

Rev. Sam Everett

By JOHN DAYBERRY

It may seem unlikely that a newspaper sports editor would end up being a minister who edits his church's bulletin, but that is just the case with Rev. Sam Everett Jr., associate minister of First Baptist Church.

"I really think my newspaper experience was good training for a minister," he said, "probably the best training I got from any of my former jobs."

"After all, a minister and a newspaperman both have to be able to compose well, whether it's a sermon or a story. And they both have to be able to see situations clearly. They must be able to see beneath the surface."

Rev. Everett, 34, was born in Hampton, S. C., a small community with a population at that time of just more than 1,500.

"The emphasis in Hampton was on community. We went to sugar cane grindings, peanut boilings and taffy-pulls. We felt like a close-knit community and acted like one."

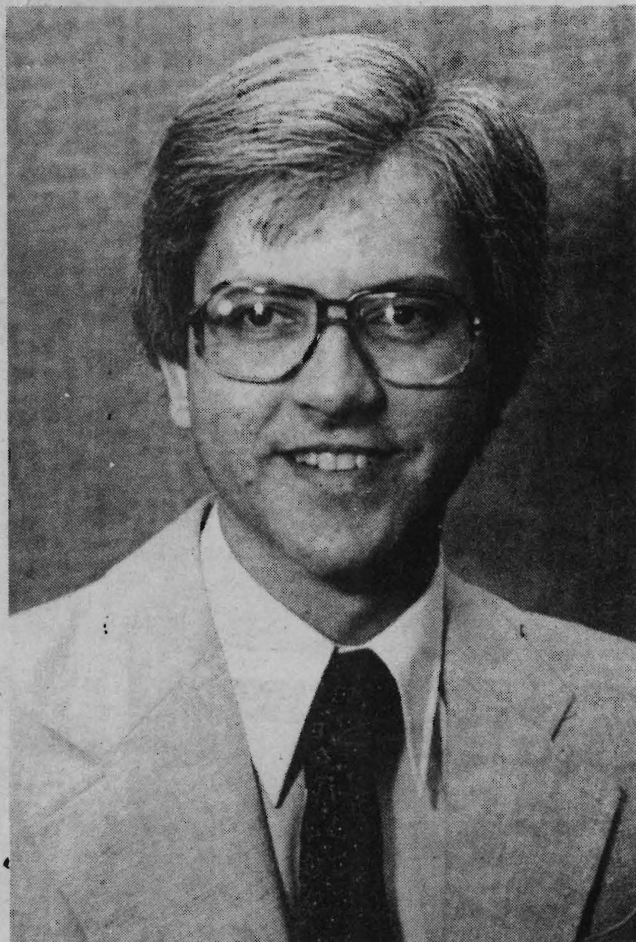
"I think that had a lot to do with me wanting to go into the ministry, that feeling of communal love."

From Hampton, Rev. Everett went to the University of South Carolina, where he studied journalism for two years before dropping out.

"I wasn't sure I really wanted to be a journalist, so I decided to make up my mind while working on a paper."

"I got a job with the Beaufort Gazette, which was a bureau for the Charleston News and Courier. It was the perfect newspaper job, because we were located at Hilton Head, a beautiful and exciting place."

At 24, he left the newspaper



REV. SAM EVERETT

thought it should become involved in, it's because it takes any institution time to act wisely."

Since 1976, Rev. Everett has been associate minister of education at First Baptist. And he has loved it.

"We walked into a nearly perfect situation when we came to Goldsboro. My wife teaches at North Drive School, and is

"I think we make a mistake when we try to push too much Christian theology on a small child," he said.

"They are too young to understand complex concepts, and it often does them more harm than good to try to teach them too much."

"I let them know that they are alright, that they have a special friend in God, and that He loves them."

Luther King was assassinated and a lot of other bad things were happening.

"The church was not as responsive to these happenings as I had hoped it would be. It was a time of exodus from the church in general.

"And I, like a lot of other people, took the easy way out. I tried to forget about the ministry and be happy doing something else."

He went back to Charleston where he got a job as the assistant director of cottage life at the South Carolina Retarded Children's Habilitation Center.

In 1969 he married Elaine Betts, and they moved back to North Carolina so she could finish her studies at Campbell.

He took a job as a rehabilitation counselor at the Harnett Youth Center, where he supervised inmate programs and did some counseling.

He then took a job with the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in Harnett, and then later another job with Vocational Rehabilitation in Smithfield.

"In 1973 I decided it was time for me to get back to doing what I really wanted to do, so I went to the Southeastern Baptist Seminary in Wake Forest.

"The church had changed some since I had first been at Campbell, but I guess I had changed more, much more.

"I realized that if I was ever going to do what I really wanted to do I could only do it in the context of the church.

"It's easier to stay uninvolved. But if you really want to change things, you have to work within the system instead of leaving it.

"And people have changed. If the church was slow to become involved in the issues that I

now is a 'university on wheels' series which Eddie Dedrick, associate minister at First Presbyterian Church, and I have planned together.

"It will be a series of experiences which will combine Christianity and culture."

High school-age members of the churches will travel to St. Andrews College this summer to take part in archaeological digs. It will be explained to them how archeology can help to prove that facts related in the Bible are historically accurate.

The young people will also travel to Sailor's Snug Harbor, a sailor's retirement home, where they will talk with the sailors and be confronted with the problems of aging, "perhaps for the first time in their lives," said Rev. Everett.

They will go to Washington, D. C. for a three-day trip and will stay near the foreign embassies, tour the embassies, and later discuss the role of Christian ethics as applied to international relations.

"We will hear lectures on Christian art and architecture while we are in D.C., and then later in the summer we will visit the Morehead Planetarium for a show on 'Chariots, Gods and UFOs,'" he said.

"The university on wheels program is the sort of thing that can be boring to no one. I hope it will give them a chance to learn, to experience, and to apply what they gain to Christianity.

"In my work with the young, the very young and the senior adults, I try to make things fun and interesting."

Rev. Everett's approach to young children is one characterized by understanding and patience.

together, and we prepare a lot of oriental dishes.

"We bike, and our latest project is a Tibetan terrier. But when we are not working we try to spend as much time with Meredith as we can. We like to do things as a family."

Rev. Everett said the best thing about his work is the variety.

"From the beginning of my day to the end, whether I'm doing paper work, visiting congregation members, working on programs or composing sermons, it's always something different.

"Things never get hum-drum, and there is plenty of variety. I find that very satisfying."

Rev. Everett said he would never discourage anyone from entering the seminary, even though there is currently an oversupply of ministers in almost every denomination.

"The seminary is not all that different from college," he said.

"There is a good deal of reflection involved, but there is also a whole lot of hard studying, researching and reading that goes on.

"You have a lot of people who are interested in one thing, and that's getting out there and being an effective minister. You have to know where you're coming from in order to do that.

"And no, I would never discourage anyone from entering the seminary if that's what he really wanted.

"There are a lot of positions open for talented ministers."

In his everyday life, Rev. Everett's philosophy centers around love, but a special kind of love.

"I think love that gets into action is my philosophy of life. For me, that love would have to center around God."

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