Grace followers 'carry on the spirit . . .!

By SIMON C. WILLIAMS
BALTIMORE

"We have to carry on the spirit when the body is gone. Jesus died, all great men die."

This statement was the response of one of the followers of Bishop Charles Manuel Grace, when asked if it was true that her beloved leader had died.

The time was about 10 o'clock Tuesday morning at the United House of Prayer For All People in the 600 block of W. Preston St.

The first reaction of the followers here to the report that their leader had died was a reluctance to believe it and a "hush hush" censorship toward outsiders.

A REPORTER had gone to the temple to investigate a report that "Daddy" Grace had died in Los Angeles.

Inside the building, which was bare except for the pulpit and was furnished like a living room, about 15 adults and 10 children mourned.

One young man, who had been praying at the foot of the pulpit, suddenly leaped to his feet and stepped off several paces of a ritual dance as he recited in an unknown language.

ANOTHER FOLLOWER, a youngster of about 14, wept silently. Others chanted and hummed a strange tune.

A young girl, who seemed less dedicated than the others, commented, "Well we knew he had a bad heart, and he was old."

A young man, who appeared to be one of the officials of the church, told the AFRO that "We don't know yet, the pastor has gone to Los Angeles to find out."

MOMENTS LATER, he played his finger to his lips and gave the other members of the church the "silence" sign.

The reporter was then silently quarantined by the members. A few who were sitting in rear got up and moved to the front row.

Later another church official arrived and addressed the early arrivals. The members were coming in gradually as the word was circulated about the city.

"WE HAVE to prepare for these things," he said. "This will come to all of us."

He told them that the pastor had purchased tickets to leave the city the same morning, at 11:20. It was 10:30 then, and that he would stop at the Temple if he could.

The spokesman told the group the pastor had sent word for them to "mourn around the mount" until they received his report.

Cautioning them against speaking to outsiders about this situation, he quoted from the Bible: "Speak ye not that which you know."

LATER FOUR male members of the group brought in five large stacks of wood chips and spread them on the floor in front of the altar.

A member informed the reporter that they were going to have a special ceremony and asked him politely to leave.

"I ain't telling you nothing," he answered sharply when asked if the leader had died.

Richmond elder mum on death

RICHMOND

At the imposing United House of Prayer at 926 Chimborazo Blvd., the pastor, Elder Mitchell proved non-committal Tuesday afternoon on the subject of Daddy Grace's death.

With apologies he explained that he could make no comments until after a conference that night with higher officials of the Kingdom.

"This Kingdom is run by bylaws and if I say anything now with them I could be dealt with according."

He maintained that he had heard "nothing definite" about Daddy Grace's state of health but did not seem to be surprised at news of his death.

LITTLE ACTIVITY was going on at the church at the time other than a couple of women tending some children.

While they noted disapproval of the pastor's refusal to comment on the situation, their demeanor was such as if they were hopeful that the news was true.

Elder Mitchell declined even to state the number of Daddy Grace's followers in Richmond saying he was "not prepared to give membership of six million."

He did point out that five services are held daily at the church beginning at 6 a.m. The last service starting at midnight.

THE AUDITORIUM which features a portrait of Daddy Grace over the pulpit seats about 300 persons.

The massive red brick structure which is set back on a well-tended lawn features impressive Colonial columns painted the traditional red, white and blue.

A three section sign board stationed on the lawn greets visitors with these messages:

"Top the Grace of God That Bringeth Salvation hath appeared to all men — Titus 2:11."

"One man the Heavenly Father sent Daddy Grace to bring the Word."

"There is none other but the House of God and this is the Gate of Heaven — Gene. 28:17."

Daddy Grace last made news in Richmond in Aug. 1957 when he was accused of slapping a 14-year-old girl attending services at the House of Prayer, allegedly located in the 500 block Louisiana St.

He was found not guilty of this charge.

Shortly afterwards the church was moved to the Chimborazo Blvd. site.

IN MOURNING—A huge crape on the door of the House of Prayer Mission at 121 Seventh St. NW is the symbol of mourning for Daddy Grace, the cult leader, who died in Los Angeles Tuesday morning. Similar crapes were hung on the door of the headquarters at 601 M St. NW.

—Ship body

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survivors include two sisters, Mrs. Louise Gomes and Miss Louise Grace; a niece, Mrs. Mary Miller; a nephew, Tony Gomez, all of New Bedford, and a brother, Ben Grace, of Portugal.

'Daddy's' death reported Tues.

(Reprinted from Philadelphia AFRO)

Charles Manuel Grace known as Bishop Sweet Daddy Grace to millions of East Coast residents who have witnessed his street mass baptism with fire hose, died early Jan. 12 in a Los Angeles hospital.

Founder of the church called the United House of Prayer for All People, Grace arrived in Los Angeles by train from Detroit about six weeks ago.

He had been scheduled to leave Los Angeles for Savannah on the day of his death. He then planned to visit Cuba, after which he would undertake his annual tour of sanctuaries in 15 states.

Bishop Grace became ill on Friday and was hospitalized Sunday. He would have been 79 on Jan. 25 his next birthday.

PHYSICIANS AT Metropolitan Hospital, a 500-bed private institution, said that death was due to advanced age and complications which included a coronary condition, cerebral thrombosis and a chronic prostate condition.

Dr. Milford Ballard of New Bedford, Mass., had been treating him for the heart condition for more than 10 years, but said that the sect leader had kept it a secret from his relatives and associates.

Dr. Henry Silver and Dr. Jack Chudnoff, who treated him at Metropolitan, characterized the patient as "arrogant" refusing to accept medication, saying, "God will take care of me."

Death occurred at 12:05 a.m.

FOLLOWING THE arrival of his relatives from New Bedford, Mass., it was decided that Grace would be buried in that city.

His $400,000 mansion and estate in Berkley Square at Los Angeles was vacant at the time of his death.

He had been residing at the Adams Boulevard, Grace Apartment Hotel when he became ill.

The man — whose trademarks were his shoulder-length mane, long curving fingernails and cutaway coats — was a livine legend along the eastern seaboard.

Known to millions as a result of his flair for the spectacular as well as his ability to attract thousands of followers who constantly shouted, sang and danced his praise, Bishop Grace still remained a man of mystery.

Many said that he had been a North Carolina farm boy, born near Durham, but Judge Alexander Holtzoff of U.S. District Court, Washington, D.C., ruled that there was sufficient evidence to uphold Bishop Grace's contention that he had been born on a Portuguese island off the Cape Verde Islands.

The jurist, who ruled against the claim of Mrs. Louvenia Royster, a former Waycross, Ga., schoolteacher, that Bishop Grace had married her in New York City, accepted Grace's claim that he came to the United States in 1900 and settled in New Bedford, Mass., later going to sea.

BISHOP GRACE, or Sweet Daddy, as his followers call him, constantly told members of his flock that he was part of colored man, but had come to help you poor colored people."

The number of his followers and the source and amount of his wealth have remained a much speculation as his own origin.

His Houses of Prayer are located in more than 60 major eastern cities.

Baltimore, Washington, Philadelphia, New York City, Raleigh, Durham and Charlotte, N.C., Atlantic City and Newark, N.J., Norfolk and Richmond, Va., boast their own places of worship and congregations, which range in size from less than a hundred to more than 1,000 each.

THE ARRIVAL of "Sweet Daddy" on one of his periodic visits to a given church would be preceded by several days of special services.

On the day of the visit, several hours before Bishop Grace was due, a band would begin to play. Members of the congregation would join in clapping their hands, stamping their feet and punctuating the perpetuous beat of the music with cries of "Sweet Daddy! Sweet Daddy Grace!"

His followers — children just past the toddling stage, junior miles, teen-agers, young adults and the elderly — would march around and up and down the aisles, building up to an ever increasing emotional pitch.

Suddenly, at a signal, the marchers would stream outside and form a double lane leading from the curb to the church doorway.

One of a group of guards, in uniforms similar to those worn by policemen, opened the door of Bishop Grace's car (the latest one was a red, cream and blue Cadillac). The others kept the curious, not members of the sect, at their distance.

Inside the church a silken runner was spread down the center aisle from the door to "the Mountain" (pulpit). Behind the pulpit is nearly all of the Houses of Prayer banners, life-sized or larger portraits of Bishop Grace.

Usually flanked by two white-clad, teen-age girls, one of whom carried his broad-brimmed hat before her, on up-turned palms, Grace would march down the church's center aisle to "the mountain," whence he would watch as the congregation marched about the church to the music of the band and the beating of tambourines.

BISHOP GRACE founded his first House of Prayer in Charlotte in 1926, baptizing his first converts in a mud hole.

In Richmond—BISHOP Grace posed, proudly after being

But Sweet Daddy was the first to go

Father Devine, who Daddy Grace said was dead a little over two years ago, has announced to live the self-styled spiritual leader who founded the House of Prayer, Bishop C. M. Grace, better known as Sweet Daddy Grace, died in Los Angeles Jan. 12.

Father Devine is dead," announced Daddy to his followers at his home of 1001 Devine's unfounded.

ANOTHER LIFE MEMBERSHIP in the

Crowds don't believe 'Daddy's' death report

WASHINGTON

Local followers of Bishop Charles Manuel Grace expressed shock — and in some cases disbelief—at the news of his death.

The Washington AFRO-AMERICAN was flooded with telephone calls Tuesday by members of the denomination who wanted to know if it were really true.

When the news was confirmed many refused to accept it.

Nevertheless, members here quickly organized themselves for mourning services at the three local headquarters of the cult: the United House of Prayer at 601 M St. NW, the Affiliate House, 1721½ 7th St., NW, and the Bishop's local residence at 11 Logan Circle, NW.

MEETINGS HAVE been held nightly—especially at the M Street address, where members packed the ancient white stone building to capacity and formed long lines stretching on to the sidewalk.

Elder Walter McCullough head of the local mission, had not returned here Thursday from Los Angeles, where reportedly he had been summoned by Bishop Grace just before the latter's death.

Elder McCullough is reported to have been named interim head of the national cult pending a selection by the Board of Elders of a successor to the late Bishop.

A spokesman at the M Street address who identified herself as Mrs. Annie Bell Jones, special officer, said only that Elder McCullough was still in Los Angeles and was expected back here "at any time."

THE SPOKESMAN SAID she had not been informed of any definite decision on funeral arrangements, but it was learned from other sources that burial will probably be in New Bedford, Mass., following a series of displays of the body at points across the country, including Washington, during the trip from the coast.

Health authorities here said there is no ordinance against such a rite.

Washington represents one of Bishop Grace's larger followings although his visits here in recent years have only been sporadic.

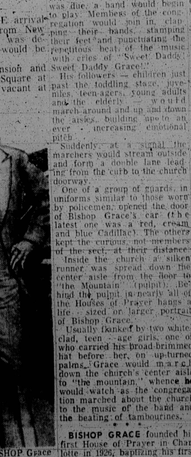
HIS PALATIAL home on Logan Circle has largely been unoccupied by the Bishop, except for several dramatic visits, one of which was occasioned by a paternity suit in Dec. of 1957 filed by a woman who claimed to be his wife and mother of his child.

Mrs. Louvenia Royster, a Waycross, Ga. school teacher unsuccessfully sought to sue Bishop Grace for non support of their daughter.

She claimed to have been married to him 37 years ago in New York City. She said he then went under the name of John H. Royster.

During the hearings, local followers jammed District Court, at times having to be restrained by court officials as they cried out encouragement to the Bishop.

Often during recesses at the hearings, Bishop Grace preached impromptu sermons to the shouting crowd, declaring that "the love of money is the root of all evil."



ELDER W. W. McCULLOUGH
May head dynasty

—Daddy Grace

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the ringing of a telephone in a booth at the rear of the church.

Near the phone, a middle aged woman was heard arguing with a young man because he had asked, "What's going on?"

In anger, the woman commented, "You know we have noon day services here every day. Why do you come around here asking me that?"

THROUGH A swinging door at the end of the hall, three small girls who appeared to be around four years of age burst into the room, paused, smiled and jitterbugged toward the front to a row of empty seats.

As if in anger, a tall muscular-looking man rushed into the room, removed a tarnished trombone from its case, mounted the stand where he proceeded to take a solo.

Another woman took the floor to offer a testimonial.

Reading from a sheet of paper yellowed with ages she recited quotations allegedly written by Bishop Grace. She called him the apple of her eye.

An elderly gentleman raised his hand as if asking for permission to be excused and tipped quietly from the church.

As he reached the door he turned to look at a painting on a nearby wall.

The painting was of an angel. Its face was that of "Sweet Daddy Grace."

A larger painting depicted a towering building with Bishop Grace standing on its roof.

A second painting, a replica of the building, bore this inscription:

"The Tilsey Apartment Building in the World, Daddy Grace, Leader."

HEBREW ACADEMY TO HONOR BALTZ

WASHINGTON

Edward C. Baltz, president of Perpetual Building Association will be honored, along with Society of Academy Patrons, at the 16th annual banquet of The Hebrew Academy of Washington, Sunday, at the Sheraton Park Hotel.

Philly followers mourn C. M. Grace

By RALPH MATTHEWS
PHILADELPHIA

An atmosphere of gloom hung heavy over the two houses of prayer in the widely divided sections of Philadelphia as followers of the late Daddy Grace assembled grim-faced and in disbelief to verify reports that their famed leader was actually dead.

The steady stream poured into both edifices, one at 16th and Fitzwater in South Philly and the other at 12th and Ogden in North Philly, beginning in the wee hours of Tuesday morning and lasting throughout the day.

Many of the devout had maintained an all-night vigil continuing the three-day fast which began Sunday when reports of the serious condition of the cult leader first began to take hold of the consciousness of the believers who were skeptical because they had unqualifiedly accepted the assumption that sweet Daddy Grace was God almighty and could never die.

THE DEVOUT sang and prayed continually since early Monday evening when they were kept informed hourly by long distance telephone by one of the elders from the local district who along with leaders from other sections of the country had converged on the coast to serve as emissaries from their respective congregations.

Most of the elders gathered at the North Philly House of Prayer where they closeted themselves behind close doors issuing hourly bulletins as funeral arrangements were being arranged on the West Coast.

The latest announcement was that no statement would be issued until the elders spoke to the whole congregation at special ceremonies at the Fitzwater Street House, Tuesday night. Both young and old drifted in and out of the building throughout the day sitting in small groups, sobbing together with an occasional hysterical outburst. Most timid about in silence with monitors, apparently self-appointed, moving from group to group breaking up discussions and seeing that nobody talked to strangers, until the elders made their combined announcement.

Also summoned to the Tuesday night meeting were members from other outlying groups who constitute the Philadelphia District. These are stationed in Wilmington, Camden, Shiloon Hill, and Vineland, N.J. Elders in charge of the local flocks were identified as Elder J. Long, Elder A. Alles and Elder Taylor.

ATTEMPTS TO get a statement on the passing of the cult leader from Father Divine were met with dubious success.

Daddy Grace created a sensation more than a year ago when he announced publicly that Father Divine was dead and the man appearing in his stead was an imposter.

Father Divine, who had not been seen publicly for a long time, made a sudden appearance to disprove the charge.

This incident was uppermost in the mind of one of the Divine spokesmen, who came out unofficially to answer the AFRO's request for a statement on the passing of Daddy Grace.

After being summoned by Brother Methusula, a young woman appeared at the top of the stairs at his Broad Street headquarters and announced that Father Divine was not available, but if he were here, she declared, he would say that he has no comment to make about what goes on among the followers of Daddy Grace.

"We have heard the report of his death, but we are neither sorry nor glad. We are concerned only with our own affairs; that's why we are so peaceful, happy here, thanks to Father."

Body of Mrs. Erma B. Davis sent to Kansas for burial

Funeral services for Mrs. Erma Bruce Davis, well-known clubwoman and widow of Dr. Carrington L. Davis, noted educator, were held Thursday at the Holland Funeral Home.

Because there were no immediate survivors, arrangements for burial were made by two close friends, Mrs. Lena K. Lee and Mrs. Vivian Cook.

The body was immediately shipped to Leavenworth, Kansas, where Mrs. Davis will be buried beside her husband in the Bruce family plot in the Mount Muncie Cemetery.

Brief graveside rites will precede burial on Saturday morning.

Ceremonies to commit the body to the ground were held at the funeral home here.

THE 3 p.m. rites at the Holland funeral home were attended by more than 150 persons including members of her sorority, the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority, the YWCA board and longtime friends.

Among them were Dr. Marjorie Parker, Washington, supreme basileus of the sorority, Mrs. Vernice Reynolds, basileus of the Baltimore chapter of which Mrs. Davis was a charter member; and Morgan President Martin D. Jenkins, and Mrs. Jenkins, Judge W. C. Hueston, Washington.

Also, Mrs. Hilda Evans, Washington, who was Mrs. Davis' lifelong friend and former roommate at Northwestern University.

THE REVS. Reginald Daniels, pastor of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church and Edward Carroll, pastor of Sharp Street Methodist Church, presided at the 45-minute rites.

The Rev. Mr. Daniels spoke of death as an experience to bring human beings closer to God and he asked that the gates of heaven open wide to receive the deceased woman into eternal life.

The Rev. Mr. Carroll gave thanks for the "great charm of her life, her noble heritage, her high Christian ideals."

Mrs. Mary Robinson, is sorority member, sang the Lords' Prayer. Solos were also by Mrs. Floretta Palmer Hyman accompanied by Mrs. Charlotte Swann.

In addition to Dr. Parker, Mrs. Evans and Judge Hueston, other out-of-towners attending included Dr. and Mrs. Clarence Lewis and children; Mrs. Leland Simmons, Mrs. Jesse Thompkins.

Mr. and Mrs. Melvin Bright, Harry Hueston, Miss Effie Simmons, and Tecumseah Bradshaw, all of Washington.

Members of the YWCA board were present in a body. Mrs. Davis was for many years devoted to the YW and was due to attend a meeting Monday.

Not only was she a founder of her sorority and the YW but she was also devoted to organizing civic and social projects in the community.

Mrs. davis to be buried m.5

JUST 48 HOURS before her death, Mrs. Davis attended the Founders Day banquet of Epsilon Omega Chapter of the Alpha Kappa Alpha sorority at Wilson's Restaurant.

She was honored as one of the founders of the Baltimore chapter.

During Dr. Davis' tour across the nation fighting for equal salaries for colored teachers, Mrs. Davis was at his side.

They were married on Sept. 8, 1915, and celebrated their

LATEST PHOTO of Mrs. Erma Bruce Davis, prominent Baltimore clubwoman, was a picture of beauty on Saturday evening when she attended 51st Founder's Day celebration of AKA Sorority where this picture was made. On Monday evening, Mrs. Davis was found dead in her McCulloh St. home. It was estimated she had been dead several hours. Her husband, Dr. Carrington L. Davis, well known Baltimore educator, died in Oct. 1958.

enworth, Kansas, the daughter of the late Blanch Kelso Bruce who tutored young men for commissions at the U.S. Naval Academy and at West Point.

After finishing secondary school in Leavenworth, Mrs. Davis was graduated from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor.

AFTER COMING to Baltimore she joined the St. James AME church and frequently attended the Church of St. Michael and All Saints.

She was a member of the old Baltimore Fort Nightly Whist Club and president of the Dubois Circle to which she was scheduled to serve as hostess for the meeting next Tuesday.

Dr. and Mrs. Davis had no children. Her death marks the end of a line of descendency

Nigerian minister threatens press

LAGOS, Nigeria — The press has registered a protest against the "unprovoked threat of newspapers" made recently by the Federal Minister of Information, T. O. S. Benson.

"I must make it quite clear," said Mr. Benson at a recent press conference, "destructive criticisms of Nigeria will not be tolerated by my ministry."

Mr. Benson, however, promised to cooperate with the press but gave an opinion that destructive criticisms at this stage of Nigeria's emergence might be detrimental to the country's progress.

Earlier, Mr. Benson had appeared before a magistrate here on a charge of contempt

'FABULOUS' WAS THE WORD FOR 'SWEET DADDY'

"SAVED BY HIS GRACE" — Here a female convert collapses from the fervor of her baptism into Daddy Grace's faith. In earlier years, Bishop Grace obtained indoor pools — in later years, he favored the more spectacular fire-hose method of baptism.

THE BIG HAT; the flowing mane that touched his shoulders—these were Grace trademarks even back in 1934 when his hair was black and reached his shoulders.

WITH A GRAND, THEATRICAL GESTURE, Bishop Charles Manuel (Sweet Daddy) Grace blessed Philadelphia converts at one of his famous street baptismals. For this, as for many others, Bishop Grace used a fire hose to anoint newcomers to his flock with water. This service was held at the House of Prayer No. 1.

IN A PLAYFUL MOOD, Daddy sits on the lap of one of his uniformed female followers. This Philadelphia gathering liked it — just as they liked his manner of dress and his orchestra (at left of picture).

IN LATER YEARS, Daddy Grace's expression was that of a benevolent patriarch. Here are clearly seen the three-inch fingernails which showed his followers one thing: Here is a man who does not work with his hands.

IN YOUNGER YEARS, the flamboyant leader's features were sterner. This was back in the 20's when he was already making his mark along with Elder Solomon Lightfoot "Happy Art I" Michaux and others.

THE WOMEN ADORED HIM — Here gospel singer Carrie Williams (Sister Carrie) kissed "Sweet Daddy's" hand. This was in 1956 when he held a Thanksgiving celebration in Philadelphia.

HOW HE LOVED DISPLAY — Surrounded by dedicated members of his uniformed patrol, Daddy Grace is a strong, central figure. Even in 1934 when this picture was taken, he was seldom without his personal bodyguard.

'IN THIS PICTURE' taken in 1959, Daddy Grace is protected not only by his own uniformed bodyguard (standing to his rear) but also by Baltimore City policemen. They are awed by the huge sheaf of high-denomination bills he holds in his left hand. These were given him by followers as he sat on an improvised pulpit outside his House of Prayer. His 33rd annual Baltimore Convocation drew over 2,000 persons.

'GRAC-IOUS' LIVING — Daddy Grace was no ... lived good food, good clothes and luxuri-

... just one of his several residences. This one is the Gates Mansion in Montclair, N.J. which he bought ... and other luxurious bedroom furnishings. In center photo he poses Bible in hand between Grecian statuary on sweeping, carpeted stairs. In picture

... at right, dinner is served. The young, attractive maid is a member of the House of Prayer. Except for feasts and special meals, Daddy dined alone.