

Rev. Charles H. Smith Wins Jaycees' Award For Service

The Rev. Charles H. Smith, pastor of the First Baptist Church and director of the anti-poverty Action Center, was presented the Huntington Junior Chamber of Commerce distinguished service award Monday night for contributions to the community during the past year.

The award was presented at a dinner at the Holiday Inn on recommendation of a judging committee composed of former Governor Cecil H. Underwood; Dr. Stewart H. Smith, president of Marshall University; Dr. Lynn T. Jones, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church, City Manager Edward A. Ewing and Larry Glick, executive director of the Downtown Improvement Group.

Mr. Smith, 35, was nominated by the Huntington Professional and Business Men's Club, which noted that his church recently completed a \$275,000 building to replace one destroyed by fire about

two years ago; that he founded and heads a seafood market which helped finance the rebuilding program, meets a community need and provides work for six persons;

That the Action Opportunity Center with 38 employees that "has done more to lift the economic status and social climate of citizens in the lower socio-economic bracket . . . than any other program . . . in recent history" of the city; that he served for two years as chairman of the City Human Rights Commission, and that he is chairman of the board of trustees of the West Virginia State Baptist Convention and has been active in many volunteer community organizations.

Mr. Smith is an honor graduate of Virginia Union University in Richmond with an A. B. degree and received his Bachelor of Divinity degree from the Virginia Union



Rev. Smith

school of religion. He has been pastor of the First Baptist Church for more than six years.



Members of the Huntington Ministerial Association and their wives honored the outgoing and incoming presidents of the Association and their wives at a reception at the Campus Christian Center of Marshall University early this week.

The honorees are, from left, the Rev. and Mrs. Charles H. Smith, First Baptist Church, and Mrs. Aldred P. Wallace and Dr. Wallace, Johnson Memorial Methodist Church. Dr. Wallace is the new president.

sers today that Butz was 'merely' Powell said. "The President's decision on ly offensive to him and to the American people."

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Monday Evening

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Black pastor Rev. Smith fights hostility and 'Appalachia mentality'

By JOHN KOENIG
Of The Advertiser staff

Charles Smith talks quickly during an interview, rushing through sentences, trying to make them fit into his hectic daily schedule.

Then, perhaps realizing he's two words ahead of schedule, he slows for a few seconds drawing out syllables.

His words are emphasized, not just by the speed with which he says them, but by his volume.

He talks like a preacher. He is a preacher. He's the Rev. Mr. Smith, minister of the First Baptist Church.

He's also director of the Tri-State Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC).

But today, for this interview, he's a Huntington man who's a candidate for the executive directorship of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

The present executive director, Roy Wilkins, is to resign next summer at the NAACP convention in St. Louis, Mo. Wilkins was supposed to resign this summer, but refused to give up the job, causing some association directors to be disgruntled.

Those board members are expected to select Wilkins' replacement late this year and the 45-year-old Rev. Mr. Smith is among those being considered.

"Hostility." The Rev. Mr. Smith emphasizes each syllable of the word. It's something he knows well. He's been active in dozens of community programs and issues since he came here 16 years ago. Not all of them were popular with blacks or whites. He's faced bitter confrontations.

Their hostility has eaten at his wife and children, he says. He's shrugged off the rumors and gossip that go with it. That's the price of being a leader, he says.

With his shirt collar button undone and tie knot loosened, the Rev. Mr. Smith still looks neat. He's well dressed most of the time. He looks poised and confident, almost arrogant — not at all like the stereotype of a black Baptist preacher.

Perhaps that's what leads to rumors. He's a rich man, owns property all over, it's whispered around town.

He smiles when asked about that. "I've never run into a mentality like I've run into in Appalachia. Any outsider who comes to town is under suspicion. If he exercises any



Advertiser photo by Frank Altzer

"If I was a purely ambitious person, I would have been out of Huntington a long time ago"—Rev. Charles Smith

reference to Internal Revenue Service audits.

Despite his complaints about being under suspicion, he said, "The result is that I am a much stronger person."

"Money means nothing to me. It's merely something to have."

He is and has been involved in business ventures. Along with other members of his church, he started Fisherman's Wharf, a restaurant at 8th Street and

...ers had to say. The section also features Marshall defensive end Ron Puggi, who continued playing this season despite suffering a serious knee injury.

Then, on Jan. 2, a special, 32-page, magazine-style section commemorates Marshall's rise to a Division I-A national power. The cover features drawings of Herd stars and the section features an in-depth, upclose look at Chad Pennington and his family, with photographs and information you've never seen before.

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Number **6** THE CENTURY'S TOP 50
INFLUENTIAL PEOPLE
CHARLES H. SMITH

Rev. Smith's teachings inspired generations

By **LISA D. OSBURN**
The Herald-Dispatch
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HUNTINGTON — The Rev. Charles H. Smith had a vision for the future.

He spent only 20 years in Huntington as the pastor of First Baptist Church from 1960 through 1980, but impacted generations with his teachings from the pulpit and his daily life.

"Rev. Charlie Smith is a man who strives toward Christian principals and positive change," said the Rev. Joseph Evans, pastor of First Baptist Church, 801 6th Ave. "He was and is brilliant."

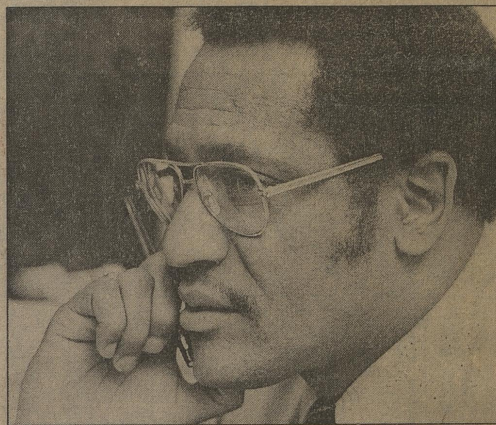
Smith came to Huntington in 1960 during a time of social unrest across the country. As a local leader in President Johnson's War on Poverty in the mid-'60s, he encouraged African Americans to pursue education, buy their own homes and businesses

and take their place in society. Children of his congregation were encouraged to not only attend college, but to graduate and become prominent citizens in society, Evans said.

Many residents will always remember the way Smith stood up to the city administration if he feared someone's civil rights had been violated. In 1978, two city workers were fired and Smith led efforts to have them reinstated because they were dismissed without a fair hearing.

In 1974, he urged the Huntington Police Department to fully investigate the death of one of his congregation members who was struck by a car on Doulton Avenue.

A sometimes controversial figure, Smith was behind the design and construction of 150 low-rent apartments and a new church edifice when the First



The Herald-Dispatch file photo

The Rev. Charles H. Smith spent 20 years as pastor of First Baptist Church in Huntington.

Baptist Church building burned in 1961. He co-founded a skills training center, senior citizens center, two multi-service centers and a community development corporation. He was director of the Tri-State Opportunities Industrialization Center and project director of Action Inc., a poverty prevention program.

After leaving Huntington in 1980, Smith took the second highest post in the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. He

went on to be Sen. John Glenn's deputy political director in 1983 as the Ohio senator vied for the Oval Office.

Recently, Smith, who lives in New Jersey, helped edit an edition of the Bible that emphasizes roles of people of African descent, Evans said.

This feature is one in a series profiling the top 50 people who made a difference in the Tri-State during the 20th century.

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