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THE LIVING CHURCH

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Saturday, February 24, 1990

NEW CREATION CHURCH:

Reaching out to the young married couples

By Evan. Theresa Mercer
AFRO Church Writer

The Church building was established to be a place where God's people could receive knowledge of God and be strengthened as they learn about God through His word.

The church building was designed to be a House of Prayer where whole families would be nurtured as one.

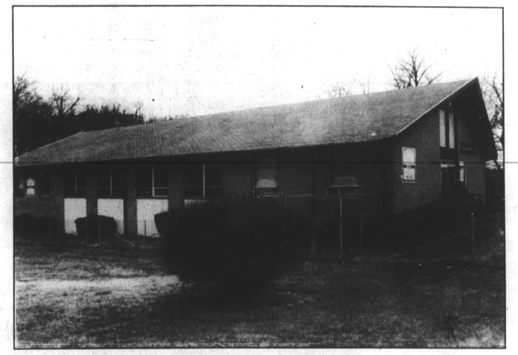
The families as God intended, consisted of husband, wife and then children. Today many of our families consist of one parent and children.

To help bring the focus back to the scriptures, to encourage more family unity, and to build up the total family structure, more and more churches are beginning to focus on the families foundation, the marriage.

For eight consecutive years, New Creation Church has encouraged it's married couples by setting aside a special time for them to relax and see God's glory in their union.

The week-end of February 9, was used by 17 married couples of New Creation to renew their wedding vows during a well planned week-end away, at Frederick Maryland Inn.

The weekend theme was "Strike the Original Match." A poem: "The Marriage," author unknown, was used to open the doors of communication between married partners.



New Creation Church

The entire Strike the Original Match Weekend was set up for the married couples "to rest and reflect on the precious treasures that" the marriages contained, stated by Yvonne Merritt.

On Saturday after breakfast, the couples had choices of shopping, sightseeing, a weight room and hotel hot tub.

After dinner, hosted by Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Turner, a program was held for the couples.

On Sunday, the couples renewed their commitment to one another by renewing their wedding vows. The Pastors of New Creation, Aaron and Deborah Claxton rewed the couples in Holy Matrimony.

Mr. and Mrs. Rolanda Finch, hosted the reception which followed.

Announcement of the couples was done by Minister Irene Ushry.

Well wishers sent congratulations to the couples, reminding them to forget the past and start anew. The couples were told to let God be their helper.

To be renewed in the spirit of their minds, and to give no place to the devil. (Eph. 4:23,27)

The couples were reminded to "be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ sake hath forgiven each of them."

For these married couples, love was highlighted. They were told that, "Love is patient and kind, Love is not jealous or conceited or proud or easily provoked, that love does not keep a record of wrongs.

"Love is not happy with evil but is pleased with the truth, Love never gives up it's Faith, Hope and Patience, Love never fails."

New Creation, located at 5401 Frankford Ave., and Pastors Aaron B. Claxton and Deborah Claxton, lovingly encourage all married couples to take the time out to focus in on the beauty that's in your marriages and to continue to "Strike the Original Match."

Couples: Messrs. and Mesdames Malcolm Stanwick, William Smith, Aaron Claxton, Brian Claxton and Edward Brewington.

Couples: Messrs. and Mesdames Michael Coleman, Frank Ushry, Ernest Rony, Arthur Jones, Samuel Merritt and Kelvin Braithwaite.

A WORD OF HOPE

By Maxine L. Wallace

The true meaning of Lent

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the spirit into unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently:" I Peter 1:22.

Greetings and blessings in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ. Beloved, won't you allow the Lord to minister His unconditional love, His wonderful peace, and His unspeakable joy unto your heart just now. Yes, as you are in the healing presence of the Lord, won't you just lift up your hands and give Him a wave offering. Oh, how He loves you. Yes, God really loves you. . . .

And isn't it good to know that because He first loved us, we can really love the Lord. Not with a Sunday morning love . . . but with a seven - day - a - week — love . . . a twenty - four - hours - a - day love. We can love the Lord deep down on the inside . . . with everything we've got . . . with our whole soul, mind, body, and strength. A song writer said, To know Him is to love Him. The more I know Him, the more I want to love Him . . . The more I love Him, the more I want to know Him. Isn't it good to be in a love relationship with the Lord Jesus? Isn't it good to know that you belong to Him, and He belongs to you?

My friend, God's love is powerful . . . God's love is mighty . . . God's love is life changing. Because God's love lives on the inside, we are not the same. By the power and might of His great love, we are continually transformed . . . re-shaped . . . and fashioned in the likeness of Jesus.

God's love is a pure and holy love. It is a love that encourages and edifies . . . It's a love that gives . . . It's a love that knows no boundaries . . . no limitations . . . and is a respecter of no persons. His love loves Black and White . . . rich and poor . . . young and old. My friend, you are loved.

And because of the transforming love of God, we can love one another. We can really love one another. Yes, because the Agape love of God dwells in us, we can love our neighbors as we love ourselves. That means, we can reach out and touch somebody's life. We can make the difference in somebody's life . . . We can give to others the gift of our love. Not a wishy - washy love, but a pure love . . . a holy love . . . a God love.

My friend, let us love one another; for love is of God.

The Bible says that we ought to be kindly affectioned one to another. We ought to prefer others before ourselves. Let us seek opportunities to be a blessing to someone else. Let us love one another from the heart.

I'm so glad that God's love keeps on loving . . . It doesn't run out . . . it doesn't get tired . . . It doesn't shrink or fade . . . The Bible says, Nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God. Thank God, His love does not give up on us.

Remember Lent? Remember the weeks of denial, sacrifice, fast, abstinence and penance?

Unfortunately, these negative aspects are all many Catholics remember when they think of Lent, says the Rev. Kevin Irwin, a theology professor at The Catholic University of America.

People are so busy doing things (or avoiding them) that they lose sight of the season's element of hope.

The 40-day retreat known as Lent, the theologian contends, also is designed to be a hopeful thime — one during which an individual is encouraged to refocus on the paschal mystery of Christ.

The seasonal celebrations of Lent are full of symbols and gestures, Father Irwin notes, but it is through this communal sharing one can gain the personal confidence to accept the reconciliation and liberation Christ's sacrifice won for all.

When Lent begins this year on Wednesday, Feb. 28, the imposition of ashes will be more than a simple reminder of an individual's mortality.

The ashes, Father Irwin explains, are a positive reminder to turn again to the Lord, so that one can identify more deeply with the paschal mystery.

This process of personal conversion, he adds, is meant to continue until the day one is called from this life to the next, where ashes, fasts and sacraments no longer will be needed.

There, all will be assumed into the mystery of Christ.

In the days following Ash Wednesday, Lenten readings and prayers sharpen the notion of one's total reliance on God.

Metro Church Briefs

Pennsylvania Ave. AME Zion Church

Pennsylvania Avenue AME Zion Church, 1128 Pennsylvania Ave. will observe its 59th annual Women's Day Sunday, Feb. 25. Mrs. Marlene Bishop, Missionary supervisor, Eighth Episcopal District, will speak at 11 a.m. worship service. Rev. Diana Cherry of Full Gospel AME Zion Church, Temple Hills, MD is guest speaker at 3:30 p.m. service. A musical program will take place at 6 p.m.

Prayer Breakfast is scheduled for Saturday, Feb. 24. Rev. Debbie Ervin is speaker for this occasion at 8 a.m. Call 448-0337.

First Baptist Church

Coalition of Pastors, Ministers and Concerned Citizens present tribute to Nelson Mandela Sunday, Feb. 25 at 7:30 p.m. Tribute, which is in observance of History Month, will take place at First Baptist Church, 525 North Caroline St.

St. Matthew's United Methodist Church

Turners Station's Celebration of Blackness, sponsored by St. Matthew's United Methodist Church and Dundalk - Sparrows Point NAACP is a five week African - American Celebration Experience during the month of March. Registration should take place not later than Saturday, Feb. 24. Sessions will be held every Saturday in March from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Adults and children grades 2 - 6 are invited.

Open house will take place Sunday, Feb. 25 at the church, located at 101 Avon Beach Rd. at 2 p.m. Call 285-4466.

Shiloh Progressive Freewill Baptist Church

The Rev. Willie Mae Gregg, assistant pastor of Shiloh Progressive Freewill Baptist Church, 2308 East Madison St. will observe her 35th Gospel Singing Anniversary, March 4 at 3 p.m. Event will take place at Booker T. Washington High School, 1302 McCulloh St. Special guests from Rockingham, NC will be Howard McLaurin, Swanee Jubilees and Bishop Adam Rollins.