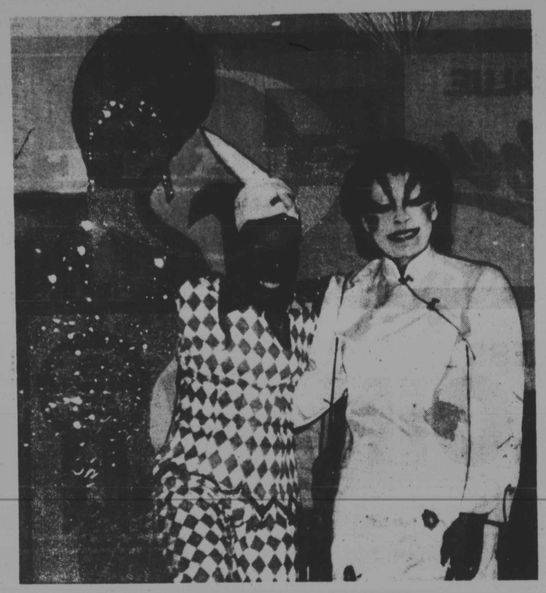


OBVIOUSLY HAPPY with the success of the First Annual Masquerade Ball, sponsored by the Baltimore County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, are (l-r): Gloria Wilson, Photo by Carole Craddock Jeffries Masquerade Ball Chairwoman, Gloria Marrow, Chapter President, and Tina Jolivet, Chapter 1st Vice-president.

Deltas host Masquerade Ball

If you were not at the recent Masquerade Ball, sponsored by the Baltimore County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta, you missed a top notch affair.

Imagine turning into the winding driveway of the Cloisters Children's Museum, greeted by helium-filled balloons. Your arrival at the parking area is quickly noted by several parking attendants, who assist you in finding your way to the castle entrance.

The atmosphere of the Cloisters provided the perfect compliment to the masked revelers as they wandered among the various rooms. Throughout the evening, guests helped themselves to an endless supply of refreshments. The service was exquisite.

The Taylor and DeShields Caterers provided a series of hot buffets, including a full dinner service of roast round of beef and szechuan chicken mid-way through the evening. Waiters circulated throughout the evening offering a variety of delicious hors d'oeuvres. Two open bars were available for guests to quench the thirstiest palate, even those with a taste for champagne.

What more could one ask? How about a lively, driving band, Muzak, which kept the ballroom filled with dancing couples boogying under the orange and black, helium-filled balloons, with lighted jack-o-lanterns, staring from the windows. Everyone was in a festive mood and the vibrations were electrical.

A highlight of the evening was the parade of costumes. Creativity was the word of the evening. The party goers went "all out."

Witches, harem girls, matadors, court jesters, clowns, Cleopatras, African kings, gypsies, matching beer cans, pirates, and flappers, were only a few of the many, wonderful fantasies expressed that evening.

Judges for the costume contest were Phyllis Shelton, Public Service Director for WJZ-TV, Mary Clayburn, Program Director for WWIN, and Russell Jolivet, Vice President of Personnel for Business and Finance Services for Commercial Credit.

It was a difficult assignment, but they finally selected Ledonna Kimball, dressed as a witch, for the most creative costume, Father Maurice Blackwell of Saint Edwards Church, for the scariest costume, and Tina Jolivet, for the prettiest costume.

Now for the moment everyone waited for; the drawing for the first prize, a blue fox fur jacket. Tension mounted as the third prize ticket was drawn, with a framed print from Huff Art Studio of North Carolina, going to R. T. Sears. The second prize winner, Carlotta Bond was selected to receive a Unisex leather briefcase. Finally, the first prize winning ticket was drawn. Joan Troy was the lucky winner of the beautiful fur. Soror Marietta English sold two of the winning tickets. Soror Lucille Perry sold the second prize ticket.

Special congratulations go out to Ball Chairwoman Gloria Wilson, dressed in an eye catching black, sequinned Broadway dancer's stage outfit, complete with a raised, feather headdress.

Soror Wilson and her hard working committee planned a first rate evening that will be an anxiously awaited annual event.

The Masquerade Ball Committee members were: Jaqueline Bowser, Cathy Carr, Barbara Cruise, Juanita Edgerton, Valerie Green, Linda Hollis, Mabel Murray, Lucille Perry, Paulette Quickly, Glenda Simpson, Linda Vaughn, Mabel Wilson, Gloria Marrow (ex-officio), and Deborah Peaks, co-chairwoman.

Proceeds from the ball will benefit the chapter's public service activities and scholarship fund. The Baltimore County Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta made a big splash on the area social scene, one month shy of its first anniversary of existence. Soror Gloria Marrow is the chapter president.

Alphas to honor Senator Clarence Blount at Founders' Day Program

The Delta Lambda Chapter of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc, will honor Senator Clarence W. Blount at their annual Founder's Day Celebration on Sunday, December 8, at an afternoon dinner program at The Forum, located at 4210 Primose Ave.

Senator Blount, who is an Alpha brother, has served in the Senate of Maryland continuously since 1970 and is now the Majority Leader of the Maryland Senate. Because of his outstanding accomplishments in representing the citizens of Maryland, he will receive the Alpha's Political Action and Community Service Award.

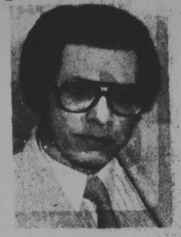
Senator Blount is a graduate of Frederick Douglas Senior High School. He holds a B.S. Degree in Political Science from Morgan State University and has completed four years of graduate study in International Law at Georgetown University.

His career was interrupted during World War II when he served his country in combat with the 92nd Inf. (Buffalo) Division in Italy. He was cited for bravery in action and was commissioned as an officer on the battlefield.

The Senator's occupational background includes 24 years of service in the Baltimore Public School System where he served as Principal of Paul L. Dunbar Community High School. He later was employed as Executive Assistant to the President of the Community College of Baltimore.

His educational career has been extensive and has included lectures in American Government at Morgan State Univ. and other institutions of higher education. He has used his experience in the educational field to advance legislation to improve the Maryland educational system.

Senator Clarence W. Blount .. Alpha Honoree



Dr. Levi Watkins Jr. Guest Speaker

Senator Blount's legislative accomplishments have encompassed a broad range of community concerns including Public Assistance, Foster Care, Human Resources, Medicaid and civil rights – just to mention a few.

In addition to being the Majority Leader of the Maryland Senate, he is Chairman of the Sub-Committee on Health, Education and Human Services and Vice Chairman for Budget and Taxation.

Senator Blount has received many awards from community organizations but the Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity believes that he is due further recognition for his unselfish devotion to duty in improving the quality of life for all the citizens of Maryland without regard for race, creed or color.

GUEST SPEAKER ON FOUNDER'S DAY

Dr. Levi Watkins, Jr will be the guest speaker on the Alpha's Founder's Day Program. This is the oldest black college fraternity and was founded at Cornell University in December 1906. Dr. Watkin's is a member of this fraternity which has over 100,000 members.

Dr. Watkins is an Associate Professor of Cardiac Surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital. He is not only an outstanding surgeon but one who has long been committed to a strong and progressive civil rights program.

He was a close friend of Dr. Martin Luther King during the civil rights movement in Alabama and still devotes much of his time in carrying out the goals and objectives of Dr. King.

Dr. Watkins has been instrumental in recruiting many high quality minority students to attend the Johns Hopkins Medical Schsplat with an astounding rate of successful graduates.

He is a graduate of Tennessee State Univ. and obtained his medical degree from Vanderbilt Univ.

Additional training at the Johns Hopkins Hospital has qualified him as one of the most outstanding physicians in open heart and cardiac surgery in the nation. The Alphas are proud to have him as a guest speaker for this occasion.

WORSHIP SERVICE

The Alphas will attend the Heritage United Church of Christ for their church service on Sunday, Dec 8 at 11:00 a.m. The Rev. (Bro) Wendell Phillips is pastor. The church is located on Liberty Heights Ave. and Dennlyn Rd.

The Founder's Day Celebration will continue after the church service with a Dinner Program at The Forum at 1:30 p.m. Please contact Bro Joseph Bracy (466-6093) for further information.

LACRETIA COX (L) a senior at Forest Park Senior High School became 'Miss Forest Park' last Thursday night. She is receiving a plaque proudly presented by her grandmother Mrs. Pauline Simmons.

Kelly Hill

SINGLE PARENTING

NOW THAT THANKSGIVING IS OVER....

Now that you have decided; Xmas is here again and you haven't gotten your Xmas shopping out of the way, you may want to take time out to map out a strategy for shopping this year.

It makes no sense to buy useless gifts or items that you know will be returned immediately. To get off on the right foot, I have listed places to shop in order to get real bargains.

In the toy department, 50 percent of retail prices can only bring delight into a parent's pocketbook. Second hand shops offer a large selection of used toys in great condition.

Brand names such as Fisher Prices, Hasbro and others, are good buys. Most second hand stores won't accept toys that are dirty or broken....so, you can be sure that the toys you are getting are in good working condition.

One resale shop I know of deals with toys' closeout companies that sell merchandise that manufacturers will no longer produce. The toys are in their original packaging and sell in the neighborhood of ⅓ off their retail cost.

The latest toys currently in high demand won't be found at second hand stores. However you may be able to find "survivors" transformers and other toys that were in high demand just a couple of month ago.

Choose your toys wisely. Some stores may have a three-day return policy...but ask before you buy. While you are in the store, try it out. Be careful of signs that say "AS IS." Remember you don't want any toys that you have to repair....the point is you are looking for bargains...not a headache.

You can also sell your toys...you've heard of consignments. It's the same concept.

To all members of BSP, the Teen Symposium which will be held on Saturday December 7, at the Manor Club, will start at 12 Noon. If you have not contacted please call 466-5554 or 276-4674.

Don't forget the second annual Thanksgiving Dance on Saturday, November 30 at 4903 Liberty Heights Ave. Admission is $4 for members and $5 for nonmembers. Refreshments included with a cash bar from 9 until 1 A.M.

For more info. call 466-5554.

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THE LIVING CHURCH

CHURCH CELEBRATION ROUNDUP

First Baptist Church Observes Annual Youth Day

By Brien M. Tyson
AFRO Staff Writer

On Sunday, Nov. 24, First Baptist Church was especially blessed when the church lived up to its theme on its Annual Youth Day: "Rise! Shine! Give God the Glory!"

A great Youth and Family Spiritual Feast and Revival was held each night from Nov. 18-22. Monday night's speaker was Rev. Kelvin Thompson, associate minister of First Baptist, and special sections were rendered by The Gideon Singers.

Tuesday's service was uplifted by Mrs. Betty Anthony of First Baptist and the United Baptist's Youth Choir.

Wednesday was a "Night of Praise" in musical ministry with the Sounds of Joy from Knox Presbyterian Church. Thursday's enlightening service was the "Family Fellowship Chorus" of First Baptist featuring Rev. Jesse Frazier of Mt. Sinai Baptist Church and Miss Kearney of New Antioch Baptist Church.

A great jubilee in Christ was held on Friday as Rev. P.M. Smith, pastor of Huber Memorial United Church of Christ, the Agape Choral Wind Choir of Huber Memorial, The Young Voices of Fountain Baptist Church, and the Inspirational Chorus of Macedonia Baptist celebrated "Joy Night."

On Saturday, Nov. 23, there was a Spiritual Growth Hour as the youth were shown the film, "Inside I Ache."

* * *

Services on the Youth Day began with a breakfast hour followed by another film, "The Selfish Giant."

The 11 a.m. service began with Rev. Kelvin Thompson presiding. The New Light Singers of First Baptist were praising the Lord in song as they filled both choir lofts. Other individual praises came from Detrich Fitts, scripture; Timothy Fitts, prayer; Judie Thompson, church news briefs; Karen Harvey, welcome; William Cook, offertory prayer; Donna Alston, introduction of speaker; and Zonda Whitfield, meditation.

The guest speaker, Rev. Stacy Harris, associate minister of Antioch Memorial Baptist Church, was able to identify with the youth because of his age. His message included the fact that worldly people and things have seeped into the church and "we Christians have let it happen, but we, as Christians serving the Lord, have the power to turn the church into the Lord's house." He urged the youth to take their Christianity with them, always, wherever they go.

The New Light Singers were glorious in singing praises to God and Rev. Dr. Leroy Fitts, pastor of First Baptist, dedicated the choir's new robes to the service of the Lord. Rev. Fitts then commended the member of the choirs for their successful efforts in raising the needed funds for the robes.

Remarks and thank yous were given by Nicole Cook, president of the Youth Encounter Society (Y.E.S.), followed by remarks from Rev. Fitts, who commended the youth of the church as well as the choirs for giving their best to the Master.

After a delicious meal in the dining room, decorated in red, black and white, expectations were high in anticipation of the afternoon program.

At 3:30 p.m. the congregation's expectations were fulfilled as the New Light Singers marched in and began a concert in praise of the Almighty. From the youngest to the oldest, the voices rang out in a most wonderous harmony. No one could doubt the Lord was smiling down on them as they sang everything from the dynamic musicians: James Heath, Sr., on piano and Arnold Anthony on drums. Many shouts of joy came from the congregation.

Remarks were given by Damon Parker, president of the New Light Singers, Mrs. A.L. Fitts and Mrs. Ora L. Robinson, advisors and Rev. Leroy Fitts.

After the concert ended, Mrs. Mary Cook, on behalf of the youth, presented tokens of appreciation to those who went the extra mile for the church's youth. The choir and the congregation stood in honor of Mr. Heath as he was thanked for all of the incentives he offered and for his artistic talent as director of the New Light Singers.

When making his remarks at that time, Rev. Fitts praised Mrs. Fitts and Mrs. Robinson for the magnificent job they had done as advisors to the youth. According to Rev. Fitts, they were one of the best working teams around. Rev. Fitts said that with cooperation of all the parents these were the best Youth Day services he had seen in his 13 years as pastor of First Baptist Church.

* * *

Sunday, Nov. 17 culminated activities in recognition of the 75th Annual Women's Day at the Israel Baptist Church. The women chose as their theme this year, "Footsteps of the Virtuous Woman."

Special attention was given to the studying of Proverbs 31st chapter, 10th through the 31st verses as the women began focusing on their theme last July when Pastor H. Walden Wilson preached to the women on their kick-off Sunday.

The women later sponsored a one-day retreat with open discussions on the "Virtuous Women in Her Church, Home, Community, and Job." The women, at a later date inspired the church with a dinner-theatre-drama entitled, "Twelve Gates to the City," casting Israel Baptist's own members. On Pre-Women's Day, the Vocal Choir of Israel led the women in an Old Fashioned Revival.

On that Sunday morning at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m., Rev. Stephen Thurston of Chicago preached to the women. Special tributes were paid to Mrs. Bernice Meade, First Lady Emeritus, for her many years of leadership, training, and inspiration to the women of Israel, to Mrs. Gayla Wilson, First Lady, for her cooperation and willingness to work with women in all area, and to Mrs. Bernice Walker for her loyalty and dedication as organist and directress of the Woman's Day Choir for several years. Following this service, a scrumptious dinner was served to the women by the men of Israel.

The 3:30 p.m. service featured "God's Women in White" in a special service of rededication and commitment. Mrs. Janice Richburg spoke on the theme, "Footsteps of the Virtuous Woman" Mrs. Louise Graves spoke on "Rededication and Commitment."

City Council President, Clarence "Du" Burns presented the women with a resolution on behalf of the City Council in recognition of 75 years of outstanding service to the community.

The women of Israel have served in the City of Baltimore with their regular group visits to hospitals, nursing homes, and private residents to care for the sick and shut-in, their weekly distribution of food and clothing through their outreach program, and their annual Thanksgiving Dinner prepared to feed several hundred poor people.

The women of Israel are making further preparation, along with the men of the church, to serve the City of Baltimore through an evangelistic program that is being initiated by Pastor Wilson.

Officers for this Diamond Jubilee Celebration were: Estelle Robinson, president; Gertrude Foster, vice president; Odessa McLean-Dorkins, recording secretary; Louise Graves, program coordinator; Bernice Walker, directress of music; and Rev. H. Walden Wilson, II, pastor. The church is located at the corner of Preston and Chester Sts.

Rev. H. Walden Wilson, pastor of Israel Baptist Church smiles at the entrance of his church.

REV. SUSAN D. JOHNSON, first black woman Baptist preacher in America.

Color her blue—sky blue of faith

Interwiew with first black woman preacher

By Zachary Smith
AFRO Staff Writer

Blue is the color of the archways inside of the Mt. Gilead Baptist Church on this rainy Friday morning where a handful of journalists gathered to interview Rev. Suzan D. Johnson, the first ordained black woman Baptist preacher in America.

Blue is also the color that Rev. Johnson feels inside, not the dark blue of sadness, but the sky blue of faith—her favorite color.

Dressed in a blue suede suit, Johnson, the 28-year-old former WJLA (channel 9) television producer, was in town last week to preach during the Women's Week celebration at Mt. Gilead.

During an interview, Rev. Johnson, pastor at Mariner's Temple Baptist Church in New York City, discussed her prodigious career, private life, and vision for the ministry.

"At the age of 13, I first felt the call of the ministry but their were no role models and the peer pressure was enormous, so I pursued a career in T.V.," said Johnson.

After graduating from Emerson College with a degree in Communications and Speech at the age of 19, Rev. Johnson spent five years working with the media, including a stint as P.R. director for a New York City hospital, before embarking on her ministry career at the age of 23.

"At the time, I felt an insatiable desire to serve the Lord, and five years of experience with the media had given me the confidence to pursue my goal," Rev. Johnson said.

She felt added pressure about the decision because she started at the Union Baptist Church in Harlem, where her father, the late Wilbert T. Johnson, had been a member for 40 years. Johnson served as the minister for youth there for two years after being ordained in March 1982.

In March, 1982, Rev. Johnson received her biggest challenge when she was called to Mariner's Temple Baptist Church as Interim pastor.

According to Johnson, Temple Baptist, located in the Chinatown section of Manhattan, "was a dying church with between 15 to 250 members."

Under her direction, the church has grown now to more than four hundred members—with close to 150 baptisms during the last year.

Not suprisingly, on Oct. 6, 1983, the congregation of Temple Baptist elected Rev. Johnson as their 26th pastor, and in March 1984, she was installed.

On the subject of her private life, Rev. Johnson admits that her marital status is a topic of interest to her congregation.

She is single.

"The congregation is anxious for me to marry," she said.

Johnson, a tall, and attractive woman with a deceptive smile, said that most men find her unapproachable because of her status as a pastor.

"I need a very unique, strong, and secure man because of the demands of my job," she said. "I may have to leave in the middle of the night or get up at the first thing in the morning," Johnson said.

Rev. Johnson said that she is dating a preacher but has "no immediate plans for marriage."

Despite her place in history as the first black woman Baptist minister, Rev. Johnson shuns all ties with the feminist movement—a group she says is characterized by lesbians and women with feminity problems.

"I don't identify with the feminist movement...I am a black female called and created by God," she said.

"I was raised as a young woman, very clear on my sexuality... I try to make my feminity come into contact with divinity," Rev. Johnson added.

Johnson said that she would "love to be a mother over the next two to three years."

On the subject of her vision for the ministry, Johnson is very clear:

"The scriptures don't help people who are victims of society. I belive in a holistic ministry that deals with the mind, body and spirit."

In commenting on the tendency of some black pastors to become corrupted by the power and status of their positions, Rev. Johnson said that she must recreate and have personal privacy in order to arrest any tendencies towards arrogance or corruption.

Rev. Johnson also said that she is not afraid to seek the spiritual guidance of her colleagues as a safeguard to resisting the temptations that power can bring.

Rev. Johnson, whose participation at Mt. Gilead's Women's Week was purported by Rev. William Revely, to have caused a row at D.C.'s Baptist Minister's Conference, was upbeat about her acceptance by her male peers.

"In New York, many of the ministers knew me from my background, initially there were some hostile statements, but over the last two years I have fellowshipped regularly with many who were opposed to me at the beginning," she said.

Rev. Johnson said that male resistance is a power problem rooted in job insecurity rather than the issue of her womanhood.

According to Rev. Johnson, the endorsement of her pastorship by one powerful Baptist minister in New York City, Rev. Gardner C. Taylor, Concord Baptist Church, has also helped her image.

Rev. Johnson described one unexpected development stemming from her controversial pastorship—a boost in male membership.

All Night Gospel's 'Just Before Dawn'

Rev. Ronald Armstrong has been on WJRO for two weeks with the program "Just Before Dawn" with Rev. Armstrong and the Armstrong Singers and has reached many of thousands of radio listeners, who needed the all night gospel. Rev. Armstrong has received many phone calls over the radio station air of how God has done miracles from testimonies of radio listeners. Rev. Armstrong has a Prayer Miracle Line at 5:00 a.m.

Rev. Armstrong is on WJRO, Monday through Friday with all night's gospel's "Just Before Dawn" from 2:30 a.m. til 6:00 a.m. Rev. J.D. Fowler is on night time gospel from 8:30 p.m. till 12 midnight. Bro. Vernon McBride, with midnight gospel, is on from 12:30 p.m. till 2:30 a.m.

Tune in with Rev. Armstrong on Sunday, December 1st for his anniversary along with the Armstrong Singers at 6:00 p.m. It will take place at the Second Baptist Church on the corner of Guilford Avenue and Lanvale Street, East Baltimore, where Rev. F. Williams is Pastor. As special guest from Washington, D.C. will be the Jackson Singers, "Stay With God." Special guest from Baltimore will be Ms. Julia Mae Price-Williams, Fernando G. Allen Singers and many gospel Choirs and groups. The admission is free. Also on November 30th at the Gospel Tabernacle Baptist Church, 3100 Walbrook Avenue, Dr. E. Reed, Pastor, will be the first Prayer Breakfast of Rev. Armstrong and the Armstrong Singers. Featuring as gospel guest will be Dr. E.L. Johnson from Interdenominational Church, The True Tone Gospel Singers of Baltimore and many others. You may purchase tickets by calling the station, WJRO, at 761-1590 or Rev. Armstrong at 522-2217 or 727-0144.

The Lord has blessed me to be preaching God's word for eighteen years on Sunday, December 1, 1985. Playing and singing God's praises for 15 years, so I have something to thank God for.

Come and help us praise God this weekend. God love you and so do I.

METRO CHURCH BRIEFS

BETHEL A.M.E. CHURCH

"The Total Church Institute," a dynamic workshop and learning experience, will be taking place at the Bethel A.M.E. Church, located at 1300 Druid Hill Ave. It will take place on Dec. 5 and last through Dec. 8. There will be a workshop and learning service and workshops dealing with God's will for our lives. This is a must for those who have questions about the Bible.

Registration is $5 for adults and children are free. For information, please call 462-HEAL or 523-4273. Come on out and receive your blessing.

CENTENNIAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The members of Centennial United Methodist will celebrate 213 years of Methodism in Baltimore and want you to join them at their second Annual Awards Banquet on Friday, Dec. 6 at 8 p.m. The event will take place at the Forum at 4210 Primrose Ave.

Yolanda King, actress/producer-director/lecturer, and daughter of the late Dr. Martin Luther King will be the keynote speaker.

The theme for this event will be "Peacemakers for Christ and the Kingdom of God." It will focus on the education of our youth.

The church requests that you join in the fun and fellowship on this occasion. The banquet donation is $25 for adults and $12 for children under 12 years old. For more information, please call 276-2870.

PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE A.M.E. CHURCH

In observance of their Annual Day, the Emma Clement Guild of Pennsylvania Avenue A.M.E. Zion Church will present in concert James R. Peterson and Singers on Sunday, Dec. 1 at 3:30 p.m.

Part One will feature an extended chorus performing Antonio Vivaldi's "Gloria in D Major" James R. Peterson is conductor, Hugh W. Carey is organist, and Dennis E. Minor, pianist.

Part Two will feature several Christmas Contemporary Gospel songs and arrangments by James R. Peterson. Also featured will be Robert Ray's "Gospel Mass" admission is free. The church is located at Pennsylvania Avenue and Dolphin Street.

JOHN WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Ms. Sandra bunch, lyric soprano soloist, will be featured in an Annual Pre-Christmas Recital on Sunday, Nov. 1, at 5 p.m. This recital will be held at Mt. Zion Church of God in Christ, 2539 E. Oliver St.

Also appearing will be Evangelist Willie Mae Gregg, Bertha Myers, The Bunch Ensemble, and the Bunch Specials. Admission is free. The church is at 3202 W. North Ave.

ISRAEL BAPTIST CHURCH

The Missionary Circle of Israel Baptist Church presents "An Evening of Scared Music" with Joyce McNair, lyric soprano, and friends, on Saturday, Dec. 7th at 7 p.m. The church is located at Preston and Chester Sts. Donation is $5. For further information, call Shirley Faddy at 433-0674, Bernetta McNair at 655-7716, or Israel Baptist Church at 732-3494. Rev. H. Walden Wilson is pastor.

PAYNE MEMORIAL A.M.E. CHURCH

Youth Day activities given by the Payne Memorial A.M.E. Chruch will be held on Sun., Dec. 8. Dinner will be served after the morning service.

Special guests for the afternoon services will be Mariarlika of Maryland and the American Filipino Cultural Exchange. Please come share the day with us, the Youth Department of Payne Memorial A.M.E. Church. For information please call 488-0290 or 367-6688.