

**Scripture of the Week:**  
Proverbs, Chapter 17

# RELIGION



## "I Have No Gifts to Bring" A Congregation's Plight is Herald

by Mattie Ann Callier-Spears

Christmas is a joyous time of the year. A time when many people of all shapes and sizes are wandering about in the stores and malls trying to find the perfect gift.

How many times have you received a gift that was too large or too small, too long or too short? What did you do with it when you discovered that it was not your kind of gift? Did you return it? Did you throw it away? Is it still in the back of your closet where no one else can see it?

According to Webster, a gift is "something given to show friendship, affection and support." We, the human race, tend to give gifts for all the wrong reasons. Because . . . "Oh, this is good. She didn't give me nothing last year," or "Maybe if I spend a lot on his gift, maybe he will give me a real expensive gift."

Christmas is the season for giving and even receiving — BUT — Christ is the reason for the season.

The commercialization of various items and sundry products start their appealing appearances to the public as soon as September and

continue through New Years. The stores are jam-packed with merchandise for the curious shoppers. The television and radio programs are peppered with commercial breaks announcing that "this product is bigger and better than before," "my toy can thrill and hold the interest of your child better than company X," and so on it goes.

As usual, we take so much for granted, and we become so complacent and — YES! — gullible, that we allow ourselves to get caught up in these very carefully- and well-orchestrated plans: plans created to make more money for an already-wealthy company.

Let's stop for a moment to think of other alternatives: the hospitals are short-handed and need more volunteers; my neighbor has a leaky faucet; my mother has not seen me in two years; a family up the street's house burned and they need a place to stay; I saw a little lady at church who had a very ragged coat, I have two; and the list goes on and on and on.

The little drummer boy in the Christmas carol had no gift to bring,

so he played his drum for the Baby Jesus. Many of us have no money to buy fancy gifts nor credit cards to charge a lot of things that we can't pay for afterwards. The one gift we do have is the gift of LOVE. With this gift, we can cause a person filled with despair to have hope. With this gift, we can put a smile back into the heart of a troubled soul. With this gift, we can turn someone's life around and cause them to think and live in a positive manner.

Oh! There are so many ways to give LOVE. "God so loved the world that He GAVE His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) This, of course, and the fact that Christ died that we might LIVE, are the ultimate acts of LOVE.

We need not have a physical or material gift to bring — . . . And abideth faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is LOVE." (I Corinthians 13:13) "Follow after LOVE, and earnestly desire spiritual GIFTS, but rather that ye may prophesy." (I Corinthians 14:1)

by Mattie Ann Callier-Spears

### TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

On the sixth of December, 1987, during the morning worship service, an unknown person or persons entered the Maranatha Church on N.E. 12th and Skidmore Streets and removed not one but 50 to 60 coats of various descriptions: there were men's suit coats, men's top coats, women's overcoats, men's raincoats, women's raincoats and women's dress jackets to their suits. These articles of clothing were hanging in the choir room.

The person or persons removing these items are being asked to "Please return as many of these items as possible and the contents of the pockets". The pockets contained car and house keys and other personal items that would be of no

use to anyone but the owners.

With the Christmas Season upon us, it is apparent that money is short and a quick buck is the obvious reason behind this incident.

Several members have already heard from some of the street people, with "coats for sale", not knowing that they were speaking to a member of the congregation where the coats were taken from in the first place.

Some of the coats that were taken belonged to women who had no other coat but that one.

We, the members and pastor, ask that you return the coats to the church in large plastic bags, place them on the ramp on the side of the building, and no questions will be asked. If you need prayer or wish to

talk about this, call the church office, and the pastor will be happy to speak to you: 288-7241.

This is a time for giving — NOT taking.

Christ invites all who feel the burden of their sins to . . . "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light." St. Matthew, 11:28-30.

**Yours in the Name of Jesus Christ, The Pastor, Officers and Members of Maranatha Church**

## Dedication and Installation Service

by Mattie Ann Callier-Spears

The week of December 9 through 13 shall always be remembered by the members of the Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church and all who came to listen, enjoy and be blessed.

Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church was organized by Pastor Johnny Pack, IV, on Wednesday, October 14, 1987, after a spiritual and refreshing time of prayer. At the time of organization, the church extended a call to Pastor Pack to serve as the pastor of the congregation. He accepted and began to serve without salary. We shall always remember the sacrifices that he made.

Fellowship was blessed immediately to find housing in the Lodge Hall located at 635 N. Killingsworth Court. It was at that site that Fellowship was organized and continues to temporarily worship until a permanent building is located.

The church has been blessed by many donations and financial contributions from the hearts of the people.

God has continued to bless the needs of the Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church. The number of members now on roll stands at 200, with persons continuing to unite.

Rev. Gary Black, I, of Seattle, Washington, began his gospel ministry here on November 29, 1987, when he preached his first sermon.

On Sunday, December 6, 1987, history was made as Pastor Pack and Rev. Robert Houston, Sr., (of Seattle) baptized the first two persons who were candidates for baptism. This service was held at the St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church, Rev. Joe S. Hardie, pastor.

Fellowship is a member of the Union District Baptist Association of Oregon, the General Baptist Convention of the Northwest, the Portland District Sunday School, Baptist Training Union and Ushers Congress, and will be applying for membership in the National Baptist Convention of America, Incorporated, Dr. E.E. Jones, President.

Pastor Pack said, "God sent me to Portland over 3 years ago on a mission. Little did I realize that He would allow me the privilege to organize these believers into what we now call Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church."

During the week of celebration, the theme was "A Praying Church." Many churches and their choirs and pastors participated in the celebration: Greater Faith Baptist Church, Mt. Gilliard Baptist Church, Paradise Baptist Church, Antioch Baptist Church, Christ Memorial COGIC, St. Mark Missionary Baptist Church and many well wishers and praying souls.

The speaker for the close-out service was the Rev. Joe S. Hardie, pastor and director of the United Theological Seminary.

## New Art Gallery Displays Original Religious Art

On Sunday, December 6, a new art gallery and display area opened on Portland's east side. The gallery, a project of The Grotto Gift Shop, grew out of discussions with the Sacred Art Society and LARC, the Liturgical Arts Resources Center.

Located on the lower level of the Gift Shop, the Gallery will serve as a public exhibition area and as a resource for individuals and area churches seeking original religious art. The display area will be open daily from 12 noon to 4:00 p.m.

The Executive Director of The Grotto, Fr. Gerald M. Horan, OSM, is a member of the Sacred Art Society Board of Directors. "I'm very pleased that The Grotto is able to be involved in and lend support to such a wonderful venture. The relation-

ship between the religious ministry we do and artistic expression of religious faith is very close. This new display area will be an enriching element to The Grotto's work, a gift to the Christian community in Portland and a real encouragement to local religious artists."

According to Crystal Clark, manager of The Grotto Gift Shop, three major Oregon artists will be featured in the first exhibit: Mary Lewis, David Haidle, and Brian Paatz. These individuals have made significant contributions to the field of Christian art in Oregon and each has been active in supporting the work of the Sacred Art Society.

"Without the encouragement of the Sacred Art Society and LARC this gallery would still be only a

dream," said Ms. Clark. "Our long range plans call for ongoing displays of contemporary art from a variety of sources. We are actively seeking Christian artists who need exposure as well as those who are already established. For me, this is the most exciting aspect of the Gallery — the combination of known artists with those just entering the field."

According to Fr. Horan, a formal opening and dedication of the gallery is planned for early 1988 but, "we wanted to begin the project just as soon as the facility became available. We are especially grateful to the artists who are supplying works to us so we might begin this project before the end of the year. We hope that Portland will be able to enjoy this unique addition to the art community."

## Methodists Make News

### Christmas Called 'Spiritual Realism'

LAKELAND, FLA. — Christmas is "spiritual realism beyond this age's arrogant unbelief," United Methodist Bishop Earl G. Hunt Jr of the Florida Area said in a message as president of the church's Council of Bishops.

The text of Bishop Hunter's message reads:

"Christmas is the festival of the Incarnation, the time of the Christ Child's birth. For believers it has deep and rich meanings.

"Christmas is a haze of hope, a chest of memories, a brief, fleeting moment of enchantment with snow on the hills and a Star in the sky.

"It is more. It is spiritual realism beyond this age's arrogant unbelief. It is Love pushing hate aside. It is faith alive still in spite of the grinning cynic and the hell of war. It is an invitation, in a day of emptiness, to invest life in something that will outlast it.

"'God so loved the world He gave His only begotten Son' (John 3:16). This is the miracle of all miracles, the supernatural event which draws life together in a pattern that makes sense. Without it we would be in danger of madness. Because of it, we are able to see another way of living, enduring, relating, hoping. God cares, God is with us — Immanuel!

"There is no fear in the Christian Faith, only the quality of trust which emanates from Love realized and appropriated, Love sufficient for all our needs. This is the glory of Christmas.

"We wish for all of you and for the world this Christmas the excitement of faith and the beginnings of lasting peace."

### Interfaith Cable TV Network Planned

NEW YORK — United Methodism will have a prominent role in the formation of a new interfaith religious cable television network, a church media executive said Dec. 4.

United Methodist Communications (UMCom) staff members are key founders, and the agency plans to contribute \$25,000 start-up funds for the Vision Interfaith Satellite Network (VISN), according to Nelson Price, who heads the

UMCom public media division and is convenor of the incorporating coalition that includes several mainline Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox bodies. David Ochoa, communications executive for the United Methodist Board of Higher Education and Ministry, has been named coordinator for VISN, which is scheduled to begin operation in June 1988.

### Lord Give Me Time

Lord give me time to know a bit of peace,  
Be free from care, before I grow too old.  
Beyond the rainbow's end,  
may I at last,  
Find where You've put my little pot of gold.  
Lord, give me time to walk among the stars,  
As fireflies flicker on a summer night,  
Feel the fragil snowflakes on my face,  
Hold Autumn on my heart in pure delight.

Lord, give me time to grow, that I may fit  
The mold of what you wish me to become,  
It is not easy for me, casting off  
These human failings that I suffer from.  
But Faith has eyes much clearer than my own,  
And Hope has wings to lift up, and I'm  
So full of Love, I know for sure I'm meant  
For Heaven, given just a little time.

by Grace E. Easley

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the Bible says—  
Follow peace with all men & holiness without which no man shall see the Lord

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Thursday	Choir Rehearsal	7:00 p.m.
Sunday	Sunday School	9:15 a.m.
Morning	Worship	11:15 a.m.
Y.P.W.W.		6:30 p.m.
Evangelistic	Worship	8:00 p.m.
Tuesday-Friday	Noon Day Prayer	
Friday	"The Pastor Speaks"	7:30 p.m.
Saturday	Morning Prayer	9:00 a.m.

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Psalm 34:3



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