

The Enquiry

Serving the Southeastern Community

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Moravian Lovefeast emphasizes Christmas 'spirit of unity'

by David Fischler

In what one student called "the best chapel service of the year," over 300 members of the Seminary community joined together last Tuesday to celebrate a Moravian candlelight lovefeast service in Wake Forest Baptist Church.

The service, led by the Rev. Harold Durham of Raleigh Moravian Church, was a traditional candlelight service of Christmas Eve. It consisted of the serving of a sweetened bun and coffee in a modern-day recreation of the early Church's "agape" feasts.

Nineteen students and one faculty member, Dr. T. Furman Hewitt, acted as "dieners," or servants, in distributing the food and the candles.

Following the eating of the bun and coffee, red-trimmed beeswax candles were distributed to

the congregation. The candles, Rev. Durham explained, symbolized in their flame Christ the "light of the world"; the pure beeswax the purity of His person, and the red trim the blood of His sacrificial life. These were held aloft at the service's end to symbolize our commitment to God.

Rev. Durham was pleased with the way the service was held. "Everyone knew where they were supposed to be, and everything got served on time. Considering many of them had never served at a lovefeast before, it went very well."

Student reaction seemed to be very positive. First-year student Gary Wells called the service "impressive." He praised what Rev. Durham called the "unifying spirit" of the service, and noted that "it's a message that Southern Baptists need to hear."

Another student, David Medlen, added that he thought the lovefeast "a tradition worth having, one which has added to my Christmas season." He, too, praised the "open-mindedness and unity" which the Moravian service encouraged.

It was suggested by one student that a similar service could be held on campus around Easter. "The Good Friday lovefeast would be a good way to cap our Easter celebration," he said.

A pictorial essay on the Lovefeast, as well as other aspects of the Seminary's celebration of Christmas, will appear in next semester's first issue.

A Christmas message for ministers

by David Sparrow

This is the season of Advent, the season of preparation for the event of God entering into history in the person of Jesus the Christ. Yet, for many of us (if the truth were known), the "good news of a great joy" is no joy at all! It is ironic that we as "ministers" fail to take time for our own faith response to the Christmas event because we are so busy organizing the various "special programs" we feel are so important to our congregations.

We are all familiar with the innkeeper who was so busy with the things he thought were important, that he missed the greatest event in the history of the world; the birth of the Savior.

I imagine that many of us will use him as an illustration in our sermons as we proclaim a message to our congregations to be sure there is room in their lives for the coming of Jesus to save humanity.

Yet, we must be willing to hear this message and apply it to our own lives as well. There are things to be done, that is true; but if we fail to allow ourselves to be touched by the beauty of the Christmas event, if we lose touch with its sacred message, we will have lost something very precious indeed! We will have lost that which is at the heart of why we are Christians. We will have lost the "good news of a great joy".

Morris recovery "a miracle"

by Cindy King

Andy and Pam Morris cannot help but remember that exactly one year ago Andy was in the intensive care unit at Rex Hospital, on a respirator and paralyzed from the neck down. He has already recovered 90-95% and the spiritual significance that has resulted gives good cause for the recovery to be termed "a miracle."

Guillain Barre Syndrome is a neuro-muscular disorder; it affects the part of the nervous system that controls the muscles. As an athlete and former football coach, Andy at first found the psychological anguish to be as bad as the physical. Once he had won the battle against depression the progress "became extremely noticable."

The months in rehabilitation and physical therapy were agony, but help from family, the seminary community, and Andy's church, Athen's Drive Baptist in Raleigh, helped Andy make it through. For the first month of his hospital stay the church set up around-the-clock visitation so that someone could be with him at all times. For five-and-a-half months the church people did not miss a night visiting.

The seminary has also cooperated superbly. Andy was allowed to do his supervised ministry during his long stay in the hospital. An Andy Morris Fund was set up by the school to help offset the tremendous expenses. Funds were also set up by Athens Drive Baptist Church and First Baptist Church in Franklin, Tennessee, where Andy's parents are members.

Many people expect Andy and Pam to say that their faith has grown because of his illness. It has. But the Morrises are quick to point out that it is the faith that they had beforehand that carried them through the ordeal.

Andy's outlook on life has changed, too. Before, he took for granted such things as being able to walk, talk, eat, and hold his family. His understanding of life has gone beyond the "taking for granted" stage. Andy Morris more than ever realizes that life is a gift from God and Christ makes life worth living.

At this Christmas season, Andy and his family want to once again thank friends and the seminary for all the support, love, and prayers of the past year.

The Enquiry

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The Right to Pray

It seems that not only politicians are capable of reading election returns. Some Christians, as well, have looked at last year's results and decided that now is the time to re-open the question of prayer in the public schools. They do so, however, due to a misconception about the issue at hand.

Almost 20 years ago, the Supreme Court decided the case Engel v. Vitale. It stated that it was unconstitutional for New York State to write a prayer to be recited by schoolchildren, whether the exercise was voluntary or not, even if the prayer was supposedly non-denominational.

More important for the present controversy is what that decision did not say. At no point did the Court prohibit voluntary prayer by any student at any point during the school day. Those who claim that the Court did so simply have not read the decision.

The late Justice Hugo Black summed up our position well when he wrote in Engel:

"It is neither sacrilegious nor anti-religious to say that each separate government in this country should stay out of the business of writing or sanctioning prayers and leave that purely religious function to the people themselves and to those the people do choose to look to for religious guidance..."

Thus, with all true conservatives, Christian or otherwise, we say to the government: stay out of our prayer lives, and those of our children. We'll pray when, what, and to Whom we choose.

The Right(?) to Genocide

We were flabbergasted to read last week that Sen. Jesse Helms was planning on filibustering against U.S. ratification of the international treaty against genocide. His reason was that the treaty would infringe on U.S. national sovereignty.

We can only wonder at the disingenuousness of such a statement, and wonder if one of the sovereign rights which Sen. Helms thinks he is defending is the right to murder racial groups. How American Indians might react to such a statement is easy to guess. Christians should also wonder at the priorities which a statement of that kind indicates.

With many thanks to . . .

This season would not be complete for us if we did not stop to thank those people who have assisted us with the job of publishing The Enquiry this semester. These include Woody Catoe and Janie Brown in the Student Affairs Office; Rod Byard and Dovie Frazier in the Communications Office; all those members of the administration, faculty, staff, and student body who gave us so much cooperation; the Wake Weekly for printing our headlines; and the Henderson Daily Dispatch, which did our printing. To all, thank you, and Merry Christmas.

Letters to the Editor

Moral Majority defended

To the Editor,
Re: Leonard Robinson's letter on Moral Majority (MM) in the November 3 issue of The Enquiry: I accept his invitation. I shall refer to 3 items in the October 9 issue: the editorial, Brad Chappell's letter, and Cindy King's column.

As long as morals are legislated, MM has the right to express its views in the political arena. It is an effective and legitimate political organization.

MM addresses real, serious moral issues that cannot be overlooked. Christians (especially in the pulpit) ought to address them.

MM's purpose is best expressed by the title of Rev. Falwell's book, Listen, America! Similarly, the first words of the prophets and Jesus are not of "guidance" and "adapting" (King) but "repent."

On MM's approach, we read—(Falwell) expects the impossible" (editorial); "a moral America is a dream, illusive and unattainable" (Chappell); "Idealistic goals of wiping

out the ills of society should be discarded." (King)

Yes, in the long run, values cannot be imposed, and yes, political methods are not the answer. The Lordship of Jesus Christ is the answer.

The articles quoted above do not express a Biblical view of the power of the Gospel. Can you imagine Jesus saying, "Forget it—only a few of these turkeys are ever going to listen to Me"?

They also reflect the condition of the pulpit today—unwilling (or unable) to speak out on specific moral issues. Reminds me of overhearing ministers (practicing and prospective) say they avoid the Holy Spirit because He is too controversial, or that they stay away from Genesis and Revelation because they create problems.

If God sees fit to use MM to wake up America, fine. But God also needs one man, confident of the transforming power of the Gospel, with a vision that America can be turned around.

John Rawlings

Enforcing morality hopeless

To the Editor,
Re: Leonard Robinson's letter in support of Rev. Falwell:

That Caesar has the right to enforce a morality, no matter how universally held, is alien to every nation that has lasted more than a few centuries. Dogmatic morality from Caesar and national demise usually occur at the same time.

In our own country, every attempt to legislate morality upon an unwilling populace has ended up as hysterical history. Just recall the folly, and waste, that accompanied Prohibition.

Think also of the modern drug laws. Despite all efforts by Caesar, the amount of money that changes American hands to buy illegal drugs is more than an equal to the GNP of most of the world's nations! These are just two tarnished examples of the folly of trying to marry morality and law.

By choosing a narrow foundational stance (late

20th-century pop morality) Falwell has chosen for himself issues that won't last. With such a myopic vision, he stumbles onto a course of action that will always support his brand of ignorance. I refuse to subscribe.

Sure, I am against abortion, licensed homosexuality, etc., but there must be meaning in the method one chooses to combat these. Falwell's arrogant innocence masquerades his erroneous beliefs. His universal morality is really a front for legitimized ignorance.

This is the crux: my morality, your morality, must be achieved rather than enforced, or else the resulting pseudo-morality misleads. The morality he advocates, by its very method of indoctrination, is emasculated of any moral power to make me love my neighbor any more. I'll struggle to my last brain cell for the environment of freedom that permits this kind of love.

Marc Mullinax

The spirit of Christmas giving

by David Fischler

The pitter-patter of little feet tromping down the stairs at 6:00 AM. The crumpling of paper and crushing of boxes. The groans of disappointment muffled under the breath. The clop of reindeer hooves on the roof....

We all know such sounds. In connection with Christmas, they are all vaguely distasteful.

They are distasteful because they drown out the other sounds of Christmas: the magnificent strains of "O Come, All Ye Faithful" and "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen"; the meditative silence of a starry Christmas Eve night, when all nature seems to celebrate the birth of a Child; the hoof-steps in our minds as we imagine the manger in an animals' stall; the crying of a child, not then but now, the cry of hunger, and of pain.

It is easy to attack the commercialism of an American Christmas. What is not so easy is to re-adjust our priorities in such a fashion as to realize that it is not the spirit of giving that is wrong, but the ways in which we show that spirit.

For example, there is no need to lavish expensive and unnecessary gifts on friends and relatives. Gifts that one makes oneself (at a fraction of the cost) would probably be more appreciated as a token of the giving of oneself.

And what should one do with the money which one was going to spend on presents? Why, make a present of it, of course.

There are more suffering people in the world than we can ever hope to help. Jesus said

that the poor would always be with us, but that does not mean that we should not help those we can.

Suggestions spring to mind with ease. The United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF), while it may have its problems, is still one of the best organs for helping those who do not have even the comforts of that Child of Bethlehem. Also on an international scale is Oxfam, a group dedicated to the relief of hunger in disaster-stricken areas such as Cambodia last year.

Here at home, we often forget that there is suffering and poverty in the midst of Christmas. To the assistance of those in need are such organizations as the Salvation Army, Catholic Social Services, and the Red Cross dedicated. It is a dedication which should not go unassisted by the Christian community.

Outlets for giving such as our local churches should not be ignored, of course, but they have not previously been mentioned because we give to them all year round. It seems as though it is only at Christmas that these others are considered, perhaps because the misery of the world stands in such stark contrast to the merriment of the season.

That is why they should be considered at the top of your Christmas list. Grandmother can do without a new microwave this year—knit her a scarf instead. And while you do that, consider the Child—and the children. The Ghost of Christmas Future will remember you fondly for it.

Dave Sparrow — A Moment for Methodists

Why Methodists baptize infants

Before I begin to answer this important question of doctrine, I wish to remind everyone that it is not my purpose to write Methodist apologia. It is my intention only to answer the question most often asked of Methodist here at S.E.B.T.S.

Any question concerning infant baptism, must begin with the doctrine of the "sacraments". The heart of the issue is as J. S. Whale puts it "...between the objective and the subjective in religion". Are we to place the emphasis on the believer's action or on God's initiative? The Protestant response to this question is that both are important. God acts and people respond in faith to that action.

The question now comes to mind, how can an infant respond in faith to baptism?

Answer: an infant cannot.

Question: is not then infant baptism an example of pure objectivity in religion as it pertains to this sacrament?

The answer here is that the response to God's initiative in faith is the response of the Church on behalf of the child, not that of the child itself. Infant baptism is for us the Church's proclamation of the love of God for this child, expressed in the sacrificial life of Christ Jesus. We claim this promise for the child until that day comes when he shall claim it for himself at confirmation.

Speaking of which, confirmation will be the subject of next issue's column. Until then, Merry Christmas to all—Baptists and Methodists alike.

Cindy King

A Christmas letter to a friend

You are my friend.

This one statement carries a great many implications and responsibilities that are beyond my human grasp. I cannot uphold them alone.

Yet I promise to always try to look beyond the you that appears on the surface. I realize that beneath human imperfections and idiosyncrasies lies a wonderful person.

I promise to always be there when you need me. If you are angry, I will listen to what caused your anger. If you are hurt, I will hold you.

I love you and will never forget you. My love is the kind that will never diminish but only increase. As years and miles grow between us, I will remember you with love.

My phone or door will always be answered. No matter how late it is or how busy I may be, I will never turn you away. If your pain is too great for you to bear alone, I will hold you.

God made you as you are for a reason. Who am I to criticize? The real you is seen only in your heart and soul.

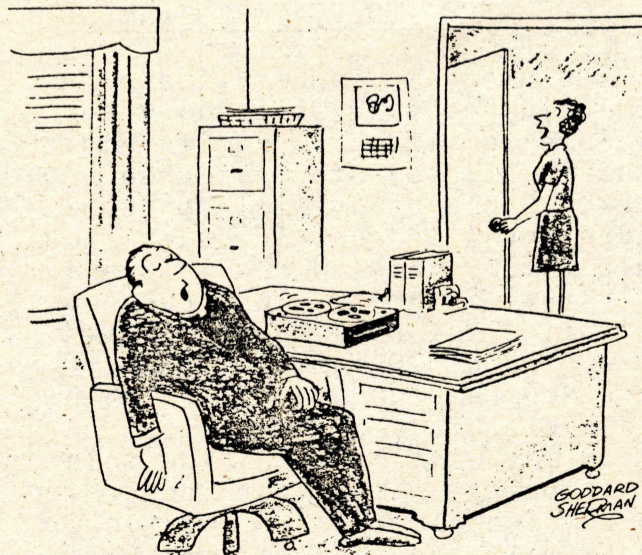
I am not perfect, and daily I carry the burden of fallibility caused by my humanness. But with God as my strength, I will uphold my responsibilities to you.

I will love you in spite of you. I only ask that you do the same for me.

Merry Christmas, my friend.

Love,

FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE



"YES, THE PASTOR IS HOME... HE'S IN HIS STUDY LISTENING TO ONE OF HIS TAPED SERMONS."

Library Lines

by Reference Services

GRADUATING SENIORS! Congratulations and best wishes.

The Library hopes no prospective graduate is disappointed on December 19th by being pulled from the line-up and not permitted to graduate due to having overdue materials and/or unpaid fines at the Library. An alarming number of people are in this category as of this writing. It is your responsibility to check with the Library and clear all debts.

WHAT'S HAPPENING? A shocking number of books are still overdue. Even if you are able and willing to pay heavy fines (???) please remember the purpose of returning books on time—to share them in a responsible manner with others as good stewards of available resources. Large numbers of other students have been denied access to critical study material due to books returned late. Please examine your attitude on this matter.

LIBRARY SCHEDULE-DATES TO NOTE
Exams: December 14, 15, 16 (Monday-Wednesday)—The Library will stay open until 12:00 midnight to provide additional time and resources in preparing for exams.
Holidays: December 18 (Friday)—The Library will close at 4:30 PM and reopen on December 28 (Monday) at 8:00 AM. January 1 (Friday)—Closed. Hours of service December 28 through January 11, will be 8:00 AM-4:30 PM.

BOOKS ARE NOW BEING CHECKED OUT FOR USE DURING THE HOLIDAYS. NEEDED FOR OUR PERIODICAL COLLECTION:

Baptist Program June/July 1979 and April 1981.
Outlook (SEBTS) Volume 27, No. 3, 1978.

If you have any of the issue above, would you be willing to donate them so that the volumes for those years may be bound?

HOME LIFE TO FEATURE FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Beginning in January, the periodical Home Life will add a new feature entitled "Family Bible Study." Step-by-step guidance in weekly Bible study will be provided for all ages in order to help family members grow toward spiritual maturity. This purpose underlies the Bold Mission Thrust goal of 500,000 families committed to regular family worship and Bible study in the home.

You may wish to emphasize this opportunity with your church, Sunday School class or even your own family. Copies of Home Life are available for examination, both in the Church Curriculum Center and the Reference periodicals collection.

Children a disappointment

by Maryanne Fischler

Somehow it adds a lot of appeal when a play adds to its bill "Tony winning." Children of a Lesser God won a Tony season before last for best play. Based on the road company which recently played at The Stewart Theatre, one might very well conclude that it was a very weak season on Broadway.

The play is the story of a deaf girl and a teacher of the deaf who fall in love and get married, but never are able to share their different worlds.

The deaf girl, Sarah, was played by Freda Norman of the National Theatre for the Deaf. Since voice was not an available tool for her, one would have thought she would have relied heavily on facial expressions. But she played the part largely deadpan and was little more than mediocre. She also moved poorly around the stage.

Somewhere early in the play the teacher, James Leeds, crossed the fine line between bringing energy to the part and overacting. By the final curtain he was surely at least as exhausted as his audience. This was due partially to poor direction which called for too much unnecessary

movement about the stage.

Speaking of the stage brings up a sore spot with me on the subject of props. I realize that the current trend is toward using as little scenery as possible, but is it really asking too much that when characters are supposed to sit at a table that there be a table?

I had difficulty relating to and agreeing with the basic premise of the play, which didn't really come through until the final moments of the play. Mark Medoff, who wrote Children of a Lesser God, seems to be saying that those who hear can never completely know those who can't. And yet at one point in the play there is a long speech about the wonderful way that sign language can put across a complex thought with one small gesture. What then is he really trying to say?

In conclusion it might be said that if Children of a Lesser God is the best that the New York stage has to offer, one doesn't mind so much living in Wake Forest. While it may have been a good try at doing a play about the special problems of the deaf, it was hardly the kind of play one expects from a Tony winner.

Carol a Christmas treat

by Robin Dulling

Charles Dickens' most beloved advent season story, "A Christmas Carol" is being performed at the Paul Green Theatre, UNC, Chapel Hill, until December 12.

I had the good fortune to see this wonderful adaptation on opening night, and contrary to popular belief about opening night performances, it was very good.

There is something very magical about the Christmas season, and something very vibrant and tension filled about the first showing of a play. Mix these two elements together—and you have the excitement of a play about Christmas—but much more, indeed.

Dickens' story about Ebenezer Scrooge—a ruthless skinflint who refuses to "keep Christmas," and thereby alienates himself from everyone at his own expense, and theirs—is a stark, funny, and warmly captivating tale about the human condition.

The Chapel Hill cast have presented, I think, a truly professional and outstanding adaptation. Hamilton Gillett, as Scrooge, exudes miserliness, outrage, and finally, compassion throughout the performance, to the delight of the audience. The other cast members present us

with fine acting, in the personages of Bob Cratchit, Tiny Tim, and the ghost of Jacob Marley. The play, done "in the round" lent itself to a very multi-dimensional feeling, not often experienced in regular play settings. The period costumes of England, mid eighteenth century added just the right polish. I suppose what impressed me the most was the lack of much stage property; the bare minimum being utilized. Instead of detracting from the performance, I feel it heightened the mood by causing the audience to rely on their imaginations.

So much energy was expended on stage, as well as off—and it was obvious. I entered the theatre knowing the plot, and left feeling a part of it all, somehow, and happy, to boot.

I have always enjoyed the theatre, Dickens, and the Christmas season. It shouldn't come as a surprise, then, when I extol the virtues of all three—wrapped neatly in a holiday package which is "A Christmas Carol." Hats off to the author and the modern-day performers at Chapel Hill—this is definitely a play worth seeing, to be enjoyed by all ages.

Maryanne Fischler's "Through the Looking Glass" and "Restaur-

ant Reviews" will return in our next issue.