

# Religion

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## Focus On Religion

### Concert shows their versatility

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In Winston-Salem's black church community, the 50-voice choir of the Ambassadors for Christ is synonymous with gospel music.

"A Symphony to God in Song '84" is David Allen's way of dispelling the myth that black people, including the Ambassadors for Christ, can only sing the high-spirited and rhythmic spirituals that serve as the foundation for many black entertainers.

On Saturday, April 21, Allen, who serves as minister of music for the Ambassador Cathedral on English Street and its well-known choir, will perform along with contemporary gospel singers Larnelle Harris and Priscilla and Benjamin Winan at 8 p.m. in the Stevens Center.

"The first half of the show will be devoted to classical and traditional music," says Allen "along with a combination of works from the 'Creation.'

"Then," he says, "we'll start gettin' down. But what we're trying to do is let people know that we're not limited and I think folk have limited us because we sing a lot of gospel music."

The Ambassadors for Christ will be accompanied by a 50-piece orchestra composed of members of the Winston-Salem Symphony.

Harris, a two-time winner of the Dove Award (an inspirational music award comparable to the Grammy) a Grammy nominee and a member of the Bill Gaither Trio, will be backed by the Ambassadors and Allen. On Friday, Harris will be at Hanes Mall to sign autographs.

Harris has made regular appearances on the "700 Club," the "PTL Club" and has been featured on several of Billy Graham's televised crusades. Even though Harris has recorded five albums, says Allen, his name isn't synonymous with gospel music in the black community.

"The black people really don't know Larnelle," he

says, "because he sings contemporary gospel, which appeals more to the white audience. But when they come to the concert, they're going to know that he can sing."

This makes the fourth straight year Allen and the Ambassadors have invited well-known inspirational entertainers to join with them in concert, a practice which will continue, he says.

Past performers have included Tramaine Hawkins, Donald Vail and Keith Pringle. Already, the 30-year-old musician of 21 years and mastermind behind the performances is busy working on plans for next year's concert. He's been courting Andre' Crouch for months now.

"The thing that I'm trying to do with this event is build a tradition that originates in the black community," says Allen. "That something meaning that it's comparable to the 'Nutcracker,' which is sold out every year.

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-- David Allen

"But," he says, "'the Nutcracker' doesn't appeal to the black community."

What Allen does want, he says, is something more than just an array of gospel music each year. He says he also wants to expose his choir to versatile singers and musicians.

"The only way I felt I could even build a tradition was to offer something to everybody," he says. "We want to perform to a mass appeal and to have an orchestra performing with us adds a new dimension."

The Winan Duo, says Allen, will only appear in the concert for one song. They will perform their gospel hit, "Lord Lift Us Up."

Expecting to attract a large audience isn't something



David Allen, minister of music at Ambassadors for Christ Cathedral and director of the church's well-known choir, prepares for concert this weekend at the Stevens Center. The featured guests will be Larnelle Harris and the Winan Duo (photo by James Parker).

Allen is preoccupied with, especially since he says he and the Ambassadors aren't trying to compete with other churches. The fact that the concert is on an Easter weekend is something he also says just couldn't be helped due to the availability of the Stevens Center.

"We tried to avoid the Easter weekend," he says, "but it's hard to get good musicians and then a lot of other churches are doing big productions.

"We try not to clash with each other," says Allen.

"We do all we can to support each other."

The Ambassadors' most recent recording adventure, "You Are My Miracle," is an album that was done live three years ago at the Cathedral with gospel singer Myrna Summers. But, Allen says, the \$20,000 production this year will not be recorded for sales because of royalty and contract technicalities and legalities.

Tickets are on sale for \$8 and \$10 at the Stevens Center box office Monday through Friday.

## Church Notes

### Revival begins Monday

The annual spring revival of Shiloh Baptist Church at 916 E. 12th St. will begin Monday, April 23-27, at 7 p.m. each night.

The Rev. Moses Jarvis, pastor of Wetside Baptist Church in St. Louis, Mo., will be the revival evangelist for the week.

The Rev. J. Ray Butler and congregation urge all prayer bands of the city to join the services.

Jarvis, a native of Columbia, S.C., received his bachelor of divinity degree from the J.J. Stark School of Theology at Benedict College there and received his bachelor of science degree from Zion College.

He is the former pastor of Gethsemane Baptist Church in Boiling Springs, where he led the building of a \$30,000 educational annex, St. Paul Baptist Church in Gastonia, the Tabernacle Baptist Church in Birmingham, Ala., where he led in the erection of a half-million dollar edifice and at his present church. There he led the congregation in the construction of a million dollar educational building in 1979.

In July 1970, Jarvis was appointed by former President Richard Nixon to the Advisory Committee for Public Education. In 1977, he gave the opening prayer at the 92nd Session of the U.S. Congress House of Representatives and in 1978 was appointed lecturer of the Congress of Education General Division of the National Baptist Convention, USA Inc.

Among Jarvis' other accomplishments is his election to



The Rev. Moses Jarvis

the Morehouse College School of Religion's Board of Directors in 1979 and his election as executive secretary in 1983 to the Missouri Missionary Baptist State Convention.

Jarvis, a member of numerous community and church organizations, is a life member of the NAACP, president of the St. Louis Baptist Union, a member of the St. Louis Urban League and a member of the Writers Staff for the National Baptist Convention.

He and his wife, Edna, have two sons, Cedric and Julian, and a daughter, Melody.

### 'The Seven Last Words' service to be held

The Easter Sunrise Committee will present the original sixth pre-Easter sunrise service, "The Seven Last Words," on Friday, April 20, at Antioch Christian Church at 1432 Underwood Avenue at 7 p.m.

The Reverends Samuel Cornelius, pastor of New Jerusalem Baptist Church; Ellis C. Austin, pastor of Exodus Baptist Church; R.L. Watlington, pastor of Prince of Peace Baptist Church; Philmon A. Samuels, associate pastor of St. Stephens Baptist Church; Frank Hanes, pastor of Great Zion Wall Baptist Church in Durham; Emmanuel Rucker, pastor of Mt. Zion Baptist Church in

High Point; and Elder Joseph Lowery, pastor of St. Matthews Apostolic Holiness Church will all deliver sermons on "The Seven Last Words."

These ministers will be accompanied by the choirs and congregations, and beginning at 5:30 a.m. Sunday, the 27th annual Easter sunrise service will be held.

The Rev. William Elder of Middlefork Christian Church will the message. Music will be provided by the Middlefork Prayer Band, the Middlefork Christian Church Choir and the Antioch Christian Church Choir. Breakfast will be served.

### 'Daybreak' is presented

The Drama Department of First Baptist Church on Seventh Street will present the Easter drama "Daybreak" April 22 at 7 p.m. in the lower auditorium of the church.

Members of the cast are Shedrick Adams, Sylvia Neeley, Clyde Dungee, J.L. Lassiter, Minnie Lucas, Jamilia Lucas, Mary Sawyer, Frances Bowen, Evna Penn, Jennifer Brown, Linda Mitchell, Eddie Vaughns and Dexter Felder.

Catherine Humphrey is the director.

Members of the production staff include Mildred Batchelor, Mattie Clark, Lois Young, Geneva Brown, N.E. Kiser, Mavis L. Miller, Albert Palmer, Katherine Meroney, Thomas L. Brown and William Fulton Sr.

### Senior Choir to sing

The Senior Choir of Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Yadkinville will present its seventh annual Easter memorial service at the church, Sunday, April 22, at 7 a.m.

## Goler presents service

Goler Metropolitan AME Zion Church will again present its rendition of Theopore Dubois' "The Seven Last Words" at the church at 4th and Dunleith Avenue April 22 at 6 p.m.

Dr. D.L. Cromwell, former minister of music, directed the cantata for many years, with Mrs. Vivian K. Bright, George Matthews and Frank Roane as soloists.

This year's production is being directed by the church organist, Mrs. Bernice Howard Davenport, a student of Dr. James A. Dillard, a graduate of Winston-Salem State University, Columbia University and a retired music teacher.

William Knox, a native of Winston-Salem, will be the tenor soloist. A member of the Goler choir, Knox has been a soloist for local churches in the productions of "The Crucifixion and Hosanna in the Highest." He is also a student of Bright's and is a member of the Twin City Choristers.

Miss Kathy Anderson, a native of Marian, S.C., is the soprano soloist. Also a student of Bright's, Anderson graduated from Johnson C. Smith University with a dual degree in sociology and music and has taught in the local public schools.

Miss Wanda Lee Stark is this year's guest soloist. She received her bachelor of arts degree from the North Carolina School of the Arts and her master of arts degree from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio. A teacher at Walkertown Junior High School, Stark serves as organist for Mt. Zion Baptist Church.

Daniel W. Andrews Jr. will be the baritone soloist. An accomplished musician and a graduate of Tuskegee Institute, he serves as minister of music at First Baptist Church on Highland Avenue. He toured Europe, Scandinavia, the Middle East and North Africa with the Fisk Jubilee Singers and studied under Dr. Clifford Blair.

Mrs. Hattie Elliot, a member of Goler Metropolitan, will serve as the narrator. A retired school teacher, Elliot now works with the Primary Reading Program of the city-county school system. She is a graduate of WSSU and New York University.

## Cantatas at First Baptist...

The First Baptist Church Choir of First Baptist Church at 700 Highland Avenue will present "Olivet to Calvary," an Easter Cantata by J.H. Maunder, Sunday, April 22, at the 11 a.m. worship service.

The choir is under the direction of D.W. Andrews, who will also be a featured soloist and Martha S. Atkins is the organist.

The soloists will be Virginia Wiseman, Melvin Williams, Albert Palmer and Harold Palmer.

## ...and at Galilee Baptist

The Senior Choir of Galilee Baptist Church at 575 Claremont Ave. will present its first rendition of the Easter Cantata, "King Triumphant," by E.L. Ashford, Sunday, April 22, at 4 p.m. at the church.

Soloist will be Princetta Covington and Bettie A. Sales, sopranos; Linda Morrison, contralto; Emma Jean Cockerham, alto; Alice Carter and John M. Smith, tenors; and David L. Martin, baritone.

James D. Smith, director and organist for the choir of Hanes Memorial CME Church, will be the guest organist. The choir is under the direction of Madeline Samuel Gerald.

## Sunrise service held

The Greater United Progressive Baptist Church at 1122 Quincy Caldwell Circle will begin its Easter observance with a sunrise service at 6 a.m. Breakfast will be served.

At 4 p.m., a "Door Knob Rally" will be held. The Rev. Robert Booker, associate minister at New Light Baptist Church, will be the guest speaker.

Bracy H. Bonham Jr. will deliver his trial sermon at the church at 7:30 p.m.