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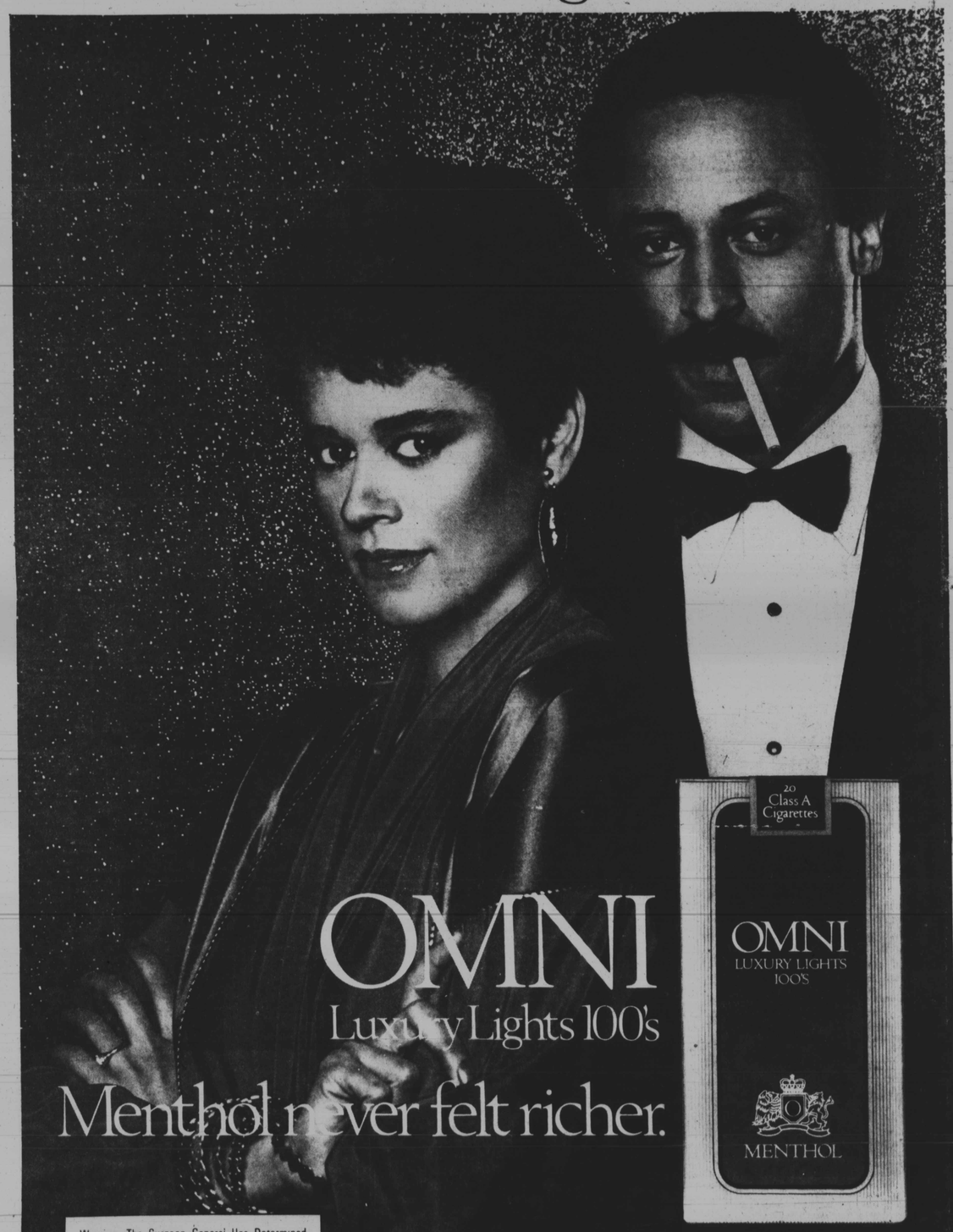

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THE LIVING CHURCH

17 year anniversary

Rev. Wendell Phillips adds unique style to ministry

By Portia E. Badham
AFRO Staff Writer

The motorcycle cruises up to the curb and the bearded driver, clad in jeans, a clerical shirt topped off with a large cross medallion and a sport jacket, shuts off the engine and hops off his Kawasaki.

He walks through the side door of the building and down the hall to his office to begin another day of his work... work he has done for 17 years. And as he puts it, in a rather "unorthodox way."

The driver is the Rev. Wendell H. Phillips, 46-year-old pastor of Heritage United Church of Christ and his attire and means of transportation are only in part symbolic of the unique ways in which he has conducted his ministry.

"I've always identified with 'street people,' they're very important to me. I guess that's why my ministry is so unorthodox," says Phillips.

His appearance as a minister is not what one would hardly invision as a "man of the cloth" and Phillips is the first to admit that it took his congregation some getting use to.

But after 17 years at Heritage, members of his congregation only had words of praise for their pastor at a recent reception, observing his anniversary.

Phillips, one of six children and one of five ministers in his family, did not plan on joining the ministry when he first attended Colgate-Rodchester School of Divinity. "I

"I went to the seminary not to be a minister but to study psychology and counseling," he said. "My call to the ministry came after my first year when I raised certain questions about Christianity.

"Christianity was the most exciting lifestyle that I had encountered and there seemed to be a lot more than the church was proclaiming. There was a distinction being made between Christianity as a creed and as a lifestyle."

It would almost seem natural that Phillips, who was born in Pittsburgh, the son of a minister, would have followed in his father's footsteps.

But he says, his church experience as a youngster "undoubtedly played a role but it only served as a subconscious part of my decision."

Phillips first assignment in the ministry at a church in Mumford, New York, was marked by controversy. The church was located 15 miles outside Rodchester and Phillips served as president of the Rodchester NAACP. He also worked with Malcolm X and the Muslims, a position that was atrongly opposed by other NAACP officials.

"My congregation did not understand my involvement with Malcolm X and why I was involved with the people in the street. But they had enough trust in me not to jump down my throat."

Phillips said the members felt he was young and would calm down in a few years. But four years later, he took yet another challenge . . . helping to establish Heritage United Church of Christ, here in Baltimore.

The church, at Liberty Heights Avenue and Dennlyn Road had a congregation of about 20 people and a past marked by problems. "It was a challenge and I knew if I stayed in the ministry it would have to be in a building sense... not with bricks and mortar but with people."

In addition to the people in his congregation, Phillips also tackled the problems of juveniles and inmates and working toward reducing the problems that plague the correctional system.

Because he felt the "church voice was not being heard in Annapolis, he sought a House of Delegates seat in 1974 but lost. He next attempt in 1978 proved successful and he became the first minister to serve in the state legislature in nearly 150 years.

"My basic belief is that God is God overall and that means over the political," said Phillips. "I've really just extended my ministry because if healing is needed anywhere, it's in Annapolis."

Although he considered leaving Heritage after his first four years to take an administrative job at a college in Florida, he now admits "he's here at Heritage to stay."

His weekly sermons are also touched with a contemporary flare as he interjects current events and world news.

One Sunday, he took the lead in saying his version of the Lord's Prayer. "Our leader, who sometimes art in Washington, tho unpopular be your name, may your re-election come, your energy program be done, on earth as as on Wall Street; Give us this day our daily petrol, and forgive us our lack of confidence in you, as we forgive each other for not trusting you, lead us not into recession, but deliver us from OPEC, for thine is the kingdom and the power and the flory, even until 1984, which may seem like forever."

It was a rather unorthodox prayer but it well displayed the feelings of the minister, whose ways are sometimes unorthodox, but purpose is always normal... and that's to be "Wendell and help people."

AFRO photo by Roman Hankewycz

FROM MOTORCYCLE RIDING to delivering the message, the Rev. Wendell Phillips, pastor of Heritage United Church of Christ, has combined an unorthodox method to his style of the ministry. At left, clad in his usual attire of jeans and a spot coat, he prepares to leave on his motorcycle... his most common means of transportation. At right, he gives the morning message during the services at the Northwest Baltimore church.

Religious workshops held at Enon Institute

"Christian Teaching Growing Leaders, is Designed for Growing Christians", is the theme for the annual Enon institute. The three day workshop is being held at Enon, Edmondson Avenue and Schroeder Street, where the Rev. Porter Phillips is pastor.

Worship, workshops and music will be featured and Rev. Phillips will be the Saturday speaker. Thursday workshop participants were Dr. Oberlin W. Perry who spoke on The Roles of the Board of Christian Education; The Rev. William E. Johnson, "The Roles of Deacons.

The Rev. J. Terry Wingate spoke on the Roles of Trustees. Others who participated were Mrs. Brenda Greene, The Roles of the Church School Teacher; the Rev. Darrell Green, The Roles of Officers of Church Organizations and Marvin Cheatham, Youth and Young Adults Faith Shaping.

Today (Friday) at 6:45 p.m. the Rev. Milton E. Owens will speak on the Bible and Personal Growth. Mrs. Maria Stansbury will talk about Children and the Parables of Jesus; Mrs. Maria Stansbury will discuss The Holy Spirit.

Others who will be participating are Rev. John Harvey, Leadership Developemnt; Rev. Paul Clark, Music of the Church; Rev. Raymond Kelly and Dr. Oberlin W. Perry.

Enon Institute is sponsored by the Board of Christian Education and is open to the public. Ira Canty Jr., is chairperson of the planning committee and Mrs. Bertha Nixon is chairperson of the Board of Christian Education. Mrs. Betty M. Shelton is director of Christian Education.

Metro church briefs

The Pastor's Aide of Berean Baptist Church, 5200 Denmore Ave., will present The Witnesses For Christ in Concert on Oct. 16, 7 p.m. at Northwestern High School, 6900 Park Heights Ave. Laura Sneed is chairperson, Annie Hairston is president of the Pastor's Aide and the Rev. John Lunn is pastor.

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The women of Timothy will sponsor a tea and fashion show on Oct. 17, 5 p.m. at Timothy Baptist Church, 1214 Saratoga St. The Rev. James L. Ball is pastor.

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The Rose of Sharon Auxiliary of Fulton Baptist Church, 1630 North Ave., will present the Chancel Choir of Douglas Memorial Community Church on Sunday, Oct. 18, 3 p.m. Mrs. Virginia Smith is president; Miss Leseita Smith, vice president, the Rev. Douglas Wilson is pastor.

Revival services will be held at Fulton Oct. 19-23. The Rev. Dr. T. E. Holmes, pastor of Community Baptist Church in New Haven, Connecticut will be the speaker. Services will be held at 7:30 p.m.

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The Lutheran Church women of Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Grindon and Mainfield Ave., will have their oyster dinner on Oct. 21, 3 to 7 p.m. at the church.

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The Rev. John Hurst Adams, presiding bishop of the Second Episcopal District will be the 11 a.m. speaker Oct. 18, at Waters AME Church.

At 3:30 p.m. The Sanctuary Choir of Shiloh Christian Community Church will sponsor a play, "Arms Too Short To Box With God." Carolyn Tynes is chairperson; Imogene Douglas, president and the Rev. John W. Duckette is pastor.

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The women of St. Paul United Methodist Church, 1000 Saratoga St, will observe Women's Day on Oct. 25.

Their theme is "Love Through Inclusiveness." The Rev. Ruth Travis is the 11 a.m. speaker and the Rev. Cynthia Jones of Jones Tabernacle Church is the 3:30 p.m. speaker. Rosalind Seth is chairperson and Rosie Gates is co-chairperson. The Rev. George R. Allen is pastor.

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A recital will be held at Mt. Calvary Church, Oct. 18, 4 p.m. at 816 Eutaw St.

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The City Temple Mass Choir concert will be held at City Temple on Oct. 25, 6 p.m. The Rev. W. W. Payne is pastor.

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Bishop John Hurst Adams will be discussing the conference program and budget at a mid concerence Oct. 16-17 at Third Avenue AME Church in Richmond Va.,

TESTIMONIAL BANQUET — The Rev. C. Anthony Muse, pastor of Mt. Zion United Methodist Church in Ellicott City, where he has served for four years will be honored on Oct. 17, 6 p.m. The banquet will be held at Morning Star Baptist Church in Catonsville. Rev. Muse is also the pastor of Mt. Olivet United Methodist Church in Catonsville.

Benny Washington, The Johnny Polite Trio and Melvin Green will be in a recital on Sunday, Oct. 17, 6 p.m. at Harlem Park Baptist Church, 612 Gilmor St. The Rev. Dr. Raymond Kelly Jr., is pastor.

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Family and Friends Day will be observed on Oct. 18, 3:30 p.m. at Sharon Baptist Church, Stricker and Presstman St. Miss Essie Hughes will be the speaker. Mrs. Elaine Brown Page is chairperson of the activities and Mrs. Mary Ward is chairperson of Women's Day. Rev. James L. Moore is pastor.

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Members of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, 214 Loudon Ave., will sponsor revival services Oct. 19-23, 7:30 p.m. The Rev. William McCoy Jr., pastor of Friendship Baptist Church will be the speaker. The Rev. Nathaniel Sapp is pastor of Pleasant Grove Baptist.

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The women of Central Summerfield United Methodist Church, 700 Wildwood Parkway will observe their 10th annual Women's Day on Oct. 18. Their theme is "Love, The Key to Christian Growth in the Eighties and Beyond." Mrs. Myrna Powell will be the 11 a.m. speaker and the Women's Day Chorus will be in concert at 3 p.m. Mrs. Althea Coleman is chairperson and the Rev. Daniel C. McLellan Jr., is pastor.

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Grace United Presbyterian Church, 2604 Banister Rd., will celebrate its annual harvest home Sunday on Oct. 18, 11 a.m. Mrs. Cecelia Bryant of Bethel AME will be the speaker. The Rev. William T. Peters Jr. is pastor.

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The senior Usher Board of Hemingway Temple African Methodist Episcopal Church will celebrate their anniversary on Oct. 18, 3:30 p. m. Mrs. Myrna Powell of Ebenezer Baptist Church will be the speaker. The Rev. M. Arthur Camper is pastor.

Southern Baptist observes its 50th anniversary

As part of the 50th anniversary celebration of Southern Baptist Church, 1701 North Chester St., several activities have been held at the church.

Mrs. Myrtle Owens, an active member of the church recently received a certificate of appreciation for her services in assisting the needy families of Africa. Last Surday, she was crowned chief of Liberia by the Rev. Mark Richards Jr.

The church will sponsor a banquet on Nov. 16 at Martin's West. Mrs. Alvera Harris is banquet chairperson and the Rev. Nathaniel Higgs is pastor. The Rev. Edmond D. Meade will be the speaker and Dr. Emmitt Burns will be presiding.

Several clubs of the church will observe their anniversary on Sunday, Oct. 18, 4 p.m. The Rev. Vernon Dobson will be the speaker.

Among other activities that have been held at the church was Founders Day, Memorial Day services were held in March in memory of all deceased members. Dr. Charles C. Hayes, pastor of St. Charles Baptist Church in Washington was the revival speaker in May.

The combined anniversary celebration of the ushers and nurses annual choir fellowship night will be held Oct. 23, 7:30 p.m. at the church. Visting choirs from local churches will be participating and guest soloist will be Thelma Jackson from Shiloh Christian Community Church. Cleo Johnson is the choir director.

Women's Day services held at John Wesley United Methodist

By Doris M. Duncan

The women of John Wesley United Methodist Church recently celebrated their annual Women's Day. The day was a sprit filled one, filled with heart warming devotional services by Lenturia Mullin.

Mrs. Minnie Washington of St. Timothy Baptist Church was the 11 a.m. speaker and the altar call prayer was given by Evangelist Myrna Powell of Ebenezer Baptist Church. Music was by the Women's Day choir directed by Mrs. Lillie Meyers. Mrs. Evelyn Pinkney was the organist and soloist were Sandra Roberson, Annie Hopkins, Vera Johns Rose Dingle, Thelma Benns, Arbella Johnson, Marietta Reay, Rosalind Yorker and Yvonne Johnson.

Other members who participated in the morning services were Stephanie Owens, Pearl Wallace, Sandra Roberson, Corrine Saunders. The occasion was given by Lerenzer McQuaige and Mrs. Brenda McKinley gave the response to the welcome.

Several women of the church were honored and received a certificate of recognition. Mrs. Lucy Price was honored as one of the oldest members of John Wesley and Mrs. Helen Lewis, chairperson of Women's Day received special recognition.

The colors for Women's Day were green and white. Several churches and organizations made presentations in memory of Ethel Bond and Mozell Armstrong presented a check to the church.

Dinner was served following the morning service. The Rev. Agnes Hooks of Washington was the 3 p.m. speaker and music was by the "Third Generation Choir" of Lewin United Methodist Church. Mrs. Barbara Cooper was the lead soloist. Certificates were given to chairpersons and co-chairpersons by Mrs. Duncan. The Rev. Calvin Crosson is pastor of John Wesley.

How to get church news in the AFRO

For coverage of any church events, mail your announcements to Ms. Pam Widgeon, religious editor, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21201 or call 728-8200 Monday through Friday afternoon.

There is no charge for news or photographic coverage. Publication of any church news is contingent upon factors of time and news space available and organizations from all religious denominations, as space permits.

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