

# RELIGION

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## ON FAITH

ROSA SHAREEF

### Does your life need a little restructuring?

Are you at the same spot in your life today that you were in a year ago? Do you always give excuses why you can't do something without giving much effort? Recently while visiting the Piney Woods Country Life School near Jackson, I read a sign, "If you think you can't, then you won't." Many of us lack the motivation needed to overcome a small word "can't."

In the Holy Koran, God Almighty says, "Never will I change the condition of a people, until they first change the condition of their hearts." This means a change in our attitudes. With the right attitude of heart, we can overcome just about any condition or obstacle.

**Successful man** in a tradition of Al-Islam it says, "He has been successful whose heart God has made sincere towards faith, whose heart He has made free from unbelief, his tongue truthful, his soul calm, his nature straight, whose ear He has made attentive and his eyes observant. The ear is a funnel and the eye is a repository for what the heart learns. He is successful whose heart is made retentive.

In life we face many obstacles which may be a test to see how we are going to respond. Some see obstacles as hurdles, as a reason to try harder at life. But others see obstacles as an excuse to give up.

Almighty God promises us success if we would only give a little effort and have the right attitude of heart to please Him. We spend hours in our jobs in overtime to earn extra money. Where was the last time we worked overtime for God by aiding our fellow man?

We burn the midnight oil hitting the books to advance ourselves academically and financially. When — in the last time we burned the midnight oil studying the Holy Book to advance us spiritually? God gives us as in so many ways that we can't begin to count His many favors. The more we give, the more we will receive.

**Taking time** If we would give more effort to God, He will be the hands with which we work, the tongue with which we speak, and the feet with which we walk. He will also give us what we ask for. One way of giving effort is by helping in the cause of God to help our fellow human beings. The more we make effort to help one another, the more Almighty God is pleased with us.

Our society is in dire need of us reaching out and contributing to the improvement of our neighborhoods. In another tradition in Al-Islam, it says that a believer should not go to bed at night knowing that his neighbor is in need of food. Sometimes the best food is knowledge. So let us stop giving excuses why we can't, and help ourselves by helping our society, and we will begin to see more progress in our own lives.

**Rosa Shareef is a Muslim, a member of the New Methodist community in Marion County, a writer and a teacher. Write to her at 16 Al-Halim Road, Sumrill, Miss. 39482.**

## A peaceful, final resting place

### Area Episcopal church opens Columbarium to house cremations

By CHERYL JENKINS  
AMERICAN Features Writer

Surrounded by wax leaf legnum trees and positioned in front of a hand-made waterfall, the Columbarium recently built at the Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Hattiesburg will provide a peaceful final resting place for those who wish to be cremated.

The Columbarium, which will hold the ashes of the cremated, was dedicated Thursday at Ascension by Bishop Alfred "Chip" Marble.

Paul Pradat, priest at Ascension, said with cremation becoming more of an option, the need for the Columbarium at his church was great.

"Gravestone services will be held at the Columbarium," Pradat said. "Our first interment will be Sunday."

Pradat said that the Columbarium is becoming more popular at churches around the country. People are curious about the free-standing stone structure and having one at Ascension will help them learn more about it.

Before the structure was built, Pradat said ashes were kept at the church. Families have been waiting for the completion of the Columbarium in order to have loved ones who were cremated placed in a permanent home.

Services held at the Columbarium will be the same as those

#### TO LEARN MORE

For more information on the Episcopal Church of the Ascension Columbarium, call 264-6773. It is available to members of the Ascension and their family, who purchase a niche for the ashes to be placed in.

at regular gravesides, Pradat said. "Rather than going to the cemetery for the service it will be done right here," Pradat said. "It's nice because loved ones are right here on the church grounds."

Pradat said the dedication Thursday was a service of prayer and necessary so that the bishop can set the property aside.

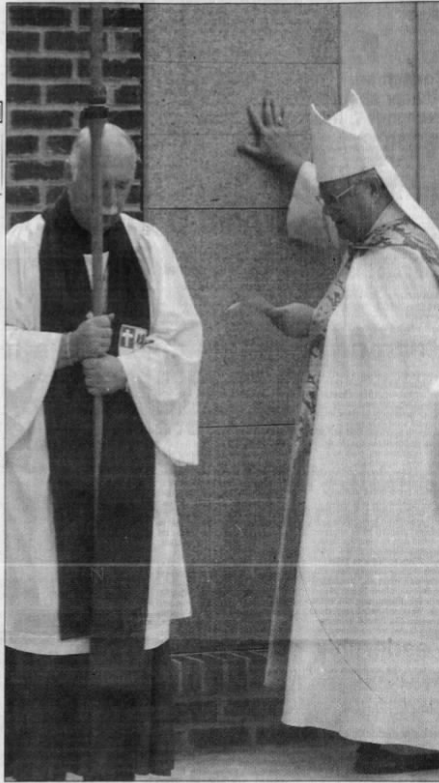
Several members of Ascension gathered before their regular Thursday evening service to take part in the dedication.

Led by Bishop Marble, members proceeded to the Columbarium space and followed a printed order of worship.

In union, the group read Psalm 139 and Corinthians 4:16-5:9. Afterward, the bishop laid his hands upon the structure and said a prayer.

Built by Wallace Dehn, a member of Ascension, Pradat said the Columbarium is a wonderful addition to Ascension.

"It's a peaceful space and we're real excited about it," Pradat said.



SINGLE FILE: Ascension members proceed to the Columbarium for the dedication ceremony.

BLESSED EVENT: Bishop Alfred "Chip" Marble, right, places his hand on the new Columbarium during a dedication ceremony at the Episcopal Church of the Ascension in Hattiesburg.

## Area resident hopes to unite all worshippers

By CHERYL JENKINS  
AMERICAN Features Writer

Quing Jones had a vision of people of all races, backgrounds and denominations coming together and praising God.

In that vision, the Hattiesburg resident saw these people all in one room worshipping through song.

That vision, she says, was from God, and she and several members of the community are making plans to see it come to fruition.

"Sanger's Last Song: Jesus Gets the Last Word," will be held at 6:30 p.m. Thursday at the Sanger Theatre in downtown Hattiesburg. The program will be a time of worship and song and will include people from all different denominations in the area taking part.

Making her vision a reality has been a constant struggle for Jones. After calling several peo-

ple for help, sponsorship and support, she soon realized that the battles would be great.

"At first there was a lot of apprehension," Jones said. "I couldn't get the Sanger at first. A lot of people were saying, 'Well, what are you trying to do?'"

Down but not out, Jones continued her fight for the program. She made more calls and was counseled by and prayed with Dr. Russell Bush, pastor at Main Street Baptist Church, as well as others.

When the event seemed almost hopeless, Jones made a call that turned things around. Jones, who works at a local

Christian radio station, mentioned her idea to the station's general manager. He advised her to give Philip Davenport, one of the founders of the group Jesus' Next Generation, a call. That conversation was the key to getting things going.

"I called him and he said that he had been praying for six years about the same type of event," Jones said.

Davenport, along with Donnie Biglane and John Brown, recently founded the nondenominational Jesus' Next Generation, a unit of young people seeking to fulfill God's will in their lives. It is their goal to reach others for

Christ by expressions of Christian love. They encourage young people to seek active membership in local church in order to enhance their relationship with God and to win others to Christ.

Davenport's assistance in the Sanger program was a blessing and no coincidence, Jones said. With his presence they would be able to reach more people.

"We want to get people excited about Jesus," Davenport said. "With everything that's going on in our society, everyone wants to stick their heads in the sand. Jesus is the basis for the whole livelihood of this country. We have been allowed to be compromised. When we have things like this we need to embrace it and come together."

Jones said the May 28 event will be centered around one or two praise teams. Several groups from the area will perform as well as special guests. Youth from different churches will serve as ushers for the event as well as perform.

Jones and Davenport want to make clear the purpose of having such an event in Hattiesburg. "This is all for the glory of God," Jones said. "This is not just to make me look good. We're just doing what we've supposed to be doing anyway. There should be some outward expression of what God has done for you."

#### TO PARTICIPATE

Groups that would like to perform can call Quing Jones at 268-1320 or Philip Davenport at 266-1721. The musical will be at 6 p.m. Wednesday at the Sanger Theatre. Youth are needed to sing on stage with praise and script groups, to help as ushers, to sell refreshments and as stage hands.

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#### BIBLE QUIZ

- Answer true or false: 1. Peter walked on water.
- 2. The ark of the covenant had a golden pot that had manna in it.
- 3. Zipporah was the wife of Moses.
- 4. The first recorded miracle of Jesus was at the marriage in Cana of Galilee.
- 5. Abah made an ivory house.
- 6. The Bible never states that God "hath made of one blood all nations of men."

- 7. The 10 Commandments are found in Exodus 20.
- 8. Balam saw the angel of the Lord.

**Bible Scholar of the Week:** Selma Mitchell, Ellisville.  
**Last Week:** 1. T-Genesis 1:1-2. T-Revelation 22:21. 3. T-Genesis 19:28-29. 4. T-Genesis 24:67. 5. T-Genesis 35:1-6. P-John 2:1. T-John 3:2. 8. T-Luke 4:16-30.  
**Mail answers to the Rev. Gary Smith, Box 256, Carriere, Miss. 39426.**

#### DEADLINE

Church announcements are published as a free service. All will be edited to conform to newspaper style. Deadline is noon Thursday. Mail announcements to Religion Editor, P.O. Box 1111, Hattiesburg, Miss. 39401; or fax them to 564-3130.

#### MEDITATIONS

Rather than complain about the thorns on roses, be thankful for roses among the thorns. — Submitted by Helen Peters, Kingsland, Ark.

#### WHAT'S PLAYING

- Z MUSIC:** Christian music video, 1-5 a.m.; Channel 3 on Free Belt Cable.
- WDAM TV:** "Love Never Fails," 7 a.m. Sunday; hosted by Richard Phillips of Faith Arena in Laurel.
- UNITED METHODIST HOUR:** 7-9 a.m. Sunday, WLTX-TV 32 on Free Belt Cable.
- WFOR RADIO:** Southern gospel music, 1400 AM.
- AMERICAN FAMILY RADIO:** Christian talk, music, 99.3 FM.
- SPIRIT 98 RADIO:** Contemporary Christian music, 95.1 FM.

#### BIBLIOPICHER

SHH KQZ DQVVYXZYH BAE WQJY HQMTOZ IE, AX BHPTH.  
MBAWY MY MOY NYH EAKXYE, DBOAHE ZAYZ QO IE.  
OQVTEX CAJY.YAKBH  
This week's clue: X equals N.  
Last week's answer: Ezekiel 36:27.  
A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error.  
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