

Daily News-Sun • Friday, Oct. 13, 2000

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# Bells will ring as congregation burns mortgage

BRUCE ELLISON  
DAILY NEWS-SUN

Five years to the day after ground was broken for the new Palm West Community Church in Sun City West, members of the growing congregation will burn the church's mortgage.

The weekend of Oct. 28-29 will be given over to a variety of celebrations as the congregation, a member of the American Baptist fellowship, holds what it calls Celebration Weekend.

The Oct. 29 service will also include the dedication of a new set of handbells, and their first use in a performance, as a new but enthusiastic group of ringers plays, "How Firm a Foundation."

Guest speaker that day is the Rev. Dr. George Sweeting, chancellor emeritus of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, an evangelistic fellowship founded by Dwight L. Moody more than 125 years ago.

Sweeting's topic is "God's Promise of a Bright Future."

Sweeting also will speak Saturday night at a church banquet in the Sun City West Community Services Building, 14435 R.H. Johnson Blvd.

Sweeting has been with Moody Bible Institute for 28 years, as president for 16 years, then as pastor of the historic Moody Memorial Church. He has been an Institute trustee since 1969, a role he still plays. He also has written more than 30 books, and each year at rallies and other ministries addresses in total some 100,000 people in person.

The Oct. 28 evening program starts at 5:30 p.m., and will include special music. Tickets are required in advance, at a cost of \$12 per person. Call the church office at 546-2980 to reserve a spot.

Saturday will start with a missions conference, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., in Hoover Hall at Palm West, 13845 W. Stardust Blvd., at Echo Mesa Drive.

Speakers from a variety of American Baptist missions in Arizona will participate, and there will be continuous displays of videos, and literature for the taking.

Special guests are Rev. Steven L. Roblee, world mission support for the American Baptist Churches of the Pacific Southwest; Dr. Dale Salico, regional executive minister in the southwest, and Rev. Bruce Schipul, also from the area ministry conference.

On Sunday, Sweeting is main speaker at the 9:55 a.m. service and again at Sunday's 6 p.m. service.

The new handbell choir, under the direction of Irene Lamprecht, a violinist and the church choir director, gives its first public performance that morning.

"I'm a violinist and I know music, and I guess I was willing to take up the challenge (of organizing the bell ringers) more readily than anyone else," Lamprecht said in explaining her additional role.

The bell choir will perform in later Christmas programs. Right now it has only two octaves of the four and one-half octave bell set, bought at a cost of some \$12,000.

The bells are a joint gift of several church members plus an anonymous donor who contributed a major part of the cost, said the minister, the Rev. David Gallagher.

The bells are from the nation's premiere maker of handbells, Malmeck Inc., and travel in their own cushioned, velvet-lined cases. The metal is touched only with gloves, to help keep body oils away and the bells in tune.

So far, eleven people have joined the

bell ringers, Lamprecht said. One or two more may be all that's needed, since generally a player can handle two to four bells with practice.

There's also a silent bell in the set, one that will bear an inscription and not be used, Gallagher said.

Following the service, the mortgage will be burned in the church parking lot.

The structure now being used for services will later become the church fellowship hall.

As the congregation grows, a new sanctuary will be built on the several acres adjoining Hoover Hall, named for Robert and Ruth Hoover, founding members of Palm West who made a major financial contribution to its construction. Palm West began in 1992 with 16 members, and now counts about 260 in its membership.

About nine months after the church began, it acquired the land from Del Webb Corp. for its current structure.

Ground was broken for the building on Oct. 29, 1995, with the first service in the new structure on June 2, 1996, as the congregation grew.

The founding pastor, the Rev. William Kearns, was present for the dedication of Hoover Hall that November, fulfilling, with wife Janice, a three-year commitment as new-church planners.

They were succeeded in October 1997 by Rev. David Gallagher as senior pastor. That same month, the Rev. Mike Moore was called as minister of music.

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**JOY LAMBERT/DAILY NEWS-SUN**

Irene Lamprect, left, handbell choir director and church choir director, gives a test ring of the handbells at Palm West Community Church in Sun City West. Photo, above, is of the new handbells at Palm West Community Church in Sun City West.

# Church will have new home

## American Baptists break ground Sunday

By BRUCE ELLISON  
Staff writer

SUN CITY WEST — Members of the congregation at Palm West Community Church, an American Baptist fellowship, will break ground Sunday afternoon — Reformation Sunday — for Hoover Hall, the first physical structure of the 150-member church.

The ceremony is scheduled for 1 p.m. at the church site, at the intersection of Stardust Boulevard and Echo Mesa Drive.

**'You also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.'**

— I Peter 2: 5-6.

By unanimous vote of the congregation, the building was named in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Robert J. Hoover, honorary charter members of Palm West. The Rev. William P. Kearns, principal pastor, said the name "is in recognition of their generous gift to the church building fund and their faithful Christian stewardship over the years."

Palm West was organized in September 1993. It currently meets for Sunday worship in the Johnson Social Hall, 19803 R.H. Johnson Blvd.

This Sunday's 10 a.m. worship — in which several pastors will participate — will be followed by a celebration buffet luncheon at 11:30 a.m., also in the Johnson Social Hall.

Then, at 1 p.m. comes the groundbreaking, appropriately keyed by the hymn, "How Firm a Foundation," which takes its words from II Timothy 2:19, "... the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: The Lord knows those who are His ..."

Instrumentalists Cleo Craigie, the Rev. Ralph Daniel, Estelle Hahn and Irene Lambrecht will perform.

The Hoovers are expected to be present for the formal session, along with the pastor, the moderator, the chair of the building council and the architect.

The church, estimated to cost about \$1.7 million, will not need a mortgage, Mr. Kearns said earlier this year. Architect is Dead Glasco of Glasco-Bedrin Architects.

In its initial phase, Hoover Hall will contain about 10,000 square feet, and will serve many purposes, including worship and fellowship.

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Rick D'Elia/Daily News-Sun

Members of the five-month-old Palm West Community Church launch balloons to celebrate the acquisition of a site for the church at Stardust and Echo Mesa in Sun City West.