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Wearing traditional garb, Mary Jane Hill weaves a basket at the Moravian Church in Old Salem.

MORAVIAN CHRISTMAS

*Holiday lovefeast celebrates
Christian unity and goodwill
among neighbors and friends*

By Joe Drape

Staff writer

OLD SALEM, N.C. — Red ruffled candles glow like warm embers in the windows of 2-century-old timber and brick homes. Doorsteps are illuminated by sharp-pointed Advent stars, twisting slightly as if they are moved by the violin and harpsichord music that enchant this historic quarter.

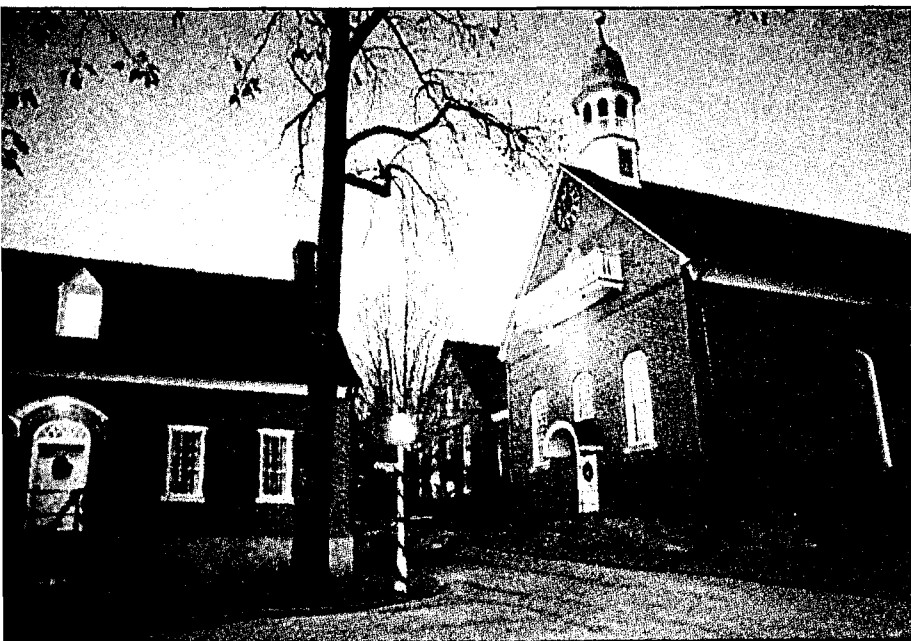
Christmas is different in Old Salem, a restored 18th-century village in the middle of Winston-Salem. True to its founding by the Moravian Church, whose members prize a simple faith, the town is free of 20th-century holiday notions. No plastic Santa Clauses dot the manicured lawns. Rudolph and his red nose are nowhere in sight.

The heart of the community's

gentle holiday season is the lovefeast, a Christmas Eve service at the Home Moravian Church, a handsome 1800 brick structure with an unassuming bell tower. The service, consisting of rich songs and a simple meal of sweet buns and coffee, celebrates unity and goodwill among neighbors and friends.

Nothing is to detract from the congregation's devotional thoughts. "We are to blend in, to be insignificant," says Ann Hall Wauford, who will wear white from head to toe. (Actually, her lace apron and white cap are rather stunning.)

Mrs. Wauford is a diener — German for "servant" — and, along with other members, will serve the lovefeast meal at four services today. In all, some 3,000 people will attend, many of them members of other denominations.



the Moravian Church (right) was built in 1800 and the Inspector's House (left) was built in 1766. Both are in Old Salem in Winston-Salem, N.C.

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