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**Minister Opposes Quoting Bible to Jury**

By Bill McIlwain  
JOURNAL NORTHWEST BUREAU

WILKESBORO — A Wilkes County minister wants to smite down the practice of prosecutors quoting Scripture when asking a jury to impose the death penalty.

Peter Parish, who has been pastor of the Roaring River United Methodist Church since April, told the Wilkes Ministerial Association yesterday that quoting Scripture to a jury is unfair and violates the separation of church and state set forth in the Constitution.

Parish cited a recent first-degree murder trial in Wilkes Superior Court in which Mi-

chael A. Ashburn, the district attorney, quoted the Bible as he sought the death penalty against David James Mash.

The jury sentenced Mash to death.

"He that smiteth a man so that he die shall be surely put to death," Ashburn told the jury, quoting from the Bible.

Parish said that the Old Testament Scripture quoted by Ashburn cannot be cited as justification for the death penalty because it is superseded by the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament.

"The Holy Scriptures in no way support the death penalty," Parish told the Ministerial Association. "If the word of God and deeds of Christ teach us anything, they

teach us forgiveness. However, there are some backwoods theologians who persist in teaching an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth."

Ashburn said yesterday that the Bible is often quoted by prosecutors and defense attorneys in closing statements to juries.

"All I can say is people have different views," he said. He declined to comment further.

Parish said that quoting Scripture could prejudice a jury.

"If they were naive Christians . . . there is the possibility that they might think that to deliver any verdict other than death may put

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## SCRIPTURE

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them in jeopardy with the Almighty," he said.

Parish said that he plans to seek legislation that would prohibit prosecutors from using religious references in arguments to juries deliberating the death penalty.

"I don't want it to end in this particular case," he said. "I want to ensure that any case in the future does not fall into this particular trap."

Ideally, Parish said, all references to religion would be prohibited in the courtroom.

"The only way to avoid abuse is to avoid the use of any religious text completely."

Although the Ministerial Association took no action on Parish's statement, several members commented on it.

The Rev. Robert C. Evans, the pastor of the North Wilkesboro Presbyterian Church, said that Scripture should not be quoted out of context.

"You can prove most anything you want to . . . with one text of Scripture," Evans said. "I do think it's dangerous to be quoting only one particular part of the Bible."

The Rev. William C. McKinney, the president of the Brushy Mountain Baptist Association, said that the Bible does not support the death penalty and should not be used to argue in favor of it.

McKinney said that lawyers and prosecutors should be careful when making reference to the Bible. "I certainly think it needs to be used prudently and correctly."



Casar Baptist Church was organized in December, 1894, and accepted into the Kings Mountain Baptist Association in 1903. They have a present membership of 167. The present house of worship was constructed in 1934. Rev. Jerry Laughter is pastor; Emerson Pruett is Sunday School Director; Donald Melton is Church Training Director; and Mrs. Alethea Downs is W.M.U. Director.



New Bethel Baptist Church was founded in July, 1848, with a charter membership of twenty-five persons. Only seven churches in the Kings Mountain Association are older. New Bethel was the first to host the Association and has always been prominent in support and leadership of the Association. The present building was erected in 1954 during the pastorate of C. O. Greene. Rev. W. C. McKinney, Jr., is the present pastor.

## ASSOCIATION

1972  
KINGS MOUNTAIN BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

### JANUARY

#### MAKE YOUR WILL MONTH

- 3 Pastor's Conference
- 3-7 January Bible Study (Job)
- 5-7 VBS State Clinic, Wingate Co
- 9 Soul-Winning Commitment I
- 18 General Board, Shelby Secor
- 18 Associational Night, S. S.
- 18 WMU Mission Action Works
- 20 Baptist Youth for Christ, Fir
- 21-22 Institute for Home Mission S
- 23 Baptist Men's Day
- 28-30 High School Senior's Retrea

### FEBRUARY

- 5 RA Counselor Leadership Co
- 6 Baptist World Alliance Sund
- 7 Pastor's Conference
- 7-9 State Evangelism Conference
- 13 Race Relations Sunday
- 15 Brotherhood Council
- 20 Home for Aging Day & Offe
- 22 Baptist Men's Meeting—Witr
- 20-24 Regional Real Life Conferen
- 22 Lenoir, College Avenue
- 23 Lincolnton, First
- 25-26 Statewide Missions Confere
- 28-29 Regional Choir Festivals
- 28 Charlotte, Calvary
- 29 Gastonia, Unity

### MARCH

- 24 Religious Education Conf.,
- 3-4 Regional Choir Festivals
- 3 Charlotte, St. Johns
- 4 Hickory First
- 3-4 Day Camp Workshop, Cara
- 5-12 Week of Prayer, Home Miss
- 6 Pastor's Conference
- 12-19 Youth Week
- 14 Church Training Council
- 14-16 WMU Annual Session, Wins
- 18 Associational Youth Night
- 23-24 C. T. Adult Leadership Wo
- 24-25 Baptist Men's & Boys' Con
- Memorial

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*New Bethel Baptist Church  
Pictorial History, 1848-1973  
125th Anniversary (Kings mtn. B/H)*

tire budget going to Cooperative Program in 1967. He stressed Foreign Mission giving and made this a special project during the Christmas season. He began printing the first church directory which gave a complete church roll, lists of all church deacons, WMU officers and leaders, Sunday School and Training Union officers and teachers, committee members, graphs showing increases or decreases in the financial status of our church, baptisms, church letters, tithers, etc. This directory proves to be a very valuable part of our church life. Rev. Borders also started a monthly series of cottage prayer services with members meeting in the homes and having prayer and fellowship together. On Sunday nights for a while we discussed contemporary problems among us which was very helpful. He also started the practice of class participation in the Sunday School lesson with each class member giving a specific part of the lesson. On Sunday nights during that period we had a pre-study of the next Sunday's lesson which provided us with helpful information for our parts. During his pastorate the first church secretary became a part of the staff with Mrs. James D. (Marilue) Elam serving in that capacity. Rev. Borders taught many Bible classes in Cleveland County through the Seminary Extension Department. All churches in the Kings Mountain Association participated in these classes. Rev. Borders visited Sunday School classes to determine needs, visited in homes and prayed with families. He proved to be an able shepherd by giving wise counseling to many. Was that the secret of his success?

Rev. William Charles McKinney, Jr.

July 1967 — — —

Biblical history proves that God finds the right man for critical periods in history. Our country was beset with new problems on the horizon — integration, war, a rapid climb in the juvenile delinquency rate and permissiveness when he became pastor. Coupled with this was a growing wave of prosperity and apathy. In such times counseling is needed. The Rev. McKinney aided by his teaching experiences proved to be the man. By counseling and diligent work he has led New Bethel to a feeling of more sanity. He has worked especially hard with the teen-age group. One week in the summer he with other helpers has been counselors for a Youth Retreat which has been held at White Lake each summer since 1968. There they study the Bible and discuss personal problems. This has proven to be very beneficial and enjoyable for all. Under his leadership the church has formulated, adopted and published a new Constitution and By-Laws. During the years 1971-1972 a new parking lot was completed to the South side of the church and a lovely memorial garden was planted in memory of Mr. and Mrs. Ben Wease with funds given by her daughter, Mrs. Sallie Wease Powell, for that purpose. Prior to his pastorate the maintenance of church properties had been unplanned and as a consequence much work was needed to restore the building to good condition. A five-year rotating plan of church maintenance was adopted under which a part of the total maintenance is scheduled for each year. Since this plan was adopted the church and parsonage have been re-



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painted inside and outside and all floors in the church refinished. Following this plan will make major renovations unnecessary. Rev. McKinney began a monthly newsletter entitled "The Proclaimer" which is sent to every member of the church. This has proven to be very valuable to our church family. Rev. McKinney has also taught classes in the Bible through the Seminary Extension Department. He has been especially helpful to the colored ministers in Cleveland County. He has been their instructor in a number of classes during the time they were working toward their "Pastoral Training Certificate."



Long-time pastor J. W. Suttle and Mrs. Suttle flanked on the left by former pastor C. O. Greene and Mrs. Greene, and on the right by the pastor at the time J. Russell Fitts and Mrs. Fitts. Picture made in 1961.

## The 1988 Annual of the Brushy Mountain Baptist Association Is Dedicated To



W.C. McKinney, Jr.

William Charles "Bill" McKinney, Jr. was born September 6, 1926, in Spruce Pine, North Carolina. The product of a Christian home, he accepted Jesus Christ as Lord at the age of 12 and was baptized into Grassy Creek Baptist Church. Following military service in World War II, he married Robbie Shuford - a schoolmate from childhood. They have two daughters and four grandchildren.

Bill received his education at Mars Hill College, Wake Forest University (B.A. in Religion, 1963) and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary (B.D., 1966, D. Min., 1975). He served English Road Baptist Church in High Point as Associate Pastor, Gum Springs Baptist Church in Pittsboro as pastor, and New Bethel Baptist Church in Cleveland County as pastor. When he became Director of Missions for Brushy Mountain Baptist Association in August 1976, Bill brought a diverse background of education and experience. Having served his home church as a deacon and lay leader for several years, he brought to the ministry a keen appreciation for the role of laypersons in the life of the church. His experience as a staff member lent insight into the circumstances surrounding work as a minister of music, minister of youth, minister of education. His years as a churchman and pastor enabled him to identify with pastors of churches small and large. His years in the business world gave experience in administration and human relations. While serving among Brushy Mountain Baptist people he has been deeply committed to evangelization, missions, church development, discipleship training, and leadership development.

While serving among us, Bill has been very active in the community. He has been an active participant and leader in Wilkes Ministerial Association where he has assisted with Wilkes Cares, nursing home ministries at Vespers and Britthaven, and starting the prison chaplaincy program at the North Wilkesboro Prison Unit. He has worked with Wilkes Day Care Center - a

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developmental program for handicapped children - for 11 years, serving as a director and as chairman of the board. He was instrumental in starting Hospice of Wilkes, Inc., and continues to serve as a Hospice volunteer. He was instrumental in establishing the Catherine H. Barber Homeless Shelter, and was involved in founding Wilkes Teen Pregnancy Council which he continues to co-chair. In addition to these activities he has maintained an active counseling ministry. He has also been active in denominational life; having served as president of the NC Directors of Missions Conference, and now serves on the NC Baptist Convention Long-Range Strategy Planning Committee.

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