Forum to explore cultural diversity

Goal is creating understanding among area people

By Tula Andonaras
STAFF WRITER

Eula Apostolopoulos thinks it's funny when customers come up to her at her restaurant and want to know why her husband speaks with an accent and she doesn't. "They think all Greeks should have accents," she said. "And they think all Greeks own restaurants. There sure are a lot of misconceptions about different cultures."

Apostolopoulos will join representatives from Asheville's Asian, African-American, Ukrainian, Native American, Indian, Middle Eastern and Jewish communities in a panel discussion on cultural diversity at 6:30 p.m. Feb. 15 at Calvary Baptist Church on Haywood Road in West Asheville. The program is free and open to the public. A taste of ethnic foods will follow the discussion.

"Everyone in Asheville is invited to attend and ask questions of the panel members," said Rev. Buddy Corbin of Calvary Baptist Church. "We're reaching out to bring groups together toward a better understanding."

"We all have our preconceived attitudes that we grew up with," said Rachael Queen, women's missionary director of Calvary Baptist Church. "We need to learn about stereotypical attitudes and get a better understanding of people who live in our community."

"We don't comprehend why different cultures feel or think the way they do," Queen said. "It will be an opportunity to dialogue feelings and attitudes and to foster more positive feelings. We're calling this a day of reconciliation to overcome prejudices we might have."

"The more we can understand about each other, the better it is," Apostolopoulos said. "When people don't understand, they fear."

Corbin said there is no place more fitting to hold such a panel discussion than a church.

"Church is the most segregated hour of the week," he said.
"We will talk about attitudes and prejudices. We want this to be a community endeavor to help each of us become more aware of our neighbor."
The Rev. Aubrey D. Folk is the new pastor of Calvary Baptist Church at 331 Haywood Road. Folk, a native of South Carolina, comes to the Asheville church after 11 years as pastor of Penelope Baptist Church in Hickory. "I will be seeking to lead the church in reaching out to the whole person — body, soul, mind and spirit — the whole community and the whole world with the message of wholeness of Jesus Christ," he said. Folk is a graduate of the University of South Carolina at Columbia and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest.
Area Baptists try to bridge racial barriers

Multi-ethnic Christian Fellowship meets at YMI

By Paul Johnson
STAFF WRITER

As voices ring the hymn “What A Fellowship” through a high-ceiling auditorium at the YMI Cultural Center in Asheville, 40 Christians clap fervently as they celebrate their faith in song.

What makes the scene unusual – but even more uplifting – is that the men and women are evenly divided between black and white.

The racial make-up of the crowd isn’t by chance. For more than a year ministers and lay people at predominantly black and white Baptist churches in the Asheville area have been getting together regularly to break down barriers that are generations old.

“We’re all Christians in Christ. But for some reason down through the centuries, the culture barrier has made it impossible for the churches to come together,” said Bill Whitfield, a member of Greater New Zion Baptist.

The Multi-ethnic Christian Fellowship has brought together members of about 25 Baptist congregations. Meetings are rotated monthly at churches or other sites around the Asheville area.

The interracial group not only includes blacks and whites but people of Korean and Hispanic backgrounds, said the Rev. Buddy Corbin, pastor of Calvary Baptist.

Among the activities the interracial group is planning are building homes for low-income people, bringing together black and white young people from different churches and organizing revivals, Corbin said.

“We are doing things we should have been doing 15 to 20 years ago,” said the Rev. L.C. Ray, pastor of Greater New Zion Baptist and director of the YMI Cultural Center.

The interracial group can create “a legacy for the oncoming generations,” said Whitfield, a product service specialist for the construction equipment manufacturer VME Americas.

The tie to religion touches a chord within spiritual...
Baptist Women Slate

Mission Action Workshop

Paula Jean Settle, minister of education at Calvary Baptist Church in Asheville, will conduct a Mission Action Workshop Tuesday from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Baptist Center on Paragon Parkway, Clyde.

The workshop is sponsored by the Haywood Baptist Associational Women’s Missionary Union Council.

In addition to being an approved worker of the N.C. State Women’s Missionary Union, Ms. Settle has worked with Southern Baptists in Iowa, Kentucky, and Missouri, and served as a summer missionary for the Home Mission Board in Colorado in 1978.

At the workshop here she will emphasize ways of ministering through mission action.

All Women’s Missionary Union members and leaders are invited to share in the training session.

PAULA JEAN SETTLE
R. DALE FISHER has joined Calvary Baptist Church, 531 Haywood Road, as minister of religious education. An Asheville native, he has served as associated pastor of Oakley Baptist Church and Victory Baptist Church in Asheville. Fisher is a graduate of the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Fort Worth, Texas. He resides at 48 Edwin Place, Asheville.
Knight to be honored by church

By Henry Robinson
RELIGION EDITOR

For 21 years, the Rev. John Knight preached the gospel and cared for the flock at Calvary Baptist Church on Haywood Road before retiring in 1982. Knight, who came from the murky swamps of the Okefenokee along the bottom end of Georgia, took his preaching duties seriously.

He wasn't flashy - just steady and he was always reaching out helping others despite a burdensome time in his own life when he was faced with the fear of losing his eyesight.

But Knight never faltered from his duties as pastor of Calvary, relying on prayer to bring him out of the pits of darkness.

On Sunday, at the 11 a.m. worship service, Knight and wife, Elizabeth, will be honored by the congregation of Calvary Baptist. Knight will named "Pastor Emeritus." Also, the chapel in the lower level of the church will bear the name "John Knight Chapel."

During Knight's active years at Calvary, he served on the board of trustees at Mars Hill College and Wingate Junior College and as president of the North Carolina Baptist Pastors' Conference and as moderator of the Buncombe Baptist Association. He was also a pioneer in race relations in Asheville and served on the Mayor's Council for Human Relations in Asheville.

The Rev. Buddy Corbin, pastor of Calvary, described Knight as a "gentleman and a prince of a preacher."

"I first sighted John Knight many years ago, while attending a "pastors' conference of the Buncombe Baptist Association," Corbin said. "I recalled two things: his sense of humor - which was always timely and his white hair. It took me some time to be able to distinguish between him and John Hicks, (who was serving as director of missions for the Buncombe Baptist Association).

"Mr. Knight was one of those good souls who took upstart preachers into his circle of friendship. Although I was a youth minister at Beverly Hills Baptist Church and behaved much younger than my years, he always extended a hardy handshake. My first impressions have proven to be accurate. John is a gentleman and a prince of a preacher," Corbin said.
By running for office, the Rev. Buddy Corbin says he wants to bring divisive Baptists together.

**By Dale Neal**

**STAFF WRITER**

**ASHEVILLE** - The Rev. Buddy Corbin believes strongly in the Gospel message of Christ crucified and risen that's been preached for generations by Southern Baptists.

But he also believes in the conscience of believers andballots at having employees hired by the denomination's schools and agencies sign a list of beliefs approved by the Southern Baptist Convention.

"We don't want what's happening on the national level coming to the state level. That's why I'm running," said Corbin, the pastor of Calvary Baptist Church and a candidate for the first vice presidency next week at the 90th annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention in Winston-Salem.

"The state convention is about the difference between conservatives and moderates in our appreciation of the Gospel," said Corbin. "Can we cooperate without slapping a theological template on us all?"

Sitting in the study of his West Asheville church, Corbin explains how Baptists differ from other denominations in their loose organization and often bitter disputes over theology.

"Individual churches are autonomous with their own constitutions and owning their own properties. Baptists send voluntary, rather than required, contributions to finance the Southern Baptist Convention."

"We're not connectional, we're associationist," said Corbin. "But now the Southern Baptist Convention is making the claim that we're a franchise. We're struggling over how to cooperate that allows for the autonomy of the local church and the competency of the individual believer."

Corbin is a self-proclaimed moderate in a denomination that's become increasingly conservative on the national level for the last 20 years.

Conservatives and moderates have disagreed bitterly over whether to read the Bible literally and interpret Scriptures more broadly.

In recent years, Southern Baptists have historically shunned churches that submit to their husband’s religious preferences. But this summer, Southern Baptists have voted to ban women from the more than 40,000 Baptist churches in the United States.

"We don't want what's happening on the national level coming to the state level. That's why I'm running," Corbin said.

VOTE HAPPENS TUESDAY

The 170th annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention will be held Monday and Tuesday at the Lawrence Joel Memorial Coliseum in Winston-Salem. Messengers, or church delegates, will vote Tuesday on new officers. Candidates include the Rev. Buddy Corbin of Asheville's Calvary Baptist Church running for first vice president, and the Rev. Max Holland, pastor of Bear Creek Baptist Church in Bakersville, running for second vice president.

"We're not connectional, we're associationist," said Corbin, who was raised in Merrimon Avenue Baptist and First Baptist churches in Asheville.

"This document stands between us. It says, 'You must believe as I believe.' Baptists have always rebell ed against such rules."

Corbin worries that Southern Baptists may become more like the conformist Puritans of Massachusetts rather than hewing to their Baptist heritage of independence championed by Roger Williams of Rhode Island.

Many conservative churches have severed ties with Southern Baptist Convention, opting for association with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. In Texas, the moderate-controlled state convention trimmed some $5 million from its contribution to out-of-state seminaries and Southern Baptist Convention headquarters.

But in North Carolina, Corbin wants moderates to work with conservatives to keep Baptist schools and agencies from being cut off financial aid.

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Sacred Music Workshop Planned At Calvary Baptist

Choral Celebration '85, a sacred music workshop, sponsored by Jenson Publications and Purifoy Publishing, will be held July 13 at Calvary Baptist Church on Haywood Road.

The workshop will feature composers John Purifoy and Mary McDonald and James Kimmel, vice president of choral marketing with Jenson Publications, and Don Welborn, minister of music at Calvary Baptist.

The workshop will include the introduction of new sacred choral literature to Asheville area church choir directors, said Bill Altice, vice president of sales for Jenson.

Altice said Christmas music will be heavily emphasized at the workshop, but there will be plenty of general material presented as well. Choir directors will have an opportunity to sing through the latest music released by Jenson and Purifoy, he said.

Registration will be at 8:30 a.m. and the first session will begin at 9 a.m. The registration fee, which includes lunch and music packet containing more than 50 anthems, $15.

Additional information may be obtained by contacting Jenson Pub-
Christian music for a younger crowd

By Dale Neal
STAFF WRITER

WEST ASHEVILLE — Kevin Kirstein grew up believing that rock 'n' roll and church didn't mix. Kirstein learned to play guitar from a Baptist youth minister, but he liked playing decidedly secular sounds of The Allman Brothers, Marshall Tucker and Lynyrd Skynyrd.

Now a deacon at Calvary Baptist Church, Kirstein's still playing the same bluesy sounds, but the message has a Christian message. And he's playing those sounds at Calvary Baptist Church, pastored by the Rev. Buddy Corbin, the former youth minister who first taught guitar to Kirstein.

Kirstein, along with Todd Humphrey and Matt and Tiffany Corbin, the pastor's son and daughter-in-law, make up Covered, Calvary's own acoustic Christian band.

They play in a monthly coffeehouse series, Come Just As You Are, a Saturday outreach ministry in Calvary's new fellowship hall.

"Our push is to create an alternative evening for people who want some Christian fellowship and music, rather than just cruising Patton Avenue," said Kirstein. "It's not about gaining new members. We just want to have a friendly fellowship."

So in February, Calvary sent out fliers to neighboring churches in West Asheville announcing the Saturday event, with snacks, juice and coffee.

Band members were pleasantly surprised to see a crowd of about 100 when they took the stage, said Kirstein. "There's no formal sermon or message, but anyone is invited to speak at the open mike in between numbers by the band."

The group plans an acoustic set this Saturday, much like the "MTV Unplugged" series, with the acoustic instruments fed through a sound system manned by Matt Johnston.

As individual musicians, they had been playing praise music during Calvary's Sunday morning worship services, but as a band they wanted to branch out into the more contemporary sounds heard in Christian bands such as Third Day, of Atlanta, Siler's Bald and singer Nicole Nordeman.

Kirstein said he started listening intentionally to contemporary Christian music about four or five years ago, and was surprised by what he heard. "It's good music to play."

"I would love to see more young couples, youth come to the church," through the series, said lead singer Tiffany Corbin. "There's so much more out there than people realize in Christian music."

Her favorite song that Covered plays is "Please Come" by Nordeman. "That's what we closed with last time," she said. "That's what Jesus was saying to everyone. "That's how all of us feel body, come, doesn't matter where you're coming from. That's how all of us feel about the band."

Contact Neal at 232-5870 or DNeal@CITIZEN-TIMES.com
Church will begin Sunday with Dr. Harold Tallant of Louisville, Ky., evangelist.

A children's service will be held each day through May 28 at 6:45 p.m. with the revival service planned for 7:30 p.m. each day through May 28. The public is invited to attend.

Asheville Citizen
Asheville Times
Asheville Citizen-Times
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Chapel Hill Newspaper
Charlotte News
Charlotte Observer
Concord Tribune
Dunn Record
Durham Herald
Durham Sun
Elizabeth City Advance
Fayetteville Observer
Fayetteville Times
Gastonia Gazette
Goldsboro News-Argus
Greensboro Daily News

MAY 20 1978
Dr. Carreker

New Pastor At Calvary Baptist

Mr. Howard Candler, Chairman of the Board of Deacons of Calvary Baptist Church, Asheville, North Carolina, announces that the church has called Dr. Steven Camp Carreker as its new pastor. Dr. Carreker is presently pastor of the Simpsonville Baptist Church, Simpsonville, Kentucky. Mr. Candler said that Dr. Carreker will be installed and conduct his first service at the eleven o'clock worship service on Sunday, June 27, 1982. The public is invited to worship with the membership.

Dr. Carreker holds a Doctor of Ministry and Master of Divinity from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, a Master's of Education and Counseling Psychology Degree from Wayne State University, and a Bachelor of Art's Degree from Mercer University. He served in active military service from 1971 to 1976, with the rank of Captain. He is currently on the Executive Committee of the Kentucky Baptist Convention, Chairman of the Baptist Association Strategy Planning Committee, and Chairman of the Shelby County Baptist Association Missions Committee.

He is married to the former Sheri King of Atlanta, Georgia, and they have two daughters - Kirstin, seven, and Sophia, three. Mrs. King holds a Master's Degree in Reading from the University of Louisville and is a teacher in the Shelby County School System. She does not plan to teach in the Asheville area.

Mr. Candler expressed appreciation to the Pastoral Search Committee that screened over fifty resumes and traveled into five states to hear potential candidates. Members of the Pastoral Search Committee were Mark Atkinson, Bruce Farlow, Kitty Hyde, Inez Horton, Don Jones, Bill Lovelace, and Jim Truett.

In accepting the call, Dr. Carreker said, "I am eager to join the people at Calvary and ask that the membership join me in the daily habit of prayer for each other, for our church experience, and for our faithful commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ."

Dr. Carreker will succeed the Reverend John R. Knight, who retired March 7, 1982, after twenty-one years of service to the church. Dr. Thomas Sawyer, Professor of Religion at Mars Hill College, is serving as interim pastor.
A joyful noise

Disabled adults get a chance to worship in their special way

By Dale Neal

ASHEVILLE - Down the brick stairs in the basement of Calvary Baptist Church, the members of a special Sunday school class are making a joyful noise. The music begins and they march around the room, with rattles and rhythm sticks, giving each other high fives. They sing their favorite song, "Jesus Loves Me."

Each week, Calvary welcomes adults from a group home. These adults live with severe mental and physical disabilities, but on Sundays, they come with the simple faith of children. "They are God's children, like you and me," explained Charlotte McDowell, Sunday school teacher. "What they lack in ability, they make up in love.

When the music ends, they take their seats, bow their heads, and pray. They listen to McDowell's simple lesson about praying to God. "You have a special girl praying God, knowing that God loves you."

This Sunday at 10 a.m., the class will share their enthusiasm and special talents for the worship team of Calvary Baptist. "If we can get to go up to the big church, we want to explain how we're going to praise God," said Bobby, explaining:

The class was started by Bobby and Dorcas Sunday school teacher and group home resident. "We're going to sing and dance and have fun," explained Dorcas. "Bobby is so excited."

As the class gets underway, they create a sense of unity, of being a part of something special. "We're going to sing and dance," said Bobby, his eyes shining with excitement.

Music director Mary Ruth Dyeck, right, holds Sonny's hand followed by classmates John and Glenise and others marching around the room, singing alongside during Sunday school class at Calvary Baptist Church.

Contact Neat 332-8797 or DCarrington@CITIZEN-TIMES.com
Church gives land for group home

By Judy Ausley
CITIZEN-TIMES CORRESPONDENT

ASHEVILLE — A $450,000 home for developmentally disabled residents in Asheville will be built on land given by Calvary Baptist Church in West Asheville. The Rev. Dr. Buddy Corbin, pastor of the 300-member church located on the corner of Baker Avenue and Haywood Road, said the church donated the half-acre of land directly behind the church for the project earlier this year.

The home will be built and managed by The Baptist Children's Homes Inc. of North Carolina in Thomasville. Money for the project got off the ground when $100,000 from the late Alberta Bolick Trust was given to the church for the project. Corbin said the home will be named the Alberta Bolick Home.

Bolick was the longtime owner of Allison's Flower Shop in downtown Asheville until her death. She donated the money to the church in memory of her daughter, who was developmentally disabled. An additional $350,000 is needed to complete construction of the home. The Baptist Children's Home is currently building five homes in North Carolina to house developmentally disabled residents. Homes will be built in Boone, Sanford and Marshville, as well as Asheville.

"This has been a project that we have planned for several years," said the Rev. C.F. McDowell, executive vice president of special ministries in Thomasville. "These homes will give security and comfort to families with these children and adult children."

Calvary Baptist Church on Haywood Road in West Asheville has donated land at the rear of the church to build a group home for developmentally disabled adults. Looking over the plans is Bobby Moffitt, left, the Rev. Dr. J.V. "Buddy" Corbin, pastor, and Howard Candler.

McDowell said many families who have adult children they have taken care of since birth are in fear of what will happen to their "forever young" children after the parents pass on.

One such family in Buncombe County is the Howard and Mary Candler family in West Asheville, who have a 57-year-old son that would require this special needs program in the event his parents could no longer provide care for him. Candler is a member of the board of trustees of the Baptist Children's Homes of North Carolina.

"My family is so relieved that this is being done and we are very grateful," Candler said. Candler is a member of Calvary Baptist Church and is working with Corbin and McDowell on the local project.

"We are looking forward to becoming part of the Asheville community," McDowell said.

The home will be built to accommodate five or eight residents. About a half dozen staff professionals will be hired to run the Asheville home. Construction of the eight-bedroom 2,000-square-foot home is expected to begin in early fall.

For more information about the future home, contact Corbin at Calvary Baptist Church at 253-7301.

Contact Ausley at judyausley@juno.com.
Walk through church’s history celebrates the passing century

Before heading into a new millennium, the members of Calvary Baptist Church wanted to take a look at their history through most of the 20th century.

Starting Sunday, Calvary will begin a series of events to honor the church’s 90th anniversary. The Rev. Buddy Corbin and other staff members will attend the service, dressed in period clothes dating to the church’s start in 1909.

Each Sunday, the congregation will observe “a moment in history,” leading up to a May 17 homecoming for all former pastors, their families and other members.

Rather than wait for their centennial, Corbin said the congregation wanted to celebrate their history in connection with the millennium.

“Frankly some of our members are in their 80s and 90s, and we wanted to make sure our oldest members were honored,” the pastor said.

On Jan. 31, Calvary’s oldest living member, Ellen Dale, 102, will be the special guest at the worship service. Dale, who remembers Calvary’s first pastor, will be interviewed on stage, Corbin said.

The church grew out of a Sunday School class from the now defunct West End Baptist Church in 1906. Three years later, Calvary Baptist was organized with 68 charter members. The church first met on the corner of Haywood Road and Hanover Street in the old Odd Fellows Hall, which is now the site of the B&B Pharmacy. The congregation was officially organized in 1909 with 68 charter members.

In 1926, the church moved into its current sanctuary on Haywood Road. Its current membership is 1,200 members.

But the church won’t only be looking into the past this year. Calvary has also designated 1999 as its year of the Young Adult. “We wanted to look both ways, to relish the passing century and to celebrate the new generation coming onto the scene.

For more information on Calvary Baptist’s 90th anniversary celebration, call the church at 253-7301.

Disability grants

Churches, synagogues and other places of worship that want to minister to the disabled can apply for grants up to $20,000 under a state program, “From Barriers to Bridges: That All May Worship.”

The grant awards totaling $200,000 are available from the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities.

Suggested projects include developing educational material in Braille or closed captioning, minor renovations for wheelchair access, providing interpreters for the deaf or listening devices for the hearing impaired.

Deadline for grant applications is Jan. 22. For more information or application materials, call the North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities at (919) 850-2833 or (800) 357-6916.
Sometimes the biggest leap of faith involves making a switch

By Sandee Richardson

ASHEVILLE - Asim Rashid's spiritual journey carried him from a small Methodist church in Burke County to a Nation of Islam mosque in Charlotte, and finally to the mainstream Islamic Center of Asheville - the place he now calls his spiritual home.

Rashid is just one of an ever-increasing number of Americans who are making literal leaps of faith. About one adult American in four will change faiths or denominations at least once in their religion in which he or she was raised, according to a Gallup survey.

In 1999, Rashid, then 19, exchanged his Christian upbringing for the black separatist ideology of Elijah Muhammad's Nation of Islam. It was the year that Rashid's older brother returned home from Vietnam, bringing with him the teachings of the Nation of Islam.

Though rashid, 34, says he became a black Muslim because the group's strong sense of discipline and its emphasis on self-reliance and black empowerment resonated with him at that time in his life, there was a lot of racial tension out there, and I had a lot of questions in my mind. We -- as Americans -- are all supposedly born with inalienable rights and liberty. Yet black Americans were treated as second-class citizens," says Rashid, who was born Jake Conley.

He says he moved to Charlotte in the early 1990s to be near the mosque, but soon grew discontent with its emphasis on black superiority.

Rashid's second conversion -- a move to a more mainstream Islam -- began when Elijah Muhammad's son Wallace began leading Black Muslims in that direction after his father's death in 1975.

"That's when I began to really study the Holy Koran," he says. "Island means submission to the will of God, and when you submit to the will of God, you will have peace. There is no room for hate."

There are more spiritual searches now than ever before because people have more exposure to different faiths and feel free to search, says Leon Lee, a sociology professor at UNC-Asheville.

"This kind of religious switching was unthinkable a couple of generations ago, where people stayed with the religion in which they were born."

"But because America has absorbed so many different religious traditions, I think it's only natural that we're more experimental than a lot of other countries."

"We live in a different kind of society now -- a very mobile and diverse society -- and our exposure to different religions is much greater than it's ever been," Lee says.

According to "One Nation Under God," a comprehensive 1993 study of Americans and their religions conducted by two University of New York sociology professors, between 25 percent and 30 percent of American switch denominations or religions at least once in their lifetimes.

The most common reason for such switching is intermarriage with a person of another faith or denomination.

A 1997 Gallup poll showed that intermarriage accounts for roughly 24 percent of all religious conversions.

That reason is followed by a religious experience with God (16 percent), a preference for the stance of another religious group (14 percent) and geographic relocation (11 percent).

The majority of religious changes occur between and among Protestant denominations, however.

"We live in a different kind of society now -- a very mobile and diverse society -- and our exposure to different religions is much greater than it's ever been."

Leon Lee, SOCIOLOGY PROFESSOR

According to a religious study done by sociologists at Catholic University in Washington, D.C., 33 percent of religious switches fall into this category.

For Rashid, he began to think about the topic in a certain light while he was in his early teens.

Rashid was in the 9th grade and studying comparative religion in confirmation class at the synagogue he attended in Tallahassee, Fla.

"When we came to Christianity, he said that Christians believe that Jesus is the Jewish Messiah," Simon says. "That's probably when I was first academically curious. And later, when Christians began to witness to me, I began to think of Jesus."

One weekend when his older sister, Anna, returned home from college to celebrate her 16th birthday, Simon says she asked him how to become a Christian.

"She said she didn't know, but that she'd find out, and in the process, she, too, became a Christian," Simon says.

Conversion was not without its difficulties.

His extended family was not receptive to the idea, and his parents forbade him to tell his grandparents, he says.

"Through a lot of struggle, I knew it was the right choice. I've never really seen this as a departure from my Jewish faith because my Jewish faith led me into the great faith of God, but to me, Islam has changed my my life."

"I've learned to put my religious faith into practice. I want to enjoy things. I want to change the world. And I've come to believe that Islam has put down the plan for God wants me to live."

"Although we may have differences in the way we worship -- Judaism and Christianity and Islam -- all three of these great religions -- all believe in one God. But to me, Islam has changed my life."

"Since age 16, there's been no looking back. There have been times when I think, 'Did I do the right thing or wrong thing?' But then I'll find scripture that confirms my decision," Simon says.

Rashid also sees his conversion as an extension, rather than a rejection, of the faith into which he was born.

"Despite difficulties, converts often satisfied with new faith"
Calvary Baptist Plans Picnic And Bond Sale

A church picnic and bond sale will be held Sunday at Calvary Baptist Church at 521 Haywood Road following the 11 a.m. worship service. Matt Howell will deliver the message.

The picnic will be held in the church dining hall and a $150,000 church bond sale will be held for those attending.

Following the 7 p.m. service, the women of the church will give a reception in honor of the Loyd Kindiger family. Kindiger has accepted the position of minister of religious education at the First Baptist Church in Douglas, Ga.
Religion pulls two groups together

Black, Hispanic worshippers hold service at Calvary Baptist

By Dale Neal
STAFF WRITER

ASHEVILLE — Nothing got lost in the translation between English and Spanish when Black and Hispanic believers said "amen" together Sunday at Calvary Baptist Church.

In a joint service between the Hispanic Mission of Asheville and Greater New Zion Baptist Church, music and faith crossed language and cultural barriers.

"We have one God. There are no frontiers, there is no separation when Christ is our Lord," said the Rev. Sabas Amador, a full-time minister in the Baptist outreach to Asheville's growing Hispanic community, estimated at 5,730 in last year's census.

"This celebration cuts across nationalities and denominations, but one thing we know we have in common. We are children of God," said the Rev. L.C. Ray of Greater New Zion, who preached the evening sermon with translation by the Rev. Russell Hilliard of the Hispanic Mission.

Carmen Ayala of Ecuador shook a tambourine in time to the Spanish praise music, and clapped her hands as well to the soulful gospel tunes sung in English by Robbie Williams of Hill Street Baptist.

"I don't look Black on the outside, but my heart is just the same. We have to be together if we are going to be Christians," said Ayala, who regularly attends the Hispanic Mission's services. Annie Mae Martin of Greater New Zion was deeply moved by the bilingual service. She made her way to the pulpit to remind the congregation about the miracle of Pentecost described in scripture when Christ's followers began speaking in different languages. "I feel that way tonight. It was just beautiful."

"For a number of years we have been concerned about the lack of contact between African Americans and Hispanics," Hilliard said. The joint service grew out of contacts made in the minority HIV/AIDS outreach, as Blacks and Hispanics combat the spread of disease in their communities.

The Hispanic Mission is not a full-fledged church yet, but draws about 50 baptized believers from as many as 12 Latin nationalities to its services, Hilliard explained. Since 1988, the mission has sent out six Hispanic ministers to serve in several states. Amador is leading efforts to open a new ministry in a local mobile home park where 49 of 50 renters are Hispanic.

Contact Neal at 232-5870 or DNeal@CITIZEN-TIMES.com
Some are black, some are white, but...

All Are Christians

Youth in two Asheville churches tackle race problem

By Henry Robinson
RELIGION EDITOR

The youth in two Asheville churches – one black, one white – will join together in dialogue June 7 about troubling times in Los Angeles and fragmented relationships between the races in America.

The first in a series of discussions between the youth departments of predominantly-black Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist Church and mostly-white Calvary Baptist Church will be held at Calvary Baptist.

There's nothing historic about the two congregations meeting together. It started more than 20 years ago when the Rev. John Knight, former pastor of Calvary Baptist, and the late Rev. John White, who pastored Mt. Zion Missionary Baptist, exchanged pulpits annually.

But the June 7 gathering will be more than a once-a-year pulpit exchange. It is an attempt to plant the right seeds and, with the proper cultivation, reap a bountiful harvest of love and understanding that will last a lifetime.

"We are asking our young people to help us access interracial relationships," said the Rev. Buddy Corbin, pastor of Calvary Baptist. "We want to see where we are with an emphasis on truthfully understanding of where we are in the high schools."

"We want to deal with the images our young people picked up from the Los Angeles situation," Corbin said.

Corbin and the Rev. John Grant, pastor of Mt. Missionary Baptist Zion, will serve as coordinators of the discussions. Grant and Corbin have known each other since the time they pastored churches in Cleveland County.

The youth will be placed in an inner circle during the session at Calvary Baptist. The adult leadership from both churches will sit in an outer circle. But the young people will do most of the talking. Corbin will be on one side of the circle with Grant on the other side.

The next session will be held at Mt. Zion. "At this meeting will talk about developing a strategy of where we are going from here," Corbin said.

Corbin said the idea of race relations sessions came to him while he was attending a Cooperative Baptist Fellowship conference in Fort Worth, Texas a few weeks ago during the time of the riot in Los Angeles.

"I was interviewed by the local television station and they were asking me what I thought about the situation in Los Angeles. And I didn't have an answer. I was profoundly ignorant – I knew nothing of what was going on in Los Angeles. It worried me to the point that the first thing I did when I returned to Asheville was that I wrote a letter to John Grant and said let's talk."

The culminating service will be a pulpit exchange between Grant and Corbin and the choirs of both churches.
Homecoming Is Scheduled

Calvary Baptist Church will observe homecoming Sunday with a number of special events scheduled, according to the Rev. John H. Knight, pastor.

Bible study will be held from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., morning worship will be held from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The evening worship service at 8 p.m. will be a candlelight observance of the Lord’s Supper.

Dinner will be served on the grounds at 1 p.m. and afternoon activities will include a slide presentation, puppet show and an historical display in the church library. All former members are invited to attend, Knight said.

The church is located at 531 Haywood Road in West Asheville.

Asheville Citizen
Asheville Times
Asheville: Citizen-Times
Burlington: Times-News
Chapel Hill Newspaper
Charlotte News
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Fayetteville Observer
Fayetteville Times
Gastonia Gazette
Goldsboro: News-Argus
Greensboro Daily News

SEP 30 1977
Church-sponsored day care ‘God-sent’

By Henry Robinson
RELIGION EDITOR

Two-year-old Brooke Adams is the daughter of working parents. Since the time she was 6 weeks old, Brooke has been enrolled in the Child Development Center of Calvary Baptist Church on Haywood Road.

Her parents, Joe and Pat Adams waited late in marriage to have their first child and leaving Brooke in the care of others was no easy decision.

"It was probably one of the hardest things I ever did," said Pat Adams. "I didn't want to leave her, I wanted to stay with her. It was awful - but I had to work."

Pat Adams is employed as an office manager and her husband works in maintenance and as in most families, it takes both of their paychecks to make ends meet.

The Adams couple opted for the Calvary Baptist program because they had observed the steady progress of a friend's child enrolled there.

"I watched her grow until she was about 4 years old. I used to hear her sing songs about Jesus and she knew who Jesus was and that's what I wanted for our child, to have love and care that was spiritually based," Pat Adams said.

She said the curriculum is very good at Calvary. "My child is 2 years old and can count to 20. She knows all of her ABC’s, all of the colors and knows her full name," Pat Adams said.

Shirley Mathis, a single parent with two children, sees church-sponsored day care ministry at Calvary Baptist as "God-sent."

"It is such a great place and I'm certainly glad I started out with Calvary."

"Parents should be very careful about who they choose for day care. I feel that the church-sponsored day care is a safe environment for my children."

Although there are a number of highly skilled church-sponsored day care programs in the Asheville area, the Rev. Buddy Corbin, pastor of Calvary Baptist Church, sees the day care ministry as an "endangered ministry" because of the cost involved.

"A quality day care program requires an enormous outlay of money. Churches who are struggling with capital needs are having to give up some of those capital improvements in order to do this kind (day care) of ministry."

"And due to the requirements that government places on day care, which I consider to be a legitimate need for safety purpose, the cost involved sometimes is more money than you want to spend," Corbin said.

Meanwhile, the Rev. Michael B. Brown, senior minister at Asheville’s Central United Methodist Church, which also operates a well-structured day care ministry, believes any ministry that the church can provide is not only legitimate but urgent in this age.

"Our pre-school program also enhances church. We have a lot of families who were first introduced to the church through our pre-school. They become familiar with church staff and with the church facility and other ministries," Brown said.

He said a quality day care program requires the very best director you can find.

"A day care program will never exceed the abilities of the director - it will raise or fall on that person’s abilities," Brown said.
Calvary Baptist Church at 531 Haywood Rd., will observe homecoming Sunday, the Rev. John Knight, pastor, has announced.

Bible study has been scheduled for 9:30 until 10:30 a.m., followed by special worship services from 11 a.m. until 12:30 p.m.

Dinner will be served at the church at 1 p.m. and afternoon activities include a tour of the newly-renovated sanctuary, a slide presentation, historical display in the church library and a puppet show.

At 8 p.m., a candlelight ceremony commemorating the Lord's Supper will be held.

All present and past members of the church are invited.

Cowee Homecoming

FRANKLIN — Cowee Baptist Church near Franklin will observe its annual homecoming day Sunday. The Rev. C. O. Vance will be the speaker. The public is invited to attend.
R. Dale Fisher, a 1977 graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, has been named minister of religious education at Calvary Baptist Church at 531 Haywood Road, the Rev. John H. Knight, pastor, has announced.

Fisher, a native of Asheville, is the son of Mr. and Mrs. J. Frank Fisher. He is a graduate of Erwin High School and earned a B.S. degree in business administration from Mars Hill College and a master of divinity degree from Southwestern Baptist.

Fisher has also served as deacon and director of outreach for the B.H. Carroll Baptist Church in Fort Worth and as associate pastor of the Oakley Baptist and the Victory Baptist churches in Asheville.
Corbin takes helm at Calvary Baptist

By Henry Robinson
RELIGION EDITOR

The Rev. Jordan "Buddy" Corbin will step into the pulpit of Calvary Baptist Church Sunday morning to begin his new duties as pastor of the west Asheville congregation. But his ministry will take on more than preaching and visiting the sick.

"I suspect my major emphasis is twofold. One is church renewal and the other is community service," Corbin said. "I'm the kind of pastor that leads the church to be a serving church, discovering the felt needs in the community around the church and the community at large with emphasis on finding gifted people in the congregation who are willing to minister in that arena.

"I came to the conclusion years ago that Jesus came to bring a style of living as well as a destination after death in the sense that the church embodies the life of Jesus through its worship and its ministry and we are to act out that life in our world," said Corbin, who is a native of Asheville.

"Coming home was not my major motivation at first, because I'm wise enough to know that home changes over a span of time," he said. "It is a time to renew old friendships and become a part of the fabric of Asheville, which is a beautiful place to serve and a place with many needs.

"Every church I've served has been uniquely a challenge, and each church has its own history," Corbin said. "One of the challenges at Calvary is that it is a church in transition. It is located in an area of Asheville that's changing, and what the church has decided to do, as I understand, is to stay here and to serve; this attracted me to Calvary. It attracted me because the people of Calvary were willing to stay and become a regional church and to serve its community, and I think that's exciting."

Corbin is a graduate of Lee H. Edwards High School (now Asheville High), North Georgia College, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and Drew University.

He is active in Habitat for Humanity and the Baptist Men and has served as an adjunct professor of philosophy and religion at Gardner-Webb College.

Corbin previously was pastor of the 183-member Boiling Springs Baptist Church in Boiling Springs, where he served for five years. Corbin's first pastorate was in Rochester, N.Y. He literally went from door to door invited people to church, and the congregation grew from 10 members to 90 members.

He then was pastor of First Baptist Church in Drexel, where he stayed for seven years before coming to Boiling Springs.

During his involvement in the Habitat for Humanity efforts in Boiling Springs, Corbin served as fundraising committee chairman. The Habitat was the place I did something for myself," he said. "It gave me personal satisfaction. I like to see people feel good about themselves. Those people were in self-destructing conditions. I had a good time seeing their faces light up when they were given the key to their new home."

Corbin and his wife, the former Frances Brabham, are the parents of three sons, Matthew, Jonathan and James.
Unlikely pairing could do wonders for environment

Project from page A1

dition, there is an ethic that calls for the care of God’s creation,” said the Rev. Lyle Harper, pastor of Bright Hope Lutheran Church in Madison County, in a recent statement. “The Sabbath Project will be an important way that people of faith can explore our responsibilities to be good stewards in the communities.”

The group sent a letter to Gov. Jim Hunt last month signed by some 30 area pastors. Theletter asked Hunt to help improve the region’s air quality, a pressing issue in WNC.

“Our asking today for stronger action to be taken to address the chronic air pollution problems affecting the mountains,” the letter states. “There is now overwhelming evidence that deteriorating air quality is harming public health and the health of creation.”

“We in the faith community have ignored this growing problem for too long,” the letter continues. “However, we want you to know that both clergy and lay people from our various religious traditions are becoming more vocal about these problems affecting our mountain ecosystems, more informed about seeking individual and community action to help address these problems, and more certain that our faith and our belief in God’s sustaining work in creation calls us to speak a word for nature.”

The project is generally directed more at Christians than other religious groups. That’s because the Christian church has a deeper history of alienation from environmentalists than do other religious group, says Brian Cole, a licensed lay preacher in the Episcopal Church and leader with the Sabbath Project.

In the late 1990s, an article was written that basically accused the church of being responsible for the state of the environment.

“There was a real distance between churches and the environmental community,” Cole said. “Churches often felt really not well

come as well, so there was a lot of the distance. You basically had both communities beating each other up.”

There was not the same sort of dissonance with other world religious, Cole said. For that reason, the Sabbath Project’s leaders are now reaching out to Christian communities.

The environmental movement itself began in the mid-19th century, almost hand-in-hand with the beginning of the Industrial Boom. According to summaries in the federal Library of Congress, it started as an effort to encourage people not to waste, and to conserve resources, such as coal and timber, for future generations.

In 1864, George Perkins Marsh published “Man and Nature.” In the book, he called attention to the destructive impact people had on land in America, especially through deforestation. This led to what some call the first environmental movement.

Pincott, in 1910’s "The Fight for Conservation," "...recognizes fully the right of the present generation to use what it needs and all it needs of the natural resources now available, but it recognizes equally our obligation so to use what we need that our descendants shall not be deprived of what they need.”

Pincott later in the same paper referred to conservation as the “application of Christianity to the commonwealth.”

He was one of many of the nation’s first environmentalists to link moral character to an inherent sense that nature and the environment should be preserved over carelessly.

John Muir, the western writer and Sierra Club founder who died in 1914, often linked the preservation of nature with the spiritual advancement of people.

And Cornell University horticulture professor L.H. Bailey wrote in “The Holy Earth” in 1915 that “If God created the earth, so the earth is holy; man is his steward and must deal with it devotedly and with care that we do not despise it, and mindful of our relations with all beings that live on it.”

By 1969, the Sierra Club was booming, the word “ecology” had been coined, the Forest Reserve Act had been passed, the Audubon Society had been founded, the Appalachian Mountain Club had been founded, and Yosemite and Yellowstone had been founded, set aside and given federal protection.

In 1962, “Silent Spring” was published, a book that chronicled how people were poisoning their environment with widespread use of harsh pesticides. Within a decade, many had been banned, including DDT.

Still, the environmental movement was regarded with some suspicion by mainstream America.

It was not until years later, after the National Environmental Policy Act was created and the Environmental Protection Agency was created, and the National Environmental Policy Act passed, as well as the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts, that the public really began to pay attention.

Several major environmental disasters helped galvanize the environmental movement. The Exxon Valdez oil spill off the coast of Alaska brought images of oil-coated wildlife in the throes of death to living rooms across America.

Nowadays, most will say clean air and water are mainstream values.

Still, it’s hard to find the connections between religion and environmentalism. An eye-gazing four-hour search of the World Wide Web turned up only a handful of Internet sites dedicated to environmental stewardship through religion.

Among them are the Evangelical Environmental Network near Philadelphia, which boasts a nationwide membership of 5,000; the A Rocha Trust in Portugal, the Christian Environmental Association whose mission is “serving the earth, serving the poor;” the American Scientific Affiliation, which deals generally with scientific issues and people of faith; and the Christian Environmental Stewardship Center at nearby Montreal College.

“It will be an interesting challenge for the church to be relevant, because we are going to want environmentalism to be a part of that,” said Tracy Davis at 452-1467 or e-mail ttdavis@citizen-times.com

The Sabbath Project creates unique earth movement

“The earth is the Lord’s, and the fullness thereof, the world, and they that dwell therein.” Psalm 24:1.

By Tracy Davis

Black Mountain - To many, it might seem an unlikely pairing.

But to those involved, it’s as natural as the earth itself.

The Sabbath Project, a new local movement sponsored by the Western North Carolina Alliance, is part of a national effort to reconnect religion to the environment.

“It’s an attempt to involve congregations in stewardship.

INTERESTED? Call the WNC Alliance, 258-8737, for information about the Sabbath Project, or visit http://cocs.montreal.edu

Listening and learning about it.”

Corbin cites Psalm 24:1. “As I look at that, I recognize we have an obligation to protect what’s given to us,” he said. “There is a theological basis for environmental stewardship.”

It’s not the first time people of faith have become involved in environmental issues, but those involved say

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ASHVILLE CITIZEN-TIMES

Unlikely pairing could do wonders for environment

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Asheville Citizen-Times
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Church makes unusual donation

Land, money to help build group home

By Rebekkah Melchor Logan

WEST ASHEVILLE — Calvary Baptist Church on Sunday donated $100,000 and half an acre of land to Baptist Children’s Home of North Carolina for the construction of a group home for developmentally disabled adults.

It’s the first time in the 118-year history of Baptist Children’s Home of North Carolina for the construction of a group home for developmentally disabled adults.

The Rev. C.F. McDowell, the organization’s executive vice president of special ministries, received the unprecedented bequest and addressed Pastor Buddy Corbin and his congregation Sunday.

“Our plan is to construct one group home for six adults in order to provide a nice place the residents can call home,” McDowell said. “Also, our goal is to minister to those residents as well as their families.”

McDowell, headquartered in Thomasville, will oversee construction and work with the Winston-Salem-based director of developmental disabilities ministries, Jane McMillian, who will oversee operation of the home.

The project was made possible by the late Alverta Bolick, a longtime member of Calvary Baptist, according to church member Howard Candler.

“Bolick left a trust fund for the church after her daughter, Peggy, who was developmentally disabled, preceded her in death. She supported the church both financially and with her regular attendance,” Candler said. “Calvary now has the chance to honor Bolick for her faithfulness.”

During his 50 years of church membership, Candler has had many roles, including chairman of the deacons. He also is a trustee of the Baptist Children’s Homes of North Carolina and a member of the Baptist State Convention committee looking into prospects for constructing group homes for disabled persons.

“We have Bryhill in Waynesville, Maternity in Asheville and the main unit in Thomasville — seven different homes for children throughout the state. But this is the first project of its kind in Buncombe,” he said.

Calvary member Herbert Hyde said, “Alverta Bolick was a wonderful person. This home that her gift has made possible is not only good for the church, it’s good for the entire community. It’s a special kind of outreach and we need to do more reaching out to people everywhere.”

Contact Logan at 232-6015 or Rlogan@CITIZEN-TIMES.com.
Roberts Is Revival Speaker

The Rev. Roger D. Roberts, pastor of Metropolitan Baptist Church in Wichita, Kan. and son of the Rev. and Mrs. Ray Roberts of Asheville, will conduct revival services April 14-17 at Calvary Baptist Church on Haywood Road. A native of Danville, Va., Roberts received an undergraduate degree at Georgetown Baptist College and a master's and doctorate at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary.

He pastored churches in Indiana and Ohio before moving to Kansas. Roberts will speak at 11 a.m. and 6:30 p.m., April 14 and at noon and 7:30 p.m. on weekdays. Roberts' father is serving as interim pastor of Calvary Baptist.
A new training class for volunteers in the “Contact” ministry will begin Feb. 12 and will continue through May 21 at Calvary Baptist Church, according to Mary Caldwell, Contact executive director.

Contact needs people to go through the 50-hour training session to prepare themselves to serve as telephone workers in the Contact ministry, she said.

The training is excellent, Mrs. Caldwell said, adding, that it provides an opportunity for Christian to grow and enrich themselves in service to Christ.

Contact needs people who care and are willing to make a commitment to reach out and share the love of Christ with the lonely, depressed, grieving; all who are hurting for whatever reason. The Contact ministry is an excellent way to live out our faith in a meaningful way, she added.

Additional information may be obtained by calling 252-7703.
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David Wayne Barton, son of Johnnie and Mary Barton of Blair Street, has been elected minister of youth and outreach for Calvary Baptist Church of Asheville.

Barton, 22, received a B.A. degree in recreation and sociology, with a minor in speech, from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He is also a graduate of Thomasville Senior High School.

The new youth-outreach minister participated in the Youth Corps three summers and has served as youth director of Highland Baptist Church in Hickory, Mount Zion Baptist Church in Cherryville and Mount Zion Baptist Church in Hudson. In the summer of 1978 he was a member of the Apostoloi team, a four-member student ministry reaching new churches and offering assistance in day camps, youth activities, prayer meetings and Sunday worship, with some emphasis on drama and puppetry.

Barton has engaged in volunteer work involving youth groups, nursing homes, pre-release centers for prisoners, Butner federal prison, Orange County social services and the Big Brother program. He has also been active in Baptist Student Union leadership, Intervarsity and the Fellowship of Christian Athletes.

In his work at Calvary, Barton will be working with all ages, from children and youth levels to senior citizens, according to the Rev. John Knight, church pastor.

Barton's election took place Sept. 9 upon recommendation of a special committee designated to select a candidate for the new program. Also among his responsibilities will be leadership of the bus ministry and children's church and the promotion of a church-wide program of outreach.
Baptist Leadership Session Planned

The quarterly leadership meeting of the Buncombe Baptist Association will be held at 2:30 p.m. Sunday at Calvary Baptist Church, 531 Haywood Road.

The Rev. Johnnie Tiller, pastor of Pole Creek Baptist Church in Candler and moderator of the association, will hear recommendation of the Search Committee for a new director of missions for the association. The Rev. Gayle D. Brown, acting director of missions, will be recommended for the position.

The opening session also will highlight a missions challenge to be presented by the Rev. David Coleman, chairman of the associational Missions Development Council. Also, the Rev. Thomas Smith, ACTS consultant with the North Carolina Baptist State Convention, will update the pastors and lay people about the progress of ACTS in the Asheville and Buncombe County area. Following the opening session, simultaneous conferences for all church leaders will be conducted by associational leadership. A reception for the new director of mission will follow in the fellowship hall of the church.
By Susan Gambrell
Citizen-Times Writer

The imposing dark brick building, with its oversized white columns, is a sight taken for granted on Haywood Road. It’s been there so long, people hardly give it another look.

Behind those old red walls at Calvary Baptist Church, local and state history has been made.

The church is celebrating its 80th anniversary with a homecoming this Sunday. It’s not so much the number or years Calvary has survived and grown, but the history of the unusual church which makes it special.

Several firsts have taken place at Calvary. The first Vacation Bible School in Asheville was formed at the church in 1924, as was the first Brotherhood organization in the state in 1934. The church was organized on January 3, 1909 in the old Odd Fellows Hall which stood at the corner of Hanover Street and Pennsylvania Avenue.

On the first Sunday in July, 1909, services were conducted in an unfurnished sanctuary. During the following years, the church and Sunday School grew rapidly. In 1916 the lot of its present location was purchased. Because of World War I, work didn’t begin on the new building until December 1921.

It was first used on May 13, 1923. Each Sunday during the building program, a special collection was taken in an old iron pot. Money was raised through pledges, and later through the sale of bonds. The memorial windows in the auditorium and the large outside columns were donated by members and their families.

Sunday’s homecoming will give members and former members an opportunity to celebrate the 80 years of Calvary Baptist Church.

This church has a well-rounded, multiple ministry, with a very strong worship program, love ministry, a very, very strong music ministry and missions program,” Folk said.

The drama program, which includes puppets and other performances, also makes Calvary special, he said.

One of the biggest programs, however, is the music ministry led by Don Welborn. Each Tuesday evening a group of members goes to different nursing homes in the community and entertains residents with song, jokes and a little preaching.

Folk says the most important aspect of his ministry is “caring for the flock.” He makes as many as nine personal visits each day to church members and their families. As a relatively new pastor of the church, he is proud of its rich history.

Organized on January 3, 1909 in the old Odd Fellows Hall which stood on the corner of Hanover Street and Haywood Road, the church began with 68 members. Membership now exceeds 1,000.

The first church building was constructed on the west side of Hanover Street in the block between Haywood Road and Pennsylvania Avenue.
Calvary Baptist Pastor To End 41-Year Career In Ministry

John N. Knight will bring down the curtain on 41 years in the ministry Sunday with a sermon entitled “What Makes A Church Great” and the sermon could be a recap of his own ministry, especially the last 21 years at Calvary Baptist Church in West Asheville.

Knight could talk about a burdensome time in his life, and when faced with the fear of losing his eyesight, he almost resigned from the ministry.

But Knight said it was prayer that brought him out of the pits of darkness and once again into the brilliance of light — and that renewed his faith in God.

“I kept it to myself for a long while,” Knight said, “and when I revealed it to the congregation — they were just marvelous. I tell you, church folks are mighty fine folks,” the Baptist preacher said.

Knight came from the murky swamps of the Okefenokee in the bottom end of Georgia and went to school in the shadows of the Blue Ridge Mountains at Mars Hill College where he made the decision to enter the ministry.

In 1936, at the age of 19, he preached his first sermon in a small Baptist church in Cowee Mountain community near Sylva and for the next seven years, Knight was a much sought-after speaker at youth revivals in the mountains.

Knight graduated from Wake Forest College in 1939 and entered Southern Baptist Seminary for pastoral training. While a senior at the seminary, he was called to pastor Corinth Baptist Church in Grant County, Ky., where he was ordained.

In 1942, Knight accepted a call to pastor Mebane First Baptist Church in Mebane and he pastored two other churches before accepting the call to Calvary in 1961.

Under Knight’s leadership, the music and religious education departments of the church have been expanded with the addition of ministers of music, education and youth.

“We have an excellent program of religious education and music at Calvary,” Knight said.

Donald N. Wellborn, who has served as minister of music for 13 years at the church, “has one of the best sanctuary choirs in the history of the church,” he said. Wellborn also directs a youth choir and the New Life Singers which is made up of young adults of the church.

Knight has served on the board of trustees at Mars Hill College and Wingate Junior College, as president of the N.C. Baptist Pastors’ Conference and as moderator of the Buncombe Baptist Association. He also served on the Mayor’s Council for Human Relations and is presently on the faculty at Fruitland Baptist Bible Institute in Hendersonville.

On Sunday at 3 p.m., Knight and his wife, Elizabeth, will be honored during a special program at the church. A reception in the fellowship hall will follow.

Knight said his preaching career has been a rewarding experience, adding that “I would certainly go the same route again.”

“In spite of the fact that I haven’t been a great achiever, I have always believed that I was in the will of God. Some of us are not born to be great achievers,” he said.

“I’ve fallen short — I’ve had my ups and downs — but I believe I have followed the mandate of the ministry which is to be a good representative for God. I only wish I could have done more — there’s a lot of needs around us.”

Knight said he plans to remain active even in retirement. “My hope is that the people of Calvary will have enough confidence to use me as a substitute.”

Knight said he will continue to teach at Fruitland “because the challenge facing young men going into the ministry is a strong one and I would like to be helpful to them.”

A pioneer in race relations in Asheville, Knight said, “I think the city and county ought to be commended on how we managed to adjust to integration. This is because of the kind of people we have in the black community and white community.”

Knight and wife will live in the Royal Pines area of Arden.
Churches use modern means to fill the pews

By Barbara Blake

Marketing tools needed to reach today’s masses

By Barbara Blake

RELIGION: MARKETING CHURCHES

Religion: Churches look for new ways to reach modern congregations

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the church has to change," Hager said. "And the churches that don't change are dying.

A recent Gallup poll shows that the number of people who attended church regularly in the 1960s — about 50 percent — has changed little in the last 40 years. But there is evidence that fewer of those regular worshippers are attending the churches of their childhood, moving instead toward high-energy nondenominational congregations or mainline churches that offer a wide variety of programs, including youth groups, tutoring and other nonchurch-sponsored meetings, in hopes they might eventually choose to become members of the congregation.

LOCAL CHURCHES

Trinity United Methodist Church in West Asheville has sponsored a number of billboards in Asheville encouraging people to think about their faith and inviting them to attend the church.

THE PROBLEMS

Whatever the state of a church's congregation, there is danger — including financial danger — in losing its eyes to the changing happenings around it.

"The churches who just don't do anything are one generation away from expiration," he said, referring to the need to inspire loyalty among younger members or risk losing them to churches that seem more relevant to their needs. "In the next decade, we will see one generation pass off all its wealth to the next generation. And that generation — if they don't have a connection to the church, guess what will happen?" Corbin said. "The church as we know it will die."

Corbin believes healthy churches are those whose members share the same spiritual values.

But while we seriously consider how we are to be evangelistic, sharing our openness to all people, and especially to people who have never been a part of the Christian church.

"We were in living in this major adult in the church’s life."

Seeking the mindset

The Rev. O.T. Tomlin, pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church in Asheville, said the church leadership is already seeking ways to reach out to its existing congregation as well as non-members. But he noted that Calvary will eventually have ads blaring from a television screen or any other type of in-your-face promotion.

"I don't believe God sent a streamer behind a building to say 'Come to Our Church,'" Corbin said. "It's about human beings talking human beings.

"We're not trying to be the biggest church in the world," he said.
Dr. Brown Evangelist At Calvary

Dr. Vernon Brown, former pastor of the First Baptist Church of Daytona Beach, Fla., will conduct revival services at the Calvary Baptist Church Sunday through May 2. Sunday services will be at 11 a.m. and at 7 p.m. and the weekday services will begin at 7:30 p.m.

A special family service will be held Wednesday night with supper preceding the meeting at 6:30 p.m. Children, the first through sixth grade, will have a spaghetti supper at 6:30 p.m. Saturday.
Children in the Calvary Baptist Child Enrichment Center on Haywood Road learn how to plant pumpkin seeds in Wanda Fenn’s (center), classroom. The children are Casey West, left, Morgan Pinto, Leroy Long and Quentisha Watkins.

Area churches providing much-needed child care

By Henry Robinson

Working parents with preschool children are finding blessings of another kind at Asheville area churches. They are learning that the church can provide a much-needed support system through its child care ministry for single and two-parent families.

Based on data provided by the Buncombe County Child Development Program, 21 of the 92 state-licensed child care centers in Buncombe County for infants to 5-year-olds, are church-supported, and figures almost double for church-sponsored half-day preschool programs.

“Churches in Buncombe county have a long history of being involved in child care,” according to Fran Thigpen, interim director of the Buncombe County Child Development Program. “Churches have a great commitment for children and families,” she said.

And the Rev. Gayle Brown, director of missions of the Buncombe Baptist Association, sees the role of the church in child care as a great opportunity for ministry to the needs of the family.

“With the tremendous stress put on today’s family, there are insurmountable needs to be met. The single parent family as well as the two-parent family are stretched to the limit. Every child needs what I call the four A’s — acceptance, affection, activity and achievement. And the church can provide for these needs through a well-designed and well-staffed child care program.”

One such program is the Grace Covenant Children’s Center at Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church on Merrimon Avenue.

The program, under the leadership of center director Rebecca Bennett, can adequately accommodate 50 pre-school age children. There are seven full-time staff members, five of which have degrees in early childhood education from Asheville-Buncombe Technical Community College. The other two hold state credentials in early childhood education.

Bennett said a five-member board of directors governs the center. Two board members are parents of children involved in the program; three are appointed by the Outreach Committee of the Session at Grace Covenant. The church views having the day care center in the church building as part of its outreach to the community.

“We do not have any kind of religious focus as part of our day-care program,” Bennett said. “We have children of different faiths here and while we stress moral development we do not have any religious components in our program.”

She said some of the advantages of a church-based day-care program are that the space for the program is rent-free, utilities are paid for and the center’s office needs are provided by the church.

“We can use the various office machines and we are able to offer a higher quality of program because we have a greater commitment to professional staffing. And in order to retain the staff, we have to pay them a higher salary and they also have full benefits,” Bennett said.

Meanwhile, on the west side of Asheville, Wanda Fenn, a teacher at Calvary Baptist Children Enrichment Center on Haywood Road, said her life has been revived since joining Calvary Baptist Church and becoming a member of the faculty of the enrichment center.

Fenn, a single parent, was on and off the welfare roll for several years until 1993, when she enrolled in early childhood classes at Asheville-Buncombe Community Technical College.

“It hasn’t been easy,” she said. “I work on two jobs. To help pay for tuition, I work at a video store on the weekend,” Fenn said.

“I’ve been through some rough times, but by the grace of God, I’ve gotten a lot of help and support from the people of Calvary Baptist Church. And the people at the day care center are really supportive too. They have allowed me to continue with my classes at A-B Tech.”
Worshipers attend interracial service

BY AMY B. MCCRAW

EAST FLAT ROCK — A standing room only crowd of black and white worshipers filled Mud Creek Missionary Baptist Church Sunday for an interracial service.

“The only way to solve racism in society is to first solve it in the church,” Dr. Buddy Corbin told the crowd.

Corbin is pastor of Calvary Baptist Church in Asheville and serves as co-chairman of the Multiethnic Carismatic Fellowship. Corbin’s sermon Sunday was called “Dealing With Our Prejudices.”

If people look beyond the color of each other’s skin, they will realize they have more in common with people of different races, he said.

Corbin illustrated that point with a story about two knights in the middle ages who fought one another. When one of the knights died, the other pulled his mask off and realized the knight he killed was his brother.

“Suppose we could rip off this skin, look into our own souls and realize that’s just my brother, that’s just my sister,” he said.

Other parts of the service called “On Common Ground” included singing by the Calvary Baptist Church choir, prayer and an offering.

The congregation of Mud Creek Missionary Baptist Church at the corner of Mine Gap and Roper roads hosted the event.

The Rev. Matthew Tollison of Mud Creek Missionary Baptist Church was the host pastor.

The church is the oldest predominantly black church in Henderson County. It was established in 1860, and many of its charter members were slaves of Charleston plantation owners who visited Flat Rock.
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Calvary - 1909

1909 - Const. 3 Ja.  Admit. to BUNCOMBE.
1931 - Bingham Hgts.  Buncombe