

Church Anniversary

The West Hill Street First Baptist Church will celebrate the 15th Anniversary of their pastor, the Reverend Raymond A. Morris, Sunday, March 24, at 3 p.m. Rev. Midgett, Pastor of the Burning Bush Holiness Church of Faison, will be the guest speaker. Rev. Morris has served 43 years in Greene County as teacher, principal, and was former School Coordinator upon his retirement last year. The amiable minister is a native of Jamesville and graduated from Elizabeth City State College with a B. S. degree and later received the MA Degree in Administration and supervision of Elementary and secondary schools from New York University. He is also pastor of Union Baptist Church in Tarboro. The affair, sponsored by the deacons and trustees, urges the community and sister churches to join in this celebration.

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Wake Forest: Wake Weekly
Wallace Enterprise
~~Walnut Cove: Stokes Record~~
Warrenton: Warren Record
Warsaw-Faison News
Waynesville Mountaineer *regro*
Weldon: Roanoke News
Wendell: Gold Leaf Farmer
W. Jefferson: Skyland Post
Whiteville: News-Reporter
Williamston: Enterprise
Wilmington: Journal
Windsor: Bertie Ledger-Advance
Yadkinville: Yadkin Ripple
Yanceyville: Caswell Messenger
Zebulon Record

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West Hill Street Baptist Church

Celebrating 108th Anniversary

The West Hill Street Baptist Church, Warsaw, will be celebrating its 108th Anniversary July 21 through July 25. Current ministers of the churches founded by the Rev.

Thomas Parker in the mid-18th century will be guest speakers.

It was immediately after the Civil War that a group of dedicated men, with restraint on their lips and passion in their hearts bound together and founded the present church. The church, born of a need of the time, brought together on July 28, 1887, men like the Rev. Thomas Parker, Ned Dixon, Bill Shaw, James Jeff Johnson, Bill Faison, and a few others whose names are lost in time to organize the Bear Swamp Baptist Church, which later became known as First Baptist Church.

The first site of the church was about three miles east of Bowdens, however no building was ever erected there. The present site was donated to the Bear Swamp congregation in January, 1871, by W. E. Pierce, C. H. Pierce and Thomas Pierce as recorded in Book No. 27, page 83, on July 17, 1882, in the Duplin County court house.

The erection of this church was the second black church

established in the area -- Kenansville First Baptist being the first. Prior to this time, the few blacks who were church members belonged to the white churches. Facts of historic value about the church will be presented each night of the celebration.

The Rev. J. T. Robinson, pastor of the Magnolia First Baptist, its choir and congregation, will lead off the celebration on Monday night, July 21. The Rev. C. W. Wright, and the First Baptist

of Kenansville and Mt. Gilead Baptist will join in Tuesday night July 22. Wednesday night July 23, will feature the Rev. J.M. Grimes and the Six Runs Baptist church and congregation. Thursday night the Rev. Robert Lowe, a son of the First Baptist Church in Warsaw will render service and Friday night speaker will be the current pastor of the church, the Rev. Raymond A. Morris.

The public is cordially invited.

Warrenton: Warren Record
Warsaw-Faison News
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Whiteville: News-Reporter
Williamston: Enterprise
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pastor, the Rev. "Buster" George Price.

291 NAACP Honors West Hill St. Baptist Church B5

A Warsaw church received national political national honors at the 88th National NAACP Convention held the week of July 11 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. West Hill Street First Baptist Church was among several churches in the nation to receive the Church M-Pac Award.

The honor came as a result of the month-long Black History programs and exhibits sponsored by Soissette Nixon who chaired the effort.

Several hundred exhibits were displayed at West Hill Street Baptist church during the month of February.

The plaque, presented before a thousand delegates was inscribed as follows:

"Presented to the pastor and members of West Hill Street First Baptist Church, Warsaw, NC, in appreciation of your contribution

to Political Action Programs, having formed a pact in cooperation with the local NACCP and Leadership in your community to impact against the evils of racism and to improve the social equality of all Americans. Issued the 11th day of July 1995 in Minneapolis, Minn."

The M-Pac Award to churches was presented in a luncheon meeting with several Duplin County delegates in attendance.

The plaque was presented to chairperson Soissette Nixon on behalf of the membership at regular church services held on Sunday, July 23, in Warsaw.

In addition to the M-Pac Award, Duplin County Branch of NAACP received the Thalheimer Award, Qutam Buster Award, a Youth Award and Bill Cosby Award as well as three individual awards. The delegation traveled by charter bus to the convention.

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Area Churches Uniting for Famine Relief

Warsaw West Hill St. Baptist Church Supports Ethiopia Aid

by Jo Cameron Jones
Staff Writer

"Feed my sheep," Christ told his disciples.

God's children in Ethiopia are dying of starvation. Marie Dixon of West Hill Street First Baptist Church in Warsaw is helping organize relief for these famine-stricken Africans.

"A grassroots organization has come together to aid the relief effort in Ethiopia," said Dixon.

"Churches are now working together to aid Ethiopia. Our next meeting will be held on Thursday, July 27, at First Baptist Church

in Warsaw.

"We ask the Warsaw community and surrounding communities to help in our relief efforts."

Dixon has contacted a number of local churches and asked each to raise \$300 for this humanitarian cause.

"I know we have suffering right here at home, but the suffering in Ethiopia may affect as many as eight million people," Dixon told her Christian brethren.

She also pointed out that many churches already do mission work in Africa, but the famine in Ethiopia is so widespread and devastating that it must be addressed as a special Christian concern.

Churches Working Together to Aid Ethiopia (CWTTAE) is accepting contributions for famine relief. Their goal is to raise \$10,000 for famine relief by August 1.

"We ask that those who come to the July 27 meeting be prepared to contribute to this worthy cause," said Dixon. "If you cannot attend our meeting, we ask you to mail in your contributions."

Checks may be made payable to CWTTAE c/o Marie Best Dixon, 1592 Lanefield Road, Warsaw NC 28398 or to Centura Bank CWTTAE, Acct. # 1200006639, 205 South Main Street, Kenansville NC 28349.

About the Famine

Ethiopia, located on the east coast of Africa, has one of the oldest governments on that continent.

Its people are both Christian and Moslem. During the last several decades, the country has suffered terrible losses due to civil war.

Drought struck in 1984-85, when one million people perished in that famine.

This famine promises to be even worse.

"You have watched TV and seen the terrible images of people starving to death," said Dixon.

"Their bodies are only skin and bones, their eyes are hollow, and their faces reflect no hope.

"We can turn off the TV, not read the newspapers, but if we are concerned in any way about our fellow human beings, these images will haunt us."

Eyewitnesses to the famine have said, "Conditions in Ethiopia are very, very grim. We have never encountered anything like this. So many fresh graves, a nightmare, terrible to see. So many dying children."

Dixon said, "Please don't just cross over to the other side; be a Good Samaritan.

"Maybe God has allowed us, as he did Joseph of old, to be in this land of plenty for such a time as this.

"If we have been blessed, we have to be a blessing to someone else. When much is given, much is expected.

"That's why I pray everyone who reads this appeal will respond and help our starving brothers and sisters to survive. We must feed Jesus' pitiful starving sheep."

First Baptist

Continued from Page 1

presence with singing."

The singers are made up of choir

members from the following churches: West Hill Street First

Baptist, St. Stephen A.M.E. Zion, Prayer of Faith, Faison Memorial Presbyterian, Salem Chapel FWB, Hines Chapel FWB, St. Jude Church of Christ and Wilson Chapel Baptist.

Pianists accompanying this group are Mrs. H. B. Austin, Marcia B. Watkins, and Jacqueline Drayton.

"We welcome any motivated community singer, male or female, who desires to become involved," said Faison. Call 293-7205 for further information.

And come listen to the Inspirational Choir, the Warsaw Community Male Chorus and the Warsaw Community Singers at 2:00 p. m., 4:15 p. m. and 5:15 p. m. during Christmas in Warsaw on Sunday, December 5.



THE WARSAW COMMUNITY MALE CHORUS will perform for Christmas in Warsaw at 4:15 p. m. at the Lee Ed Brown, Jr., home at 419 East Hill Street, on Sunday, December 5. This group of twelve men from various churches has been giving benefit performances since it was formed in 1996. Shown here are four of the members: (Seated, L-R) Chorus President Herbert Smith and Donald Herring. (Standing) Henry Bouyer and Reginald Melvin.

Located on West Hill Street

First Baptist Church Singers to Open Christmas in Warsaw

291 by Jo Cameron Jones
Staff Writer

Bright, vibrant voices raised in song at West Hill Street First Baptist Church will open the second annual Christmas in Warsaw celebration sponsored by Beautification of Warsaw (BOW) members. Their joyous performance will run from 2:00 to 2:30 p. m. on Sunday, December 5.

The singers are members of the Inspirational Choir of West Hill Street First Baptist Church, and of The Community Singers, made up of singers from several area churches.

The beautiful old historic church will be the scene of the first event in this year's five and one half hours of walking, touring, singing, listening and plain out celebrating of the holiday season.

The public will be welcomed to Christmas in Warsaw at 3:00 p. m. by BOW President Barbara Thompson Edwards from the balcony of the L P. Best House/Veterans Museum located at 119 East Hill Street.

Alan Brown will perform a solo at that time.

Regular walking/listening tours will begin at 3:15 p. m.

Visitors will hear James Kenan High School Band perform, versatile Jim Aycock at the piano, the Methodist Hand Bell Choir, the Harmony Belles and a number of other sparkling performers.

House tours (\$10 per ticket) of six East Hill Street residences will run from 2-6 p. m.

The evening will close with a 7:00 p. m. Vesper Service at Warsaw Presbyterian Church, followed by a 7:30 p. m. Open House at the Best House, with music performed by Amanda Sharron, flutist, and Ron Stenquest, saxophonist.

History of First Baptist Church West Hill Street

Historic First Baptist Church of West Hill Street is 130 years old. It has a long and distinguished history.

The church was organized and established in 1867 by freed slaves, two years after the Civil War, through the efforts of Rev. Thomas Parker, Ned Dixon, Bill Shaw, James Jeff Faison, Bill Faison and several others. These men organized the Bear Swamp Baptist Church which later became the West Hill Street First Baptist Church, the name it bears today.

The original site for the new church was about three miles east of Bowdens; however, no building was erected at that site.

The present site was donated to the Bear Swamp congregation in January 1871 by W. E. Pierce and Thomas Pierce.

Tree branches and brush were used for shade and the benches were made of mill scraps. It was not until 1882 that a building was erected.

In 1921, 1,000 square feet were added to the original structure. In 1945 the church was brick veneered and in 1947 new windows were installed. Further improvements included a new education building, covered pews and a refurbished pastor's study and restrooms.

The West Hill Street First Baptist Church congregation and its choirs are eager to welcome the public to their 2:00 p. m. Christmas service in song that will begin this year's celebration of Christmas in Warsaw.

Warsaw Community Male Chorus

A special treat for Christmas in Warsaw will be provided at 4:15 p. m. when The Warsaw Community Male Chorus performs at the Lee Ed Brown, Jr. home at 419 East Hill Street.

The Warsaw Community Male Chorus was formed in the summer of 1993. Herbert Smith, along with several other men in the community, decided to come together and sing for a Men's Day Service at St. Stephens AME Zion Church in June, 1993.

Men from Hines Chapel, Mt Zion and other churches joined St Stephens men and took part in the singing to help make the service a success. The men decided they wanted to keep the chorus together, so they began rehearsing and invited other men to join them.

In August, 1994, the Warsaw Community Male Chorus officially became a gospel male chorus and celebrated their first anniversary. The anniversary celebration was held at Hines Chapel FWB Church.

For the past six years, the men have been traveling and singing the gospel approximately five times a month. The group sings for choir anniversaries, concerts, Men's Day services, revivals, Senior Citizen banquets and other benefit functions.

The group sings each first Sunday at the Sunrise Nursing Home in Warsaw at 6:30 p. m.

The Warsaw Community Male Chorus currently has twelve members, and Herbert Smith serves as president. The Chorus looks forward to sharing their gifts with all the public at Christmas in Warsaw events.

The Warsaw Community Singers

Another special gospel group, the Warsaw Community Singers, will entertain at Christmas in Warsaw at 5:15 p. m. at the Charles and Susan Greenhill home at 304 East Hill Street. They will also be part of the 2:00 p. m. West Hill Street First Baptist Church songfest.

The Warsaw Community Singers were organized in December of 1998. "Motivated by a need to fellowship," says its coordinator, Sadie E. Faison, "this group performed at several community functions prior to its formal organization."

"The group fosters a passage from Psalms 100: 'Serve the Lord with gladness; come before His



WEST HILL STREET FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH IN WARSAW is a historical treasure. Founded by freed slaves in 1867, shortly after the Civil War, it was first called Bear Swamp Baptist Church and located three miles east of Bowdens. The present building was erected in 1882 after members had worshiped for years using tree branches and brush for shade with benches made of mill scraps. Christmas in Warsaw will begin at this historic church with a song service from 2:00 to 2:30 p. m. on Sunday, December 5. (Photo Jo C. Jones)