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The Living Church

Broadway musical spreads the gospel

By Maxine L. Wallace
AFRO Staff Writer

The popular gospel musical drama, "Don't Get God Started" will open Thursday, March 3 at the Lyric Opera House in downtown Baltimore. The gospel revival is currently on a national tour.

The play which serves as a vehicle of Christian witnessing was written by Ron Milner of Detroit, Michigan and the music and lyrics are by gospel singer Marvin Winans.

According to Chip Fields, who performs four parts in the vignettes that make up the play, the purpose of "Don't Get God Started" is to spread the gospel through music and drama.

"The message of the show is Jesus is the way," she said.

Fields and another member of the cast, Marvin Wright-Bey said all of the scenes throughout the play seek to teach the audience a spiritual message - to put God first.

"The show portrays some of the social issues blacks face on a day-to-day basis such as crime, drugs, broken homes, etc.," said Wright-Bey.

The characters portrayed by Fields include Claudette, a status or social climber; Sylvia, an upwardly mobile free lance writer; Sis. Need Love, who is convinced she doesn't need a man; and Barbara Ann, a hard working hair dresser.

"We're responsible for making the audience feel they're seeing a part of their life or of lives that touch theirs," said Fields.

Pictured above is a scene from the new Gospel revival, "Don't Get God Started." Pictured, left to right, is Marilyn Coleman and Ernie Banks.

"The purpose is to bring the audience to Christ."

Marvin Wright-Bey, 36 of Cleveland, OH played two of the male characters. One character, Robert is "the average Joe Blow" while Larry is "the J.R." type.

"The message given is don't make man your God," said Wright-Bey.

There are over 35 persons in the play, mostly of whom portray adult characters.

Also adding to the spiritual plot of the play 18 members of choirs

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A WORD OF HOPE

Maxine L. Wallace
Church News Editor

"Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." March 10:23.

As we consider our focal verse today, let us examine the passage of scripture that precedes it.

And so it is that in this 10th chapter of the book of St. Mark, we find a man bringing his son to Jesus because his son needed to be healed.

The Bible says that He had spoken unto the disciples concerning casting out the dumb spirit that was in his son, but the disciples could not cast it out.

And Jesus says in verse 19, "Oh faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I suffer you? Bring him unto me.

After the son had been brought to Jesus the Bible says that the spirit immediately possessed him and he fell on the ground wallowing and foaming.

Then Jesus received some information from the demoniac son's father concerning how long the boy had been in that state.

And the Bible says that the father then said to Jesus, "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us and help us."

And Jesus said unto him, If thou canst believe, all things are possible to them that believe.

And as we read beyond our focal verse we find the father responding to Jesus' statement. The Bible says that He cried out, "Lord I believe... Help thou my unbelief."

And so it is that Jesus taking authority over the spirit that had for so long had the boy bound charged it to come out of him and enter no more. Jesus is a miracle worker.

Yet as we reflect upon this passage of scripture we find that while we know God can do all things but fail, there is yet something required of us.

For the Bible says Jesus said unto him if thou canst believe.

To believe means to hope in, to put confidence in... to trust in. To believe means to surrender all thoughts of rationale uncompromisingly to the steadfast assurance of the reality of something.

Well... in our focal verse, Jesus says ... If thou canst believe.

My sisters and brothers, faith is the key to answered prayer. For the Bible says whatsoever you shall ask in my name, believing, you shall receive. Well .. faith is the substance of things hoped for ... the evidence of things not seen.. And without faith, it is impossible to please God. Faith turns God on.

Whatever your situation is ... whatever circumstances you find yourself presently faced with, have faith in God...

There is nothing too hard for God.. For He is the Almighty God... He is Jehovah Jireh... He is God my provider. The Bible says I have never seen the righteous forsaken .. nor his seed begging for bread. If you believe... God will put food on your table... He'll put clothes on your back... He'll put joy in your heart. God is able..

Well... the demoniac was standing in the need of a spiritual healing... and his father borught him to Jesus...

Yet his father said to Jesus, have compassion on US... and help US. The boys' problem was his father's problem... The demoniac's sickness was also his father's sickness. And so it is that his pain was his pain. Can you see that father... interceding for his son... making a plea to Jesus on behalf of his son. Believing God on behalf of his son. We need to pray for one another. The Bible says that we are to bear one another's burdens.

Oh that we would pray for one another... Oh that we would believe God for one another. Oh that we would put our faith to the test for one another.

Well... the boy was healed by Jesus...

Have you ever been sick and couldn't get well...Have the doctors ever told you that there was no hope for your recovery.

The Bible says all things are possible to them that believeth. Not some things... but all things... Not most things... but all things. Ask the woman who had an issue of blood and couldn't get well.... She said ... Oh if I could but touch the hem of His garment, I know that I shall be made whole. Well... the woman's faith touched God's heart... All of your crying ain't going to touch God's heart... Your whining and complaining ain't gonna make times get better... but, your faith will touch the hearts of God. For without faith, it is impossible to please Him. Believe in God... trust in His power to give you victory in every situation... Over every manner of sickness and disease... over every temptation. Trust Him to do it and He will do it.

Why, because He loves you. The Bible says that He loves us with an everlasting love. God wants to richly bless your life.. He wants to fill your life with His love, peace, and joy. He wants to fill your life with His divine healing presence.

But you have to have faith. Whatever you need, God can supply it... Whatever your heart desires, God can fulfill it. Beloved, if thou canst believe... all things are possible to him that believeth....

New Bethel honors Phillips

New Bethel Community Christian Community Church, 3900 Dorchester Road held the Seventh Anniversary and Appreciation service in honor of assistant pastor Mary Antoinette Phillips.

Rev. Phillips, who is recuperating from a recent stroke was escorted by the mayor as she made her way to the service walking slowly with a cane.

The guest speaker was the Rev. Charles R. Meile, Jr., pastor of New Mt. Carmel Baptist Church, 1907 Poplar Grove St.

Music was provided by New Bethel's Chancel Choir, a choir from the guest church, and several of the honoree's children and grandchildren.

Mayor Schmoke gave a proclamation in honor of Rev. Phillip's years of service to the church and the community.

Rev. Phillips was born in Baltimore, Maryland and is the third daughter of the late Dr. and Mrs. James Black Hawkins. She is the mother of four children, Leah, Shelley, Lemmel, and Edward.

Rev. Mary Antoinette Phillips on Sunday celebrated seven years as assistant pastor of New Bethel Christian Community Church.

She attended the Baltimore Public Schools and graduated from Douglass Senior High School, and Community College of Baltimore. Rev. Phillips has

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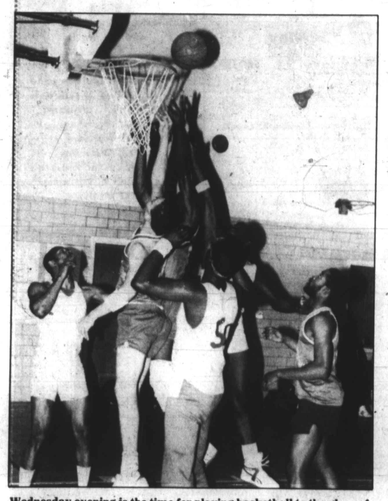
Men play basketball to God's glory



Wednesday evening is the time for playing basketball to the glory of God for the members of the Baltimore Christian Men's Basketball Association.

By Maxine L. Wallace
AFRO Staff Writer

A worship in song service sponsored by the Baltimore Christian Men's Basketball Association will be held Friday, Feb. 19 at 7 p.m. at United Baptist Church, 932 N. Broadway.

The service will consist of music provided by the churches having members in the basketball association.

Those churches are Mt. Olive Freewill Baptist, Fremont and Sartaoga Streets; United Baptist, 932 Broadway; St. John Christian Community, Lanvale and Aisquith Streets and Greater Faith Holy Tabernacle, 29th St. and Hillen Road.

Men from the named churches hold basketball competition against each other every Wednesday at 7 p.m. at the Madison Square Recreation Facilities, on Biddle and Eden Streets.

While there are presently four churches involved, Rodney White, the coordinator for the program, said they look forward to other churches throughout the city participating as well.

"It is open to men of any denomination," he said.

According to White, the winter program started the first Wednesday in December and will run 12 weeks. That league should be finished by the fourth week in March.

The four churches involved divide the game competition into rounds — each round consisting of six games.

Rodney White

There are 10 to 12 players in each group, ranging from age 17 to 35.

The first round was won by United Baptist with a record of five wins and one loss.

White said each participant in a league will receive an award.

White said the main purpose of the association being formed is to give God the glory. "Our first priority is saving of souls — That's where it counts the most . . . letting them (people from the neighborhood) know God should be first, and whatever else is secondary," he said.

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Metro Church Briefs

Southern Baptist celebrates Black History

Southern Baptist Church, 1701 N. Chester St., will hold a Black History celebration Saturday, Feb. 20 at 12:30 p.m. The program will feature the film "Black History: Lost, Stolen, or Strayed," narrated by Bill Cosby. Black History projects by area elementary school students will also be on display. Call 732-8566.

Ray of Hope presents pastor and choir

The special activity committee of the Ray of Hope Baptist Church will present Rev. Charles M. Franklin, Sr. and the mal chorus in concert on Sunday, Feb. 21 at 4 p.m. The church is situated at 3000 Parkside Dr. Reverend Charles M. Franklin, Sr., is pastor and founder.

Mt. Calvary choir to celebrate anniversary

The Children's Choir of Mt. Calvary AME Church, 300 Eudowood Lane, Towson, MD. will be celebrating its anniversary Sunday, February 28 at a 3:30 p.m. service. Ms. Cynthia Watkins, the teacher of the church's liturgical dance ministry will be the speaker.

Chestnut plans special services

There will be a number of special services at Chestnut Grove AME Church in Street, Maryland during the month of Feb. On Saturday, February 13, there will be a Fashion Show and Tea at Noon. For further information contact Mary Harris at 272-6764. On Feb. 21, at 3:30 p.m. Chestnut Grove will celebrate its annual Missionary Day. The Rev. Joan Wharton from Bazil A.M.E. Church, in Cockeysville, Md. will be delivering the afternon message. Finally, on Sunday Feb. 28 at 3:30 p.m. the Gospel Choir will celebrate its second anniversary. Everyone is cordially invited to attend any or all of these services. Call Marie Gover at 557-8625.

FEB 1988