Create own ornaments

The first Christmas tree was decorated with confections, paper roses, apples and cookies in France during the 1600's. Since then, tree trimming has become one of our most important holiday traditions-often cause for a celebration in itself! This year why not invite a group of family and friends to an old-fashioned tree trimming party, and let them create some edible ornaments from an assortment of colorful candies.

According to the confectionery industry, there are over 2,000 varieties of candies in almost every color of the rainbow which can be used to make your tree look simply spectacular. Here are a few ideas to get the party started.

Ornaments simple enough for even young children to make, start with squares of cellophane filled with an assortment of bright confections, and then are tiedd to the tree with bright yarn.

Provide children and daults with cardboard cutouts of wreaths, angels, and stars. Let them "glue" on a mosaic of candies with a special edible icing made by beating 2 eggs whites until frothy, then gradually beating in ½ cups of confectioners' sugar, and continue beating until stiff. Each ornament becomes an original artwork.

Another idea is to hang personalized Christmas stockings on the sturdier branches. Fill them with special candies representing their individual interests. For example, a coin collector would be amused by a stocking brimming with folwrapped chocolate coins, while the ski buff could use a wool sock filled with energy-boosting hard candies.

Ornaments made from attractive confections lend a personal touch to your tree with designs limited only by imagination. Oh— and since confections are so irresistible, be certain to have plenty of extras on hand at the party for everyone to enjoy while trimming the tree.

BALTIMORE GAS AND ELECTRIC

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— Community Calendar —

HEART RISK FACTOR CALENDAR

The American Heart Association-Maryland Affiliate, Inc., has produced a Risk Factor Calendar which is now available to the public. Featured in the calendar are the winning illustrations designed by 12 high school students who participated in the statewide 1983 Cardiovascular Risk Factor Poster Contest. Over 100 students participated in the contest.

Each month features one of the winning illustrations accompanied by a heart healthy message. The back of the calendar has information concerning heart attack warning signals, first aid for choking, and a space for emergency telephone numbers.

The calendar may be purchased for $4. plus .50 cents postage from the American Heart Association. The proceeds raised from the calendar benefit the American Heart Association's research, education and community service programs. For more information call 685-7074.

WINTER CLAY COURSES AT BALTIMORE CLAYWORKS

Baltimore Clayworks is currently accepting registration for its winter classes. This session runs from Jan. 9 -March 12 . Adult classes at all skill levels will be offered as well as Children's Saturday Workshops.

Adult classes meet as ten-week sessions. The fee of $125 includes materials, instruction, and unlimited use of the classroom facilities. Both day and evening classes are offered to serve a variety of demanding schedules; and the introductory classes assume no prior experience. Volker Schoenfleiss will teach Figurative Sculpture, and an advanced wheel class will concentrate on covered vessels and teapots.

Children's four-week workshops will be offered in both January and February. The $40 fee is all inclusive. Expressions in Clay for ages 4-7 will explore the medium through handbuilding projects, while Kids on Wheels, ages 8-13, will develop skills using the potters wheel.

Baltimore Clayworks, a center for the Ceramic Arts, is located in Mount Washington Village. In addition to its classroom, Clayworks' retail gallery sells functional and sculptural ceramics by the 21 studio artists and associate members. Gallery hours are Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Clayworks also retails ceramic supplies including clay, chemicals and tools to the public.

EXCLUSIVE "BLACK WINGS" SHOWING AT BWI

"Black Wings: The American Black in Aviation", an exhibition depicting the contributions and achievements of blacks in the field of aviation, will be on view at Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI) from Dec. 19, through Jan. 15. The exhibition, which was organized by the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum, is touring the United States under the auspices of the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES).

Carroll H. Hymon, Jr., director of Information and Trade Development at BWI comments, "We are honored to present this exhibition for BWI's passengers and the residents of this area. The State Aviation Administration, the Maryland Department of Transportation, and WJZ-TV are co-sponsoring the exhibit, and we hope that area residents, students, and people interested in aviation will plan a visit to BWI to see the displays."

"Black Wings" tells the relatively unknown yet intriguing story of black experiences in aviation—from Eugene Bullard's service in France in World War I to the black astronauts assigned to the Space Shuttle.

Participation of blacks in aviation did not come easily. Men, and at times women, found themselves excluded from flight instruction solely on the basis of race. Georgia-born Eugene Bullard, the world's first black combat pilot in World War I, and early 1920's stunt pilot Bessie Coleman, the first American black to receive a pilot's license, were both forced to train in France because of their color.

Included in the exhibition are photographs, beginning from the 1930's and videotape of the Tuskegee Army Airfield in Alabama. The first all-black fighter units, known as the "Tuskegee Airmen," were trained at Tuskegee. Highlights of black participation in World War II are also featured. The exhibit film is narrated by Benjamin O. Davis, Jr., the first black American Air Force general and commander of the Tuskegee-trained 332nd Fighter Group.

A model of a P-51, one of the fighters used by the Tuskegee airmen, will also be part of the exhibit. The exhibition will be housed in the South Terminal Passenger Lounge area.

"The achievements of blacks in aviation are more heroic considering the obstacles they had to overcome," Von Hardesty, curator of the exhibit, says. "And blacks played a significant role in aviation. It's a story that's never been told before on such a scale."

SENIOR BOX OFFICE

Senior Box Office, a project of The Baltimore County Department of Aging, announces that all Senior Residents of Baltimore County (60 years of age and above) can apply for the following limited cost trip to be held in January, 1984.

"Behind the Theatrical Scenes" on Jan. 26, 1984. We've been in front of the curtain and now we are going behind it. We will be treated to the seldom "scene" events at the Mechanic Theatre, Center Stage and Baltimore School for the Arts. The trip will leave from the Cathedral of Mary Our Queen (Charles St. at Northern Parkway) at 12:15 p.m. and will return about 4:30 p.m. The cost is $4.00.

For further information contact Senior Box Office at 296-6737 between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., Monday - Friday.

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OAKLAND • Eastmont Mall
Coming Soon 29th & Greenmount

Religion In Modern Life

Plans readied for first national black church's confab

By Larry Still

WASHINGTON—The increasingly powerful influence of Black Church was demonstrated in the nation's capital recently during three key events involving religious leaders. Black representatives of several major denominations held a historic session to outline a multi- billion dollar educational and economic development program for their members. It was the first time many of the ministers had talked to one another.

Religiuos organizations which have traditionally provided the support for predominantly black colleges, the civil rights movement, nationwide moral leadership and international missionaries are now becoming more involved in economic, educational—and political projects according to actions taken here last month.

Meeting at the Howard (University) Inn, leaders of the National Baptist Convention, Inc.; the African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church; the Christian Methodist (CME) Episcopal Church; the Progressive National Baptist Convention; the Episcoapl Church Black Ministers; the Black Catholic Clergy Caucus and the Nation of Islam discussed community development proposals to be presented at First National Assembly, of Black Churches scheduled at the New Orleans Superdome, April 5-6.

Rev. T. J. Jemison, newly elected president of the National Baptist Convention, and the Right Rev. Frank Cummings, secretary of the AME Bishop's Council, are chairmen of the assembly. Jemison said at least three representatives from each of the nation's 50,000 black churches will be invited.

Attending the planning session were were Bishop C. A. Kirkendoll, CME; Bishop Frank M. Reid, AME; Bishop Quincy Broomfield Sr., CME; Rev. Sloan A. Hodges, Progressive Baptist; Rev. Harold T. Lewis, coordinator of black ministers of the Episcopal Church; Rev. Donald M. Clark, president, National Black Catholic Clergy Caucus, and Minister George X. Fox, Nation of Islam. Leaders said minister of 12 denomination are expected to participate.

The assembly is being sponsored by the Black Church of America Publishers, Inc., in cooperation with the participating denominations, James E. Hurt, chairman of the firm, announced. Officials emphasized that the assembly will not discuss politics or endorse any presidential cnadidate, although individual participants may be involved in politics.

During the same week, Rev. Jemison announced his support of Rev. Jesse Jackson for the Democratic party namination for U.S. President and urged fellow members of the National Baptist Convention to support the black candidate. He also urged churches to organize banks and other investment programs to provide jobs, but declared We cannot isolate ourselves."

Also that week, President and Mrs. Ronald Reagan visited the Shiloh Baptist Church here to participate in a cultural program being produced for television. Rev. Henry Gregory, pastor, said the visit did not change conditions much, but "I hope the President will get the spirit he observed."

Celebrating her 26th anniversary in the ministry is Rev. Roberta Baker (seated at table) with friends (L to R) standing, Carrie Weems, Thelma James, Gregory Battle, Patricia Chester, Dianne Little and seated (L to R), Rev. Baker, Peggy Candy and Fiossie Bradley.

Christmas is dedication time

The birth of Jesus, which we commemorate, has never lost its meaning.

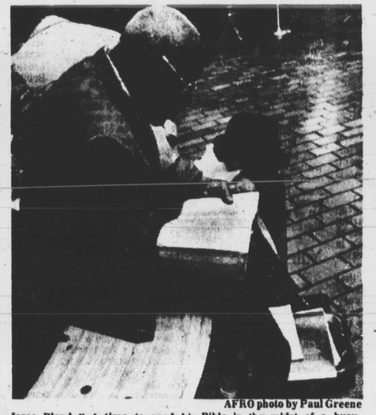
The manger, bedded with straw, Mary with the newborn baby, the shepherds and Wise Men, and the quiet figure of Joseph marked the beginning of a light that was to shine all over the earth.

In this troubled generation mankind needs this light, it is time to dedicate ourselves to peace and goodwill. Most of us feel we cannot influence the nation's destiny, but we can all practice kindness and gentleness in our own neighborhood and our own town.

We can all help someone, and Christmas is the time to remember this. The giving of gifts began with the birth of Jesus, and as packages pile under trees we need to think of the meaning of giving. The only real value in any gift is the thought behind it, for a gift means ' I think of you; I care about you."

The race to give more and more expensive things is deplorable, and especially bad for children, who can easily get in the habit of wanting more and bigger toys.

MAY CHRISTMAS BRING TO YOU THE MUSIC OF LAUGHTER, THE WARMTH OF FRIENDSHIP AND THE SPIRIT OF LOVE. MERRY CHRISTMAS.



AFRO photo by Paul Greene

Jesse Bland finds time to read his Bible in the midst of a busy food pavilion at the downtown Inner Harbor.

Metro church briefs

St. Peter Claver Catholic

St. Peter Claver Roman Catholic Church, 1546 N. Fremont Ave., extends an invitation to a gala Christmas reunion for former parishioners, Upton and Sandtown Winchester communities to be held on Dec. 24 at 7: p.m.

Mt. Zion Apostolic

"Love's Gift" will be presented free at Mt. Zion Apostolic Church, 5501 Liberty Heights Ave., on Fri., Dec. 23 at 8: p.m. It is a musical highlighting the birth of Jesus written by local musicians. Various gospel artists star.

Bethel A.M.E.

The Museum Committee of Bethel A.M.E. Church, 1300 Druid Hill Ave., is sponsoring a Christmas Carol Extravaganza on Fri., Dec. 23 at 7: p.m. Program will feature the Imani Messengers, John R. Bryant Inspirational Choir and others.

Towson United Methodist

The Dulaney Valley chapter of Parents Without Partners is sponsoring an ecumenical Christmas Eve Candlelight Service at Towson United Methodist Church at 7:30 p.m. at the Dulaney Valley exit of the beltway.

Simmons Memorial Baptist

James P. Thornton, Jr. will be in concert on Sun., Dec. 25 at Simmons Memorial Baptist Church, Pennsylvania Ave. and Cumberland St., at 4: p.m.

The Voices of Simmons Memorial Baptist Church will have their Annual Celebration at 7:30 p.m. following the concert. The celebration will continue on Mon., Dec. 26 at 7:30 p.m.

Community Church of Christ

A Christmas dinner sponsored by the Community Church of Christ, 1002 Sommerset St., will be held Christmas Day from 1: p.m. until. All are invited.

Progressive Baptist Church

A play entitled "Bethlehem Again" will take place at Progressive Baptist Church, 3220 Garrison Blvd., on Christmas Day. For further info call 367-9540.

WAYE Radio

Pastor Naomi Durant will join WAYE radio station as they go black gospel on Mon., Dec. 26 from 6 until 10: a.m.

New Shiloh Baptist

The Deacons Conference on Baltimore and Vicinity will sponsor its Annual Revival from Jan. 2-6 at New Shiloh Baptist Church, Freemont and Lanvale Sts., at 7:30 p.m. nightly. Dr. Harold A. Carter, pastor of New Shiloh will be the featured speaker.

University Baptist

On Sun., Jan 8 at University Baptist Church, 3501 N. Charles St., at 3: p.m., the Children's Chorus of Maryland, directed by Betty Bertaux will present a Twelfth Night Concert.

Jones Tabernacle Baptist

The second call meeting for the Gospel Music Workshop of America, Maryland chapter, is scheduled for Jan 9 at Jones Tabernacle, Baltimore and Pulaski Sts., at 7:30 p.m. Madame Evora Robinson will be presiding over events. All city musicians and directors are invited. Expected guests include Fernando Allen, Tommie Jenkins, Ernest Long, James Peterson, Joe Smith, James Foster, Charles Watson, Vashti Hunt and many, many.

Waters A.M.E.

Waters A.M.E.'s Sunday School will sponsor "Happy Birthday, A Tribute to Dr. King" on Sat., Jan 14 at the church, 417 N. Aisquith St. Featured entertainment will include modern dance, poetry and gospel music.

St. Mary's Seminary

The School of Theology of St. Mary's Seminary and University in Roland Park, 5400 Roland Ave., will offer 21 graduate theology classes during the Spring semester, Jan 16-May 11. The Ecumenical Institute will offer 17 graduate evening courses as well from Jan 16-May 10. For further info. call 323-3200, ext. 44.

Miss Christian Teen

The Miss Christian Teen pageant is still accepting applications for interested young ladies between the ages of 14 and 18 to represent their church in the pageant. Interested applicants must send name, address, age, phone and church information to 814 Cedar Ave., Baltimore, Md. 21221. Related materials will be mailed back immediately.

Gospel stars perform in Holyland songfest

"Love is the main message of the Bible," Black gospel singers crooned to an exuberant audience of 7,000 Israelis and tourists as they performed in concert last month under the stars of Jerusalem.

The message was as strong as the beat that rang out from the natural arena of the Sultan's Pool in the Biblical valley of Hinon, at the base of the walls of Jerusalem's old city.

Veteran singing star Barry White led an all-star gospel group that included the Rev. James Cleveland, Andrae Crouch and Shirley Caesar, accompanied by the 50-member Southern California Community Choir.

While Barry White's announced slogan for the event was "One Nation Under God," the rapport between audience and performers proved that the real theme was love; love for Israel as the land of their spiritual birth and culture and—the dominant message of their songs—love of God.

The moon was bright, as were the huge lights shining on the stage and occasionally the audience. At times the spectacle of thousands of hand-clapping, foot-stomping Israelis and tourists joining in the singing was as electrifying as the charismatic performers on stage.

To warm up the audience, the New World Gospel Choir, a 35-member Black gospel group that lives in Dimona, Israel, was invited from their seats to the stage. Their rendition about Noah—"It's Gonna Rain"—caused late arrivals to pause in their search for seats to scan the night skies for clouds. But the open-air event never saw a hint of rain.

The evening shifted into high gear as Evangelist Shirley Caesar exploded onto the platform in a gown of cobalt blue chiffon, with her trio of musicians in matching blue tuxedoes.

Caesar, who boasts that she "can sing to any audience," preached her faith between lyrics. She spoke in clear, simple terms of the honor of performing where Jesus lived and died. She elicited responses of up-raised hands from the Christians in the crowd—about 15 percent of the audience. Yet her original songs echoed universal strains acceptable to all.

Next, Barry White introduced Andrae Crouch, who picked up a hastily printed sheet to sing Hebrew words to his classic chorus, "To God Be the Glory." Crouch later introduced his aged father, who was cheered by the audience as he demonstrated some of his old-time Pentacostal pulpit style.

The Rev. James Cleveland and his gravel tones gave a special twist to "I Write the Songs." He was backed up by the Southern California Community Choir, which joined him in such old church favorites as "Amazing Grace" and "What a Friend We Have in Jesus."

The evening ended with the ultra-basso tones of Barry White, who moved from his role of host to singer. Later in the evening, he cut loose with the choir in an old-fashioned gospel hoe-down, hitting notes that lifted the audience from their seats.

In the finale, hands were clasped as audience and performers joined with Shirley Caesar in one great rendition of "Reach Out and Touch Somebody's Hand." It was, as all agreed, an unforgettable evening.

Shirley Caesar

Rev. James Cleland

Centennial United Methodist celebrate its 20th year

Some 200 years ago they were slaves. There were some free ones, but not many. Dozens of them would gather to worship God with whites. It wasn't exactly acceptable, but it was tolerable, for they too had contributed to the development of this site, a site that would inevitably belong to them one day.

That day wasn't long to come for black members of Strawberry Alley Church. In 1801, whites left the church, leaving a completely black membership to use the facilities at Dallas and Fleet Sts, renaming the church to the Dallas Street Methodist Episcopal Church.

It was 1777 when Strawberry Alley first opened it doors and by 1877, one hundred years later, hundreds of changes had taken place. It had become an all black church; it had a larger membership; and the church had been moved to a new location, Caroline and Bank St. where it was renamed Centennial United Methodist Church.

The leadership of the church became instrumental in black community interests. Still in a rather highly populated white district they were limited to their ability to expand ideas.

Centennial, along with other local black churches of the time like Sharo Street Methodist, became involved with the founding of Morgan College.

Over the years, Centennial dwindled in membership. The neighborhood began to change and more churches began to arrive on the east side of town.

The membership became introverted, the church became less active and services became more limited. Centennial had become a hermit.

For years it remained that way until this year when a young, vibrant woman was appointed pastor of the church.

Rev. Mamie Williams came with new ideas and new hope for the church. She became a catalyst for action, encouraging activeness in the community, pushing for more service programs and revival of the spirited bunch of a century ago.

"The neighborhood is changing. It's becoming more economically and racially mixed, and we want to be about broadening and becoming more involved and not just focusing on needs of just members."

And it has come to be. Tutorial programs, health programs and various other community outreach programs have become lined up on Centennial's agenda.

There has even arisen a Youth Ministries which caters basically to young people. Trips, lectures and seminars have become regular parts of the church's activities.

Now 210 years old, Centennial celebrates this Christmas with a different focus than normal. It celebrates its history and growth; there is a celebration for its survival and longetivity; and mostly there is a celebration for its return to the old, its revitalization.

This Christmas is not only intended to be a bit different for Centennial, but it's intended to be a bit different for several families. Centennial is offering a community fellowship Christmas dinner to anyone who wants to come on Christmas Day from 12-6: p.m.

Located 1029 E. Monument St, Centennial is catching up with its history and moving forward. It will not only be a historical site, but it will be a monument of love and exchange for all to see.

DEC