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Brothers 4 Kidz Mentoring Program Holds Successful Summer Camp

By Allie M. Peebles

Columnist

The Brothers 4 Kidz Mentoring Program held its Summer Camp from July 15 through Aug. 14 at Halifax Baptist Church, where the Rev. J. Vincent Terry serves as pastor.

The program was initiated in 1995 by Gloria Whitehurst, a TEACH Early Childhood, Ameri-corps member, in a Headstart program in Raleigh. The name was later changed to Brothers 4 Kidz.

The goal of the program is to provide positive male role models for

the children in a safe environment.

The mission of Brothers 4 Kidz is to advocate for educational, cultural, recreational and fundraising programs and activities that benefit children under 12 years old.

Rev. Terry opened the doors of Halifax Baptist Church to provide space for the 1998 Summer Program.



REV. J. VINCENT TERRY

The church is located at 1130 N. Blount St., and Rev. Terry has served as its pastor for 15 years. He is a native of Rockingham, where he served as student minister of the Providence Baptist Church and later as associate minister of the Poplar Springs Baptist Church.

Rev. Terry is a past member of the Board of Directors of Building Together Ministries, Inc. He is a member of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina and serves on the Baptist Student Union Committee, the Evangelism Committee and the Prison Ministry Committee.

Rev. Terry is a member of the Raleigh Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance, and he serves on the Advisory Council of the Foster Grandparent Program for Raleigh.

He is currently pursuing dual degrees from Shaw University and the Shaw University Divinity School.

The program director is Gloria Whitehurst, and the volunteer student counselors are Michael Hodge, Crystal Kinsey, Carlton Pope and Rachel Robinson.

Rev. Terry and the church provided transportation for field trips taken in the Raleigh area.

The children traveled to the North Carolina Museum of History, to the African-American Cultural Complex and to St. Mark's Episcopal Church to attend the Building Together Ministries-sponsored 1998 Moving in the Spirit Summer Tour Explosion. This featured Atlanta's youth in an educational dance performance.

In January 1999, the Brothers 4 Kidz Program will add an After-School Program. For further information, call 269-0597.

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Preacher, 19, balances school books with Bible

By DIANE WINSTON
Staff Writer

At an age at which most young men fill their extracurricular schedules with sports, parties and girls, the Rev. J. Vincent Terry is busy preaching the word of God.

Terry was 16 when he felt called to the ministry. At 17, he was an ordained minister. Now, at the ripe age of 19, he pastors a church full time.

"I think I'm very normal," said Terry, whose church, Halifax Baptist, belongs to the primarily black N.C. General Baptist State Convention. "I'm doing things that most 19-year-olds don't do, but really, being a preacher is normal. He wants to have a good time and get up with his friends."

But Terry doesn't have much time to get up with friends. When he's not at the church, he's in class. A Shaw University sophomore, he has two more years of college ahead of him and expects to spend another three at Shaw's Divinity School.

Raised by his grandmother, who also cared for his two brothers and four sisters, Terry had planned a life in the ministry since childhood. But the call didn't come until his teenage years.

"I was thinking that I'd see a great sign," he said. "But it was more that there was something in my mind that was on me constantly and leading me mainly toward preaching."

When he no longer could deny the feeling, Terry sought out the Rev. R.T. Gilchrist, pastor in his home church in Rockingham. Gilchrist was aware of Terry's interest in the church because the teenager had been active in youth groups and denominational work.

After reading several books

about the ministry, Terry felt certain he wanted to proceed. A date was set for his first sermon.

"It was called 'Time is Winding Up,'" he said. "The main point was death. I'd noticed that a lot of people in the neighborhood were dying."

"It was done from a spiritual point of view. And it wasn't just for old people. We should all be preparing for death."

Terry has been told that he has an old man's mind. But he also has a young man's dynamism, which is why, after that first sermon, his reputation spread. Before he started college, Terry had preached more than 200 sermons.

He takes his work seriously. He prepares his messages over the course of a week, types his final draft and makes certain his message is loud and clear.

"You must have a message," said Terry, a friendly man in a three-piece suit who is given to broad smiles and easy laughter. "No one wants to listen to a lot of talking. You can do that at home."

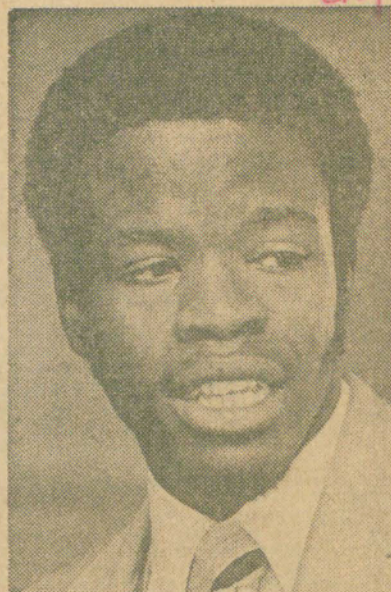
The message is the gospel — the good news of Jesus Christ — he said.

"Our job is to tell people they don't have to go to a place that's hot but that they can live eternally," Terry said. "That's my whole goal, to help somebody with the good news."

But preaching is one thing, and pastoring a church is another.

The Rev. Archie D. Logan, assistant to the executive secretary-treasurer of the N.C. General Baptist State Convention, said it was not unusual to find young preachers. What is unusual is a young pastor, he said.

"It's usually someone who's



J. Vincent Terry

very committed to the calling, who's conscientious and who knows what he wants to do," Logan said in a telephone interview.

Because Baptist churches are independent and autonomous, he added, each congregation selects whom they want for a minister.

Terry's church, a white clapboard building in the Mordecai section of Raleigh, has 60 members. Since his arrival, Terry said, he has made changes. A downstairs classroom has been converted into a pastor's study, a new emphasis has been placed on education, and there has been some reorganizing of the church service and the duties of church officers, he said.

His rapport with church members is good, Terry said.

"We're still in the honeymoon period," he said with a grin. "Some talk about the boy preacher, but to most of them, I am the pastor."

The pastor, who lives in a dormitory, said that when he is not at church or at school, he likes to ride around. When he wants to relax at night, he climbs into his 1978 Malibu, turns on a gospel station and cruises. He also enjoys dating, but he thinks marriage is far off for him.

Most evenings, Terry said, he works.

"I've learned to use my time wisely," he said. "Sometimes I'm here at the church looking for inspiration to write a message. But there are times when I can't get it, and that's when I do my homework."

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Project DIRECT To Sponsor Diabetes Sunday, Nov. 23

Project DIRECT (Diabetes Intervention Reaching and Education Communities Together) will sponsor Diabetes Sunday, Nov. 23, at a number of churches in Raleigh.

"Diabetes Sunday will be recognition of November being Diabetes Awareness Month," stated Rita Starks, program manager of Project DIRECT.

Volunteers and staff members of Project DIRECT will be passing out literature and informing church members about the signs and symptoms of diabetes.

The following churches will have representatives from Project DI-

Activity Part Of Diabetes Awareness Mo.

RECT at their Nov. 23 services: Abundant Life Christian Center; Rochester Heights COC; First Baptist; Smith Temple Baptist; Martin Street Baptist; First Cosmopolitan Baptist; St. Ambrose Episcopal; Baptist Grove Church; Oak City Baptist; St. Paul AME; Providence Holy Church; Cokesbury United Methodist; Davie Street Presbyte-

rian; Wake Chapel Baptist; Rush Metropolitan AME Zion; Halifax Baptist; Glorious Church; Macedonia UCC; Praise Temple; Bright Hope Divine Holy Church of God; Young Missionary Temple CME; Upper Room COGIC; First Congregational UCC; Christian Faith Baptist and Piney Grove.

Project DIRECT is a diabetes intervention program funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and is headquartered at 219 S. East St. in Raleigh

For more information about joining in the fight against diabetes in Southeast Raleigh, call Project DIRECT at 856-6540.