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Members of the Christ Miracle Healing Center and Church fight with law-enforcement officers prior to a shoot-out that left two church members dead

# 2 die in Miracle Valley battle

## Long expected, the shooting finally comes

By Paul Brinkley-Rogers  
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MIRACLE VALLEY — "You've got to kill us if you want us, man," Robert Luckett yelled at the sheriff's deputy backing away from a woman with a large rock in her hand.

Then Luckett screamed, "Wait right here till I come back with a gun, and then we'll see who's the dead man."

But by the time Luckett ran back, with nunchakus — an Oriental weapon — instead of a gun, Deputy Ray Thatcher was gone. He was lost in a sea of church members attacking him and 35 other deputies on Axehead Drive with everything from teeth to gun butts.

That's what Arizona Daily Star photographer Jim Davis and I saw first as we leaped from my pickup after following close on the heels of half a dozen sheriff's patrol cars responding to an urgent appeal for help.

A few minutes earlier, two deputies had driven into the valley to try to serve a warrant for a traffic violation on Frank Bernard, a member of the Christ Miracle Healing Center and Church. They were quickly surrounded by angry church members, and called for help.

We heard the backup sheriff's cars roaring into the valley from across Arizona 92, jumped into the truck, and stayed with them in the dust.

Standing there, watching the anger, the hate and the fury of the church members, it didn't really seem possible. Not in this quiet neighborhood of single-story homes built by ardent followers of Jesus Christ.

At times, in past months, deputies had told me that one day it would come to this — someone getting shot. I had agreed.

But when the guns started blazing and both

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One woman grieves as two others try to lift the body of a shooting victim

## Effort to arrest 3 leads to violence

By Paul Brinkley-Rogers,  
R.H. Ring and Don Dale  
The Arizona Daily Star

MIRACLE VALLEY — A leader of a controversial all-black church here and another church member were shot to death yesterday in a wild melee that left at least two lawmen wounded and dozens more with broken arms, cuts and bruises.

Nine people were arrested after the bloody confrontation. It erupted shortly after 9 a.m. when deputies keeping watch on the community from the sheriff's substation across the road responded to a call for help from two other deputies, who were shot as they supported Deputy Pat Halloran, who was trying to serve three traffic-related arrest warrants.

An attempt to serve the same warrants Friday night failed when the two arresting officers were surrounded by scores of club-wielding church members and forced to withdraw.

One of those killed yesterday was William Thomas Jr., 33, son of the church pastor, the Rev. Frances Thomas, and the militant theoretical leader of the church. He suffered gunshots in the arm and the side. The other church member killed was identified as Augusta Tate, 52. Tate was William Thomas' father-in-law. Autopsies are to be performed today in Tucson.

At least five injured lawmen were taken to Sierra Vista Community Hospital, two suffering from gunshots and the rest suffering from

★ William Thomas Jr. had a bitter vision of reality. Page 8A.

★ Many are evacuated, but tomorrows still loom. Page 8A.

★ A chronology of conflict. Page 9A.

broken bones, cuts and bruises. One sheriff's deputy, David Jones, was transferred to St. Joseph's Hospital in Tucson. He suffered shotgun wounds in the face and upper chest, and was reported in stable condition last night.

The other lawmen, including Sgt. Larry Dever, who was shot along with Jones, were treated at the Sierra Vista hospital and released.

Two injured church members were transferred from Sierra Vista hospital to Tucson hospitals. Roy Williams, whose spine was severed by a gunshot, was listed in critical condition at Tucson Medical Center in Tucson. And John Jamison, who was shot in the shoulder, was taken to University Hospital, where he was listed in serious condition.

Deputies who responded to the call for help were punched, beaten with pipes and sticks, stabbed with broken soda bottles and then shot at with shotguns and rifles.

In all, as many as 100 men, women and children from the church were involved in the fight with 35 Cochise

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### Weather

**High and flighty.** Today will be generally fair with variable high cloudiness. A high near 90 and a low near 60 are predicted. Yesterday's high and low were 87 and 56.

Showers and thunderstorms extended from southeast South Carolina across the Georgia coast and Florida. Showers were also widely scattered over the Pacific Northwest. Snow flurries remained over northern Maine.

Yesterday's national temperature extremes were 16 at Houlton, Maine, and 99 at Thermal, Calif. Details on Page 4A.

### News

**Rules violated.** The administrator and nursing director of the Arizona Elks Long Term Care Unit in Tucson are disciplined by a state board for violating state nursing regulations. Page 21A.

**Barred romance.** She's a judge. He's a convicted murderer confined to the Arizona State Prison. And they're in love. Page 1C.

**Beyond numbers.** State Senate President Leo Corbet seems to have the turnout, Gov. Bruce Babbitt has the money, and Libertarian Sam Steiger just wants 5 percent of the vote. Page 1B.

**Ron vs. Tip.** With results of the Nov. 2 election hanging in the balance, the president and the speaker of the House trade economic charges over the radio. Page 5A.

**Hassan on peace.** King Hassan II of Morocco restates the position of the Arab nations that they would recognize Israel, but only after lands seized in the 1967 war are evacuated. Page 10A.

**Apparent retaliation.** Salvadoran rebels critically wound an off-duty civil-defense officer and kill his three daughters in apparent retaliation for the disappearance of 11 leftist and labor leaders. Page 14A.

**Ulster stalemate.** The new provincial assembly in Northern Ireland is plagued by the same Catholic-Protestant hostilities of centuries past, and insiders expect it to collapse eventually. Page 16A.

**Parents cared.** The death of a 13-pound man ends a 19-year-old secret for his parents, who feared he would be taken away by outsiders. Page 2C.

**New strike call.** Leaders of the now-outlawed Solidarity labor union call for measures they hope will lead to a national strike in Poland after the first of the year. Page 6A.

### Money

**ACC race.** The two major candidates for the Arizona Corporation Commission — a group in the midst of many a controversy — are running for political survival in a race that's no longer polite. Page 8B.

### Comment

**Luck triumphed.** Were it not for errors in judgment on both sides, O. Carroll Arnold writes, World War II might have ended with a sea battle in the Philippines on Oct. 24, 1944. Page 4B.

### Lifestyle

**"Chipping away."** Dr. Jose Santiago, chief of psychiatry at Kino Community Hospital, knows there is no ultimate answer to many of his patients' problems, but he keeps "chipping away." Page 1K.

### Entertainment

**Who changes.** The music of the Who is evolving as the musicians get closer to the age of 40. Page 1-I.

### Sports

**Talks stop.** Negotiations between the NFL owners and the striking players are suspended and mediator Sam Kagel leaves for home. Page 1D.

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### Press problems plague Star again

An electrical malfunction left part of our press inoperable last night, forcing some last-minute changes in how your Sunday Star was printed.

Although it contains no sections lettered E through H, your paper is complete.

The first 72 pages of the paper normally would have been printed in eight sections, but we had to consolidate them into four.

No delays in distribution were expected, but we apologize if further problems during the press run made your paper late.