

The newspaper also stated that insiders of the group described Tyler as “charismatic [and] controlling.”

One individual who formerly attended Tyler’s Bible study said, “Everything had to go his way. One time he said there would be no discussion until everyone agreed that the King James Version was the only true version of the Bible. Well, I was Catholic so I had a problem with that. So we argued and of course Tyler won everybody over because that’s what he did.”

Moore was a student at IHOPU, and others of the group worshipped together at IHOP. But church officials and their members quickly tried to limit public reaction by putting distance between themselves and Tyler and his group, saying the events are not reflective of IHOP.

Meanwhile, *Charisma* magazine quickly rallied to Bickle’s and IHOP’s defense by publishing an online article titled, “IHOP Kansas City Is Not a Cult, but Cults Are Rising.” The magazine reported that, “*The Huffington Post* published an unfortunate article penned by a radical gay activist characterizing the International House of Prayer in Kansas City, Mo., as a cult. It’s clear ... that [the article’s author] Wayne Besen doesn’t understand the Holy Spirit or how He moves. How could he? He’s not saved and he’s been on a witch-hunt for years.”

*Charisma* also noted that, “in response to the tragedy IHOP Director Mike Bickle taught on the seven characteristics of a cult. I’ve heard Mike teach on this in the past, but he dusted off his notes to address the IHOP community earlier this month — a responsible response to the heartbreaking story.”

But not all share *Charisma*’s commendation of IHOP. Keith Gibson, apologist and author of *Wandering Stars*, indicates that while the IHOP ministry appears to many to be within the mainstream of Christianity, a closer examination reveals that the group is built upon the shaky foundations of personal revelation and that it promotes heresy.

—MKG

## SISTER AIMEE GOES TO BROADWAY

Jesus found Himself headlining Broadway shows in the 1970s with *Jesus Christ Superstar* and *Godspell*. More recently, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints found itself the casualty of a contemptuous and irreverent — but Tony Award winning — Broadway musical, entitled *The Book of Mormon*. Now the Pentecostal vanguard and Foursquare Church founder, Aimee Semple McPherson, took her turn on New York City’s theatrical stage.

*Scandalous: The Life and Trials of Aimee Semple McPherson* opened last Nov. 15 and ran through Dec. 9 at the Neil Simon Theatre in New York City.

The Broadway show marks several “firsts.” It is the first Broadway musical about McPherson — narrating the highs and lows of the controversial evangelist’s life. It is also the first time that the Foursquare Foundation has invested in a Broadway production. The group’s customary use of funds is for evangelism and social ministry work. In addition, the show is the first with a book and lyrics written by Kathie Lee Gifford, popular co-host of the *Today* show and former longtime co-host of *Live! With Regis and Kathie Lee*.

Gifford wrote the musical and, before appearing on Broadway, the show had a month-long run in Seattle in 2011 under the title *Saving Aimee*. Gifford’s husband Frank, a former professional football player and sportscaster, attended McPherson’s church as a child. Gifford describes herself as “a very bad follower of Jesus. Every day I try to be a better one.”

*Christianity Today* magazine, in an online posting, writes that, “The show opens with a scene about the biggest scandal of McPherson’s career. In 1926, she disappeared while swimming in California. When she resurfaced five weeks later in Arizona, she said she had been kidnapped and held prisoner in Mexico. Her critics said she disappeared to be with a married lover. She was charged with lying to a grand jury and conspiracy to commit a hoax in connection with the case, but those charges were dropped. The show flashes back through key moments in McPherson’s life, including her decision to leave her second husband and travel the country holding tent revivals that drew thousands. She began her ministry a few years after the birth of Pentecostalism, and almost single-handedly popularized the movement that’s best known for speaking in tongues and faith healings.”

McPherson’s career spanned from the 1910s until her death in 1944. The International Church of the Four-square Gospel claims 8 million members worldwide.

—MKG

## COURT VERDICT IS A SETBACK FOR SCHULLER

In what is being described as “the final chapter” in the court battle between the Rev. Robert H. Schuller and the church and ministry he founded, the erstwhile pastor received only a fraction of the money he claimed was owed to him.

Schuller stated that for decades the books and other materials he wrote were given to the Crystal Cathedral without compensation. He was seeking over \$5 million which he claimed was due to him for his intellectual property, and for copyright infringements and contract violations. Judge Robert Kwan thought otherwise, awarding Schuller just \$615,625 and nothing to his wife,

Arvella, who also sought damages for her work for the Crystal Cathedral Ministries and its *Hour of Power* television broadcast.

The minister's daughter, Carol Milner, called the judge's ruling a "travesty" and claimed that it left her parents with no option but to "start liquidating everything."

While the Schullers may regard the court decision as a reversal of fortune, not all share that same opinion. Because of the Schullers' lawsuit, creditors of the Crystal Cathedral church and ministry, who were owed millions of dollars, were delayed payments. With the judge's ruling, it gave a green light to allow the church's creditors to finally receive the money they were owed. Most have waited years for payment.

—MKG

## END-TIME HANDMAIDENS FOUNDER DIES

Gwendolyn Ruth Shaw, founder and president of End-Time Handmaidens and Servants International, died Sunday, Jan. 13. She was 88.

Shaw was born Gwendolyn Bergman in Canada in 1924. She was raised in a Mennonite family and claimed a conversion to Christianity at age 17. In 1943, she met and married her first husband, Dave Schmidt, and in 1947 the couple became missionaries to China. After

more than 25 years of marriage and nearly a decade of separation, the couple divorced.

In the early 1970s, Schmidt met Lt. Col. James Shaw, a retired Air Force officer. Schmidt told Shaw that, "The Lord has told me that I can marry you." In 1975, the couple and their organization moved to Jasper, Ark.

With doctrinal ambiguity and theological aberrations, Shaw and her End-Time Handmaidens easily mobilized within and gleaned from various extremes of Pentecostal and Charismatic teachings. The organization stressed the importance of ongoing and personal revelation.

During a Benny Hinn crusade held August 2003 in Berlin, Germany, Hinn invited Shaw to the platform to pray for revival to come to Germany. Shaw told Hinn and his audience, "It will begin here, it will begin here." When Hinn inquired, "Are you prophesying now, that the revival will begin in Berlin?" Shaw replied, "I am speaking it by the Holy Spirit. ... The Lord said that the revival would begin with this crusade. ... Pastor Benny, you got no idea how important it is that you're here."

Thousands of Handmaidens and Servants gather annually at the group's World Conventions, which were first held in 1976. Followers are coerced into attending the gatherings and are told that those missing the convention may have lost their "first love" and have "grieved the Holy Spirit by not accepting His invitation."

Shaw wrote more than 50 books. Her second husband, James, died in 2007.

—MKG

### PERSONAL FREEDOM OUTREACH — STATEMENT OF BELIEF

- I. THE BIBLE AS THE DIVINELY INSPIRED, INERRANT WORD OF GOD: IT IS IN ITS ENTIRETY THE SOLE AUTHORITY FOR ALL MATTERS OF CHRISTIAN BELIEF AND PRACTICE.
- II. THE ONE TRUE GOD. IN THE ONE TRUE GOD THERE EXIST THREE PERSONS, BEING: THE FATHER, THE SON JESUS CHRIST, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- III. JESUS CHRIST: HIS DEITY, HUMANITY, VIRGIN BIRTH, SINLESSNESS, DEATH AND BODILY RESURRECTION; WHO WILL PERSONALLY AND VISIBLY RETURN AGAIN TO EARTH.
- IV. THE PERSONALITY AND DEITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
- V. THE EXISTENCE AND PERSONALITY OF SATAN, HIS TOTAL OPPOSITION TO GOD, AND HIS POWER OVER THE UNREGENERATE.
- VI. THE COMPLETE AND TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF ALL MEN WHICH MAKES THEM HOPELESSLY LOST WITHOUT THE NEW BIRTH OBTAINABLE THROUGH FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST.
- VII. THE FINAL ESTATE OF MAN: FOR THE SAVED, EVERLASTING LIFE IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD AND FOR THE UNSAVED, EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT BECAUSE OF THEIR UNBELIEF.
- VIII. THE GOSPEL BY WHICH WE ARE SAVED BEING SUMMED IN THE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST.
- IX. THE CHURCH BEING THE BODY OF CHRIST, UNITED IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, CONSISTING OF THOSE WHO HAVE RECEIVED JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOR. A LOCAL CHURCH IS AN ORGANIZED ASSEMBLY OF BELIEVERS UNITED FOR THE PURPOSE OF CARRYING OUT THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST.
- X. THE GREAT COMMISSION OF CHRIST BEING TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO ALL MEN, BAPTIZING AND DISCIPLING THOSE WHO HAVE BELIEVED.