

# 8B

# RELIGION

Life 1B

## Minister accused in Ga. sex scandal Bishop files countersuit

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

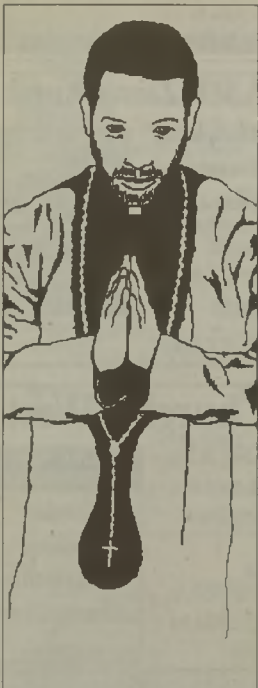
DECATUR, Ga. — A megachurch minister has been accused by one of his former employees of coercing her to have sex with him and others in the church, telling her it was "the will of God" and "her only route to salvation."

Bishop Earl Paulk of the Chapel Hill Harvester in Decatur has denied Mona and Bobby Brewer's allegations and is countering the couple for libel and slander.

WAGA-TV reported last week that the Brewers filed the lawsuit in DeKalb Superior Court. In the lawsuit, Mona Brewer also names Paulk as her former spiritual adviser and her husband, Bobby, was a pastor in Paulk's church and looked up to him as a spiritual mentor. They have both since left the church.

Mona Brewer claims that Paulk began "a pattern of conduct" around 1989 that led to the relationship and that others in the church knew of Paulk's conduct and did nothing to prevent it. The Brewers are seeking damages from the church, its related corporations and Paulk's brother, Don Paulk, who is affiliated with the church.

Earl Paulk's court filing said the Brewers' claims were "false and malicious." In addition to seeking compensation for emotional distress and harm to his reputation, he asked the court to award him punitive damages because of the Brewers' "willful misconduct."



By Cheris F. Hodges  
cheris.hodges@thecharlottepost.com

Christian fiction is becoming one of the hottest genres of African American literature these days.

According to a report by Target Market News, black readers spend nearly \$301 million on books each year.

Since 1997, Walk Worthy Press, a division of Warner Books, has been publishing Christian-based fiction. This new market for fiction also means that new writers get a better chance at getting published.

Charlotte author LaTonya Mason received the benefit of the burgeoning market. Her novel "Good to Me" will be released next month from Walk Worthy Press.

"I really didn't think the book was good enough to be published," she said. But the powers that be at Walk Worthy did. Two weeks after Mason sent her manuscript, she received a letter saying that she would be published. The news couldn't have come at a better time for Mason, who had been going through financial difficulty.

Six weeks later she received her advance check.

Mason said she wrote because she was a lover of fiction, particularly Terry McMillan.

"I wanted to read something without the profanity," she said. "I really didn't know that Christian fiction existed."

That is until Mason's father sent her a newspaper clipping about Denise Stinson, the publisher of Walk Worthy Press.



Charlotte author LaTonya Mason is a newcomer to Christian fiction.

Readers are apparently hungry for Stinson's books. In her first year, she published two books. This year she's publishing 20.

"Church Folk," by Michelle Andrea Bowen, another Walk Worthy imprint, has sold over 100,000 copies.

Bowen, who lives in

Durham, is also the author of "Second Sunday."

When she wrote "Church Folk," Bowen said there wasn't a market for those types of books at all.

"There were books out there that targeted white Christians, but nothing that talked about black Christians," she said.

Once she finished her novel and began making appearances, Bowen said readers began labeling her as a black Christian fiction writer, so she went with the flow.

Writing isn't just about selling books. Bowen said she writes the book that Please see CHRISTIAN/7B

Literary world takes note of growing genre

## Statue of black Jesus unveiled in N.J. city

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

CAMDEN, N.J.—The Sacred Heart Church in Camden now has a black Jesus statue showing crucifixion wounds on its wrists and feet.

Rev. Leonard Carrieri, a 91-year-old sculptor, created the statue because he said he wanted it to reflect the population of Camden.

"The theme of this statue is 'My heart goes out to you,'" said Carrieri,

in the Courier-Post of Cherry Hill for Sunday's newspapers. "That's why the heart of the statue swells out of his chest."

A native of Naples, Italy, Carrieri only began sculpting at age 58, when he took a sculpture class in Atlantic City after the painting class he signed up for was full.

He has also created another statue for the church, Our Lady of Camden;

Carrieri had a Puerto Rican girl serve as his model.

Elliot Johnson of Pennsauken, who stopped to see the statue outside the church, said he thinks the children will get something out of the new black Jesus statue.

"The kids who go to school here, not many of them are Caucasian. I think they'll look at this every day and see themselves," Johnson said.

## Little Rock AME Zion pastor feels spirit

By Dianne Commander  
SPECIAL TO THE POST

The Rev. Dwayne Anthony Walker invokes the presence of the Holy Spirit through sermons and songs.

Walker, the newly-appointed pastor of Little Rock AME Zion Church, has already led the return of former members while new members are joining. Walker was born in Rock Hill and moved to Chicago as a child. He is a graduate of Livingstone College,

where he earned a bachelor's degree in political science. He enrolled at Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington, D.C., and served as assistant pastor for youth and young adult ministry at John Wesley AME Zion Church. He earned a master's in divinity in 1989 and was appointed pastor of Metropolitan AME Zion

Church in Detroit. In 1994, Walker was appointed pastor of Jones Tabernacle AME Zion in Indianapolis, Ind. In May,



Rev. Walker with wife Geneva and daughters.

Walker earned a doctorate of ministry degree.

Walker's vision for Little Rock is simple: "We will do all that we can to strive for excellence in ministry. I am blessed to have received this appointment to serve as ...pastor. We are called to be disciples and to make disciples."

Walker is the son of Bishop and Mrs. George Walker Sr., who have also moved to Charlotte. He is married to the former Geneva Moore and father of four.

## CHURCH NEWS

The deadline for announcements is 5 p.m. on Fridays. Fax your announcements to (704) 342-2160 or e-mail your announcement to cheris.hodges@thecharlottepost.com.

### Ongoing

Chappell Memorial Baptist Church will open its Clothing Closet to families in need every first and third Saturday of the month. Families can come to the church, which is located at 110 Bradford Drive, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m.

For more information, call (704) 394-5615. There is no charge for the clothes.

Plaza Baptist Church, 3321 The Plaza, will host an eight-week video study by Bruce Wilkinson designed to show how the Prayer of Jabez can release God's favor. The series begins nightly at 7 p.m. For more information, call (704) 334-3913.

### October 2

Prince of Peace Lutheran Church, 3001

Beatties Ford Road, will host its annual Homecoming Harvest Festival at 3:30 p.m. The guest speaker will be the Rev. Timothy Baldinger of Messiah Lutheran Church.

Reeder Memorial Mass Choir presents a pre-revival concert at 5 p.m. The church is located at 3725 Beatties Ford Road.

Catawba Presbyterian Church, 11401 McCoy Road, Huntersville, will host its annual fall revival Wednesday. Services begin nightly at 7:30 p.m. The guest speaker for Sunday and Monday nights will be the Rev. Darrell Van Pelt from Davidson Presbyterian Church. Sunday night will be Youth Night. On Tuesday and Wednesday nights the Rev. Byron Davis from Mt. Olive Baptist Church, Huntersville will be the guest speaker.

### October 3

Reeder Memorial Baptist Church will host its annual revival through Thursday. Service

begins nightly at 7 p.m. Guest speaker for the week is the Rev. Steven Sullivan, pastor of Gethsemane Baptist Church, Cincinnati.

St. Philip Missionary Baptist Church, 400 Dellwood Drive in Huntersville, will host its annual revival services through Thursday. The guest speaker will be the Rev. Gregory K. Moss of St. Paul Baptist Church. Services begin nightly at 7 p.m. Sunday, the church will celebrate its 129th homecoming service.

### October 8

Memorial Presbyterian Church will host a class titled "Who Has The Checkbook?" Money Matters in the Marriage. The class begins at 10 a.m.

The church is located at 2600 Beatties Ford Road. For more information, call (704) 392-4752.

### October 9

Plaza Baptist Church, 3321 The Plaza, will

host its annual homecoming, this year's theme is "Proclaim the Power of God." Services include Sunday school, which begins at 9:30 a.m. Worship service begins at 10:45 a.m.

Covered dish dinner following the morning service. The guest speaker will be Pastor Glen Johnson of Benton Heights Baptist Church in Monroe.

The Original Gospel Light Chorus will celebrate its 67th anniversary at 3 p.m. The event will be held at Greater Fellowship Missionary Baptist Church, located at 2300 McClintock Road.

Catawba Presbyterian Church, 11401 McCoy Road Huntersville, will host its annual homecoming celebration. There will be no morning service.

The schedule includes: Dinner on the Green 1 p.m. Afternoon service begins at 3 p.m. with Please see GOLF TOURNAMENT/7B



## 'Youthful,' traditional and today

Youthful Praise Live! The Praise... The Worship James Robinson and James Hariston, producers Evidence/Artemis Gospel

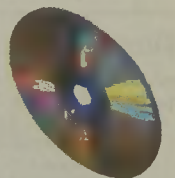


Youthful Praise's second CD didn't compare with its first, "Awesome God." Director James Hariston could have hid in defeat, but instead released a third CD that rivals the first. "The Praise... The Worship" puts the group back into the up and coming category. This is a must-have CD that mixes a bit of traditional with lots of contemporary flair, and does so successfully.

The songs are relatively simple and repetitive. But the attitude in which each is presented lifts the material well above the mundane. There's some good singing on this recording. Even when this choir sings something as simple as "The Presence," it puts a lot of effort into the message. You feel the words.

Hariston opens with "You Are so Awesome," a very Kirk Franklin-sounding song. The choir is up to this rousing call-and-response song of praise. The praise party continues with "He Reigns." This is the kind of song that made "Awesome God" so successful. The harmony is incredibly tight. This choir can swell at the flick of a wrist.

There's not a bad song on this CD, so picking a favorite is hard. "Shift This Place," a Jonathan Nelson composition, is a great candidate. Its bouncy music lifts the words. The singers ask God to lift the cloud of doubt by placing His weight of mercy and compassion in the situation. "Shift this place with your weight," has to be one of the best lines in a gospel song this year.



### Ratings

- Classic: ★★★★★
- Excellent: ★★★★★
- Good: ★★★
- Fair: ★★
- Why?: ★
- No stars - A mess

