



## NEWS FROM WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY PRESS

**\*For immediate release\***

### *Definitive Study of Contemporary Gospel Music Now Available!*



**BOOK INFORMATION:**

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*African American Life Series*

*When the Church Becomes Your Party* gives readers a behind-the-scenes look at contemporary gospel music as the genre enters the twenty-first century. Although the flashy clothing, informal language, and elaborate stage presentation found in some of the newest gospel music may surprise some worshippers, author Deborah Smith Pollard argues that this new aesthetic rests on the same Christian principles as more traditional forms and successfully extends gospel's message to a wider and younger audience.

Pollard looks at contemporary gospel music with the insider's perspective she has acquired as a regular participant in praise and worship services in the Detroit area and through her work as a successful gospel concert producer (the Motor City Praisefest and the McDonald's GospelFest) and host of a popular Sunday morning gospel show on Detroit's FM 98 WJLB. Among the topics she considers in *When the Church Becomes Your Party* are praise and worship music, gospel musical stage plays, the changing dress code of gospel performance, women gospel announcers, and holy hip hop.

Pollard, associate professor of English literature and humanities at the University of Michigan–Dearborn, draws on Detroit's thriving gospel scene as well as her knowledge of the national gospel music industry to identify important trends in each area and trace the cultural transformations that brought them about. In addition, Pollard includes interviews with contemporary gospel artists, allowing them to explain why they rap, make particular choices in attire, or participate in gospel radio, praise and worship, or gospel musical plays.

*When the Church Becomes Your Party* offers a comprehensive picture of the history and future of contemporary gospel music. **Gospel music enthusiasts and those interested in African American culture will enjoy this intriguing volume.**

"There is no doubt that 'today's gospel is not your mother's gospel' so we should be thankful that we have Deborah Smith Pollard's *When the Church Becomes Your Party* to serve as our interpreter. . . . In entertaining yet scholarly writing, Pollard tells us how, when, why, and where these changes took place and gives us some indication of how the changes are being received in the Black Church community."

—**Horace Clarence Boyer**, author of *The Golden Age of Gospel*

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