

FAITH | VALUES

SATURDAY, MAY 17, 2008 | KENTUCKY.COM/LIVING | LEXINGTON HERALD-LEADER

SECTION F

FAITH NOTES

Today

■ The Women of St. Paul A.M.E. Church are sponsoring a "My Man Can Cook" competition at noon at the church, 251 North Upper Street, Lexington. There will be four categories: chili/soup, entrees, desserts and something special (anything that doesn't fit in the other categories). Tickets for the tasting are \$5. Call (859) 255-7945. Also, the women will celebrate Women's Day at 11 a.m. May 25. The guest speaker will be the Rev. Maxine Thomas, the new assistant pastor of St. Paul A.M.E. Church. An afternoon program will begin at 4 p.m. featuring Ohio gospel recording artist Marlyce McCants and the Jimtown Male Chorus.

■ The Eckankar Center of Lexington will host "What Goes Around Comes Around: The Law of Karma," an informal spiritual discussion, 1 to 2 p.m. at 153 Patchen Drive, Suite 55B. Call (859) 268-4888.

■ The Tibetan Buddhist Community of Lexington will hold a teaching, "How to Develop Bodhicitta," 10 to 11:30 a.m. at 903 Manchester Street. The teaching will be followed by discussion. Teachings are free, and donations are welcome. Go to www.tbcl.org, e-mail info@tbcl.org or call Richard Farkas at (859) 396-3505.

■ Shirley Hayden, author of *Women of Nelson*, a fictional depiction of a historical event in which black soldiers' families were forced out of Camp Nelson in November 1864, will speak at Lexington Friends Meeting (Quakers), 649 Price Avenue, from 4 to 5 p.m. The event is free; child care is available. Call (859) 299-2026.

■ Union Church, 213 Prospect St., Berea, will have a bazaar from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The event is sponsored by the Missions Board to benefit local and global mission projects.

Sunday

■ Missionary Day will be at 10:15 a.m. at Historic Pleasant Green Missionary Baptist Church, 540 West Maxwell Street, Lexington. The guest speaker will be the Rev. Lincoln Bingham, pastor of St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church, Louisville, and former moderator of the General Association of Baptists in Kentucky. A missionary workshop and luncheon will be at 10 a.m. today.

■ Great Crossing Missionary Baptist Church, 135 Lloyd Road, Georgetown, will celebrate Women's Day at 11 a.m. The Rev. Bob Brown of New Horizon Missionary Baptist Church, Danville, will speak.

Thursday

■ Prayer, Care, Share, Lexington 2008 will be 7 to 9 p.m. at Crowne Plaza Hotel — Campbell House, 1375 S. Broadway. Call Tommy Green at (859) 489-8716, or e-mail tgreen@lexfi.org for more details.

Friday

■ The Talley Trio will be in concert at Red House Baptist Church, 2301 Red House Road, north of Richmond, at 7 p.m. Admission is free, but offerings will be accepted.

Coming up

■ St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, 1750 Summerhill Drive, Lexington will hold its Country Fair from May 29 to June 1. Admission is free. Ride passes are \$12 on May 29 and 30; \$15 May 31 and June 1.

■ Duncan Chapel United Methodist Church — Jimtown, 2289 Jimtown Lane, continues its centennial celebration with a yard sale featuring food and games at 1 p.m. May 31. Call (859) 263-8819.

Submit calendar items to hifaith@herald-leader.com at least two weeks in advance of the event. Mailed, faxed or hand-delivered items will not be accepted.

He worked in public education, ministered equally to white and black. And yet London Ferrill is remembered by almost no one in this town.



PHOTOS BY WHITNEY WATERS

David Wagoner, left, and Isaac Maddock, 4, sowed seeds last month at the London Ferrill Community Garden, next to the Old Episcopal Burying Ground on East Third Street. Ferrill was a long-overlooked black clergyman who served Lexington in the mid-1800s.

GARDEN HELPS COMMUNITY GROW

Empty lot is fertile ground for seeds of reconciliation

By Amy Wilson

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Upon his death in 1854, London Ferrill was buried on East Third Street in the Episcopal Burying Ground's rector's plot. He was not the rector at Lexington's influential and powerful Christ Church, nor had he ever been.

Heavens, Ferrill had spent his whole life as a Baptist.

But he was unquestionably an extraordinary man of faith, having given over his life to God at age 11, having overcome physical and social obstacles to gather his own church flock until it numbered 1,800 and having lived a life worthy enough to draw 4,500 mourners to the funeral of a poor but pious man.

If one earns such a thing, Ferrill earned his place in that beautifully shaded cemetery. He was only one of three Lexington clergymen who had determined to stay behind to minister to the dying during the merciless cholera epidemic of 1833. He had lost his wife early to the disease but remained, knowing of the pain of loss.

He founded a church here, led many to God in his years here, baptized 220 at one meeting alone. He worked in public education, ministered equally to white



Bob Voll, a member of Christ Church and chair of the Burying Ground Committee, was in favor of the community garden from the get-go.

and black Kentuckians.

And yet his name is remembered by almost no one in this town. There is no statuary to his bravery and goodness; no headstone marking the place where we might remember his work and his words.

There are lots of reasons why that might be. But one reason is probably the most obvious.

London Ferrill was black.

Geoff and Sherry Maddock live in the neighborhood where the

Old Episcopal Burying Ground stands surrounded by a fence. Next to the cemetery, a wide open field abuts a fire station to the west. Across the street, a clinic, houses, apartments.

It's a neighborhood in urban Lexington.

The Maddocks, missionaries by trade and parents to a four-year-old, walk past the open field every day. They used to wonder who owned it and if they would be

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Parents keep baccalaureates going

Services designed to be more inspirational than religious

By Jim Niemi

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Graduating seniors at area high schools will have a chance to wear their caps and gowns more than once. The baccalaureate service, traditionally a religious service for graduating seniors, is surviving for at least one more class of graduates.

Because public schools cannot compel their students to attend faith-based events, participation is voluntary and

student attendance can be sparse. Parents have taken on the task of organizing the ceremonies. And in doing so, they've backed off from a purely religious message and placed the emphasis on inspiration.

"We're trying to do it without it being an overtly religious ceremony," said Todd Porter, acting president of the Lafayette PTSA. "That can become a little bit tricky."

About 100 seniors from Henry Clay are expected to attend its baccalaureate, said organizer Gesela Brown.

"The attendance is not what we would want," she said. "But it's probably the most intimate ceremony the students will have all year." Brown also said the small group makes the event "a great opportunity to take personal photos."

Suzetta Yates, who is helping to organize the event for

Lafayette seniors, agreed.

"There's usually limited seating at graduation," she said. "But this is where Grandma and Grandpa can come for pictures and fellowship with the family."

Lafayette, like the other schools, emphasizes that its event is designed to be inspirational rather than overtly religious.

"We're calling it 'Senior Inspiration,'" Yates said.

Alan Stein, president of the Lexington Legends baseball team, will speak at the Lafayette gathering.

Henry Clay's baccalaureate

The urge to write enjoying a revival

We all want to see our thoughts in print



PAUL PRATHER
CONTRIBUTING COLUMNIST

I've long tried to figure out what makes some of us want to see our thoughts set down in print, as if the things we say are so important they should be preserved.

It's not just me. Everywhere I go, I meet people who tell me they're would-be writers. They've just finished a novel, are working on an essay, intend to start a blog.

Back in the 1970s, when I still lived with my parents, my grandmother, Lennie Prather, came to stay with us.

She was dying. She'd been in a coma and then spent a lengthy spell recuperating in a nursing home. Her muscles and eyesight had atrophied. She could barely sign a birthday card legibly. She had, at best, an eighth-grade education.

But she spent the last months of her life laboriously scribbling out with a ballpoint pen the first 80 pages of her autobiography.

When I'm gone, she told me, I want you to make sure this gets published. Take the money it earns and split it among my grandchildren.

Granny had spent 50 years as a housewife, married to a laborer, living in a tiny house on an obscure street in Somerset. Yet she was certain her story was unique and so profound it would make all her grandkids wealthy.

It didn't. Her autobiography never was published — she never even managed to finish it. But I'm glad she wrote as much of it as she did, and I'm sure the act of writing it brought her joy, or at least distraction from her suffering.

An urge like Granny's seems to have taken hold of a sizable portion of the population. The New York Times Book Review recently ran an essay by staffer Rachel Donadio, in which she discusses an explosion in the number of books being published and in the popularity of writing in general.

In 2007, Donadio says, 400,000 books were published or distributed in the United States, up from 300,000 in 2006.

The increase is due partly to the ease and low cost with

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