Religion In Modern Life

Premiering musical may change talent outlook in Baltimore

By Eddie King
AFRO Religion Editor

If there was ever any doubt about the Christian talent Baltimore has, it will immediately go away after a viewing of Raymond Wise's musical "Gospel On Stage" to be presented this Friday, Saturday and Sunday in Notre Dame College's Le Clerc Auditorium.

What must be one of the finest, well-thought-out, Christian musical sagas put together in the area in a long time by a Baltimore artist features direct city natives who magnificently croon the tunes in the style of any professional.

There is native Tyrone Wright from East Baltimore who in a sleek baritone presentation delivers in a night club scene a torturing rendition of a song entitled "Freedom's Lament."

Then there is West Baltimore's Cynthia Braxton, a female tenor, popping up in almost every scene with a tantalizing throaty sound triggering all types of hypnotical sensations.

But the cast is way beyond Tyrone and Cynthia. There are 20 of them, and none are billed as the star.

The play traces the history of the development of gospel music. There is an acute focus on its move from spirituals, blues, jazz and traditional stages, each being popular during noted time periods.

But the production goes a bit further. It leaps into the unforbidden realms of what Christian music in the future might be like.

Perhaps, music then will be like the upbeat, syncopated, rhythmic, harmonious blend as described by the players in the cast. Or maybe it will not, but at least a glimpse is given at somebody's idea of what future music may be like. Who knows if he is wrong?

Whether the play will be a hit with an audience is still slightly questionable, but a good educated guess is it will. The talent is good.

"We auditioned people hard," said Raymond Wise, the play's writer, chief musician and director. "Close to 75 showed up for auditions on the first day, and we selected the very best."

Wise insists that Baltimore has loads of talent and that this production will shock those who have become accustomed to the traditional order of productions presented in this area.

"Sure, it's local talent," says Wise. "But whose to say that local talent can't be professional?"

And to get it as close to professional as possible, Wise gathered up some of the city's most notable musicians and even imported a choreographer or two from California. Dwight Wilson of Oakland is the chief dance arranger for the show.

Wise asserts himself to say that the show is not by any means a gospel concert. "It's a full scale production, equal in quality to any professional one."

Wise has already been presented with citations from the Mayor, City Council President Clarence "Du" Burns and City Council for his efforts to make this production a "Baltimore's Best."

The two-hour, 23 member cast production is expected to attract agents from around the country to assess its marketability.

Notre Dame College is located 4701 N. Charles St.

AFRO Photos by Bruce Smallwood

RAYMOND WISE, producer of musical 'Gospel On Stage' being presented Fri., Aug. 31, Sat., Sept. 1 and Sun., Sept. 2 at Notre Dame College, is caught in a musical moment rehearsing with cast.

DOING IT TOGETHER — Part of the ensemble for musical 'Gospel On Stage,' premiering this weekend, demonstrate togetherness needed for caliber of show at the Notre Dame College's auditorium at rehearsal.

SLEEZY NIGHTCLUB ACT demonstrates the blues that channeled its way into gospel music. Tyrone Wright (forward) leads song with backgroud singers (L to R) Marcia Faulkner, Renee Johnson and Cynthia Braxton.

Ceasar Memorial gets start

By Eddie King
AFRO Religion Editor

Rev. Grailan Ceaser and members of what used to be the Original Mount Olive Freewill Baptist Church are finally moving into a new church.

This Sunday, the 200 or so members will not have to be conscious of time or worry about immediately tidying up as they worship in their new parish in the 400 block of Eager St.

Formerly worshipping at Berea Temple Seventh Day Adventist Church in the 1900 block of Madison Ave., the church body organized in March of 1963.

Since that time, membership has grown tremendously, almost three times as much.

As the church body moves to its new location with new hope and ideas, it also moves with a new name. In honor of the memory of the pastor's father, Bishop Leo K. Caesar, who died in early 1962, the church was renamed to Ceaser Memorial Baptist Church.

"I'm very, very excited about this move," said Rev. Ceaser. "We were restricted a bit at someone else's church. We weren't able to do as many things as we'd liked. But we're delighted about this new building. We even have an extra worshipping hall and across the street, a fellowship hall."

AFRO Photo by Paul A. Greene

CEASER MEMORIAL BAPTIST CHURCH — Rev. Grailan Ceaser stands outside new church that he and his congregation will occupy beginning Sunday.

Rev. Ceaser is quick to bring to attention that a lot of people helped to make Ceaser Memorial Baptist Church a reality. There was obviously the gracious hosts of Berea Temple, but there were many more.

One family of the church donated a house for any purpose so desired by the church. Another family donated an organ and another money. In fact, there were scores of contributions coming in from a variety of sources in and out of the city, even a notable contribution from singer Shirley Caesar, the pastor's cousin.

With the new move though comes a lot of responsibility. Within the next year, there are hopes to increase the membership of the church at least by 100. There are efforts to be made towards developing special social programs and beginning more auxiliaries.

The most basic concern is to at least begin a soup kitchen for the needy.

Pastor Ceaser will preach the opening sermon at the church this Sunday, September 2 at 11 a.m. All are invited.

Rev. Will to receive doctorate

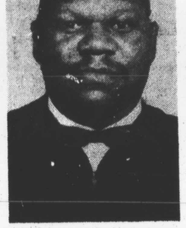
It is not everyday someone like Rev. James E. Wills, Sr. gets a doctoral degree.

In spite of a home life so hectic and congested, a school life so academically trying and a social life so wickedly tempting, he still will be receiving his Doctor of Divinity Degree on September 20 at a commencement dinner celebration in his honor.

Coming to present his degree will be Dr. Richard L. Thompson of Hayti, MO, president of the New World Bible Institute at which Rev. Will studied.

Growing up for the Reverend had always offerred him too many choices There were the obvious ones, those soliciting his involvement in the activities of his friends like drinking and smoking, and there were those kinds that were pushing for his righteousness in the Lord.

There was even one edging him on to become a priest, of course edged on by one of the Fathers at St. Pius Catholic School he was required to attend. That was one of those choices he really didn't have control over.



Rev. James E. Wills Sr.

But eventually, he had his way and graduated from Dunbar High School in 1954. He had earned a scholarship to Maryland State College in Princess Anne, Md.

Whether he wanted to or not, he attended the Church of God in Christ throughout his childhood. It was the wish of his uncle with whom he had come to stay in 1941 after his father's death.

Slowly but surely, he did become interested in the church and before long had been ordained as a preacher and later an elder and soon he became pastor of Mt. Moriah Church of God in Christ in the 1100 block of N. Gay Street.

After nine years of pastoring, he started working in community associations, Montebello, NECO fair housing and others.

In 1982, he attended Kingston Park Bible College in Baltimore from which he received an Associate Degree in Bible Study. He finally went to the New World Institute where he continued studies and earned his doctorate.

The choice had been his, and he made it all his own. Rev. Wills is now serving as assistant pastor, evangelist, teacher, all of which have carried him throughout the country and abroad.

The Rev. is married to Clorine Wills.

—Metro Briefs—

Simmons Memorial Baptist

The Majestic Choral Ensemble will be in concert at Simmons Memorial Baptist Church, Pennsylvania Ave. and Cumberland St., on Friday, August 31, 8 p.m.

New Psalmist Baptist

The Social Action Committee of New Psalmist Baptist Church, Franklin and Cathedral Sts., will be sponsoring their First Annual Back to School Dental Screening on Sept. 1, 11-1 p.m. $2.

Berean Christian School

Parents have until September 1 to register their children in the Berean Christian School, 2024 Orleans St. For further info. call 276-7971.

St. James U.M.

Men of St. James United Methodist Church, Monroe and Lexington St., are sponsoring a prayer breakfast on Sept. 1, 8 a.m. Bishop Edward Carroll will be the guest speaker.

Berean Baptist

Celebrating their anniversary on Sun., Sept. 2, at 3:30 p.m. is the Flower Circle of Berean Baptist Church, 5200 Denmore Ave. Presented in recital Miss Sonya Wooten.

Fountain Baptist

Men's Day at Fountain Baptist Church, 1215 E. Monument St., will be celebrated Sept. 2. Rev. Beecher Hicks, Jr. of Washington, D.C. will be guest speaker for this special rededication service. The service will be at 4 p.m.

Highway Christian

Young Adults of Highway Christian Church, 1100 Homewood Ave., will be sponsoring a Joy Night at 7:30 p.m. on Sat., Sept. 8 with various groups and choirs in attendance.

Leadenhall Baptist

Rev. Florence Alcorn will be in concert on Sun., Sept. 2, 3:30 p.m. at Leadenhall Baptist Church, 1021 Leadenhall St.

Bethel A.M.E.

A Labor Day Sunrise Service will be held at Bethel A.M.E. Church, 1300 Druid Hill Ave., on Sept. 3, 8 a.m. The distribution of clothes, shoes and other material helpfuls will be distributed to the needy at this service.

St. Luke U.M.

St. Luke United Methodist Church, Riggs Ave. and Gilmore St., will hold a Flea Market on Sat., Sept. 8 from 8-2 p.m.

Providence Baptist

The Inspirational Singers will be having a musical tea on Sat., Sept. 8, 4 p.m. at Providence Baptist Church, 1401 Pennsylvania Ave. Deacon Thomas Roberts, Sr. will be in concert. $5.

St. Bartholomew

St. Bartholomew's Church, 4711 Edmondson Ave., will hold its Annual Flea Market on Sat., Sept. 8 from 9-2 p.m.

First Corinthian Baptist

Brother James P. Thornton, Jr. will be in concert on Sun., Sept. 9 at First Corinthian Baptist Church, 3512 Powhatan Ave., at 4 p.m.

Simmons Memorial Baptist

The Recording King Choral Ensemble will be in recital at Simmons Memorial Baptist Church, Pennsylvania Ave. and Cumberland St., on Sun., Sept. 9, 8 p.m.

First Baptist

First Baptist Church, 525 N. Caroline St., will hold its

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Baptist Convention opens Monday

By Susan Baumel
AFRO Staff Writer

Leader of one of the first successful bus boycotts, Dr. Theodore Jemison, will meet in Washington with the 37,000 delegate members of the National Baptist Convention, beginning Monday.

A series of banquets and musical events will highlight the week's activities, most of which will take place in the Convention Center.

On Monday evening at 5:30 p.m., a presidential banquet will be held at the Washington Hilton Hotel. Reverend Frank D. Tucker, coordinator of the local entertainment committee, calls the dinner an opportunity for people to meet the dignitaries of the convention. WYCB radio will broadcast that.

At the same time that the presidential banquet will be in full-swing, an usher's banquet will also take place at the Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill.

Tickets are required for both events and can be obtained by calling the office's main number at (202) 723-6665. Beginning Monday, tickets for any events can be purchased at the "headquarters" hotels: the Washington Hilton, Washington Sheraton, Hyatt Regency on Capitol Hill, and the Shoreham Hotel.

On Tuesday night, a preconvention musical will be held at the Convention Center, featuring a 1,000 Voice Choir, comprised of members of churches in the District, accompanied by outstanding musicians, says Tucker. A ticket is also required for this event; the ticket price is $5.00.

Reverend Jesse Jackson will conduct Bible study class for the Woman's Auxiliary to the convention at the Convention Center. Those sessions begin at 8 a.m. and there is no charge. The public is welcome. Jackson will teach on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings.

The formal opening of the convention is scheduled for 9 a.m. on Wednesday morning at the Convention Center. Rumor has it that both Jackson and vice-presidential candidate Geraldine Ferraro will address the assembly at that time, but confirmations have not yet been made.

At 11:15 a.m., the opening sermon of the convention will be held in Hall A of the Convention Center. Charles T. Smith of Baton Rouge, Louisiana will be the speaker.

Woman's Auxiliary Night will be held at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday night at the Convention Center. Dr. Mary O. Ross is the speaker for the event. Ross has recently returned from a meeting of that organization, held in Geneva, Switzerland.

Accompanied on her visit to the District by C.M. Pearson, president of the Baptist Women of Georgia, (whom Ross playfully refers to as a "Georgia Peach"), both Ross and Pearson urge District women to participate in their activities throughout the convention week.

The Women's Auxiliary will take Bible Study from the Reverend Jesse Jackson at 8 a.m., Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings, September 4-7.

Ross reports this is only the second time that a woman has addressed the entire body of conventioneers. There is no charge for attendance at this event.

The National Young People's Department will set-up its headquarters as a separate body of the convention at the Shoreham Hotel.

Labor Day will find the youth members at a "Food-Fun" Fellowship at Nineteenth Baptist Church, 4606 16th St., NW. Their host will be Reverend Jerry Moore.

At 7 a.m., Tuesday, the Third Annual Department Breakfast will be held by and for the youth at the Shiloh Family Life Center, located at 1500 9th St., NW at a charge of $8.00 per person.

The president's annual address, by Dr. Theodore Jemison will be held at the Convention Center, September 6 at 11 a.m.

A laymen's annual address, also at the Convention Center, will follow at 3:45 p.m. Walter Cade, Jr. is the speaker for that event.

The long-awaited "Salad Fiesta" will be held by the women and youth at the New Bethel Baptist Church, 1739-9th St., NW. Reverend Walter Fauntroy will bring the greetings and act as host for the event.

Later in the evening, beginning at 6 p.m., the final run-offs for an oratorical contest that has swept the nation's Black Baptist churches will be held at the Nineteenth Street Baptist Church. The winner of the event will address the entire body of the convention on Youth Night, Friday, shortly before Jackson appears.

At 8 p.m. on Thursday night, a "Wedding of Roses Pageant and Queens Revue" will be held at the Convention Center.

For the closing events of the convention, on Friday night, both the winner of the oratorical contest and Jackson will address the assembly of conventioneers at the Convention Center. There is no charge.

Saturday night will be known as evangelistic night, held at the Convention Center at 8 p.m. and featuring Dr. E. V. Hill as the speaker.

Sunday school will be held at the Convention Center at 9 a.m., lead by executive director Dr. C. N. Adkins of Nashville, Tennessee.

Morning worship will be held at 11 a.m. Jemison will preach the sermon at that time.

Women's division to focus on family, building respect

By Susan Baumel
AFRO Staff Writer

President of the Women's Auxiliary of the National Baptist Convention, U.S.A., Inc., Dr. Mary Ross says that the 4,000 delegates from the Woman's Department will concentrate on the changing family in conjunction with the NBC's overall theme, "A Convention That Cares."

For the first time since 1907, the largest black organization in the world will gather in the District to discuss issues and problems vital to Blacks and a woman will address the assembly for the second time.

Trying to strengthen the family will be the key issue of concern to the women's constituency, says Ross.

"Building respect for history" and so, the elderly, is an important goal for families today, emphasized Ross during her preliminary visit to Washington, August 17.

"In speaking about the role of the elderly," Ross said, "there is so much we can do to help people remember that these (the elderly) are our resource."

Other problems facing the family today, especially with an ever increasing number of divided families is what Ross terms "one of these weaknesses—these children having children."

Young people who are lonely want somebody to love and love them, so they have children when they are little more than children themselves, comments Ross.

But she adds, "I don't think that (having children) is the way to get it (love)."

Instilling respect from generation to generation is of primary concern to Ross who is, in addition to her post as president for the Woman's Department, one of two delegates from the NBC to the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches. She

Church-wide meeting at Southern

The Southern Baptist Church will hold its Annual Church-Wide Institute from Monday, September 10 through Friday, September 14. Classes will begin each night at 7 p.m. and end at 9 p.m.

On Friday night, there will be a special encounter service with Dr. William J. Shaw, Pastor of White Rock Baptist Church in Philadelphia, Pa. as speaker. The combined choirs of Southern Baptist Church will sing for the occasion.

Southern Baptist is located 1701 N. Chester St. For further information call 732-8566.

Rev. Dr. William J. Shaw

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Gospel Spreading Church of God

The Gospel Spreading Church of God, 4310 Edmondson Ave., cordially invite you to their Annual Baptizing Service on Sun., Sept. 9, 7:30 p.m. For further info. call 233-2385.

Garrison Boulevard U.M.

Second Anniversary celebrations for the Spiritual Crusaders will be held at the Garrison Boulevard United Methodist Church, 2504 Garrison Blvd., on Sun., Sept. 9, 3:30 p.m.

Good Shepherd Baptist

Rev. Robert C. Hunt will speak at the 11 a.m. service for the 23rd Anniversary of the Angelic Choir at Good Shepherd Baptist Church, 3459 Park Heights Ave. At a 3:30 p.m. service, the Adams Chapel Choir, Shiloh C.C. Choir and Julia Mae Price Williams will perform.

Hopkins U.M.

Hopkins United Methodist Church, Highland Rd., five miles west of Columbia, will hold its Annual Homecoming Services from Sun., Sept. 9 through Sun., Sept. 16.

St. John A.M.E.

Singer Katie Jackson, along with special guest, will be in concert on Sun., Sept. 9 at the St. John A.M.E. Church, 810 N. Carrollton Ave. $5.

St. Matthews Gospel Tabernacle

Women's Day at St. Matthews Gospel Tabernacle Church, 1907 Rosedale St., to be held Sun., Sept. 9 will feature Evag. Bessie Belton of Washington, D.C. as 11 a.m. guest speaker. 4 p.m. speaker will be Pastor Annie Woods and congregation from D.C.

Strawbridge U.M.

Women of Strawbridge United Methodist Church are inviting all Christian women to march with them in their Women's Day March on Sun., Sept. 9, 6 p.m. Strawbridge is located at Park and Wilson Sts. For further info. call Sarah Ford at 448-3461.

St. Bernadine

Senior Citizens are having a tribute to Count Basie dance on Sun., Sept. 9 at St. Bernadine Church Hall, 614 Mt. Holly St. For further info. call William Shannon at 362-8664.

Control Business Center

Sept. 10, 11, and 13 Will be the days for the Crystal Clear Mind and Body Workshop instructed by Christine Fulwood. Classes will be held at the Control Data Business Center, 2901 Druid Park Drive. The workshop is sponsored by women of Wayland Baptist Church. For further information call the church.

Israel Baptist

Celebrating his Seventh Pastoral Anniversary is Rev. Dr. Harlie Wilson of Israel Baptist Church, 1230 N. Chester St. From Sept. 10-16 speakers will be at the church, 8 p.m. nightly.

Charity Club

The Friendly J.P. and L. Charity Club will be going to Lancaster, Pa. on Sat., September 15 on a shopping trip to Park City Mall. For further info. call 728-39 8.

ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH
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The Clergy
The Rev. Donald O. Wilson, D.D., L.H.D., Rector
The Rev. Robert T. Ford, ED.D., Deacon
Mr. Maurice Murphy, Mus.D., Choirmaster-Organist

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1984

8:00 A.M. Holy Communion
10:00 A.M. Holy Eucharist Sermon

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Sunday School 9:30 AM
Worship 11:00 AM

Dr. Benjamin Foust, Pastor
Herbert Brown, Minister of Music
Jacquelyn Hardy, Organist

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8:00 A.M. Prayer & Spiritual Healing Service
9:00 A.M. Church Training & Church School
10:00 A.M. Baptismal Service

Music — The Anthem — "The Heavens Are Telling" — Hayden
The Spiritual — "Soon'a Will Be Done" — William L. Dawson

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Juanita Hall Davis Organist

Sunday, September 2, 1984
Eight and Eleven O'Clock
Marion Curtis Bascom preaching

Anthems
8:00 — Mighty Spirit, All Transcending — W. A. Mozart
11:00 — Come We That Love the Lord — arr. Wendell Whalum

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TUESDAY, SEPT. 11.....Rev. Charles M. Franklin, Ray of Hope Baptist Church
WEDNESDAY, SEPT. 12.....Rev. Herman A. Ford Fountain Baptist Church
THURSDAY, SEPT. 13.....Rev. J. Chappelle Mills The Church of the Holy Trinity — Salisbury, Maryland
FRIDAY, SEPT. 14.....Rev. J. Chappelle Mills
SUNDAY, SEPT. 16 8:00 A.M. Rev. Gregory B. Perkins — St. Paul Community Baptist Church
11:00 A.M. AND 3:30 P.M.
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Rev. Otis Richardson, Preaching

9:15 A.M.
CHURCH SCHOOL
Member Orientation Class

10:30 A.M. WORSHIP
Sermon: Rev. Warren Beverly
Religious Studies Department
Morgan State University

This is the last service for the day

DR. WALTER E. PAIGE, Minister