THE LIVING CHURCH

Rev. Darneal Johnson remembers 10 year faith walk

By Sue Williams
AFRO Staff Writer

There was inside the walls of Wayland Baptist Church when the Rev. Darneal Johnson assumed the pastorate 10 years ago.

Caught in a turmoil caused by a split within the congregation, when the former pastor of Wayland, the Rev. W. W. Payne, left the church taking a sizable part of the members with him, the church was also very heavily in debt, had a relatively large number of young people with no direction, and a faltering outreach program.

For five months, the church had desperately looked for a pastor who they felt would be able to piece together the jagged edges of what had once been a great church, and every Sunday for those five months, they had listened to a different preacher deliver the Word of God, only to come to the conclusion that although he had some of the qualities, he just did not have everything.

And then the Lord sent the Rev. Darneal Johnson.

Johnson, his wife Harriet and their two sons, visited the ailing church from a rather comfortable pastorate in Galilee, Virginia, knowing some of what to expect but not quite prepared for the total picture. As Johnson preached that first Sunday, thoughts raced through his mind that here was a church, a place and a people in need, and he was not quite sure how it would all work out.

But as he preached, however, it seemed that the congregation had decided that it would all work out fine...with Rev. Johnson at the helm.

When he was offered the pastorate, he was besieged with mixed emotions mostly from himself. His first thought was, he remembers, that he "could do all things through Christ..." and even as he muttered those words under his breath, he began to realize that the church was not a place he would have gone but somewhere the Lord was specifically directing him. He prayed for guidance, and all he could get from the Lord was a steadfast affirmation. He talked it over with his wife, who told him, quietly, that if it was what the Lord wanted him to do that he had no choice but to take it and that she had no problems with him going.

He thought about the 300 or so members he had preached to that Sunday, remembering their unmistakable faith and determination that things would be better and then great, and the decision had been made.

"Yes," he said softly, "I saw the state of things, but through that, I saw the vision."

That vision included building on the faith of the members, building a strong financial base for the church, and building a young peoples department that would form the backbone of the church and be its moving vehicle in the ministering of Christianity to the northwest Baltimore community to which the church belongs to this day.

He accepted the call.

In the ten years since that first day, Rev. Johnson has had the joy of having seen the fruits of an obedient spirit; he has seen the fig tree bear more fruit than he ever expected. The faith of the now more than 3500 members is solid, the financial state of the church is good enough for there to have been a burning ceremony in the late seventies, and the youth and young peoples department, including what Rev. Johnson calls the "best Sunday School in the city, makes him poke his chest out, however modestly.

It has been a journey and a victory, all in one.

"I am sure than in those first months of his ministry he had a lot of problems," said his wife, Harriet, "but he never let me know. He doesn't think I am as strong as I am, I guess,...but for whatever reasons, he didnt bring the problems home. I could see that there were things on his mind, but he wouldnt tell, and after a while, I wouldnt ask. I just prayed for strength, and things worked out."

Johnson himself acknowledges that there have been problems, real problems, since his first days, but he says his faith would not let him buckle under what he fondly calls people problems," or those times and situations when the words and or actions of people approach the unbearable.

"Theres a reason why I have been able to get past that," he says. "First of all, it is because I try to understand why people act as they do. Usually, when people "act up," it is because their faith is weak, and because they cannot see things in a spiritual way because they are looking through carnal eyes."

Through the feeding of the Word of God, combined with what might aptly be called spiritual "faith sessions," Johnson contends that a lot of the weak faith has disappeared from Wayland.

"We teach our church family not to claim anything negative, because that which is negative is not Christ-like."

Every Sunday, he says, the congregation repeats the words from the Bible: "Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world." Slowly, perhaps through repetition of the words which are as powerful as an antibiotic warding off an infection, changes

Rev. Darneal Johnson

have come. Rev. Johnson has seen it and felt it, and so have the congregational members who have taken the time to absorb the balm.

Because of this faith-building, the church has been able to make strides. The youth and young peoples department, which Johnson obviously regards as the backbone of the church, have a zeal and enthusiasm for Christianity that make the pastor smile.

"Every Sunday after services a group of young people visit the prison. They take church..." and he emphasizes the word church, "to the inmates."

"And do you know that souls have been won to Christ because of what these young people are doing?" Johson makes no attempt to hide his pride, explaining that it is the youth of Wayland that go from door to door, seeking those community members who would go to church if it were not for some very real problems, like no clothes, no transportation, or maybe no wheelchair or crutches. The young people visit the homes, unabashedly and determine the needs. They meet the needs and then make a personal investment of time and commitment to make sure the people actually get what they need physically so they can go and get what they need spiritually.

It is all a part of the vision that Rev. Johnson saw in 1971.

"Our Sunday School," he says, "has to be the best in the city. We have trained teachers, we use videotape, films and tape recorders. And the kids respond." From the way Johnson says it, one gets the feeling that he feels, at least, that the Sunday School is so good that the kids cannot help but respond, which is the way he wants it. He says the School also has an adult division which apparently has more developing to do.

"When he came here " said Alice Cooper, a member of Wayland since 1939, "he brought young ideas with him. He was always interested in the youth. He made sure they became a part of the worship experience, that they became really involved in the church. I guess he felt that when we died off, there was going to have to be somebody to take over."

To that end, the youth department was organized and developed. One of the associate ministers of Wayland, Rev. John Lund undertook the ambitious task of becoming the churchs first minister to youth, and has now assumed the role of city-wide youth minister. The work of chipping away, however, at the posts which plague young people and thwart their journey to Christ, goes on, and will continue to do so.

Johnson smiles when he recollects that if he had had it his way, he would not have been a minister at all.

"This was the last calling," he says. A popular sports player in his Cardozo High School in Washington, D.C., Johnson said he had the position, the social life and the spending change he needed to make him happy. Because his father had been a minister, he had been involved in church life for as long as he could remember, and he had decided that it was not the life for him.

His decision would have been fine if it had not been for the Lord constantly nagging him, until at the age of 18, he finally submitted. He attended the Virginia Seminary College in Lynchburg, Va., and several other schools for graduate work before serving as copastor in Northwest Baptist Church in Washington, D.C. with his father, and the Galilee Baptist Church in Virginia.

"The ministry was the last thing I wanted to do, and I still have days when I wonder why Im doing it, but then I look around me, and I understand," he says. "I always manage to get back to the core...that it is God's will."

Despite the victories for Wayland these last 10 years, there are more journeys to go. His wife concedes that some of the "people problems" her husband has had are due to his innate stubbornness:: "he will not be pushed," she says, and that is not likely to be a part of him that will ever change. And, there are small things, like his being a progressive Baptist and the church being National Baptist in thrust.

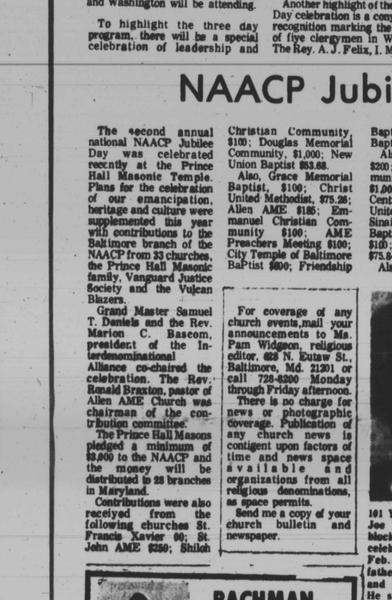
But those are just things, no greater, one would suppose, than the initial problems that met Dr. Johnson at the front door 10 years ago. The things that are negative are there, but they are not acknowledged, not by Dr. Johnson and slowly, not by his congregation, either.

"I have to remember," says Dr. Johnsn, "that I can do all things through Christ...

TWO OF THE OLDEST MEMBERS OF WAYLAND BAPTIST CHURCH remembered back to Rev. Darneal Johnson's early days at a banquet held in his honor Sunday afternoon. Mrs. Mamie Foster (L) has been a member since 1939, and Deaconess Alice Cooper, since 1956. The best thing about Rev. Johnson, they both agreed, is that Rev. Johnson has "always been there when he is needed."

(AFRO photo by Mark Gail)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS for the anniversary celebration for the Rev. Darneal Johnson, shown



AFRO photo by Mark Gail from left are Mrs. Roberta Thomas, Deacon Joseph A. Chester and Deacon Laurence Campbell.

Episcopalian clergy sees need for change in black leadership

By Sue Williams
AFRO Staff Writer

According to at least one member of the Episcopalian priesthood, the denomination is faltering in its responsibility to the black clergy and community.

The Rev. Junius Carter, pastor of the Church of the Holy Cross in Pittsburgh, told the AFRO in an interview this week that there is no drive within the national Episcopalian church structure to bring blacks into the clergy, or to elevate them to decision-making positions once they have entered the priesthood.

"In the Episcopal Church," Rev. Carter said, "there has been the largest single denominational growth in the last decade, and within that growth, (over 50 million have joined the church) there have been more blacks to join than in any other denomination."

Despite those facts, however, Rev. Carter says that there, very few blacks on the decision-making level of the church hierarchy.

In the Maryland diocese, for example, Rev. Carter said that there are no blacks in decision making positions. In view of the fact that the church holds regular policy-making meetings, and in light of the fact that the clergy, white and black, are asking blacks to join the Episcopal church, Carter sees the exclusion of blacks as a travesty that will do nothing for the progress of blacks inthe church.

"There is nobody in a position," Rev. Carter said, " for blacks to look up to, and nobody to look out for their best interests."

Rev. Carter has a vested interest in the problem. As the only black Episcopalian church in Western Pennsylvania, Holy Cross has had his share of battles to fight Carterhas observed, over time, the effects of the exclusion of blacks from such important policy-making bodes as the Executive Council or the bishopry. He has seen black priests put into token positions of power, such as suffragan bishop, passed over for the bishopry, almost imperceptibly, by whites over time.

At one time, the situation might have been almost bearable, especially in light of the fact that the great part of the Episcopalian membership was white, but as blacks have drawn to the faith, Carter views the dormant state of black inclusion into the hierarchy as a danger to the very survival of blacks who are seeking refuge in the Episcopal church.

Rev. Carter, who has been in the priesthood for over 25 years, does not consider himself an activist of any sort, but rather very aware of the implications of ignoring the problems and the situaton much longer.

"We have many black priests, brilliant, who are being passed over," Carter says. **"You have to think about them, just like you have to think about the blacks who are looking to them for some sort of guidance."**

Carter feels that if the Episcopalian church does not look into the problem and address the issues, it will be synonymous with "selling our people down the river."

"Anybody who is part of the white structure is part of the racism inherent in this society," he said. "We will always be black, no matter how high we go, in any field, but what we have to do is fight the racism so that our voices can be heard."

Implied in Carter's statements was that the white priesthood,no matter how benevolent the intentions, is not able, realistically, to handle the needs of its emerging black membership. That membership, he contends, is clamoring for a place within the faith, to worship as they can best, and to have their needs met in the most effective way. Unfortunately, the strings of racism pervade the priesthood just as they do all other professions, which explains the need for a black policy making voice to be established.

"In our church, for example," Carter said, "we are attempting to mesh our blackness with our religion." Carter defines the task as necessary, remembering back to the first days of his pastoraTe at Holy Cross.

"When I came here, the comgregation was very beougoise. The people were kind of uptight, afraid to speak, that whole thing."

But Carter says that through love, and through incorporating some of the strains of blackness, including joy

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Metro church briefs

The youth choir of First Cornithian Baptist Church will celebrate their anniversary on Feb. 15, 11 a.m. Col. Solomon Harp of Chester, Va., will be the 11 a.m. speaker. Miss Lynn Nash is chairperson, Everett Jefferson is president and the Rev. Henry J. Turner is pastor.

The women of Trinity African Methodist Episcopal Church will have their annual luncheon on Feb. 14, 12:00 at the Holiday Inn. Mrs. Elizabeth K. Stevenson and Mrs. Marylou Barnes are co-chairpersons, Mrs. Anna G. Thomas is president, Mrs. Dorothy Chappell, chairperson for publicity and the Rev. W. K. Woods is pastor.

The men of Union Memorial United Methodist Church will be celebrating their annual Men's Day on Feb. 22.

The committee for the sick of New Mount Zion Baptist Church, 817 Mount St., will present the Norman Muldrow Male Chorus in recital on Feb. 15, 3:30 p.m. The Rev. Joseph Davis is pastor.

The Flower Circle of Israel Baptist Church, Preston and Chester Street will present Edmond D. Meade Jr., in recital and the Affirmation of Faith Chorus on Feb. 22, 3:30 p.m. The Rev. Harley Wilson Jr., is pastor.

The Deacons and Trustees of Israel Baptist Church will celebrate their anniversary on Feb. 15. Dr. C. Eugene Overstreet will be the 11a.m. speaker.

Steward Day will be observed at St. Paul United Methodist Church,

FIRST CORINTHIAN SPEAKER — Col. Solomon Harp III will be the 11 a.m. speaker Feb. 15 at First Corinthian Baptist Church, 3512 Powhatan Ave. The Rev. Henry J. Turner is pastor. Mrs. Grace Renson will be the special guest soloist at the 3:30 p.m. service.

1000 Saratoga St., on Feb. 22, 3:30 p.m. The Rev. Richard Hicks will be the speaker and the Rev. George R. Allen is pastor.

The youth of First Baptist Church, 535 Caroline St., will sponsor a play on Feb. 27, 7 p.m.

The Chancel Choir of Douglas Memorial Community Church, Madison and Lafayette Ave., will be singing Feb. 22, 5 p.m. The Rev. Marion C. Bascom is pastor.

The Fund Raising Development Committee (FRED) of the United Baptist Missionary Convention is sponsoring its annual banquet at Martin's West on March 19, 7 p.m. The Rev. Charles Smith, deputy executive director of the national NAACP will be the speaker. The Rev. Lorenzo Graves is chairman of the committee. For ticket information call 728-6777, 462-4800.

There will be a rummage sale at Memorial Episcopal Church, Lafayette Avenue and Bolton Street on Feb. 27, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Feb. 28, 9 am. to 1 p.m. Items for sale include clothes, furniture, toys, household goods, books and white elephants.

The Rev. William Johnson director of pastoral care at Provident Hospital will be honored at a testimonial dinner on Feb. 23, 7 p.m. at LaFontaine Bleu.

The Young Adult Choir of Shiloh AME Church, 2601 Lyndhurst Ave., will sponsor a concert on Feb. 15, 5 p.m. Mrs. Roberta Johnson is president and the Rev. Cordell Hunter is pastor.

The Naomi Grand Chapter Order of Eastern Star, School of Instruction will present The Velvetones of Naomi and the J. LeSamp Singers in concert on Feb. 15, 4 p.m. at Morning Star Baptist Church, 1063 Fayette St.

The Missionaries of Union Baptist Church, 1219 Druid Hill Ave., will celebrate their annual Missionary Day on Sunday, Feb. 22. Dr. Mary H. Wright of Philadelphia, Pa., will be the 11 a.m. speaker. The Rev. Vernon N. Dobson is pastor.

—Episcopalians

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in the worship experience, those constrants were broken. They learned to love as they learned to worship. The church is much different today.

"We are in the process of constructing a chapel," he said, "and we have an artist who is depicting Jesus as a black."

The effects of that painting already have already been felt, , Carter says. One little girl, after studying the painting, said to him one day, "I didnt know Jesus was black."

"You see, "Carter said, "there is a need for the black church to project positive black images, in addition to providing a meaningful worship experience.."

Without blacks in policy-making positions, Carter does not feel that this dual function of the priesthood for blacks will be fulfilled.

Rev. Carter feels that the problem has boiled down to commitment; he is moved by the that unless blacks start to respond to the existing structure and make their needs and desires known, nothing will change, and a people will be hurt.

"Religion is very strong:" he says, ". but the only way it can be as strong as it is, is for people to make commitments. If wedont have anything to offer, we wont have anything to receive."

Carter said that a group of black Episcopalians will meet in Pittsburgh in June of this year to address this problem, among others.

"Were going to be dealing with ways to strengthen the black church," he said. He said that the conference will be for blacks to discuss how they can formulate their own policies. He says they dont need the whites there to help them.

"We need to have the power to say to the diocese...that we have given you a large amount of money over the years and you have given nothing back to our community. Weve helped you... now you help us."

AME Founders' Day observed

In recognition of the founding of the African Methodist Episcopal Church by the Right Rev. Richard Allen in Philadelphia, Pa., in 1787, the second Episcopal district headed by the Right Rev. John Hurst Adams has planned three days of events.

The activities will be held Feb. 12-14 at Turner Memorial AME and Metropolitan AME Churches in Washington. Guests from Maryland, Virginia North Carolina and Washington will be attending.

To highlight the three day program, there will be a special celebration of leadership and reception honoring the prelate, the Right Rev. Adams on Feb. 13 at Metropolitan AME Church. National leaders, visting bishops and church representatives will offically welcome Bishop Adams and his family to Washington. Bisbop Adams was assigned to the second district at the 1980 general conference in June 1980. The program will begin at 7:30 p.m. and will be followed by a reception.

Another highlight of the Founders Day celebration is a conyocation of recognition marking the retirerent of five clergymen in Washington. The Rev. A. J. Felix, I. M. Gray, O. J. Hayman, W. M. Moseley and w. B. Nash represent more than 250 years of productive ministry.

Guests and consultants scheduled to attend are Bishop H. T. Primm, retired; and Bishop P. R. Cousin, prelate over the ninth Episcopal district, Dr. M. William Howard, president National Council of Churcbes, Dr. C. Eric Lincoln and Dr. James Forbes. Other activities include business meetings with clergy, the Womens Missionary Society, Young Peoples Department and Lay organizations and a cornerstone laying service for the new educational building of the Ward AME Church.

NAACP Jubilee day

The second annual national NAACP Jubilee Day was celebrated recently at the Prince Hall Masonic Temple. Plans for the celebration of our emancipation, heritage and culture were supplemented this year with contributions to the Baltimore branch of the NAACP from 32 churches, the Prince Hall Masonic family, Vanguard Justice Society and the Vulcan Blazers.

Grand Master Samuel T. Daniels and the Rev. Marion C. Bascom, president of the Interdenominational Alliance co-chaired the celebration. The Rev. Ronald Braxton, pastor of Allen AME Church was chairman of the contribution committee.

The Prince Hall Masons pledged a minimum of $5,000 to the NAACP and the money will be distributed to 23 branches in Maryland.

Contributions were also received from the following churches St. Francis Xavier 00; St. John AME $250; Shiloh Christian Community, $100; Douglas Memorial Community, $1,000; New Union Baptist $53.68.

Also, Grace Memorial Baptist, $100; Christ United Methodist, $75.26; Allen AME $185; Emmanuel Christian Community $100; AME Preachers Meeting $100; City Temple of Baltimore BaPtist $00; Friendship Baptist $60; New Shiloh Baptist $1,000.

Also, Calvary Baptist $200; Cherry Hill Community $20; Union Baptist $1,000; Bethel AME $705; Central BaPtist; Mt. Zion United Methodist $43; Mt. Sinai Baptist $100; Union Baptist Turners Station $100; Knox Presbyterian $75.84.

Also, First Baptist $150; BaPtist $100; Metropolitan United Methodist $100; Concord Baptist $100; Good Shepherd Community Baptist $17.25; New Zion Baptist $30; St. Paul Baptist $100; Doswell Temple Church of God in Christ $50; Faith Baptist $200; Cherry Hill United Methodist $60; Heritage United Church of Christ $305; The Vulcan Blazers Inc., contributed $500 and Vanguard Justice Society contributed $100. Mrs. Enolia P. McMillan is President of the Baltimore branch of the NAACP.

For coverage of any church events,mail your announcements to Ms. Pam Widgeon, religious editor, 628 N. Eutaw St., Baltimore, Md. 21201 or call 728-4200 Monday through Friday afternoon.

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

Send me a copy of your church bulletin and newspaper.

101 YEARS OLD — Mr. Joe Carter of the 400 block Denison St. will celebrate his birthday on Feb. 15. Mr. Carter is the father of five children and five grandchildren. He says he still enjoys fishing and retired in 1979.

St. Ambrose Church presents 6 days at Myrtle Beach South Carolina Aug. 3-8, 1981. Cost $200.00 per person. For information call Mrs. I. Kane 367-9918 day, 466-2982 night or Mrs. A. Fulton 542-5041.

Rev. Darneal Johnson honored

The Rev. Darneal Johnson was honored throughout the week last week for his ten years of service at the Wayland Baptist Church, culminating in praise worship services on Sunday and a banquet in his honor Sunday afternoon.

Guest speakers at Sunday services were The Rev. John Lunn, pastor of the Berean Baptist Church, at 7:45 and the Rev. John Harvey, Jr., associate minister at Wayland, 11:00 a.m.

The church had a foot-stomping, holy-ghost good time at the Sunday 11:00 a.m. service, with outstanding choral selections rendered by the combined choirs of Wayland under the direction of Janette Campbell.

The banquet in Dr Johnson's honor was held in the gymnasium of the church, decorated by a special committee committee and catered by Bond Catering Service.

AFRO photo by Mark Gail

HONOREE — The Rev. Darneal Johnson is shown with his sons and wife. Shown standing from left are Darneal Johnson III, Gregory Johnson and Mrs. Harriet Johnson, wife.

The Rev. A.C.D. Vaughn, guest preacher at the banquet, reminded the church that it was significant that the banquet was held in the church facility instead of at Martin's West or some other establishment.

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REV. FOUST

22—11:00 A.M.—Morning Worship
Sermon: Bishop Harrison J. Bryant, AME Bishop -Retired
5:00 P.M.—In Concert
Morgan State University Choir, Nathan Carter, Director
23—27 SPIRITUAL RENEWAL SERVICES—7:00 P.M.
23—New Psalmist Baptist Church, Rev. Walter Thomas, Pastor
24—Morning Star Baptist Church, Rev. Samuel Ray, Pastor
25—Bethel A.M.E. Church, Rev. John Bryant, Pastor
26—Metropolitan A.M. E. Church, Washington, D.C., Rev. Robert Pruitt, Pastor
27—Mt. Olive A.M.E. Church, Annapolis, Md. Rev. Edgar James, Pastor
28—HERITAGE BANQUET AND PASTOR'S 10th ANNIVERSARY TESTIMONIAL

Baltimore Convention Center: 6:00 P.M.
Entertainment: Ms. Junetta Jones
Morgan State University Dancers
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Guest Speaker: Rev. Dr. Leon H. Sullivan, National Director and Founder, OIC; National Chairman and Founder, Progress Enterprises and Pastor, Zion Baptist Church in Philadelphia.

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NOTICE
Edit No. 7
Be it known to all Free Masons, and O.E.S. That M. W. C. Emmanuel Hazel, 33 Degree Grand Master of Maryland. Do hereby proclaim a special dispensation to all Free Masons and Eastern Stars.
The dispensation begins January 20 and ends May 20, 1981. Applications for membership can be obtained at the Masonic Temple, 1429 McCulloh Street, Baltimore, Maryland 21217 from 7 to 9 p.m. Monday through Friday. To this I affix my signature. M.W.C. Emmanuel Hazel, 33 Degree Grand Master of Maryland M.W.A.F. and A.M. Inc.

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9:15 A.M.—Church School
New Members Class
10:30 A.M.—Open Heart Service
11:00 A.M.—Morning Worship
Sermon by the pastor
3:00 P.M.—Pre-Spring Gospel
Singing program, benefit of Women's Day. Sponsored by Mesdames Estelle R. Wilkins and Gwendolyn Saunders. Subscription $3.00
6:00 P.M.—BTU New Members Class
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CHARLES E. WILSON, Preaching
Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven—Mark Andrews
I Will Give Thanks Unto the Lord—Thomas Matthews
Where Shall I Go? John Work III, arr.
Every Time I Feel the Spirit—William Dawson, arr.