THE LIVING CHURCH

Worshippers, non-worshippers talk religion

By Martin Evans
AFRO Staff Writer

The AFRO questioned several Baltimoreans at random about their views on churches in the black community.

Topics included the role of the churches in modern society, the individual's relationship to the church, the church as a source of spiritual instruction, the effectiveness of the church in addressing social problems and other questions.

The people interviewed were members of St. Marks Methodist Church on Liberty Heights Avenue in Northwest Baltimore and church goers found on the streets and in a supermarket.

Barbara Evans who, with her family, attends Sunday services about two or three times a month, said the church is a source both of relief and guidance.

"You can come to God and know he understands, she said. "If the answer isn't there immediately you know it will come to you, said Ms. Evans.

Mrs. Evans said she thought more churches should involve themselves in outreach efforts to involve people from various backgrounds. "Some people say the church. People are finding out the the first attitude isn't getting them what they are looking for, she said. "Man is made up of more than the physical. The church's role is bringing that out," she said.

Valerie Stuart decided to start going to church a year ago when she was 16 at the urging of her aunt.

The sense of ease in the relationship between her pastor and the church was a big factor in choosing St. Marks as her church.

He's open, like a regular person. He comes down to our level," she said of the Rev. Bernard Keels. She indicated she wished more people her age would get involved in church activities so they could have a greater kinship.

ANTHONY BRADLEY stopped going to church when he was "about 13." Of the possibility of eventually returning to church, he said "I probably will sooner or later."

SAUNDRA FLOWERS (right) with her niece Valerie Stuart and sons, Jay and Shannon. They attend services weekly, and are involved in other church activities.

AFRO photos by Martin Evans

VALERIE STUART, 17, a student at Mergenthaler High School began attending church services about a year ago. She wishes more young people would participate.

THE EVANS FAMILY, Darryl, Clifford, Michael, Sherrell and Barbara attend services "about two or three times a month."

Barbara said she wanted the children to have a sense of spiritual guidance.

Rev. Vincent Thompson passes medical career for ministry

By Pam Widgeon
AFRO Religious Editor

When Vincent L. Thompson was younger, he had two ambitions. One was to be a doctor and the other was to be a preacher.

"I would get books from the library about being a doctor and I wrote to medical schools for information," he said.

Somehow, as he grew older, he said the thought of becoming a doctor "weakened." My ambition to be a minister never left me. At times it was kind of dormant. When I entered Morgan, it was still there.

After graduating from Morgan State College with a degree in sociology and a masters in social work from the University of Maryland, Thompson was working as a supervisor with the Department of Social Services as a supervisor in protective service in child abuse.

Thompson said in 1975, "something was still burning within me. My vocation was to be a servant of God as a preacher."

Thompson announced his call to be a minister in December 1974 and preached his initial sermon Jan. 19, 1975 at New Shiloh Baptist Church.

Rev. Thompson says, "The Lord really blessed me that year. Dr. Carter asked me to consider serving as ministerial intern while attending Howard University Divinity School. It was not a paid position. In March 1978, he resigned from the Department of Social Services to become a full time ordained minister at New Shiloh, where the Rev. Dr. Harold A. Carter is pastor.

Rev. Thompson, 40, has been an active member of the church since 1971. He grew up in West Baltimore and formerly lived in the 900 block of Bennett Place as a child. A former member of Enon Baptist Church at Edmondson Avenue and Schroeder Street, he is now attending Howard University Divinity School in Washington, where he will receive his doctor of divinity degree.

As a fulltime minister at New Shiloh, a father of four children and attending classes, Rev. Thompson says, "It is worth the sacrifice to make myself more effective and efficient in the ministry. I want to be the best minister possible as God will direct me.

"I believe my social work tremendously helped my ministry and I have always liked people.

"People look at ministers as a strong individual and one who is closer to God."

As a father, Rev. Thompson says, "One of the biggest keys to parent child relationship is love. Parents should take time every day to hug their children and say I love you. It will become a part of you. I believe parents do love their children."

Rev. Thompson has prayer in his home every morning with his children before they go to school. "At the end of the prayer, I put my arms around them and say I love you."

Speaking of the pastor of New Shiloh, Rev. Thompson says, Rev. Carter has been a real blessing in my life. He has given me courage and guidance.

"The church has given me support and paid my full expenses for my master of divinity degree. It has been a real education. Out of all my training, just being a minister at New Shiloh has helped me more than my seminary training. I've got the practical aspect of what ministry is all about.

When asked about his plans for the future as a minister, Rev. Thompson believes one day he will be pastoring his own church. He told the AFRO, "I'll move when God moves and if God leads me to a church I will go.

Rev. Vincent Thompson

Rev. Thompson says, "I was no different then the people I ... "A lot of my friends are dead from drugs and former acquaintances are in jail. Living in the inner city, Rev. Thompson stated that "You would see someone get killed every week. I made up in my mind I wanted something different."

Rev. Thompson said he received encouragement from ministers and older people. "I have a strong and large place in my heart for older people for guidance and the encouragement they gave me."

Speaking of one of his former teachers, Mrs. Edith Mosby, Rev. Thompson stated, "She had a strong hand in my educational journey and gave me encouragement. People never let me slack up."

Metro Church Briefs

The Normal Mudge Male Choir will be singing a play February 14, 8 p.m. at greater Upper Church of God in Christ, Gilmor St. The Rev. Leonard Jones pastor.

St. Mary's Seminary and University will sponsor a lecture Sun. Feb. 14 on Holy Theology by president Bruce Nelson on February 22, 8 p.m. at St. Mary's, 5400 Roland Ave.

The senior Usher Board of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church will present Mrs. Betty L. Johnson in concert on February 21 at 3 p.m. at the church. Mrs. Johnson is the former president of the Maryland Missionary Baptist Convention and parliamentarian of the National Foreign Mission Convention. The Rev. William A. ...

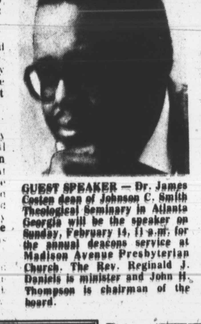
The Reconciling and Restoration Committee of the Mission United Methodist Church will sponsor a gospel music program on February 14, 3:30 p.m. at the church. The Rev. Leon F. Crossmon is pastor.

Installation services for the Rev. Mary Antoinette Phillips will be held on February 14, 4 p.m. at New Bethel Community Church, 900 Dorchester Road. Rev. Phillips will be the new assistant pastor of the church.

The Boyd's Extension of Temple Baptist Church will sing in concert on February 21 at 6 p.m. at Temple Baptist Church, 1600 White St.

The Senior Usher Board of Pentecost Baptist Church will sponsor a gospel musical program on February 21, 3:30 p.m. at the church. The Rev. Charles E. Fletcher is pastor.

The ... Singers will sponsor a revival at New Vine Prayer House, 714 North Ave., February 22-26. The Rev. Roxie Smith is pastor.



GUEST SPEAKER — Dr. James Costen dean of Johnson C. Smith Theological Seminary in Atlanta Georgia will be the speaker on Sunday, February 14, 11 a.m. for the annual deacons service at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church. The Rev. Reginald J. Daniels is minister and John H. Thompson is chairman of the board.

Morgan Christian Center dinner February 23

The Morgan Christian Center will observe its 40th anniversary on February 23, by honoring the memory of the late Rev. Howard L. Cornish, director of the Morgan Christian Center for 32 years.

There will be a dinner celebration at the LaFontaine Bleu, 3100 Erdman Av.e, at 6 p.m. February 23. Proceeds from the dinner will be given to the Christian Center.

ST. JAMES' EPISCOPAL CHURCH
Lafayette Square, Baltimore, Maryland
The Reverend Donald O. Wilson, Rector
Dr. Robert T. Ford, Deacon
Maurice Murphy, organist - Choirmaster
8:00 A.M.—Holy Communion
9:00 A.M. Church School
11:00 A.M.—Choral Eucharist Sermon
The Public is Cordially Invited To Attend

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NEW TRINITY CHURCH
National Congregation Church of America
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Sunday, February 14, 1982
10:30 A.M. — Sunday School
12:15 P.M. — High Noon — Morning Worship Sermon By the Pastor
3:00 P.M. — By Special Notice
8:00 P.M. — By Special Notice
Wednesday 7:30 P.M. — Prayer Meeting held in the chapel
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SUNDAY, February 14, 1982
Douglas Memorial Community Church
Eight and Eleven O'Clock
57th Founders' Day
"The People Had a Mine to Work"
Marion Curtis Bascom
Eight O'Clock Speaker
"Let the Final Opinion Be Gods" Isaiah 37:14
Frank L. Williams
Eleven O'Clock Speaker
8:00
We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder — N. Dett
Behold, the Tabernacle of God — W. H. Harris
11:00
Psalm 150 — J. Harber
I Will at All Times Praise the Lord (from the Oratorio "St. Paul") — G. F. Handel, Hall Hopson, arr.
Lord, I'm Out Here on Your Word — J. W. Work, III, arranger

SHOWTIME

'The Workroom...different uses silence to show human misery

IDA PETERS

There was very little applause between scenes and many of the older ladies attending the matinee said the play was "different," after viewing Jean-Claude Grumberg's "The Workroom" (L'Atelier) currently playing at Center Stage.

"The Workroom" was voted the best play of 1979 by the French Drama critics and the American version has been done by Daniel A. Stein and Sara O'Connor.

As presented in French to French audiences this play covers seven years after World War II beginning in 1946 when memories of the German occupation of Paris was still fresh in the minds of the inhabitants.

Either, th play has lost something in translation or was just too far-fetched from the imaginations of this particular audience. gor, this audience was not touched in any way by deportation from France of 70,000 Jews in World War II and has no experience in working in small family-owned sweat shops. (Black people who worked in the

Either, th play has lost something in translation or was just too far-fetched from the imaginations of this particular audience. gor, this audience was not touched in any way by deportation from France of 70,000 Jews in World War II and has no experience in working in small family-owned sweat shops. (Black people who worked in the airlines factories . . . shirt, umbrella and straw hat factories (1930-1950) in downtown Baltimore would understand the problem.)

As the lighted years were thrown on the darkened stage you could hear murmurs throughout the audience. 1945-"I was married that year!". 1946-" My husband was in Spain." 1946-"I had my first child and was working in Washington." After that they seemed to go to sleep and sit on their hands.

Hugh Lanwehr has designed an excellent set which shows the crowded workroom of a small ready-to-wear-suit manufacturer.

The cutter and cutting table is at the right of the stage. The presser with his heavy hot irons., real gas stove to hat th irons and the worker's lunches, are to the left along withe baskets to hold the piece-work.

In the center is a five-foot table where the seamstresses work... almost nose to nose, in front of one long window. They work day after day perched on stools without back rests.

The owner and wife are Jews who escaped deportation by hiding and have a guilt complex. The presser is Jewish and the central chracter is a Parisian-born Jew, (Helene-Barbara Spiegal) whose husband is Rumanian-born without papers.

The central theme of the play in the ten scenes and two acts which last two and half hours is her search for her husband who will probably never return.

Note: The five actresses give a realistic portrayal of seamstresses in an excellent example of ensemble acting.

Sam Wojewodski, the director, uses too much silence and draws out the play much too long.

"The Workroom" is a penetrating insight into poor people trapped in their environment. It's terrifying if you understand it; boring if you don't.

Angela Heard... Edmondson grad making good

Visitor to the AFRO recently was Angela Heard, Edmondson grad, who was crowned Miss Galaxy, 1980-81 in the Miss Black Universe contest and won a $25,000 scholarship.

She is now attending the Science of Performing Arts School in Las Vegas. She is a protege of Miss Wilhelmina Vaughn former teacher at Edmondson High School and now teacher at Southwestern High.

On her visit to the AFRO, Angela was wearing real fox furs, high boots, jeans and a see-thru blouse when she was snapped by Editor Ralph Matthews Jr.

She trained at Peabody Conservatory School of Dance and Drama and the United States International University in Los Angeles for two years. She became a protege of Lola Falana who has helped her with her career.

From 1973-75, she danced with the Lo-Park Dancers-Actors of New York at Atlantic City's Club Harlem and appeared with Ronni Dyson, Billy Eckstein, Billy Paul and Betty White among the many celebrities.

In 1979, Angela toured Europe with Jo Tex. In 1980, she toured with a dance group to Sweden and Barcelona, Spain.

Most recently, she appeared at the Etcetera Club in L.A. with Maxine Weldon at Pied Piper with Les McCann and Ramada Inn with the Gemini Dancers.

Angela was born May 21, 1955; is 5 feet 3 inches...113 pounds, distributed in the right places and a 22 inch waist. She still has her famous dimples and sports a new curly hairstyle.

New director at Arena starts with 'Virginia Woolf'

George (Adam Wright) and Martha (Penny Demps) enjoy quiet moment together in "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"

Jay Butler is making his debut as a guest director at the Arena Players Theatre with the play "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf" by Edward Albee to run weekends starting Feb 19 - March 14.

Mr. Butler has worked with local theatre groups in the Baltimore area including the Vagabonds, Cockpit in Court, The Hopkins Barnstormers, Theatre Hopkins, and The Colonial Players of Annapolis. Mr Butler is a full-time teacher at Franklin Senior High School in Baltimore County.

Arena Players is the oldest continuous minority, community-based theatre in the United States. Now in its 26th season, the theatre continues to bring high-quality to the Baltimore Community.

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Theatre Rep to do 'The Wedding'

Theatre Repertory Act 2 (formerly The Ebony Players) will hold their first annual Fund Raiser to benefit their building fund drive at The Star Palace, 323 North Paca St. Feb. 14, at 5 p.m.

The company will perform one of their classics "The Wedding" under the direction of George Diggs and Cathy Crawford-Bey. The company includes Darlene Millings-Bey, Lynette Turner, Randy Edwards, Wanda Mercer, Donald McCulogh, Darren Millings, George Diggs and Cathy Crawford-Bey and Kirk Stinette. Special Guest Ms Kim Brooks, (Ms Teenage International and Artartus Jenkens (Your Arms Are Too Short To Box With God").

The gala affair labeled "A Valentine Hope Chest" will hold other "surprises" a fashion show.

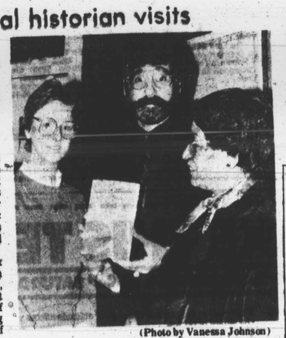
Naval historian visits

Sanford Sternlicht, co-author of The U.S.F. Constellation:" Yankee Racehorse" (the history of the famous frigate Constellation now docked at th Inner Harbor in downtown Baltimore? visited the AFRO this week.

He is a naval historian and teaches at the State University of New York at Oswego. He has served as Commander with the U.S. Atlantic and Mediterranean fleets and in the Naval Reserve.

In his research of sex years, he found that a free black season, William Brown, most likely a native of Baltimore was among the first four csualties of the independent U.S. Navy. He was wounded in the battle with the French "Insurgent" on Feb. 9, 1799. This was the first major naval victory for an American-designed and built ship. Built and launched in Baltimore in 1797, Constellation is one of the six frigates which composed the original fleet of the U.S. Navy.

The AFRO shared with Sternlicht, an AFRO feature story, 1975 lhich showed a print of black sailors on the U.S.S. Hunchback during th Civil War and other facts about how free blacks helped build ships including the Constellation.



(Photo by Vanessa Johnson)

Sanfrod Sternlicht, (C), co-author of "Yankee Racehorse" and Lynn Stonesifer, Liberty Publishing (L) visit with AFRO Entertainment Editor, Ida Peters.

This book "Yankee Racehorse" is published by the Liberty publishing Co. of Cockeysville, Md. by the U.S.F. Constellation Foundation to help restore the ship to her 1812 appearance.

The Constellation also was the flagship of the anti-slavery squadron of the U.S. Navy before the Civil War. She was responsible for the liberation of hundreds of black slaves in the apprehension of slave's or "blackbirders" off the coast of Africa and helped abolish the international slave trade.

In his research, Sternlicht found out about William Brown when he applied for a pension in a court case and the Constellation's ship's log was used as evidence.

Making love... a different kind of love story

Claire and Zack Elliot appear to have the perfect marriage. They seem to be fulfilled in their personal lives and in their careers. Claire is a highly respected network television executive; Zack is a doctor who is skilled, sensitive and caring.

Bart McGuire is a talented novelist whose work is the most important thing in his life. The relationships he chooses are casual and undemanding — until he becomes involved with Zack.

"Making Love" is a love story different from any other ever produced. It is about Zack and Claire's courage in facing the truth bout their future when Zack discovers he is attracted to another man after eight years of marriage to a womn he lovs.

Michael Ontkean plays Zack, who finally summons the will to defy his conventional upbringing and acknowledge his sexual identity to himself and to his wife.

Kate Jackson portrays Claire, who finds that she is strong enough to let go of her past and make a new beginning.

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