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THE SYLVA HERALD

AND RURALITE

291-196-211 Celebration to honor Dean's

By Rose Hooper

Two Sundays ago the children of East Sylva Baptist Church marched in with 30 bright yellow balloons and the celebration began.

This Sunday the celebration continues with special presentations during the morning worship service, which will be followed by

a communitywide celebration beginning at 2:30 p.m. in the sanctuary.

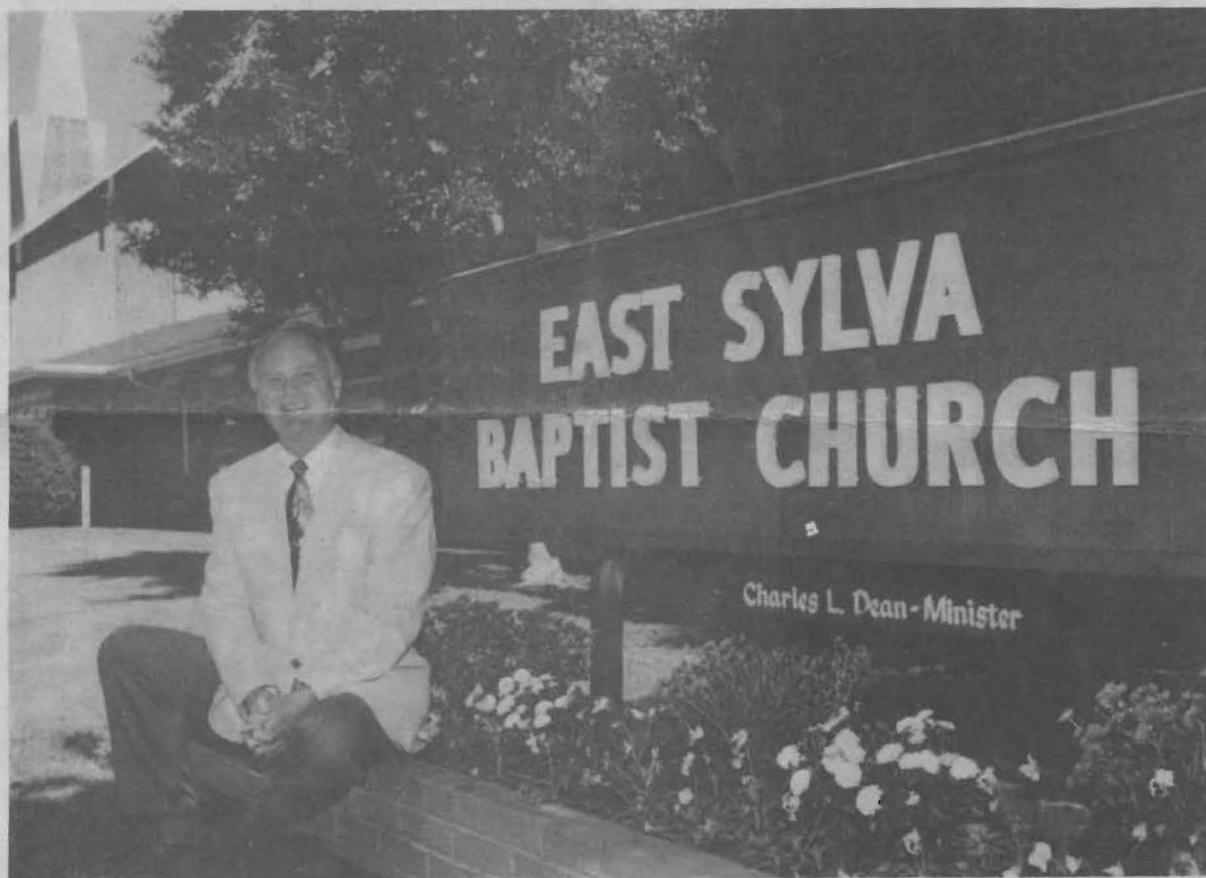
So, what's the special occasion?

It's the Rev. Charles L. Dean's 30th anniversary as pastor at East Sylva Baptist Church.

Also this week, evangelist Billy Graham begins his four-day crusade in his hometown of Charlotte.

One of Dean's favorite stories involves Graham, who many people, including those at Graham's hometown church in Charlotte, think resembles Dean.

"Lots of people tell me I look, and even sound like, Billy Graham. To me, that's a supreme compliment," said Dean. "A while back I was preaching a



East Sylva Baptist Church will celebrate the 30th anniversary of its pastor, the Rev. Charles L. Dean, this Sunday, Sept. 29. The morning worship service will begin at 10:30 a.m. with the Sunday school classes and other groups making special presentations, followed by special music and a guest speaker. The communitywide celebration will be held from 2:30-5 p.m. that afternoon in the sanctuary.

ALD

Community Life



September 26, 1996

30 years at East Sylva Baptist

revival in Spruce Pine. A couple from the church invited me to Beam's Restuarant for dinner. We were enjoying a nice Chinese dinner and the man kept looking at me.

"Finally, he said to me, 'Has anybody ever told you who you look like?'

"I thought he meant Billy Graham, and I nodded casually, still eating my moo goo gai pan. But he eyeballed me and said, 'You sure do look just like him. Yes, sir, you look just like Barney Fife!'

"Well, I was quite taken back," Dean recalled, through peals of laughter. "It was a good lesson in humility for me."

One of his church members, Mark Haskett, said he recognizes Dean by his laughter. "You can

hear him laughing a mile away," said Haskett.

"He uses humor well in his messages, too," Haskett said. "One of my favorites is the story he tells about bringing a mattress back from Asheville on top of his vehicle, how it blows off and there he is, in the middle of Interstate 40 and all those 18-wheelers, trying to retrieve his mattress. As he demonstrated the story, I laughed so hard, I doubled over in the pews."

Dean said he is convinced God has a sense of humor. "He made Jack Hinson and me, didn't he?"

"I see a lot of humor as I read the scriptures. I think I'll feel very comfortable meeting Jesus and I look forward to laughing in Heaven," Dean said.

Recently several children of the

church presented Reverend Dean with a colorful crayoned-book telling why they like their preacher. In it, two children had written, "I like preacher Dean because he is funny."

"I've wanted to tell a lot of preachers, 'Just lighten up,'" Dean said.

Most pastors just stay at a church four or five years, he said. "When I stopped to think about it, I had been here at East Sylva 10 years. Next thing I knew it had been 20 years and now it's 30 years, and I can't believe it."

"I've never looked to go anywhere else because this is where I am supposed to be," he said.

Tommy Fisher, chairman of the pulpit committee some 30 years

Please see Dean, 10C

Dean

Continued from 1C

ago, recalled when he and eight other committee members drove over to Hazelwood to hear Dean preach one Sunday evening.

"We agreed we'd listen to him, then talk it over amongst ourselves what we thought of him.

"When he finished preaching, we just looked at each other and nodded. We were in complete agreement — all of us knew he was our man.

"We told him we were looking for a man who would come and stay with us 20 or 30 years. He was fresh out of seminary and he said, 'I don't know about that.'"

Dean remembers the nine marching down the church aisle to him that fateful Sunday in August of 1966. "I thought they looked like Pharoah's Army coming down, with Tommy leading the charge. I had no idea what I was going to do with my life at that time and when they mentioned a 20- or 30-year commitment, it rather startled me."

After he had been at East Sylva

a vision of what could be," Dean said. "We got right into a massive building program, had Robert Daniels, an architect from Brevard, draw up some plans. I thought the congregation would never go for them because they certainly weren't traditional Baptist column style. But they loved the plans."

After the parsonage, the first thing built in the big field was an education building. Folks worshipped in the fellowship hall. In four years the church paid the debt off for that building and then went right back into debt and built the sanctuary, moving in on Easter Sunday 1978.

"What this congregation has done is amazing," Dean said. "We had no special fund drives. But offerings on the fourth Sunday always went to our building fund. The people just seemed to give and give. Where it came from, I don't know. But soon we retired the debt on the sanctuary, too."

In 1966, Dean recalled the weekly church budget was \$269. Now it's \$2,600.

Dean said he has been at East Sylva so long he is baptizing and marrying grandchildren of his original congregation.

med, Dean wanted to be a doctor. "But then I felt the call to be a minister.

"I was bashful, shy, not a public speaker at all. I voiced all my objections to God why I was not qualified to be a preacher. But His response to me was strong and simple.

"He said, 'I'm not asking you for what you don't have, I'm just asking you for what you do have.'"

Dean went to Mars Hill College for two years, then transferred to Carson-Newman, where he graduated with a bachelor's degree. He pastored three years at East Fork Church in Haywood County before attending seminary at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Although he has had many offers throughout the years, Dean feels at home with East Sylva. "But each year it gets harder and harder to preach. I thought it would get easier, but it hasn't."

Preachers who spend short times at various churches can "recycle" their sermons, but Dean has to stay fresh and up-to-date.

"I've even preached the gospel, according to Gump," said Dean,

lives of 30 years of sermons
and in black notebooks.

Sometimes events of the week
lead to Dean's sermons. "When
Att Cooper died, I preached a
sermon on how much the church
owes to him."

"I've always tried to present the
gospel in plain simple language,
even the children can under-
stand," said Dean, who admires
Graham preaches. "His
messages are always so simply
presented, but the power of the
Holy Spirit always comes through
strongly."

Dean, who lives high atop Kitch-
en Branch with his wife, rises
at 5:30 a.m., reads, studies
and spends time in prayer. "I'm
up at 5:30 in the morning. I take
walks in the quiet and peaceful-
ness of the early morning hours
that's when I prepare my
sermons."

The Lord did that, you know...

prepared sermons on the moun-
tain top. To me, it's kind of
Biblical."

When he comes off the moun-
tain, and down to his church of-
fice, anything can happen. Each
day is different. He is on call 24
hours a day, seven days a week.
In addition to that, he serves as
chaplain with the police depart-
ment.

This preacher, who is an avid
reader, also like to golf. But so far
this year, he has only been golfing
twice.

His daughter, Sherry D. Pend-
leton, lives in Colorado Springs,
Colo., with her husband and two
children.

Grandfather Dean said he wor-
ries a lot about young people. "I
don't see their interest in church
that I once saw. That's why a
youth minister is so important to
a church." Currently East Sylva
is searching to replace their

former youth minister, Jim Dean
(no relation).

Dean said if he had his life to
live over, he would not change one
thing. "I guess the Lord knew
what he was doing when he lead
me here."

He goes and comes by the
following verse above his office
door — "Trust in the Lord with all
thine heart, and lean not unto
thine own understanding. In all
thy ways, acknowledge Him and
He shall direct they paths." Pro-
verbs 3:5-6.

So, what are his future plans?
"I'm just waiting on orders from
headquarters," he said cheerful
with anticipation.

for three months, he told the congregation he needed to be gone one Sunday to attend graduation at Louisville, Ky., and receive his diploma.

Fisher tells this story. "The church wanted to do something for him...get him a graduation present, you know. Anytime you spend Baptist money, you have to have a business meeting. So we were having this business meeting and we asked him to leave. His wife, Patsy, said to him, 'What have you done now?' Charles and his wife were scared we were going to dismiss him.

"Last Sunday, when we wanted to tell the congregation about our celebration plans for him, we asked him to leave again. He joked that it brought back memories of the meeting 30 years when he thought we were going to fire him."

When Dean first came to East Sylva, the church was the rock building on Church Street, behind the A&P grocery store. The parsonage had already been built in East Sylva, just three months before his arrival.

"I remember it being in the middle of the big field. When the church members told me they planned to grow and build, I had

original congregation.

Back in 1955 when he first started at Wake Forest in pre-

according to Gump, said Dean, who keeps full manuscripts of his sermons. In his church office are

Baptist Plan To Honor Pastor Ends In Success

By Wanda Crawford

"I'm still in a state of shock!" related the Rev. Charles Dean in an interview at his well-appointed office in East Sylva Baptist Church.

"I knew that there was something up and something was going to happen. There were a lot of little meetings in the church that I wasn't invited to."

But he never dreamed that his congregation was preparing a celebration the likes of which he had never been part of. So, when his deacons told him to come to church on the Sunday of September 12, but to allow them to take care of the services, he suspected a plot.

Promptly on the appointed Sunday, he said, he arrived at church, and was told to sit in one of the front pews in the sanctuary. Then, Tommy Fisher emceed the Rev. Mr. Dean and the congregation through a Personalized "This Is Your Life" type program, featuring events from the Rev. Mr. Dean's 10-year ministry at East Sylva Baptist Church. This program was part of the church's Appreciation Day for its pastor.

The first event, the Rev. Mr. Dean related, was a flashcard demonstration by the Children's Choir. Each child held up a card printed with one of the letters of the Rev. Mr. Dean's name, and explained that the letter started a word to describe their pastor. The last child of all, a little boy, held up the letter N and pronounced that it was for "Number One Guy."

Then, the children filed down to the Rev. Mr. Dean's pew and made him a gift of the letters and a dollar each.

Following this, the Rev. Mr. Dean said, rolling his eyes, Master of Ceremonies Fisher gave a brief history of the Rev. Mr. Dean, including his birth at the Haywood County Hospital, his baptism, and his ordination

as a minister on December 28, 1958.

Then, came guest speakers, important people from the Rev. Mr. Dean's past.

The first speaker was Lawrence Leatherwood, who retired from his position as Superintendent of Schools in Haywood county. Leatherwood was the Rev. Mr. Dean's sixth grade teacher, and was able to jog the good pastor's memory on details of himself and his fellow students.

Following Leatherwood, was Mrs. Flora Knight, the Rev. Mr. Dean's fifth grade teacher and also his Sunday School teacher.

Then came Carol Underwood, band director at Pisgah High School, who was on the Ordination Council when the Rev. Mr. Dean was ordained. Underwood, who is choir director of First Baptist Church in Hazelwood, was also director when the Rev. Mr. Dean sang in the choir.

After this, came an account of his college experiences, first at Mars Hill College, which was then a junior college, then at Carson-Newman, from which he graduated, and then from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Ky.

Neither of his roommates

from the Seminary, Douglas Cole, Director of Family Ministry with the Baptist State Convention in Raleigh, nor the Rev. Judson Rotan, former pastor of Scotts Creek Baptist Church in Sylva, could be present at the celebration, but both sent letters.

A letter also came from his good friend Badgett Dillard, vice president for Business Affairs at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, and there was a citation presented by the president of the Seminary, Duke K. McCall. The citation read, "In recognition of

distinguished service in the cause of Christ."

After this, his marriage to his wife, Patsy, and the adoption of their little daughter, Sherry, was recalled.

Then, the emcee called to the church's attention the other congregation which the Rev. Mr. Dean had served, that of East Fork Baptist Church in Cruso, which he pastored for three years.

And then, testimonials of his service to the East Sylva Baptist Church were given.

A few of these testimonials were:

—Growth of the church budget from \$13,000 to \$37,000 in 10 years. Also, growth of the church membership from 300 to 358.

—We built a new church building four years ago, for which we borrowed \$150,000. Today, we owe only \$20,000 of that.

—We have plans to build a new sanctuary and turn the present one into a fellowship hall.

And finally,

—Our Adult Choir has cut two records. These records have proved to be a valuable ministry, and once a family from Maggie came to our church and gave a testimony as to what the music and the Rev. Mr. Dean's spoken introduction meant to them.

After the testimonials, the Rev. Mr. Dean's mother and father came. His father, he said, laughing, had a few well-chosen words to say.

And then came a few selected East Sylvans bearing a lot of loot. The gifts included a walnut plaque, about \$500 in cash, a multi-band scanner, a large silver tray, and a large, leather-bound scrap book filled with photographs, a sort of pictorial biography.

That walnut plaque is something special. Made by Jerry

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THE REV. CHARLES DEAN WAS HONORED AT A PASTOR APPRECIATION DAY BY members of East Sylva Baptist Church. In the upper left-hand corner is a walnut plaque containing 10 silver dollars, one for each year of his ministry. Above the Rev. Mr. Dean's head is a photograph of his young daughter, Sherry.—Herald Photo.

Rev. Charles Dean Honored For 20 Years At East Sylva

The Rev. Charles Dean, pastor of East Sylva Baptist Church, was honored with a special ceremony Sunday morning, September 21, in celebration of his 20 years of service to the church.

The Rev. Mr. Dean and his wife, Patsy, came to East Sylva on September 18, 1966.



Rev. Charles Dean

Under his leadership, the church has grown through new members, new facilities and new ministries.

A dedication in the church scrapbook noted that over the last 20 years, the church has grown and now includes a parsonage, spacious parking, an educational building and a new sanctuary. The building has been expanded through a three-phase building program and the church members give the Rev. Mr. Dean credit for the success of the program through his leadership and confidence.

"Discouragement always has a way of creeping in, but through your trust in God, you always helped us find a way," says the dedication written by Helen Deitz. "Words can't even begin to say how thankful we are to you."

Born in Haywood county, the son of Delos and Myrtle Dean,

Dean attended elementary school in Hazelwood. At age 12 he was baptized. He attended Wake Forest University for a short time until he felt God's call to the ministry. He then left Wake Forest and attended Mars Hill College.

On April 1, 1956, Dean was licensed to preach and on December 28, 1958, he was ordained. After graduating from Mars Hill he attended Carson-Newman College.

He was married in 1962 to Patsy Hall. They have one daughter, Sherri.

In 1963, he entered the Southern Baptist Seminary in Louisville, Ky., where he graduated in 1967. His pastorate has included North Canton and Barbersville as a

supply minister; First Baptist Church in Clyde as music director; East Fork Baptist Church in Cruso; Coffee Creek Baptist Church, Paris Crossing, Indiana; and East Sylva.

A note in the Sunday church bulletin stated, "As a congregation we appreciate his personal faith that inspires us. He is a pastor and a friend that helps us find God's answers."

The Sunday worship service consisted of a special service in which the Rev. Mr. Dean was honored with gifts, including an artists sketch of Preacher Dean done by member Donald Deitz. The sketch was copied for insertion in each church bulletin. The original was then framed and presented as a gift to the pastor //