Jesus Christ Superstar

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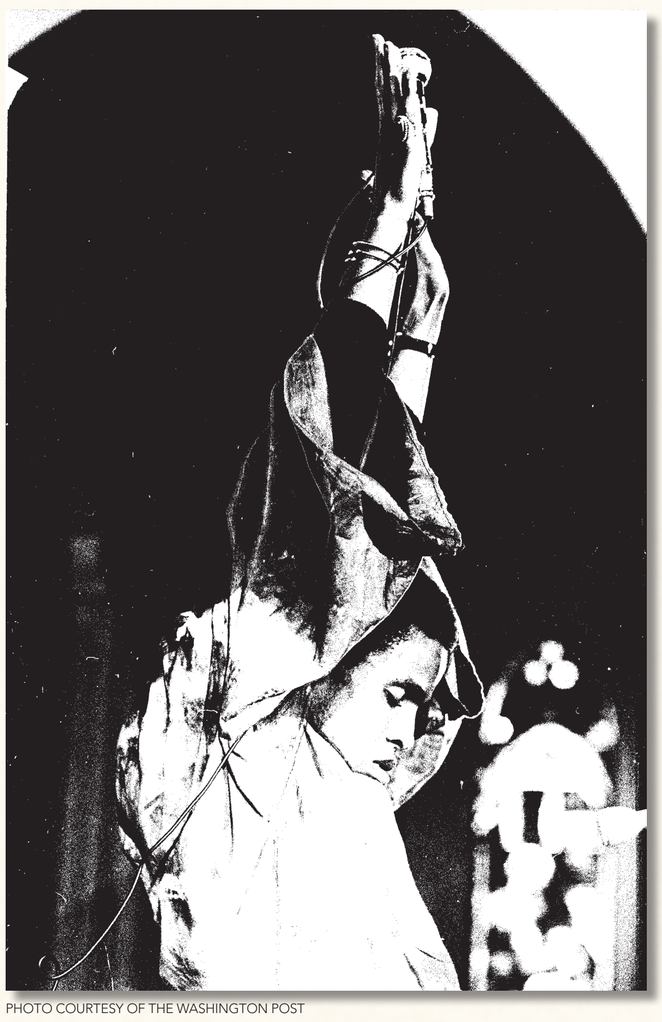
The DC band Second Eagle, led by Carl Anderson, was performing songs from Jesus Christ Superstar at the Bayou nightclub in Georgetown in early 1971. Bill Wendt invited them to perform Superstar at St. Stephen's during the main service on Palm Sunday. Thanks to media coverage of that performance, Anderson was "discovered" by Broadway producers. **Carl Anderson went on to play Judas Iscariot in the broadway and motion picture versions of Jesus Christ Superstar.**

Anderson then recorded **nine albums of his own**, and he assisted on the recordings of other musicians — including Stevie Wonder, Peabo Bryson, Nancy Wilson, and Kenny Logins.



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JESUS CHRIST SUPERSTAR

Rock Opera Moves Church Audience

Judas wore a tie-dyed robe and tennis shoes, Herod played an electric guitar and an apostle rocked out on drums.

Before an audience yesterday of more than 1,000 persons in St. Stephen and the Incarnation Church, the rock opera "Jesus Christ Superstar" scored big.

Believers had tears in their eyes when the Superstar gave up the ghost.

Second Eagle, a five-man local rock group managed by Guy Draper, began their performance by washing their hands in a silver bowl which had been placed on the church's communion table.

12-Song Selection

Then they took their places behind electric guitars, drums, keyboard, microphones and amplifiers to give their extraordinary rendition of 12 songs from the 23-song opera.

The performance, dedicated to Martin Luther King Jr., evoked tears, loud applause and a standing ovation from the audience of regular churchgoers and those who attended just to witness the event.

"It was terrific," said Carol Forsythe. "This is the first time I've been here. A friend told me the performance would be made."

Even older people said they were moved by this modern version of Jesus's last seven days on earth, and they praised the group's performance.

Interpretations of each number — from "What's the Buzz," where the apostles ask Jesus about his plans on the way to Jerusalem, to "The Last Words," where Jesus dies — were detailed on programs rolled like scrolls and passed out to the congregation preceeding services.

The Rev. William A. Wendt, pastor of the church, did not deliver a Palm Sunday sermon, but instead chose Second Eagle's performance in hopes of bridging "the gap between youth and the church."

He said, "Second Eagle is trying to replace the first eagle which has not done our country much good."

During the performance, many of the younger members of the audience, weo were familiar with the opera, clapped, swayed and softly sung along with "Herod" as he demanded miracles from the "King of the Jews."

The service was concluded with a march down 15th Street — to "honor Martin Luther King" and to protest what Father Wendt called government inaction since the 1968 riots.

About 900 persons from the congregation joined the walk and distributed palm branches. — LURMA RACKLEY.

—Star Photographer Bernie Boston

The scene at St. Stephen and the Incarnation Church during yesterday's Palm Sunday presentation of "Jesus Christ Superstar."

Anderson died from leukemia in 2004.