love it. I always have, but I’m my hardest customer to please. ‘I buy what I think would sell the best and try to have a little something that will please everyone. I know my customers,” she says. And they know her.

Over the years Caton has seen girls grow up to be married, have children and bring them in for clothes as well.

“You’ve seen them grow up and feel like you’ve really been a part of their lives.

“Over the years a lot of people have trusted me and I’ve trusted a lot of people,” she says. And she wouldn’t change a minute of it. Her only regret is that with the business end of the shop demanding her attention, she doesn’t get out on the floor helping customers as often as she’d like.

“That’s always been the best part,” she says.

I’m proud...
... of being a part of the Concord business community because I love serving people.”
A First Baptist revival

Concord's First Baptist Church, on the corner of Tournament and Chestnut streets, will have its 108th anniversary Sunday and revival Monday through Friday.

The Rev. Marvin Tyrone Clowney and his congregation from the Macedonia Baptist Church, Taylorsville, will be the special guests at the 4 p.m. anniversary service. Clowney is a former associate and interim pastor at First Baptist.

A graduate of A.L. Brown High School, he received his bachelors of theology degree at the Sugar Creek School of Religion.

Revival services at First Baptist will be 7:30 nightly, featuring the Rev. F.H. Goldsmith of Bethel A Missionary Baptist Church, Brevard.

Before the revival services, seminars relative to the adoption of black children, money management and drug abuse prevention will be 6:30 nightly. "We need your support in our community as we defend ourselves against such evils as drug abuse, teen violence and illiteracy, just to name a few," said host pastor, the Rev. Clary L. Phelps.