

# Letter to President Bush: Time for a chancel cabinet

An open letter to President George Bush: You are to be congratulated for the impressive circle of advisers you have gathered around you to guide us through the grave crisis now confronting our nation.

But have you forgotten one of the country's most valuable resources — its clergy?

We need somebody to reassure us in these troubled days when the sun is out of sight and there is no gleam of light on the path, "and all we can hear is the dripping of the sad rain." We need someone to remind us that "though the wrong be oft so strong, God is the ruler yet."

This is clergy turf, and we need those who occupy it to remind us, when the sun appears to be setting on our dreams, that the sun also rises; that, as Camus said, "good is also inevitable"; that God is smiling through his tears because he

is happy with his dream for his creation, "sad only for what men keep doing to it."

The grim morning headlines and the somber evening news have made us forget that the good life is still available to those who seek it with all their heart.

The president could put select a group of prominent members of the clergy to make up a sort of "chancel cabinet." (The chancel is the area in the front of a church where the clergy officiate.)

It would be like Andrew Jackson's "kitchen cabinet" in the White House in the 1830s. The kitchen cabinet was an informal group of Jackson advisers that included newspaper editors, longtime friends, family and official Cabinet members. Because of their unofficial status, they were pictured as keeping out of sight by



george  
plagenz

• saints & sinners

coming into Jackson's office through the White House kitchen and up the back stairs.

Jackson hoped the kitchen cabinet would be a "moral force" that would help to keep the shaky Union together.

Our problems are different from Jackson's. But with fear, hate and anger rampant today, a moral force may be what the country needs.

Such a Clergy Commission on the Good Life

could serve as our national conscience and as a repository of good ideas from the collected wisdom and moral concern of men and women whose sensitivity and integrity would lift our country's hopes and get us to "swing our lanterns higher."

The idea of a chancel cabinet would not be unprecedented. President Franklin Roosevelt in 1935 sought the advice of the clergy. "Because of the grave responsibilities of my office," Roosevelt wrote to the ministers, "I am turning to clergymen for counsel and advice, feeling confident that no group can give more accurate or unbiased views."

Roosevelt later remarked on how helpful the ministers' replies had been.

Religious leaders and educators once defined the country's values, but today the media shape

our agenda.

As author Eric Alterman says, "A tiny group of highly visible pundits make their living offering inside political opinions in the media. But these pundits are largely divorced from the travails that make everyday life in the U.S. such a struggle. They live in neighborhoods like Georgetown or Chevy Chase, with green lawns, safe playgrounds, good schools and an extra room for the maid. Their biggest problem in life is the traffic."

These pundits are not good monitors of American life. An informal chancel cabinet would better serve as the president's eyes and ears, focusing on the people's hopes and fears, their dreams and insecurities.

Mr. President, let's give the clergy back their role in the nation's public life.

## Spirituals Project works to preserve 'historical gift to the musical world'

By Colleen Long

Associated Press Writer

DENVER — Charmaine Anderson stepped to the microphone, beads of sweat gathering on her face as her powerful voice filled the hotel ballroom.

"I wanna be ready," she crooned as the Spirituals Project choir hummed softly in the background. "I wanna be ready to put on my long white robe."

At a recent convention of the National Association of Negro Musicians, the soprano's rendition of "I Wanna Be Ready" silenced the rustling papers and few whispers from the audience of about 300.

The song, a newer arrangement of a traditional spiritual, is a sad, slow hymn about preparing for judgment day. People swayed, clapped and occasionally wept while the choir performed spirituals and recited poetry.

"I feel so free singing. It's funny be-

cause these songs came from the slaves," she said.

The Spirituals Project was formed in Denver about three years ago by author and psychology professor Arthur Jones to educate the public about spirituals, what he calls the original American music.

He and his piano accompanist, Ingrid Thompson, have traveled the country conducting lectures and workshops on spirituals since 1991. Their programs combine performance of spirituals with presentations on the songs' historical significance and how they relate to modern music.

For Jones, a 5-year-old professor at University of Denver, music has always been a passion. He's been performing most of his life, but until he wrote "Wade in the Water," a book about the history of spirituals, he didn't think to create a group devoted to per-

forming them.

"It started as just an outside interest, but evolved into my life's work," said Jones. "I discovered while doing the presentations something permanent needed to be established."

A small ensemble from the choir is currently performing in a play about youth gang violence called "Not Here." The full choir plans to sing before a special performance of the play to show support for the victims of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"We were working on the play before the attacks," Jones said. "But now, it seems so much more relevant. How can we expect our kids to reject violence when they see adults acting so horribly violent?"

The spiritual style of music has roots in Africa, as folk songs sung during work, worship and entertainment. During slavery, spirituals evolved into

songs expressing deeply held religious convictions, especially for converted Christians.

The songs also reflected longings for freedom, often hidden within song lyrics. In "Blow Your Trumpet, Gabriel," for example, the singer asks the angel "...to blow me home / To my new Jerusalem."

"In times of crisis, people want to reach for something with a deep meaning," Jones said. "These songs were created in a time of great crisis, and I think when something comes out of crisis it comes from a very deep place in the human spirit. It ends up with a universal appeal."

James Kinchen, music professor at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside, said groups that work to preserve the spirituals are a necessity.

"The spiritual was this country's unique gift to the musical world. They

should be cherished, remembered and taught," he said. "If we teach them with understanding, that these are more than just words and notes, it helps everyone see their social and historical importance."

Jones' choir was formed soon after the project was founded. The 70 members are a multiracial mix of professional musicians, students and amateurs. Members are unpaid, and perform mostly in Denver, but will travel to Greeley and Colorado Springs in the next few months. Jones also hopes to travel throughout the United States.

"Many people that sing in the choir aren't Christian, but the message of the music is larger than a religious denomination. It really brings people together," Jones said.

The nonprofit project is also producing a documentary about the songs for PBS, and is working with the Univer-

sity of Denver to create a Web site.

When Jones founded the Spirituals Project, he was happy to discover others shared his interest, although the spirituals preservation movement is still relatively small; he said only about 20 choirs nationwide perform the music on a regular basis.

But interest is growing. Groups like the Brazeal Dennard Chorale in Detroit and the Harlem Spiritual Ensemble in New York City are professional choirs, and many community groups throughout the country are starting to perform the music.

"We may have different ways of going about it, but we are all fighting for the same thing, and we use each other as strength and also as resources," Jones said.

On the Net: The Spirituals Project: <http://www.spiritualsproject.org>

### Bible Baptist Church

**Pastor:** Don Crutcher

Fifth & Broadway

899-7368

**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9 am

Worship Service: 10 am

Evening Service: 6:30 pm

**Wednesday:** Evening Bible Study: 7 pm

### Calvary Gospel Church

**Pastor:** Rev. Steve Rains

Fourth & College • 899-3605

**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:15 am

Morning Worship: 10:30 am

Evening Worship: 6:30 pm

**Wednesday:** Family Night: 7 pm

Adult Bible Study and Youth Group

**Saturday:** Prayer Meeting: 5-7 pm

If you would like to receive a free newsletter, please call the church office.

### Church of Christ

401 Caldwell

899-6185

**Sunday:** Bible Study: 9:45 am

Worship Service: 10:45 am

Evening Service: 6 pm

**Wednesday:** Bible Study: 7 pm

### Church of the Nazarene

**Pastor:** Matthew Delp

Third & Caldwell

899-2080 or 899-3797

**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:45 am

Worship Service: 10:50 am

Evening Service: 6 pm

**Wednesday:** Evening Service: 7 pm

### First Baptist Church

**Pastor:** Bud Chester

Fifth & Center • 899-3450

**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:15 am

Morning Worship: 10:30 am

Evening Worship: 6:30 pm

**Tuesday:** Mens' Prayer Group: 6:00 am

**Thursday:** Night Bible Study: 7:00 pm

### Seventh Day Adventist Church

1160 Cattletrail

**Pastor:** Arlin Cochran • 785-332-2888

**Saturday:** Sabbath School: 9:30 am

Worship Service: 11 am



## Kanorado United Methodist Church

### First Christian Church

(Disciples of Christ)

**Pastor:** Loren Strait

Eighth & Arcade • 899-5233

**Sunday:** Worship Service: 9 am

**Activities:** Junior High & High School Youth Groups,

Adult Bible Study, Choir, Men's and Women's Groups,

Devotions Study, Monthly Fellowship

**Special Notice:** Handicap Accessible, Hearing

Assistance Equipment and Infant and Toddler

Nurseries Available

### First United Methodist Church

1116 Sherman

899-3631

**Pastor:** Rev. Carol Moore-Ramey

**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:15 am

Worship Service: 10:30 am

### Sonrise Christian Church

Ninth & Caldwell • 899-5398

**Minister:** Tony Kafka

**Youth Minister:** Doug Bean

**Sunday:** Worship Service: 9:30 am

Sunday School: 10:45 am

**Wednesday:**

Junior/Senior High Meeting: 7 pm

Adult & Children's Classes: 7 pm

### Emmanuel Lutheran Church

13th & Sherman • 899-6161

**Pastor:** Scott Grimshaw

**Sunday:** Sunday School: 8:45 am

Worship Service: 10 am

**Wednesday:** Confirmation: 6 pm

### Kanorado

### United Methodist Church

**Pastor:** Leonard Cox

399-2468

**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9 am

Worship Service: 10:15 am

### Goodland Bible Church

109 Willow Road • 899-6400

**Pastor:**

**Sunday:** Sunday School: 9:45 am

Morning Worship: 11 am

Evening Worship: 6 pm

**Wednesday:** Call for location

### Grace Fellowship Church

104 E. Hwy 24 • 899-6423

**Pastor:** Bob Snyder • Residence: 899-0134

**Sunday:** Sunday School: 10 am

Worship Service: 11 am

### St. Paul's Episcopal Church

13th & Center

899-2115 or Rectory 899-2114

**Priest:** Father Charles Schneider

**Deacon:** Gretchen Talitha

**Adult Forum:** Sunday : 8:30 am

Morning Prayer: 9:30 am 1st & 5th Sundays

**Holy Eucharist:** 2nd, 3rd, & 4th Sundays: 9:30

Sr. Warden for emergencies during the week 899-2067

### Church of Jesus Christ

### of Latter-Day Saints

1200 15th Street • Burlington, CO • (970) 664-2470

**Sacrament Meeting:** 9:30 am

**Sunday School:** 10:45 am

**Priesthood/Relief Society:** 11:30 am

### Word of Life Foursquare Church

223 E. 10th

899-5250

**Pastor:** John Coumerilh

**Sunday:** Worship Celebration &

Kids' Church: 10:30 am

### United Methodist Church

**Brewster:**

**Pastor:**

Worship Service: 10:45 am CST

Sunday School: 9:45 am CST

**Winona:**

**Minister:** Rev. Bob Winters

Worship Service: 9 am CST

Sunday School: 10:15 am CST

### Iglesia Del Dios Vivo

La Luz Del Mundo

Spanish Speaking Church

**Minister:** Esteban Ortiz B.

1601 Texas • 899-5275

**Daily Prayer:** Sunday thru

Saturday: 5 am & 6 pm

**Sunday:** Sunday School: 10 am

### Our Lady of Perpetual Help

**Pastor:** Father Daryl Olmstead

307 W. 13th • 899-7205

**Sacrament of Reconciliation:**

4:30-5 pm Saturday or by appointment

**Mass Schedule:**

**Saturday:** 6 pm

**Sunday:** 8 am and 9:30 am

**Spanish Mass:**

1st & 3rd Sunday: 2 pm

### Pleasant Home Church

Serving the rural community for over 100 years

Rt. 1, Box 180 • 694-2807 • 3190 Road 70

**Pastor:** Jim Cress

899-5784

**Sunday:** Worship Service: 9 am

Sunday School: 10 am

Evening Service: 6 pm

The following sponsors urge YOU to attend your chosen House of Worship this Sabbath:

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