

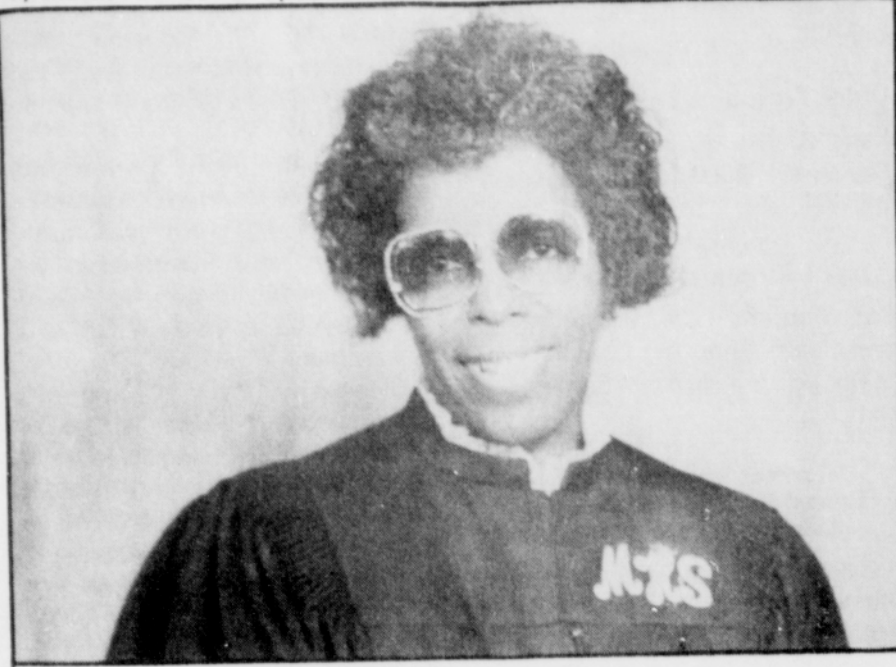
SCRIPTURE OF THE WEEK
Acts, Chapter 5

RELIGION



Blessing by the Truck Load

by Mattie Ann Callier-Spears



In the year of 1966, a woman from Gulfport, Mississippi, and her husband decided to go out in the midst of the people and bring them GOOD NEWS. Everyday, without fail, they would stand on the corner of Williams and Russell — preaching, sharing and helping people whenever they could.

The ministry began to spread. They rented a storefront building, began a radio ministry outreach, preaching to more and more each day. From 1966 to 1971, their preaching and efforts spilled into the community. They would go into the gambling places and collect money to support their ministry. The funds collected from the gamblers helped support the radio outreach and pay for the rent of their storefront church. This area, where the church was located, was known as the "Red Light" district. "Normal people" were afraid to even get off the bus in the neighborhood. But, it was the people in the night clubs and on the street that helped the ministry grow. For one whole year, Mr. Ellis, owner of Ellis Cleaners, paid for the radio broadcasts.

This man and his wife, Louis and Mary Overstreet, did great work for the Lord. They attracted many young people. The youth would sell candy to help support the ministry.

God had more in store for this couple. Mrs. Rosena Hart, Mrs. Overstreet's mother, contacted some persons concerning a piece of property on Williams. They had never had credit, so it was to be a task of great undertaking. The Lord didn't think it was so hard. The young people continued to sell candy and the money from the sale of the candy purchased the building on Williams Avenue — Overstreet Powerhouse Temple Church of God in Christ, Inc.

From 1971 to 1980, the Overstreets continued their work in the community, on the radio, and in the pulpit.

When they purchased the structure, it was a burned-out house. They had to hull it out and restore it. It was hard work, but God didn't say it was going to be easy. The house was now a church; and many came, sang, prayed and were converted to a new life in Jesus Christ.

In 1980, God called Rev. Louis

Overstreet home. His wife, Mary, was left with the task of completing what the Lord had given to them as a charge. With the help of her mother, Mrs. Hart, and her ten children: Anna, Marilyn, Phyllis, Rosetta, Michael, Tommy, Louis Jr., Robert, Albert and Alvin, she moved outward and upward.

Mary met and married Rev. Thomas Smith.

One morning, very early, Rev. Mary Smith had a vision. The Lord had given her a vision to build and increase the building that He had given to them. She had the blueprints drawn up. She took them downtown to City Hall on June 23, 1983, and didn't receive them back until September 11, 1986. Now, nobody knows why it took them so long to approve those blueprints, but the Lord had a plan of His own.

When she received the plans, she began contacting the construction companies. Those companies wanted astronomical figures. The lowest bid was \$89,000. She had no money. There was less than \$1,500 in the bank. There was a busted waterpipe that had to be repaired and so many other things — Lord.

In January of 1987, she felt driven to build. What about the carpenters and plumbers, etc.? "The Lord said it would be done with volunteers." (Matt. 7:7) In the midst of finances and everything, she called a man to lay the foundation. "He wanted money up-front. We didn't have no money." Her daughter, Anna, spoke to the man on the phone and asked him if he'd please come back. Mr. Eddie Gilbert came back, looked at the blueprint and said, "I won't charge you a penny." The next day he was down at the church.

Rev. Smith, her family members and members of the congregation donned the task of shoveling and rotatilling the ground to make way for the foundation. Bishop Scott, of Portland Miracle Revival, donated his rotatiller. Mr. Gilbert went down the street and spoke to the Caterpillar Company about excavating the excess dirt from the lot. The price — NO CHARGE. The job was finished in less than 30 minutes.

In the midst of all that, she had to put in a new water meter. The price was \$3,000, but only \$1,000 was paid.

She didn't know how to read a blueprint, but now she does. "Women don't have to be naive about everything," she said.

"There were many critics, but nothing could stop what the Lord had for us to do," she said. With no money and no credit, we went to Parr Lumber Company on Union. We applied for credit. They gave us a \$300-credit limit. Do you know that that balance was never \$300 (less than)? One Sunday morning, I got up before the congregation and said that I needed \$5,000 — on Monday the money was there."

"When you're following the leading of the Lord, you're not following man. Man will discourage you. God knows the way. All you have to do is obey Him."

"Faith without works is dead, and works without faith is also dead. I didn't have any more sense than to believe that the Lord would provide as He did with the children of Israel."

The miracles and handywork of the Lord continued.

As the foundation was finished, Mr. Fred Veff showed up. He is a journeyman carpenter. The walls are now going up. "Remember, now, these are all volunteers."

Mr. Veff continued to build, and now it was time for the trusses to go up. The company that carried the trusses, told the church that they needed to give them half of the money down and the rest on delivery. When the trusses were delivered, they needed a crane to move the 40-foot trusses. Rev. Thomas Smith called a company on Columbia Boulevard. They donated a crane for a whole day. Rev. Thomas Smith drove the crane and Rev. Mary Smith escorted her husband in the family car to the church. All the while, Mr. Veff kept praying, "Lord, please don't let it rain today." Rev. Mary Smith told him that God had promised her that He wouldn't let it rain until those trusses were up and the roof covered.

The trusses needed to be put in place. In walks Wayne Muniz from Tulsa, Oklahoma. "This young man could walk that roof like he was on solid ground," remarked Mr. Veff. The night they got the last truss up, just as they were pulling off from in front of the church, tired and hungry, ready for a hot bath and a good

hot meal, it began raining. Praise the Lord!

If anybody wants to blame the drought on anyone, blame it on Overstreet Memorial Powerhouse Temple's prayers.

"Do you realize, that at each stage of the construction, God sent just the right person for the job? You can't work with just anybody, but God fixed it so that everybody that came did not take over. Being a woman minister is difficult and hard for some people to swallow. I couldn't and can't deal with bad attitudes."

"Over \$7,000 in materials was donated for the project. All the roofing materials, labor by another company, some of the plywood on the exterior walls and the truck for hauling were all donated. We still need a truck for transportation. We have used nearly \$20,000 — that we didn't even have."

"In 1977, we began making food boxes to give to the poor. We fixed them up at the house and brought them down to the church — gave them out to whomever was in need."

"The outreach program continues. There is a 24-hour food box program, free job search, drug counseling, refuge house, special investigation service and the "Harvest Time" TV ministry."

"I have associates degrees in: nursing, social services, and criminal justice. I also have a Bachelor of Science degree in Criminal Justice from Portland State University, and I'm a licensed notary public. All these skills help to more proficiently help those who come with a need."

"God has been so faithful to us, and I know that He will continue. We still need a lot more items like pews, bathroom fixtures, plumbers, a wheelchair ramp needs to be built, and entrance doors that will pass city code. But God continues to bless us by the truck load! Praise the Lord!

A 110,000 BTU furnace was donated and is installed and running. Completion of the project is foreseen this spring.

Motto: "We may be small in number, but we're mighty strong in God."



We Have to Ask

We have to ask God's help,
For though He sees
Into the dark recesses of each
mind,
He wants to hear the words,
Our lips were made
For supplications of this very
kind.
We have to ask God's help,
To let Him know
We are too weak to walk the
way alone,
To go to Him in prayer when
things become
Too much for us to handle on
our own.

His eyes can penetrate the
thickest fog,
His fingers can throw back
the strongest lock,
How can we hope to ever
enter in,
Unless we stand before the
gate and knock?
For it is in the seeking that
we find,
And through His aid alone,
the meanest task,
Assumes its share of true
nobility,
But grace is only given . . .
if we ask.

by Grace E. Easley

Thirty-Ninth Church Anniversary

Allen Temple C.M.E. Church Family invites you to our Thirty-Ninth Church Anniversary, February 12th-14th. This year's theme is "Building on a Firm Foundation."

Friday, Feb. 12th at 7:00 p.m. will be our second annual Gospel Song Festival. Some of the featured musicians will be: Maranatha's Disciple Choir, Bethel's Inspirational Choir, The Sermonettes, Willis Devonne Group of Tacoma, Emmanuel Temple Mass Choir, and Allen Temple's choirs.

Sunday, Feb. 14th at 11:00 a.m. we will have our morning worship service and a Love Fellowship Tea following the service.

Allen Temple invites you to come out and become spiritually renewed with us.

Send notice of your church activities and events to:
Religion Editor, Portland Observer
P.O. Box 3137
Portland OR 97208

Saturday Luncheon Planned

by Mattie Ann Callier-Spears

On Saturday, February 13th, from noon to 2 p.m., the Women's Missionary Society of Bethel AME is sponsoring a Salad Luncheon.

Everyone is invited to attend and enjoy. There will be delicious and delightful treats that will thrill your taste buds.

A donation of \$3.00 is requested. Come One! Come All!
For further information, call 288-5429 or 288-5420.

The address for the luncheon is 5828 N.E. 8th Avenue, Portland, OR 97211.

Founders Day Program

Bethel AME will celebrate its 201-year-old birthday on February 14, 1988 at 7 p.m. with a Founders Day Program. Come Join Us!

NAACP Seeks to Enroll 5000 New Members

by Mattie Ann Callier-Spears

The Portland Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) will launch its annual membership drive with membership booths at the following supermarkets: Walnut Park Fred Meyer, Union Avenue Safeway, 33rd Avenue Sentry, and Albertson's on North Killingsworth. This will take place on the following dates: February 20-21, and 27-28. On Sunday, February 21 and Sunday, February 28, enrollment areas will be set up at the following churches in the community: Maranatha, Mount Olivet Baptist Church, Vancouver Avenue Baptist Church.

The goal of the Portland Branch NAACP is to enroll 5000 members by the end of the year.

Many people ask, "What can being a member of NAACP do for me?" Since 1905 until today, the NAACP is the only organization that can defend you and your civil rights concerns in a court of law. It is the most prestigious organization known

throughout African-American history. The NAACP has also helped secure and maintain jobs for its members and non-members. One of the main benefits of being a member is being a part of a unified effort to wipe out racism and reinstate our communities to their highest point.

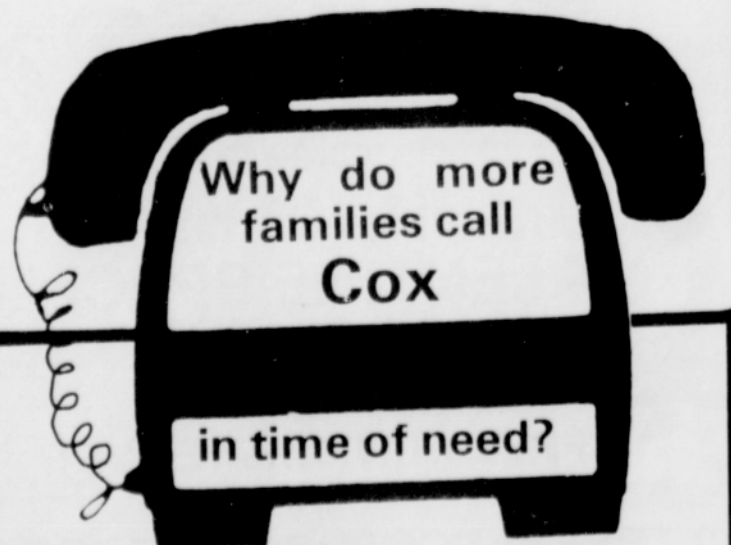
The NAACP is a non-partisan organization that urges the community to vote and support qualified politicians who are aware of and dedicated to improving the status of all groups — especially African-Americans.

We try to educate our members about the plights of today's society. You owe it to yourself to become a member — now! — or renew your membership in the NAACP.

The NAACP needs you — Today!

For further information regarding membership, please call the office: (503) 284-7722.

George Hendrick, president, local branch.



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The Willie Jordan Family
Would like to extend their special thanks for all the generous contributions of food, money, flowers and cards during our time of loss.
God Bless You All
Mrs. Willie Jordan and Family

Faith Tabernacle Church
—Apostolic—Pentecostal
"WE BAPTIZE IN JESUS NAME"
7015 N.E. 226
SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:30 AM
WORSHIP 11:45 AM & 7:30 PM
SERVICES MON-FRI 6 AM & 7:30 PM
GRACE C. OSBORNE, PASTOR
LOUIS W. OSBORNE, SR., BISHOP
282-8071

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Portland, Oregon 97211
(503) 287-0261
Phillip S. Nelson, Pastor
Psalm 34:3

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

Tuesday: Bible Band 7:30 p.m.
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.

"Showers of Blessings" broadcast
Sunday morning 10:00 A.M.
Simon KAAR 10:00AM Day