

Church

A man with a vision

Rev. Marion D. Bennett Seen As Good Organizer

By Louise H. Jordan

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God to them who are called according to his purpose." Romans 8:28. This scripture so typifies the man, Marion D. Bennett, Presiding Pastor of Zion United Methodist Church.

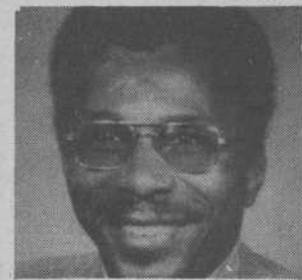
With great feelings and sincerity, he expresses his deep love for his mother and family. Coming from an impoverished background was no handicap to a young man determined to make a better life for himself. It was with this determination that he worked many odd jobs in South Carolina since he was 11 years old. At the age of 12 he obtained his first public job as a dishwasher at Frank's Cafe. His long list includes employment at Bob Jones University after school, Western Union, newspapers, stores, waiter, lawn work, etc. With these jobs he helped to support the family by contributing half of whatever he made to his mother.

Determined to make his life better he saved \$300 and after high school, against the advice of his mother, he left and went to school at Morris Brown College in Atlanta, Georgia. Not only was he determined for himself, he was also determined for his "beloved sister Margaret who recently, in 1984, passed away." With softness and a special tenderness he spoke of Margaret attending Morgan State University with the help of another now-deceased brother.

Young Marion got his first break and his first heartbreak when he began working as a chauffeur for the president of Morris Brown College where for two years he received his tuition and spending money. The heartbreak came when one day he was in a great rush, parked the president's car on a hill and forgot to put it in park and it went over an

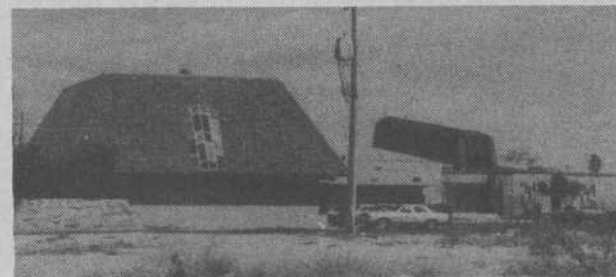
embankment.

"Of course I was fired," he said with a wide grin. Because that job had been so important to him he thought that was the end of the world, he



Rev. Marion D. Bennett

must give up. But under God's leadership he got another job that went from 75¢ an hour upward both in finances



Zion United Methodist Church

and responsibility. It was that job beginning as a dishwasher that became the vehicle by which he helped to educate his sister, support his mother and finish his undergraduate degree and Master's of Divinity from Gammon Theological Seminary. It was that job also that he held until he came to Las Vegas in 1960.

Marion felt an early call into the ministry even while he was yet in high school. His commitment deepened with his association with Bob Jones, Sr., of Bob Jones University.

Because of his religious belief and because of what he perceives the duty of the church to be, he entered the political arena, was elected

Assemblyman, District 6, and served for three terms. "I feel that the mission of the church is to improve standards of living here on earth. In fact," he says half-jokingly and half-seriously, "a lot of these people may not even go to heaven, so just in case they miss it, they will have had a better quality of life here." He believes in a balanced life. What good is it to give them religion when they don't have food or decent housing? We don't have to remain in poverty because we were born there.

Because of his vision,

Rev. Bennett, under the leadership of God, inspired his people and "gave them motivation and leadership to do first for themselves by giving tithes, begging less, and not depending on the white man to provide for them."

vide for them."

He started the day care program at Zion with himself and one volunteer to fill a need for helping the children of this community. He had approximately four or five children and had no way to feed them except for others' generosity. From that humble beginning, Zion United Methodist Church, 2108 Revere in North Las Vegas, has grown

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Louise H. Jordan, owner of the Lil Angels Pre-School Plus, has been appointed the new church reporter for the Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice. She was selected from a number of candidates who applied for the position.

"We are delighted that Louise Jordan has joined our editorial staff. She has a keen interest in her work and has pledged to give as much religious community coverage as possible," said Ed Brown, president of the Brown Publishing Company. "We look forward to a long relationship and we urge our readership to provide her with as much information as possible relative to church activities."

Born Jena, La., Jordan's parents are Levi and Mary Hatcher. She has five brothers and nine sisters and is a graduate of Grambling College, Grambling, La.

Louise Jordan and her husband, Albert Jordan of Delhi, La., moved to Las Vegas during 1964 searching for new job opportunities. They have three girls and two boys.

Jordan has worked in Las Vegas as a social worker in the Welfare Department for 10 years; as a Protective Services Officer with the Juvenile Court Services for four years at the Clark County Community College; and as

a Rehabilitation Program Specialist at the Las Vegas City Jail for one year.

Churches are urged to send their services and program announcements, typewritten, to Louise Jordan, c/o Lil Angel Pre-School Plus, 1230 W. Adams, Las Vegas, Nev. 89106 or to her in care of the Las Vegas Sentinel-Voice, 1201 South Eastern Avenue, Las Vegas, Nev. 89104. Articles must be mailed or delivered to the above locations no later than Monday noon of each week. Announcements will be printed as near as possible to the scheduled date of the activity.



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