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Douglas Lee BF

TRANSYLVANIA TIMES

BREVARD, N. C.

New Hope BC

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Note-Burning Held

Four New Hope Baptist Church trustees and the pastor, Rev. Douglas (Pete) Lee, participated in a note-burning ceremony during the morning worship service on Sunday, Oct. 26. The congregation recently paid off its 30-year mortgage. From the left are Jim [unclear], Gene Searcy, David Phillips, Pastor Pete Lee, and Ed Mann. (Times Photo by Edith Phillips)

Senior Citizen

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Douglas Lee's Lawn Vision Beca

By Edith Phillips

Never in his wildest dreams could Douglas (Pete) Lee, as a 34-year-old Naval technician, have imagined that his life would take the turn it did. A momentary vision he had while mowing his lawn one day lead to a lifetime of ministry for him.

Stationed in Guam then with the U.S. Navy and living in military housing, Lee vividly recalls the vision: "I was just out there mowing the lawn and all of a sudden I could see myself in a pulpit preaching, and I just put it out of my mind, but

it kept coming back and kept coming back."

Lee was active in the church he attended while stationed in Guam, having served as a Sunday School teacher, a Royal Ambassador counselor, and deacon.

Lee's accepting the call to be a preacher contains a bit of irony. He relates that he actually found himself pastoring a church in the very place where he had told himself he would never go.

"But, I was so miserable aboard the ship I was on that when my orders came in, I jumped off and took them," he said.

He was then ready to answer the ministerial call and soon afterwards pastored his first church. That was 26 years ago. Since then, he has received the college education he felt he needed and has pastored many churches. After his tour of duty with the Navy, which spanned 20 years, he moved back to his native Transylvania County where he has pastored churches in several communities.

"I was out of the pastorate for several years," Rev. Lee reminisces. Today, he is the pastor of New Hope Baptist Church where he was also a member while he was not

Only

A Timely Reality

toring a church. He was called interim pastor in August 1994 as church pastor in January 1995. New Hope, a small Southern Baptist church established in 1979, comparatively small in size and membership, but not in vision. "I am optimistic that our church will grow," Rev. Lee says. His goals for growth are many-fold, including "loving the people and preaching the Word."

He is thankful that he is still able to hear the sounds of talkative toddlers and happy children, the choir singing, the musicians' instruments, his own words, as well. His hearing was damaged due to Navy gunfire during his military career, but doesn't let that inconvenience interfere with his preaching or other jobs done. The bilingual pastor says his hearing has not been an insurmountable one, and that hearing provides the necessary sound reinforcement he needs.

Lee believes in good time management and that time should not be wasted in a church service. "I don't want to waste my time, or anybody else's time," the preacher says. "I don't want to kill any unnecessary time. I don't want to be in services where preachers are talking three times and then stop at 12:30, and sometimes I'm not interested in the preaching. I honestly try to step behind the pulpit to provide some information that I haven't had before, or a different way to look at things."

Rev. Lee has a respect not only for the people, but for their time as well. He says preachers don't know how to be a working man or working woman. They go through on their job, but have no idea what swing shifts are like. Everybody ought to understand swing shifts for a

preacher is there to bring whatever message God has given him for that day, and he ought to bring it as quick as he can and let the people go home. I don't care about filling a time slot. That's the way I feel. I am just me. There is no put on. And I like people that way. I used to come out of the pulpit apologizing to the Lord, ashamed that nothing happened. But I quit that. I had studied for that time and prepared for it to the best of my ability. Then, however it goes is God's business; it's His work. We preachers never know the impact that we have on a life," he said.

Rev. Lee has a wholesome sense of humor, yet, he says when he steps up to the pulpit, there is no foolishness.

"I take my preaching seriously. I am aware that there were some people here the past Sunday morning that I have never seen before and may never have the opportunity to preach to again," he said.

That is why he puts many long hours into thinking and rethinking his expository sermons. His Bible-based messages blend scholarship and practicality and challenge the listeners to think about what they have heard, whatever the subject. His messages are often interspersed with stories and quotes which enhance the points of his sermon. With instant recall, he recites quotes that drive home points, such as this one from the pen of a slain missionary. "He is no fool which trades that which he cannot keep for that which he cannot lose."

The pastor and his wife, Colleen,

who retired recently from employment with the school system, and their now-grown children formed valued friendships over the years while in the many churches, each different in appearance and size.

Thinking about those churches, he says, "In a smaller congregation, you get to know the members better and if you know their interests, you can address their interests and their needs and concerns. You can give them that individual attention. At New Hope, everybody knows I am a working man and they respect that. And, if any of them need my help, they call me. Everyone here is on a first-name basis."

Every church is like an individual, he adds, with its own personality and style.

The quiet-spoken family man believes that the world needs what the church has to offer.

"There are too many people going through life settling for the good and neglecting the best," he says, adding that there are eternal truths which everyone should prayerfully consider.

Now a seasoned Bible teacher, Rev. Lee hopes that everyone who gathers for worship will take home more than words to live by. He wants them to leave with new hope.

Edith Phillips is office manager of The Transylvania Times and was Lifestyle Editor of the Easley Progress in Easley, S.C. prior to moving back to Brevard with her husband David. If you have a suggestion for the senior citizen profile, call The Times at 883-8156.



The Rev. Douglas (Pete) Lee is right at home in a church setting. (Times photo by Edith Phillips)