

# Religion



## Playwright delivers message

### 'Deliver Me Up' makes its debut at Emmanuel Baptist

By YVETTE N. FREEMAN  
Chronicle Staff Writer

A local playwright has more than entertainment on his mind when he sits down to write his plays. Nathan Ross Freeman wants to get the community involved; not just in the play itself, but what the play is about. This is especially true with his new production "Deliver Me Up," which will make its stage debut June 22, 23, 29 and 30 at Emmanuel Baptist Church.

The play focuses on a ten-year-old boy named Little Louie, who witnesses a drug-related murder. Throughout the play, the issues of drug-related drive-by shootings, children getting involved in drug rings and the role of the church in the war on drugs are explored.

Freeman who wrote the play based on an idea conceived by producer Hayward Collins of Los Angeles, says "...What we wanted to do was write a play that would petition more involvement on the part of the church, in terms of being the vanguard in the community; as a major participant in the war against drugs. We wanted to basically join the various cultural entertainment mediums that are, in fact, launching themes dealing with the war on drugs."

Willette Thompson, who is the senior resident actress with the Nathan Ross Freeman Playwrights' Showcase Ensemble and portrays "Esther" in the play believes it achieves that goal. "I think it's an incredible piece of work because it does just that. It does get the

church involved. It makes a statement that I think a lot of people have wanted to hear or wanted to say, but for various reasons, may or may not have."

Freeman also stated that, "the church has always been a force of resurgence for the African-American, historically in this country. It has been the vehicle in which we have risen from the ashes, in trying to attempt hopeful lives, and where we actually made gains in improving the quality of life."

Getting churches more involved in the social problems of the community is not the only effect Freeman hopes his production will have on the audience. He also says that he would like to see "A spiritual uplifting, in terms of attitudes towards all of the things that are happening with us. Because the play not only deals with the war on drugs, it deals with the family; it deals with marriage; it deals with the idea that miracles can happen. We're not talking about television evangelistic stage miracles. We're talking about miracles as it relates to reeling and encouraging hope in a society where all the institutions; religious, political, social and otherwise, have been frustrating people in terms of positive hope energy."

Thompson agrees saying, "One of the things I like most about it is that even though it covers kind of a tragic issue, it leaves a lot of room for hope. It makes people feel hopeful when they leave; hopeful enough to get involved."

"Deliver Me Up" is based on events that have been happening throughout the country

with young African-Americans and drugs, but it is not an autobiographical depiction based on any one person or persons.

"It's based on true life events only to the extent that if you look in your newspapers, in any given city, for any given week or month, we have statistics that resemble this situation," commented Freeman. He added that although it is a true-to-life depiction, "Deliver Me Up" and other artistic endeavors based on current events, do not really make as powerful a statement as life itself. He said, "I think anything projected; I don't care how real or how

prolific; is an understatement of actually what's going on in terms of what you call true-to-life drama out there in the streets."

One "true-to-life drama" currently going on in the community that seems to hit close to home as far as the theme of "Deliver Me Up," is the Church Network Program, in which five area churches recently adopted the Cleveland Avenue Homes Community to help improve the quality of life in that area for the residents, who live in fear each day because of drugs in the community. Freeman says he is very glad to see that kind of interaction between the churches and the community, and that his play is by no means critical of church-



Photo by Mike Cunningham  
Pictured (left-right) are Larry Rice, the Rev. John Heath, and Margaret Tucker Johnson, with Aaron Salley (front, center).

es that have not initiated involvement in the solutions to social problems affecting African-Americans. "We're not only encouraging that something happen, because the play is not a critique, in terms of what the churches have not been doing but rather a celebration and endorsement of what is being done, and a statement of theme that there cannot be too much that can be done. So, the project out in Cleveland Avenue is a very beautiful thing that's happened. It's happened not only in this city, but it's happening in cities throughout the country. We're saving our own lives, and the church is probably the most powerful institu-

tion that's capable of doing that. The church and the arts, I think right now, are basically, the last bastion of defense and offense, when you talk destruction of our communities..." he stated.

That is one reason the play is being presented at Emmanuel Baptist Church, where the Rev. John Mendez is pastor. Freeman says Mendez has always been interested in uniting the efforts of the arts and the church, and "Deliver Me Up" was the perfect opportunity to do so. "I sought him out because of my

Please see page B10

## CHURCH CALENDAR

### SATURDAY, JUNE 22

- The Church Network Program of the Cleveland Avenue Homes will sponsor a "Clothes Giveaway" today from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Cleveland Avenue Homes Resource Center, located on 15th Street. For more information, call (919) 785-1268.
- Christ Rescue Temple Apostolic Church, 1500 N. Dunleith Ave., will host Elder Joseph Lucas and Community Tabernacle of Wendell, N.C. The Youth Department will have refreshments for sale in the church parking lot from 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.
- A "Ministers Song" will be the first in a series of activities sponsored by the Good Neighbor Club, held at St. Paul United Methodist Church, 318 Church St., Kernersville, at 7 p.m. Ministers are asked to call Mrs. Dimple Warren at 722-8831 or Mrs. Sylvia Brooks at 993-3716 to offer their services in song.

### SUNDAY, JUNE 23

- The Emmanuel Baptist Church Christian Singles Club will present "Ministers In Song," today at 4 p.m. Featured on the program will be the Rev. Walter Mack, Elder John Heath, Pastor Faye Duncan Thomas and other ministers from the surrounding areas. Emmanuel is located at 1075 Shalimar Drive. Peggy Knox is president of the EBC Christian Singles Club. The Rev. John Mendez is pastor. For more information, contact Peggy Knox at (919) 761-0826.
- St. Mark's Baptist Church Willing Workers will present their annual "12 Tribes of Israel" at 7 p.m. at 1100 Manly St.
- Evangelist Joshua C. Hoskins will be speaking at the 4 p.m. service at Scales Memorial Chapel.
- John Wesley AME Zion Church will observe their annual Homecoming Day. Dinner will follow the morning services and the Rev. James Conrad Sr. will be the guest speaker for the 3 p.m. service.
- Cleveland Ave. Christian Church will present a one-act play, "Hotel Heaven," at 4 p.m. The public is invited to attend.
- The Steward Board of Wayside CME Church, 3780 Carver School Rd., will sponsor an Olde Fashioned Service at 4 p.m. with the Rev. Marcus Durham as guest speaker.
- The deacons and trustees of Rising Ebenezer Baptist Church will celebrate their anniversary at 4 p.m. The guest speaker will be Dr. Robert D. Abott, pastor of Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church of Richburg, S.C.
- The Adult Choir of Benbow Chapel AME Zion Church, East Bend, will be in concert at 3 p.m. at New Trinity Baptist Church, located at the corner of 22nd St. and Claremont Ave.
- The Senior Usher Board of Union Chapel Baptist Church will celebrate their anniversary at 4 p.m. The congregation of New Hope AME Zion Church in Lewisville will be the guests.
- The 104th church anniversary and Homecoming service of Pleasant Union Primitive Baptist Church, 1250 E. 10th St., will be observed at 11 a.m., followed by dinner. The afternoon speaker will be Elder James Tanum of Samuels Grove Progressive Baptist Church.

### MONDAY, JUNE 24

- St. Benedict's Catholic Church will host a Community Meeting at 6:30 p.m. to discuss neighborhood improvements, safety and security, and beautification. Various members of the city staff will be present to give updates on neighborhood projects.

### TUESDAY, JUNE 25

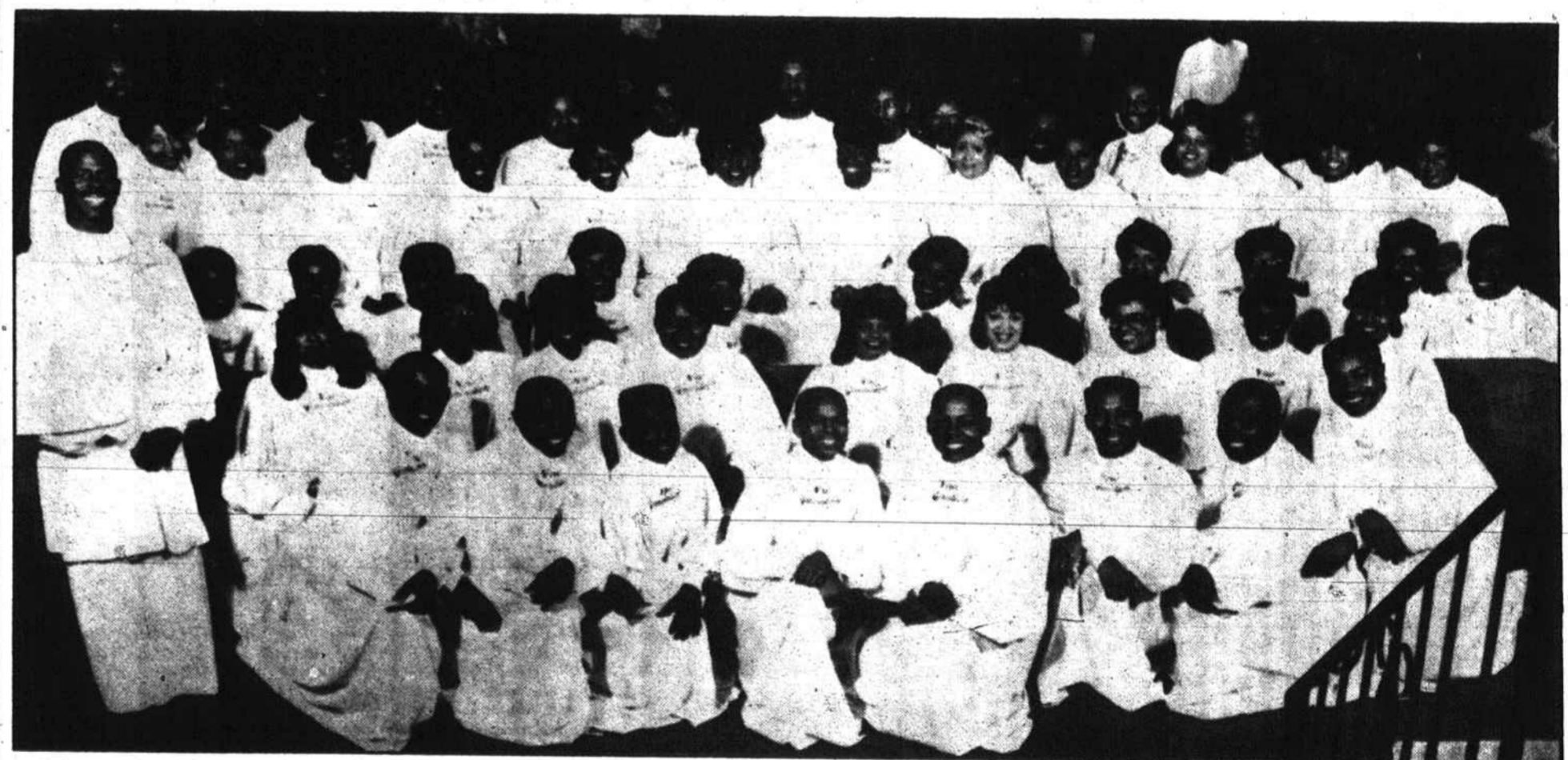
- The Ministers' Conference of Winston-Salem & Vicinity will host its annual picnic for members at 6 p.m. under the pavilion at Friendship Baptist Church, 1317 N. Cherry St.

### REVIVALS

- Solid Rock Missionary Baptist Church, 3010 Carver School Rd., will hold a revival from June 24 through June 28 with services at 7 p.m. nightly. The Rev. Christopher Young of Fairfield Baptist Church, Mocksville, N.C., will be the evangelist for the week.

### PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Piney Grove Baptist Church, 4715 Indiana Ave., will hold weekly prayer services and Bible study classes every Wednesday night at 7 p.m.
- On Sunday, June 2, Goler Memorial A.M.E. Zion Church, 630 N. Patterson Ave., began its "summer schedule." Sunday church school will begin at 9 a.m. and morning worship will start at 10 a.m. This schedule will be observed through Sunday, September 1.
- Emmanuel Baptist Church, 1075 Shalimar Dr., will hold its annual Vacation Bible School June 24-28, 6-8 p.m. nightly. If you are in need of transportation, call 788-7023.
- Goler Metropolitan Church will have a week of services June 24-28 to celebrate the church's 50th anniversary. The Saturday night banquet speaker will be alderman Virginia Newell.



The New Generation Chorale

## New Generation Chorale in concert

David L. Allen and the Spirit of Life Community Choir will present "Ricky Dillard's New Generation Chorale of Chicago, Ill., live in concert Sunday, June 23 at 7:30 p.m. at the Ambassador Cathedral, located at 1500 Harriet Tubman Drive.

Bishop Frederick D. Patterson is the host pastor. Advance donations of \$5 tickets may be purchased at the church.

The event will be a DLA Music Ministry Production.

The New Generation Chorale, often referred to as "New G," came about as the

result of a fund raising benefit concert that assisted a local suburban church.

After a tremendous amount of requests for other singing engagements, New Generation Chorale was officially organized March 1, 1988 under the leadership of Ricky Dillard.

## Bishop Marshall celebrates

The congregation of Christ Cathedral Church of Deliverance of the Greater Church of Deliverance, Inc., will host a Consecration Banquet for their Presiding Pastor and Prelate, Bishop Freddie B. Marshall, in celebration of his elevation to the Office of the Bishopric Saturday, June 22, at 6 p.m. in the Grand Ballroom at the The Stouffer Winston Plaza Hotel.

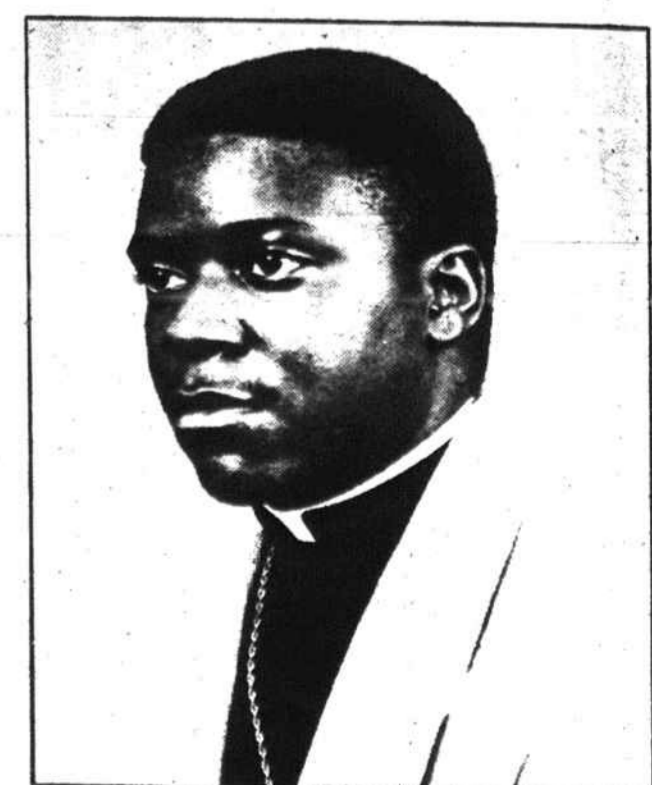
Chief celebrant will be Bishop C. L. Johnson, D.D., and assisting celebrant will be Bishop T. R. Rice, D. D. Master of ceremonies will be Bishop Lawrence S. Tate. Keynote speaker at the banquet will be Bishop L. V. Stennis, Ph.D.

Bishop Marshall is the son of Fred and Geraldine Marshall and is a graduate of East Forsyth High School. He continued his academic studies at Winston-Salem State University, North Carolina Central University, and James W. Teamer School of Religion. He is married to the former Sheri T.

Bratcher. They have one son, Freddie Alexander III.

Starting his ministry in the Old Ritz Theater building in February 1990, the 22-year-old bishop moved his congregation, which now numbers 200 active members, to the church's current location on the corner of Dunleith Avenue and Second Street. His deliverance ministry, which emphasizes ministering to the total person, has attracted a congregation that has a growing number of young people.

The new church location was purchased by the members of the congregation from the tithes they contribute regularly to the church, something that Bishop Marshall stresses. At the time of the church dedication last summer, he expressed confidence that the remaining church mortgage would be paid within a very short period of time because of the commitment of the church's members.



Bishop Freddie B. Marshall

Bishop Marshall oversees churches in five districts. The first annual convocation will be held at Christ Cathedral September 10-15.