

# RELIGION TODAY



**MUSLIM CENTER**—After seven months of rigorous work resources to repurchase its national center located in and fundraising, the members of the Nation of Islam under Chicago, Ill., at 7351 South Stony Island. The property was the leadership of Minister Louis Farrakhan pooled their repurchased for \$2.175 million. (see story page 1)

## Pilot Project Exploring Black Christian Experience In Church

NASHVILLE, Tenn.—From the fervent sacred rites of ancient Africa, through the liberation of the souls of slaves via the gospel to continuing social action deeply rooted in black churches, the black Christian experience will be explored through a new pilot project from United Methodism's Upper Room ministry here.

Beginning this spring, a group of black lay and clergypersons will take on "A Closer Walk with God," a yearlong program of prayer, study, meditation, reading and physical discipline molded in the black American Christian tradition. The program is offered in three-day sessions at Lake Junaluska, one in April, the second in August and the last in December.

Between 50 and 70 persons are expected to take part in the comprehensive exploration of black spiritual life, said the Rev. Eugene Blair, dean of the Upper Room Chapel here and head of the black spirituality project. He called the program "intense, designed for persons who genuinely want more from Christian experience than Sunday worship, choir-rehearsal religion. They're going to go deeper into what spirituality is in the lives of black people."

A joint venture of the Upper Room, the devotional life arm of the United Methodist Church, and the denomination's Southeastern Jurisdiction, the project is patterned after the Upper Room's Academy for Spiritual Formation, but is tailored to the experiences of black United Methodists. Funding for the project also comes from the Missional Priority Office of the General Board of Discipleship, the Upper Room's parent agency.

Faculty for the project will lead the entire group through daily prayer, then divide it into classes to study everything from African customs and religious practices to the teachings of modern-day black theologians, Blair

said. The program includes discipline for the body as well as the soul. Students must keep a journal, as well as set aside time for prayer, quiet meditation and worship, and even a healthy physical fitness regime, he said. The re-ordered lifestyle is to be continued in the months between the times the group meets in North Carolina.

Blair said small covenant groups allow more intensive discussion, support and a point of accountability.

Upon completion of the April-to-December experience, each person is expected to develop an idea for enhancing and fostering spiritual growth in his or her local church.

The idea of a spiritual formation project for black church people was developed in response to low ethnic

minority participation in other Upper Room offerings like the spiritual formation academy, Blair said. "We found that those models didn't address the heart and soul of people of color because they were cast in the white, European (or) strictly U.S. context."

"The soul of black Christianity can be traced to traditions and customs of our African forebears. Continuity exists from African traditions to the way black people develop spiritually today; this focus will address those unique concerns," Blair said.

Representatives of other ethnic minority groups are being invited to observe the pilot class to consider whether the idea might be adapted for use by Hispanic, Asian and Native American church people.

## Marketing Pioneer Davis, Dead At 80

CLEVELAND, Ohio—Thomas J. Davis, founder of Tom Davis Agency, an early advisor to Lyndon Baines Johnson before he became president of the United States, and Carl Stokes, Cleveland's first black mayor, died at St. Luke's Hospital. He was 80 years old. In the 1930s, Davis was also a Cleveland councilman.

Born in Memphis, Tenn., Davis, a hulking, aggressive marketer known for his innovative sales approaches, was one of the Cleveland area's first blacks to venture into the highly competitive, creative field of marketing, public relations and advertising. His first local account was Proctor and Gamble in the late 1950s.

A rugged, self-made man, Davis performed early labor relations and marketing initiatives for the Wrigley Co. of Chicago, Cleveland's TRW and the black-owned Crayton Sausage Co. He also became a leading salesman for both the Michigan Chronicle

newspaper, of Detroit, and the Cleveland Call and Post, both NNPA-member institutions.

He was one of the first blacks to secure national automobile advertising for black newspapers. He directed a number of programs for Detroit Edison and the Cleveland Electric Illuminating Co., for whom Davis created the "Bright and Beautiful" block contest and invented the slogan, "Outdoor Living Room." He also coined the phrase now used nationally, "Living Better Electrically."

Davis was married and the father of two children. Funeral arrangements were being made at press time.

Said Davis Agency Vice President Ronald E. Kisner: "While we mourn the passing of a great giant, we are blessed with his wisdom, his professional craft and knowledge to build a platform for the agency's future."

## Catholic Communications Program Makes Changes To Aid Efficiency

WASHINGTON, D.C.—A consolidation of the communications functions of the United States Catholic Conference into a single department was announced last week by Msgr. Daniel F. Hoye, USCC general secretary.

Richard W. Daw, who for the past 12 years has been director and editor in chief of the National Catholic News Service, will head the new department.

The consolidation will bring together three formerly separate entities: the Office of Public Affairs, the Office for Publishing and Promotion Services, and the Department of Communication, which included the Catholic Communication Campaign and the National Catholic News Service.

The new entity will be called the Department of Communications. Daw's title will be secretary for communications. He will be headquartered in Washington and will report to the USCC general secretary.

The newly created Department of Communications will be composed of six offices reporting to Daw: the Office for Media Relations, the Office for Film and Broadcasting, the Office for the Catholic Communication Campaign, the Office for Liaison with the Catholic Telecommunications Network of America, the Office for Publishing and Promotion Services, and the National Catholic News Service.

All offices will be in Washington, located in the new headquarters building of the U.S. Catholic Conference, except for the Office for Film and Broadcasting, which will be in New York.

Msgr. Howe said the consolidation

would improve efficiency and effectiveness. He said the changes are effective immediately.

"The church faces an increasingly complex media environment," Msgr. Hoye said. "We must be able to coordinate properly our various communications efforts. I am confident this new structure will enable us to do that."

Daw announced the appointments of persons to head several of the new offices.

Father Kenneth J. Doyle will be director of the Office for Media Relations. He is a former chief of bureau in Rome for the National Catholic News Service and for the past three years has been director of government relations for the New York State Catholic Conference.

William A. Ryan, a long-time secretary for public affairs, will be deputy director of the Office for Media Relations.

Richard H. Hirsch, who was secretary of the former Department of Communication, will be director of the Office for Film and Broadcasting.

Thomas N. Loring, managing

editor of the National Catholic News Service for the past 12 years, will succeed Daw as director and editor in chief of the National Catholic News Service.

Daniel Juday will continue as director of the Office for Publishing and Promotion Services.

Father Harry Schlitt, who has been in charge of Catholic Communication Campaign activities in the former Department of Communication, will be director of the new Office for the Catholic Communication Campaign.

Daw said a director of the Office for Liaison with CTNA will be chosen later.

Daw, 54, joined the National Catholic News Service in 1976 from the Associated Press. He had managed AP bureaus in Denver, New Orleans, Honolulu and Raleigh, after reporting, editing and writing assignments in New York, Little Rock, Ark., and Mexico City. He worked at the Pensacola, Fla., News-Journal in his hometown, and at the Panama City, Fla., News-Herald and the Times-Picayune of New Orleans before joining the AP in 1967.

## New Medicare Project Pays "Out-of-Pocket"

Human Resources Secretary David Flaherty encouraged aged and disabled individuals entitled to Medicare Part A coverage to apply for a new health care benefit available through the state's Medicaid program. This new program, called "Medicare-Aid," in North Carolina, is an outgrowth of mandated changes to the Medicaid program by the Medicare Catastrophic Coverage Act of 1988.

For eligible individuals, the new Medicaid program will pay out-of-pocket Medicare costs such as premiums, deductibles and coinsurance.

"Medicare-Aid offers us an exciting opportunity to help our citizens who are truly in need of assistance to offset the high cost of medical care," Flaherty stated.

Eligibility requirements for Medicare-Aid are less restrictive than those for other Medicaid programs for the aged and disabled. To be eligible, an individual's monthly income cannot exceed \$384 per

month, and the total value of countable resources cannot exceed \$4,000. Countable resources include money in the bank and real property that the individual owns, but does not live on. A couple's monthly income and countable resources cannot exceed \$615 per month and \$6,000, respectively. Many individuals who have been previously ineligible for Medicaid because of income or resources may qualify for this program.

Although Medicare-Aid will pay Medicare-related medical expenses, it will not cover any costs for services not currently covered by Medicare such as prescription drugs.

Information about the Medicare-Aid program is available at local public agencies including county departments of social services, county health departments, legal services offices, and councils on aging. To apply for benefits under Medicare-Aid or any Medicaid program, interested persons should contact their county department of social services during normal business hours.



**TAKES PART IN HISTORY MO. PROGRAMS**—Faith, Hope, Charity Holiness Church, 2116 Pear St., Greensboro, NC, will sponsor a series of sermons in honor of "Black History Month." Rev. R. E. Jones Jr. will speak on the topic "The Afro-American Church in World History" on February 12, 19, and 26, 1989 at the 11 a.m. Sunday morning worship services. The public is invited to attend. For more information, please call the church at 275-7145.

## KALEIDOSCOPE

BY MURIEL W. BURT

The Holy Bible is the scripture to which all Christians adhere with some degree of faithfulness. The Old Testament prophets speak clearly as to how the God of Israel expects His children to live and the importance of worshipping Him only. The New Testament is alive with lessons taught by the Savior when He walked the earth. Following His crucifixion and resurrection the writings of the first ministers of Christianity relate the struggles they and the early converts faced. There was fierce persecution and frequent clashes with Jews who clung to the old Mosaic law.

But the Heavenly Father did not create this world or send His Son to have it all end before His plan was accomplished. Through devoted adherents to the cause of Christianity and the miraculous intervention of the Lord when necessary, the faith has spread and its influence has been magnified over the past 2,000 years.

While much was taking place in the Eastern Hemisphere, there was also a civilization evolving in the Western Hemisphere. About 600 B.C., the Lord warned faithful followers in Jerusalem to leave before that city would fall. Arriving in the Americas by divine guidance, these people built great nations and prophets were raised up by the Lord. Just as Moses, Jeremiah, Joshua and Isaiah taught the word of God and the coming of Jesus Christ in the Eastern Hemisphere, there were prophets named Nephi, Mosiah, Alma and Moroni in the Western Hemisphere who also recorded warnings as God directed them. They, too, knew that Christ would come.

The writings of the Western Hemisphere prophets were recorded with much effort on metal plates of brass or gold. Keeping these records was a sacred responsibility and the Lord gave Moroni, a prophet-historian, the directive to abridge the

writings. Then Moroni's son Moroni was given custody of the plates and the Lord instructed him to bury the record in the Hill Cumorah about 421 A.D.

In the early part of the last century, the Lord chose Joseph Smith to translate this abridged record. Inspired by the Lord he brought to the world what is known as the Book of Mormon. The title is derived from the prophet-historian Moroni who labored to condense records kept for several hundreds of years.

The Book of Mormon, Another Testament of Jesus Christ, stands beside the Holy Bible as the Word of God. The Old Testament Prophet Isaiah is wisely quoted in 2 Nephi 1:3 Nephi, Christ's visit to America following His resurrection is recorded and many teachings compare to those in St. Matthew. This book of scripture has been translated into 85 languages which allows more than 85 percent of the world's population to read it.

If the admonition in Revelation 22:19 has been interpreted by some that the Lord may not direct another scripture to be brought forth, it needs to be pointed out that the Bible was not bound chronologically, and the Revelation of St. John was written prior to some of his other writings. Also, this same directive is found in the Old Testament in the Book of Deuteronomy 4:2. These passages clearly apply to that particular book in the New or Old Testament and not to the fact more scriptures cannot be given to this world by our God.

Holy Scriptures are the guideposts and directives to those seeking to know the Christ and our Heavenly Father. Members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints believe and study both the Bible and the Book of Mormon and know them both to be the Word of God.

## Church Women Discuss Plans For Homecoming

The General Woman's Department of the United American Freewill Baptist Denomination held its annual planning session recently in the conference room at the Western Steer Steak House located on I-95 in Dunn.

Ms. Eva M. Minter was the official hostess for the meeting.

The general president, Ms. Mattie Thompson of La Grange, conducted the devotion. Each lady expressed herself briefly.

Plans were made for the February convocation to be held on the 18th of February, and also the homecoming celebration to be held July 15. Both activities will be held at the denomination's headquarters building in Kinston.

After the business session, a meal was enjoyed by the group.

A spirit of oneness and togetherness prevailed.

Ms. Thompson thanked the ladies for attending. Others present were Ms. Rosa Lee Jones, vice president, Greenville; Ms. Carrie U. Best, chairperson of the board of directors; Ms. Earthline Godwin and Ms. Berline Smith, Godwin; Ms. Missie L. Freeman and Ms. McKoy, Erwin; Ms. Annie Pearl McNeill and Ms. Hattie Parker, Dunn.

Ms. Eva M. Minter is general recording secretary of the Woman's Department.



People believe if you catch a falling leaf, you will have a good and happy life.

## Services Held At Bright Hope Holy Church

Worship began at Bright Hope Divine Holy Church of God, Inc. last week at 10 a.m. with Mother Olive Turner in charge of Sunday School. The subject of the lesson was "Forgiveness: A Measure of Love."

At 11 a.m. morning worship began with devotion led by Ms. Mary Utley and Ms. Renee Williams. Scripture was read from Psalms 27:1-3. Musicians were Rev. Alphonza Hargrove, Samuel Peterkin, Jr. and Joseph Lamont Blackmon. Music was rendered by the VLP Mass Choir, with Evangelist Deborah Gordon presiding.

The opening song, "Just For Me," was led by Evangelist Robert Currie. The pastor, Eldress Verna Peterkin, was in charge of the service. The Holy Ghost took over the service and backsliders were reclaimed, bodies were healed, deliverance was given and He was the Unseen Guest in the service. Benediction was extended by Pastor Peterkin.


**ANNOUNCEMENTS**  
Revival is in progress at the Bright Hope Divine Holy Church. The speaker is Mother Annie Blackmon.

Union for the Deliverance Churches of God, Inc., will be held in Durham. Host church is Pastor Francis Wilson and God's Holy Tabernacle. 11 a.m. speaker will be Pastor Mamie Harrison of Miracle Zion Divine Holy Church, Lumberton.

Pastor is Eldress V.L. Peterkin. Church reporter is Mother A.B. Blackmon.

### TWO MINUTES WITH THE BIBLE

BY CORNELIUS E. STAN, PRES. SEBASTIAN BIBLE SOCIETY CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60635



**"DAVID'S BLESSEDNESS"**

"Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works."

"Saying: Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, whose sins are covered."

"Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin" (Rom. 4:8-9).

Obviously David knew no more about the present "dispensation of the grace of God" than did Abraham, and he certainly did not live under the dispensation of grace. He lived under the dispensation of the Law, when sacrifices were required for acceptance with God.

Had David said that the offering of sacrifices was unnecessary, he would have been stoned according to the Law.

But David, unlike many today, understood the purpose of the Mosaic Law: to bring man in guilty before God. In Psalm 130 he said: "If Thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, who should stand; but there is forgiveness with Thee." He did not know how God could righteously acquit a guilty sinner, but he believed it to be a fact and rejoiced in Psalm 32: "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered... unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity..."

Thank God, we now know the reason! God has revealed through Paul, the chief of sinners saved by grace, how He can be "just, and the Justifier of him that believeth in Jesus" (Rom. 3:26). It is because "God hath made Him [Christ] to be sin for us, [Him] who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (II Cor. 5:21).

David's blessedness may be ours too, if we will but do what David did: Trust in Him who graciously forgives sin and justifies believers on the basis of the redemptive work of Christ.

We are truly blessed when we see that God bestows salvation as a free gift; that He will not allow us to spoil matters by insisting on earning our salvation. He will not be man's debtor; this is why He demands that we stop tampering with His plan of salvation by grace.

*"Americans can eat garbage, provided you sprinkle it liberally with ketchup, mustard, chili sauce, tabasco sauce, cayenne pepper, or any other condiment which destroys the original flavor of the dish."—Henry Miller*