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White's life has become a balancing act

Many hats worn by family, community, and church leader

By Nicole Simpson
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"I don't know how I'm going to get all that done, but I'm going to." Many have said the latter about their own growing to-do lists. Plymouth's Harry White has quite the "to-do" list, but his determination and love for others helps him keep everything in balance.

Born in Plymouth, Harry White, Jr. spent his first eight years of life in Philadelphia, Penn. with his family.

However, tragedy struck his home with the death of his 28-year-old mother, Lillie.

White could no longer stay at his home in Pennsylvania after the death of his mom, so he was returned to Plymouth.

Back in the South, only eight years old, young White found himself living with his brothers and sisters in his aunt's home with her two children.

His aunt, Sarah Taylor, did not want to separate White from his other siblings, so she took them all in and reared them as her own.

Taken in and cared for at a traumatic time proved beneficial for White. In 1980 he graduated from Elizabeth City State University.

He went on to teach Industrial Arts at Brunswick Junior High School in Lawrenceville, Va.

After serving at the school for a number of months, he went to work as a draftsman for Weyerhaeuser Company in New Bern.

White worked in New Bern for a year-and-a-half before heading back toward Plymouth.

In the meantime, he had married Diane Moore, who proved to be a great help to him in his future endeavors.

White began working in Plymouth in 1982. He is presently a cat operator in charge of document control for Weyerhaeuser Company.

White's family has grown since his marriage to Diane and the two now have three sons: Harry, III, 14, Anthony, 12, and Tyrell, 5.

Being a full-time breadwinner and family man are an undertaking. But fulfilling the responsibilities that come with those roles is not all there is to White's agenda.

White has served as pastor of New Chapel Missionary Baptist Church in Plymouth for nearly four years.

Having received what he described as "a calling" to the ministry in 1987, White has been work-

ing for the good of many causes.

Ordained in 1992, White served under his pastor at Second Zion Grove Church in Plymouth until he became minister at New Chapel.

"It's a challenge," said White with regard to the time he attempts to spend with his family, on his job and with his congregation.

Maintaining balance is difficult, he admitted, but, he said smiling, "I manage it."

White explained that if he found that he could not take care of his family, he knows he would not be able to care for the congregation.

Knowing that such a level head is needed, he said that there are times when stress sneaks in. However, at those times, he said, "I thank God for my wife....She's been my best friend."

Work, family, worship—all are heavy responsibilities, but White would not continue to carry the load if he did not feel it was worth it. "I enjoy them all," he explained.

"Being pastor was a scary responsibility," said White. He added that he did not want to let God, himself or others down with his actions.

Apparently, though, he hasn't been letting folks down. "People

trust me and have confidence in me as a leader," said White. Knowing that he loves his congregation is also a help, according to White.

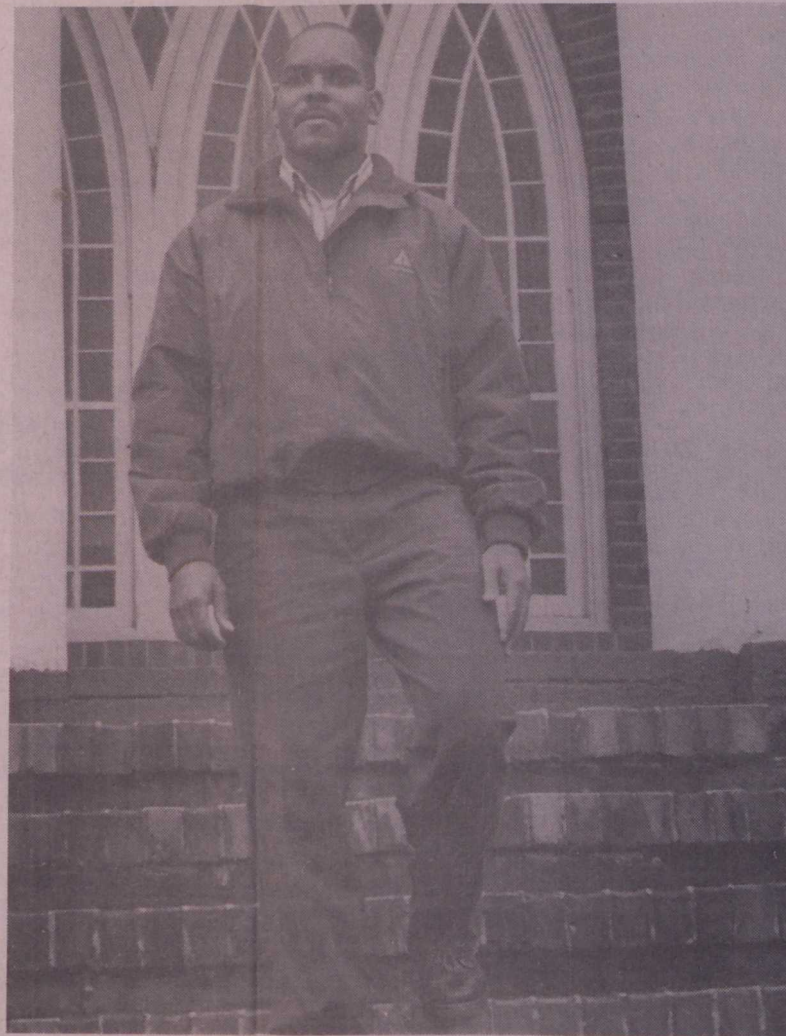
To express that love for his congregation, White relays the most important messages he can find to guide them. "Trust God. Practice what you preach... When you live it, your light shines," he said.

White's teachings don't stop at the pulpit, however. He said he tries to instill values in his sons, encouraging them that they "do not have to follow the world."

White is a participant in the Plymouth Ministerial Association, first vice moderator of the Albemarle Union, has been elected to the Washington County Salvation Army, has coached in the local soccer league and will be coaching athletics for at Washington County Union.

Though there may be no single reason why White enjoys keeping busy in doing things for others, there may be some answer to be found in his comments on his home community. "I'm very concerned about the community....I like to be an example," he said.

Reemphasizing that he has not done his work alone, he added concerning his wife, Diane, "She's been my cornerstone."



Harry White, Jr. has dedicated himself to being a good example in his public and private life. He finds balancing his duties as husband, father, mill employee, coach and minister a challenging, but rewarding task. (Beacon photo by Dow Jones)