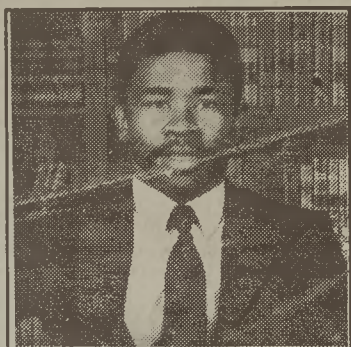


CHURCH NEWS



Rev. Thomas Whitley

•Macedonia Baptist
Watch meeting service at Macedonia Baptist Church will take place at 10 p.m. Dec. 31. The church is located at 1300 Hateras Ave.

•Tabernacle of Prayer for All People
Watch night at Tabernacle of Prayer for all people will begin at 10 p.m. Dec. 31. The church is located at 1245 Tom Hunter Rd. Elder Evert Moore is pastor.

•Nations Ford Baptist
Doors will open at 9:30 p.m. for the watch night celebration at Nations Ford Baptist Church, 7410 Nations Ford Rd. Worship service begins at 10 p.m. Rev. Phillip M. Davis is founding pastor.

•Greenville Memorial AME Zion
Watch night service will be held Dec. 31 at 10 p.m. at Greenville Memorial AME Zion Church. The church is located at 6116 Montith Drive in Hidden Valley.

•Second Calvary Baptist
Second Calvary Baptist Church will have Watch Night Service Dec. 31 from 10:30 p.m.-midnight. Breakfast will be served. The church is located at 114 Nelson Ave.

•To Be Encouraged Christian Ministry
The To Be Encouraged Christian Ministry (BEC) will celebrate the purchase of its new church edifice by conducting a 10-mile relay run from its old church site at Chapel Hill Baptist Church in Huntersville to the new location behind Derita Elementary

School on Rumble Road Jan. 1.

Nine trustees and deacons will each run one mile in the relay, carrying the Bible to symbolize the need of running with Jesus. During the ninth mile of the relay, the Bible will be passed to the pastor who will run to the church, where the congregation will be waiting.

Drivers passing the relay are asked to blow their car horns three times to acknowledge the Holy Trinity. The New Year's Day service will begin at 11 a.m. For information, call the pastor Rev. Thomas Whitley at 597-5308.

•Mecklenburg General Baptist Association
The Mecklenburg General Baptist Association Ushers Auxiliary will meet Jan. 8 at Friendship Missionary Baptist church, 3301 Beatties Ford Rd.

•Faith Memorial Baptist
Faith Memorial Baptist will begin its annual Week of Decision Jan. 2 at 6 p.m. with Rev. Clifford Jones, pastor of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church, delivering the evening sermon. Jan. 3-6, at 7

p.m., Jones will be guest lecturer. He will teach from his newly published book "From Proclamation to Practice." Rev. W.H. Caldwell Sr. is pastor. The church is located at 211 Lakewood Ave.

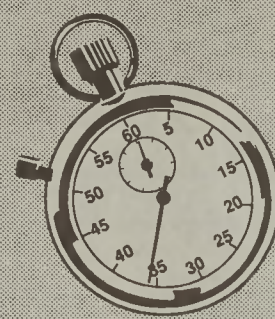
•National Conference of Christians and Jews
Carolinas Diversity Council is developing a resource guide to services pertaining to diversity in the workplace for the Carolinas and Georgia. People and organizations that provide training and resources and would like a free listing in the guide, call 332-4420 or write to: Carolinas Diversity Council, NCCJ, 500 E. Morehead St., Suite 102, Charlotte, 28202.

Carolinas Diversity Council is dedicated to encouraging organizations to value and strengthen diversity in the workplace.

•Shiloh Institutional Baptist
Rev. Clinton Ceasar Sr. will be honored on his third anniversary as pastor of Shiloh Institutional Baptist Church Jan. 12-16 at 7 p.m. The church is located at

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- WEEKLY HIGHLIGHTS -

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Sunday Worship.....11:00 a.m.
Tuesday "Youth In Action".....7-9 p.m.
Wednesday - Prayer Service/Bible Study - 6p.m.
Tutorial Prog. Tue. & Thur. all ages 4:00-6:00p.m.

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Eye On Gospel

Catching The Vision among those record labels recently getting involved in the gospel game is Georgia-based Inter-sound Entertainment, whose involvement in gospel had been limited to its distribution of Fix It Records, has also caught the vision and is currently in the midst of staffing a full-blown gospel division. Snagging pioneer gospel executive James Bullard, the label hopes to become a major force in gospel in 1994 and reports are the label has already signed Vickie Winans and O'Landa Draper & the Associates. Inter-sound and other labels wanting to get into gospel will see the bulk of their competition from smaller, independent labels like Blackberry GospoCentric, ---gospel's own "little engines that could."

While operating on a shoestring budget, GospoCentric, founded last year by former Sparrow executive Vicki Mack-Lataillade, has enjoyed success with two of the year's biggest releases---Kirk Franklin (& the Family) and the Tri-City Singers. Blackberry Records, a small, independent label founded by the Williams Brothers (Doug and Melvin), just three years ago, was on the verge of collapse earlier this year when Spectra went belly up in what was one of the year's biggest stories. Now, distributed by Malaco Records, it is thriving with a top 10 release and three additional charted singles (among them, their own "Best Of & More Live" release). In their stories is reflected a solidification from within the unfolding gospel/church marketing base as efforts to tap the growing church marketplace are paying off. So too, is the trend toward combining resources and becoming more politically savvy.

Such is the thinking that has ignited the "Year of Gospel" campaign, the purpose behind which is to broaden the awareness of gospel music and its potential. A joint resolution was made in Congress on November 19, designating 1994 - the year of gospel music. Congress and the president are being asked to proclaim 1994 as "the year of gospel music." The year-long campaign, kicking off earlier this month in both Los Angeles and Nashville, has already served to unite the United Gospel Industry Council and the Gospel Music Association in a joint goal. This, in itself, is indicative of the strides being made in the industry.

Over the next 12 months, the thrust of the campaign is expected to push sales of this

genre to as high as the \$1 billion mark. Numerous events include a Disney World gospel spectacular, the nationally-televised 25th Anniversary Dove Awards and a South African music jubilee slated for Johannesburg.

The Los Angeles press conference also provided a forum for Motown Records to announce its launch into gospel with a release and subsequent TV special featuring legendary and contemporary artists paying tribute to gospel. And while gospel is thrilled with the attention, this movement seeks no validation from the mainstream record community, hoping instead to follow the path of its country music cousins. Sure enough, if gospel handlers have their way, all eyes will be focused on gospel during the coming year. Of course, the biggest challenge remains as always, the opportunity to show its full range, shirking

the often one-sided perception of those who shriek, "gospel!" (And believe me, it ain't like you thought it was).

This week's scripture:

"Make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace," - Ephesians 4:3.

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