

+

Church

&

Family

Wait On The Lord
Northern California Chapter
Mass Choir: A Heart Full Of
Song And Service



After attending two sessions of the nation's Gospel Music Workshop of America, of which Rev. James Cleveland was the founder and president, Helen J. H. Stephens, saw a deep need to combine the various Bay Area choirs, ensembles, and soloists under one organization. In 1970, under the leadership of Helen Stephens (a 1992 appointee to the Board of Directors of the GMWA), the Northern California Chapter was organized.

In its early stages, the chapter's membership was 200. But after much prayer, perseverance, sacrifice, and hard work, the chapter's enrollment blossomed into 5009 members. Musically they are also very dedicated. The chapter meets once per month to rehearse and to attend academic classes that consist of vocal techniques, piano, organ, percussion, evangelism in gospel music, and directing.

Rev. James Cleveland's influence of traditional gospel music led to the formation of the James Cleveland Chorus and the chapter maintains two other singing groups as well. They are: The Angelic Voices, for the children, and The Helen J.H. Stephens Young Adult Voices.

In addition to the dynamic gospel choir, The Northern California Chapter also provides various service organizations as well, such as a Women's and Men's Department, Young Adult Ministry, Evangelistic Ministry, Usher Board, Nurses Guild and a Children and Youth Ministry.

The choir has recorded several projects including "Oh,

My Jesus What A Friend" which featured the Rev. Donald Vails. In addition, they combined their voices with The Southern California Chapter to record a live album. They were also very honored to perform on the "National GMWA 25th Anniversary" album.

The choir performs at least one concert per month at a variety of churches, among them -- the famous Saint Boniface Catholic Cathedral of San Francisco, California. In 1991, The Northern California Chapter celebrated its first official choir anniversary after 22 years of faithful service. They are very thankful for the way God has always been faithful to them. Their goal as a body is to continue to create and to perform music, most of which is written from within the chapter, that will enlighten the hearts of listeners as they encourage all Christians to "press towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" So far they have proven their desire to do just that.

Their debut album recorded at the Second Baptist Church in Vallejo, California, and entitled "Wait On The Lord", truly demonstrates what a wealth of talent is embodied in this choir. From the dynamic solo performances, to the exhilarating voices of the entire choir, this album is the perfect avenue for the chapter to begins its third decade of work. The northern part of California already knows what a tremendous choir this is and now it's time for the entire country to know as well.

The Year In Review: An Annual Rite

By Samuel K. Atchison
"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." -Romans 8:28

There is a saying that the more things change, the more they remain the same. Certainly this is true of the period between Christmas and New Year's when most of us give pause to reflect upon the year gone by.

Like an annual rite of winter, we take one final look at the events of the past -- savoring the joys, lamenting the sorrows -- before gazing resolutely at the year to come.

But what of the recent past? How are we to view it? Are the experiences of the previous year -- whether pleasant or not -- merely isolated episodes? Or can something larger, even providential, be detected?

As one might imagine (given my calling as a preacher), I suspect the latter. Yet my conviction has less to do with philosophical meanderings than it does with the difficulties I have experienced with day-to-day living. Allow me to explain.

As noted previously in this space, I worked for three years as an administrator in a Christian emergency shelter. Our ministry had no denominational backing and garnered little in the way of financial support. As such, the ministry's board of directors could only pay me a fraction of the income I had received during my prior employment with the State of New Jersey.

In 1990, my wife was on maternity leave following the birth of our oldest daughter, when she learned that she was about to lose her job. I then felt it necessary to leave the homeless ministry and find a position which would enable me to support my family.

Unfortunately, during the

period the country was in the throes of a recession. Thus, though my wife was eventually able to obtain work as independent consultant, I remained under employed for more than two years.

Suffice it to say that I was a happy camper. Working as a clerical temporary -- with a master's degree, mind you -- was not exactly my idea of having fun.

After all, I had given up an upwardly mobile career to do God's work. Now, when I needed Him most, He seemed to have let me down. The fact that millions of other mid-level professionals were in the same boat as I, did nothing to assuage my bitterness and despair.

Yet it was during this same period that I began to write commentaries, sharing perspectives gained from my years working with the poor. Though it didn't pay much (indeed, success as a freelancer can never be measured by income), my work began to garner a following, reaching thousands of people around the country.

In addition, I was eventually offered a position as a prison chaplain. As a result, I now work with hundreds of inmates, some of them my former clients -- again as a result of my work at the shelter.

In personal terms, 1993 was the best year I have had in the previous seven. Yet, the triumphs of the present had their antecedents in the failures of the past.

As a Christian, both my faith and my experience assure me that such is not happenstance, but is rather part of God's divine order. I trust that those whose year was not so good will find this to be true as well.

EYE ON GOSPEL

BY MARGARET MANSFIELD

Catching The Vision: Among those record labels recently getting involved in the gospel game is Georgia-based Intersound 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. Intersound and other labels wanting to get in to gospel will see the bulk of their competition from smaller, independent labels like Blackberry and Gospel Centric, -- 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 ten 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 one billion dollar 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.

Horn Of African Lutherans To Join Local Ethiopians In Celebrating Christmas

The public is invited to participate in a celebration of Christmas with local Lutheran church members, Eritreans and Ethiopians on Saturday, Jan. 8, beginning with a concert at 4 p.m. A potluck dinner will be served after the concert. The multicultural event will be held at Luther Memorial Church, 13047 Greenwood Avenue N., Seattle.

The event is sponsored by the Campaign Synod Committee of the Northwest Washington Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as a way to promote understanding between Christmas of different

cultures.

An early January date was chosen to honor the date Christmas is celebrated in the Horn of Africa. The concert will feature traditional American Christmas carols for everyone to sing, a handbell choir and Ethiopian music.

The event is free, but donations will be accepted and used to pay the salaries of two Ethiopian pastors working in northern Ethiopia.

For more information, call Fred or Yvonne Robbins, 365-4996, or Margaret Culbertson, 337-3380.

THE ILLUSTRATED BIBLE

Do You Need a New Heart?

"I will set my law within them and write it on their hearts; I will become their God and they shall become my people."
 -- Jeremiah 31: 33-34



Dr. Christiaan Barnard started the world with the announcement that he had performed the world's first successful heart transplant. Replacing a diseased heart that was over 50 percent fibrous, Dr. Barnard put a new heart in its place. As we begin a new year, God wants to give every one of us a heart transplant. He wants to replace our diseased hearts which have been lukewarm in His service and replace them with hearts set on fire for Jesus Christ. In 1994, will you allow God to write His new covenant on your heart? If so, then you will be one of God's successful heart transplants. And, you will be God's ambassador of love to a world of chaos!
 ©1994 by King Features Synd.

ETHIOPIAN CHRISTMAS MASS

The Christmas mass of the Amanuel Ethiopian Orthodox Church will be held Saturday, Jan. 8 at 10 p.m. at Our Lady of Mt. Virgin Church, 1531 South Bradner Place. For more information, call Abba Haddis, 324-3362.

ROSE OF SHARON

ORDER OF SERVICE

CHURCH SCHOOL.....9:30 A.M.
 WORSHIP HOUR.....11:15 A.M.
 SUNDAY EVENING.....7:00 P.M.
 WEDNESDAY EVANGELISTIC
 SERVICE.....7:00 P.M.
 FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY
 7:00 P.M.

PRAYER SATURDAY AT NOON

OFFICE: 722-4920

FOYER: 722-9972



DR. A.L. HARDY/PASTOR

BISHOP A.L. HARDY ACADEMY



BISHOP A.L. HARDY

REGISTRARS OFFICE

3208 S. Hanford Street
 CLASSES TUESDAYS:
 9:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.
 6:00 P.M. - 10:00 P.M.

ROSE OF SHARON

EDUCATION CENTER

4130 Rainier Avenue South

INFORMATON:

725-4271

ACADEMIC DEAN

ATTORNEY PHILLIP AARON
 PRESIDENT/FOUNDER

MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Memorial Baptist Church



Dr. Leon C. Jones
 PASTOR

ORDER OF SERVICE

SUNDAY SCHOOL

9:30 A.M.

MORNING WORSHIP

11:00 A.M.

FRIDAY PRAYER SERVICE

7:00 P.M.

13611 SE 116TH, RENTON, WA
 (206) 255-1446