

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,