

from the novel and play of the same title by Langston Hughes

FOLKWAYS FG 3538

TAMBOURINES to GLORY

Gospel Songs by Langston Hughes & Jobe Huntley

Recorded by the Porter Singers
at Second Canaan Baptist Church in Harlem, October 3, 1958



Let The Church Say Amen
Home to God
I'm Gonna Testify
When I Touch His Garment
Tambourines to Glory
Opening Theme: Choral Humming
Thank God, I Have the Bible
Devil, Take Yourself Away
Back to the Fold
As I Go
Closing Theme: Piano and Organ

TAMBOURINES to GLORY

Gospel Songs by Langston Hughes & Jobe Huntley

Library of Congress Catalogue Card No. R 60-462

©1958 FOLKWAYS RECORDS & SERVICE Corp.

701 Seventh Ave., New York City

Distributed by Folkways/Scholastic Records.

906 Sylvan Ave., Englewood Cliffs, N.J. 07632

DESCRIPTIVE NOTES ARE INSIDE POCKET

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FG 3538

FOLKWAYS RECORDS FG 3538

FOLKWAYS RECORDS Album No. FG 3538

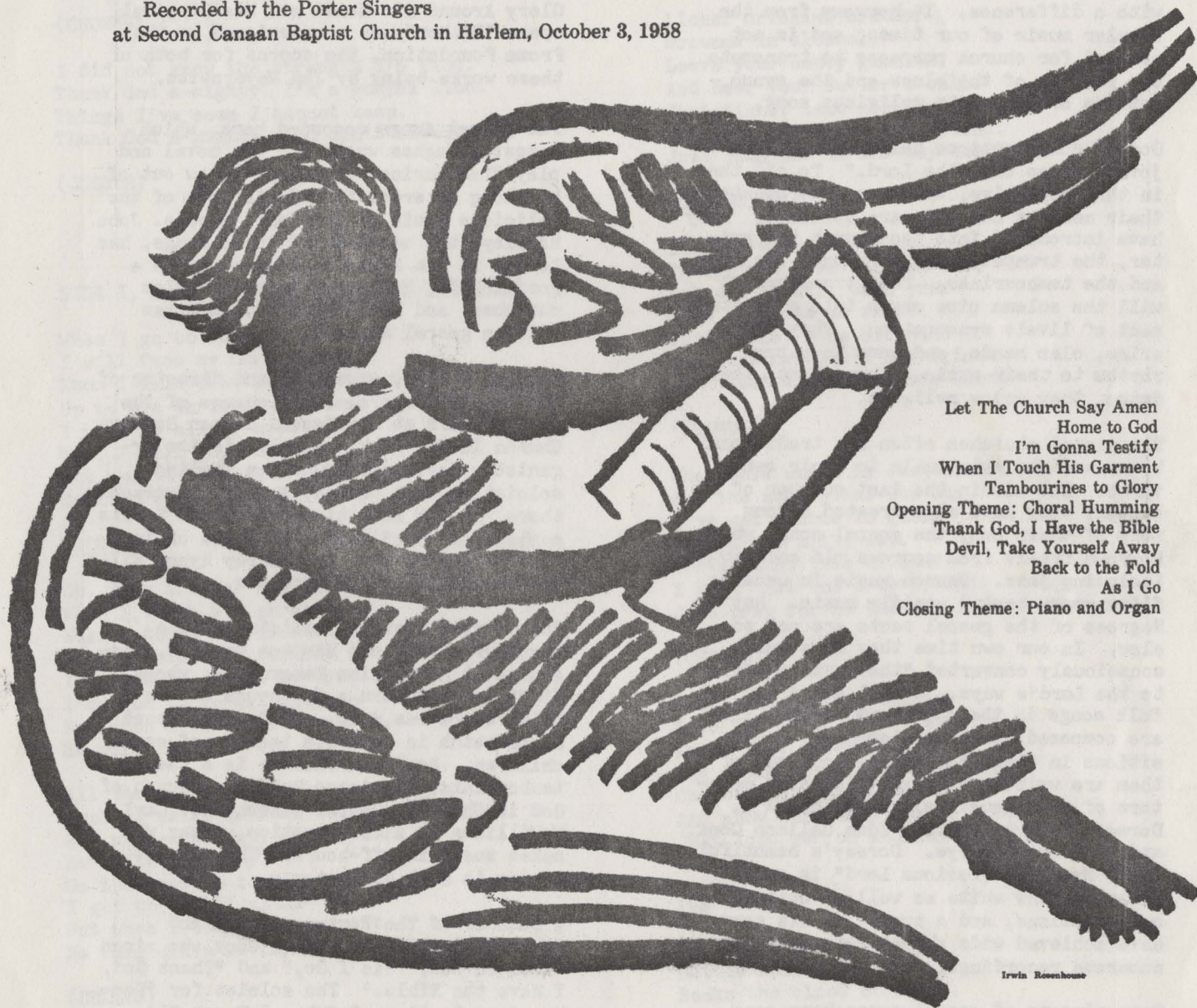
©1958 by Folkways Records & Service Corp., 701 Seventh Ave., NYC, USA

from the novel and play of the same title by Langston Hughes

TAMBOURINES to GLORY

Gospel Songs by Langston Hughes & Jobe Huntley

Recorded by the Porter Singers
at Second Canaan Baptist Church in Harlem, October 3, 1958



Let The Church Say Amen
Home to God
I'm Gonna Testify
When I Touch His Garment
Tambourines to Glory
Opening Theme: Choral Humming
Thank God, I Have the Bible
Devil, Take Yourself Away
Back to the Fold
As I Go
Closing Theme: Piano and Organ

Irwin Rosenhouse

GOSPEL SONGS AND THEIR SINGERS

The small, independent, and often highly unorthodox gospel churches that have come into being in American cities in recent years—sometimes in low-rent store fronts, sometimes in the parlors of old brownstones, sometimes in former motion picture houses—are, in the opinion of Langston Hughes, the last refuge of uninhibited Negro folk singing. Their congregations sing to the glory of God for their own sanctification and everyone is free to express himself in his individual way through singing, shouting, and testimonials. Their music stems from the spirituals and jubilees of long ago—but with a difference. It borrows from the secular music of our times, and is not ashamed for church purposes to transmute the rhythms of the blues and the syncopations of jazz into religious song.

Gospel congregations believe in making "a jovful noise unto the Lord." To aid them in this objective, whatever instruments their members can play are utilized. They have introduced into the church the guitar, the trumpet, the saxophone, the drum, and the tambourines. They transform at will the solemn pipe organ into an instrument of lively syncopation. They often arise, clap hands, and move in happy rhythm to their music. They shout, they dance, they enjoy religion.

The gospel churches often use traditional hymns and old spirituals in their services. But within the last quarter of a century they have also created a song form of their own, the gospel song, which borrows freely from sources old and new—including jazz. Church music is usually fifty years behind worldly music. But Negroes of the gospel sects are not so slow. In our own time they have quite consciously converted "the devil's music" to the Lord's ways. Gospel songs are not folk songs in the anonymous sense. They are composed songs—contemporary compositions in the folk manner—and some of them are written by highly talented creators of religious music like Thomas A. Dorsey, Roberta Martin, Edna Gallmon Cook, and Theodore E. Frye. Dorsey's beautiful "Take My Hand, Precious Lord" is sung today by many white as well as colored congregations, and a number of his songs have achieved wide sheet music sale and numerous recordings.

Some singers of gospel songs have gone from the church to national and international fame, the great Mahalia Jackson being an outstanding example. Sister Thorpe is another. Today groups like the Ward Singers and the Davis Sisters fill not only churches, but coliseums and even ball parks wherever they sing. The religious records of Negro singers sell widely. Various radio stations today are

devoted almost entirely to gospel singing, sustained by commercials between numbers.

Much of the poetry of Langston Hughes, lyricist of these songs, stems from folk sources. More than a quarter of a century ago his earliest books contained groups of poems in the manner of the spirituals and jubilees. One of these poems, as set to music by Hall Johnson and Toy Harper, "At the Feet of Jesus" is widely used by church singers and has formed a part of the repertoire of Marian Anderson. Roy Harris and William Schumann have set to music for "The American Hymn Book" religious lyrics by Langston Hughes. The New York Philharmonic has performed his cantata of the resurrection, "The Glory Around His Head" and his Biblical opera "Esther" was commissioned by the Fromm Foundation, the scores for both of these works being by Jan Meyerowitz.

The gospel songs recorded here, which Langston Hughes wrote for his novel and play "Tambourines To Glory," grew out of his long interest in and his love of the religious music of the Negro people. Jobe Huntley, the composer of these songs, has toured in the South as a singer with a gospel trio, now sings in many Harlem churches, and for the past decade has written gospel music.

Hugh E. Porter, organizer and director of the Porter Singers, is in charge of the three choirs at the Second Canaan Baptist Church in New York, and also is its organist. Rev. Ernest Cook, a leading soloist at that church, sometimes preaches there, and is affectionately known to its members as "Doc" Cook. From the choirs of this church also are Audrey Ryan, Ellen Courts, and Florence Strachan.

The singing instrumentalists include twenty-two year old Hampton Carlton, organist at Mount Zion Tabernacle, whose first son was born a few hours before this record was made. Guitarist Yvonne Cumberbatch is a Harlem teacher of small children. Benjamin Snowden is a teenage tambourinist at Bishop Brodie's Church of God in Christ. Gospel saxophonist Carl McWilliams is a construction worker who makes music in off-hours. The pianist and leader is Hugh E. Porter.

A founder of The Porter Singers and featured soloist is Ernest Cook who sings "Home To God," "As I Go," and "Thank God, I Have the Bible." The soloist for "Tambourines to Glory," "When I Touch His Garment," and "Back to the Fold" is the composer, Jobe Huntley. "Devil, Take Yourself Away" is sung from the piano by Hugh E. Porter. These songs were recorded by David Hancock at the New Canaan Baptist Church in Harlem on the evening of October 3, 1958.

SIDE I, Band 1: I'M GONNA TESTIFY

CHORUS:

I'm gonna testify!
I'm gonna testify!
I'm gonna testify.
Till the day I die.
I'm gonna tell the truth
For the truth don't lie.
I'm gonna testify!

Sin has walked this world with me.
Thank God a-mighty, from sin I'm free!
Evil laid a Cross my way.
Thank God a-mighty, it's a brand new day!

(CHORUS)

I did not know the strength I'd find.
Thank God a-mighty, I'm a gospel lion.
Things I've seen I cannot keep.
Thank God a-mighty, God don't sleep!

(CHORUS)

SIDE I, Band 2: WHEN I TOUCH HIS GARMENT

When I go to face my Lord,
I will face my Lord alone.
When I walk that starry street
Up to his Christian throne,
I will go all by myself,
Yes, I will go alone——
But when I touch His garment,
He'll claim me for His own.

CHORUS:

Oh, when I touch His garment,
When I touch His garment,
When I touch His garment,
He will claim me for His own.
I've got to go all by myself,
I've got to go all alone——
But when I touch His garment,
He will claim me for His own.

All the troubles of this world
Such as weigh me down today,
All my heartaches, all my woes
He will take away.
On the road up to His throne,
I got to go all alone——
But when I touch His garment,
He will claim me for His own.

(CHORUS)

There will be a shower of stars.
There will be a blaze of light.
All around my Savior's head
A diadem so bright!
I will see it from afar
As I stand there all alone——
For when I touch His garment,
He will claim me for His own.

SIDE I, Band 3: LET THE CHURCH SAY AMEN

When you see some sinner
Leave iniquity's dark den
And turn his feet toward Canaan,
Just help him to begin.
Christians, take his hand
And show him God's his friend.
Just lead him on and say Amen!

CHORUS:

Let the church say Amen!
Let the church say Amen!
When a sinner comes to Jesus,
Let the church say Amen!

Licker drinking brother
Drowned in alcohol,
Leave your empty glasses
And hear your Savior's call.
Christians, take his hand
And show him God's his friend.
Just lead him on and say Amen!

(CHORUS)

Listen, wayward sister,
Though you have sunk so low,
Ask and He will wash your
Sins as white as snow.
Christians, take her hand
And show her God's her friend.
Just lead her on and say Amen!

(CHORUS)

When this world is shattered
And the atom's had its day,
I've got a home in glory
Beyond the milky way.
Christians, take my hand
I know that God's my friend.
Just pray for me and say Amen!

(CHORUS)

When some erring daughter
Sees the error of her ways,
Turns that gospel corner
And seeks the sun's bright rays,
Christians, take her hand
And show her God's her friend.
Just lead her on and say Amen!

(CHORUS)

If some weary warrior,
Battle-scared and torn,
Seeks the blood of Jesus,
Anew he shall be born.
Christians, take his hand
And show him God's his friend.
Just lead him on and say Amen!

(CHORUS)

SIDE I, Band 4: HOME TO GOD

I'm going to lay down my soul
At the foot of the Cross.
I'm going to tell my Savior
Just what sin has cost.
I'm going to find my Savior.
I'm going to whisper in His ear.
I'm going to tell Him, Savior,
My salvation is near:

CHORUS:

Oh, this world
Has been my dressing room,
But now, at last,
Dear Lord, I'm coming home.
Down, down in the mire
Too long my feet have trod.
Now, at last, I'm going home to God!

SIDE I, Band 5: TAMBOURINES TO GLORY

If you've got a tambourine,
Shake it to the glory of God!
Glory! Glory! Glory!
Shake it to the glory of God!
Tambourines!
Tambourines! Tambourines!
Tambourines to glory!

If you've got a piano,
Play it to the glory of God!
Glory! Glory! Glory!
Play it to the glory of God!
Piano!
Tambourines!
Tambourines! Tambourines!
Tambourines to glory!

If you've got an organ,
Play it to the glory of God!
Glory! Glory! Glory!
Play it to the glory of God!
Organ!
Piano!
Tambourines!
Tambourines! Tambourines!
Tambourines to glory!

If you've got a sweet guitar,
Play it to the glory of God!
Glory! Glory! Glory!
Play it to the glory of God!
Sweet guitar!
Organ!
Piano!
Tambourines!
Tambourines! Tambourines!
Tambourines to glory!

If you've got a horn to blow,
Blow it to the glory of God!
Horn to blow!
Sweet guitar!
Organ!
Piano!
Tambourines!
Tambourines! Tambourines!
Tambourines to glory!

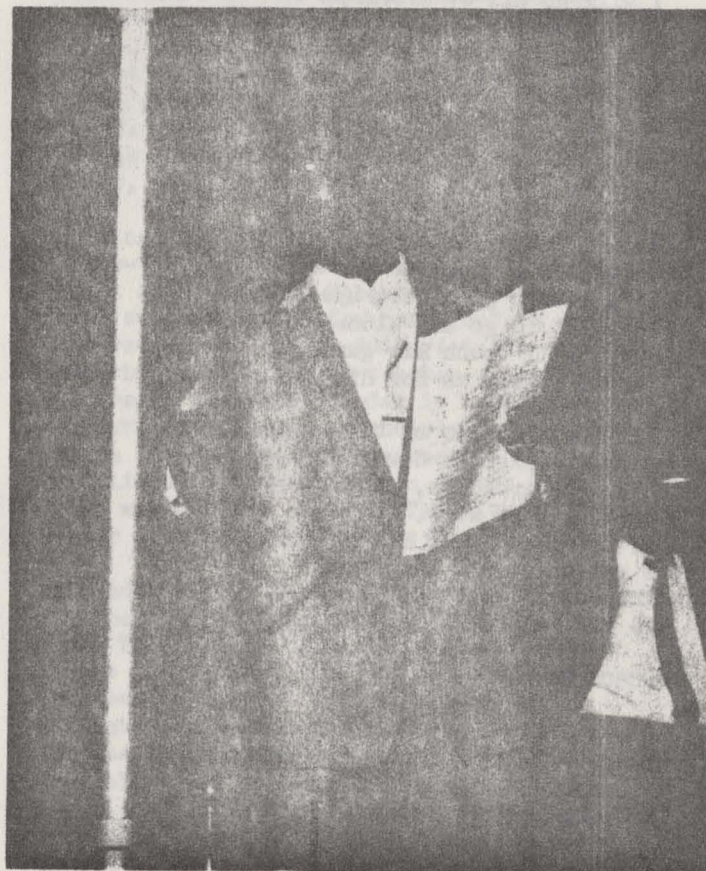
If you've got two hands to clap,
Clap them to the glory of God!
Glory! Glory! Glory!
Clap them to the glory of God!
Hands to clap!
Horn to blow!
Sweet guitar!
Organ!
Piano!
Tambourines!

Tambourines! Tambourines!
Tambourines to glory!

If you've got a song to sing,
Sing it to the glory of God!
Glory! Glory! Glory!
Sing it to the glory of God!
Song to sing!
Hands to clap!
Horn to blow!
Sweet guitar!
Organ!
Piano!
Tambourines!

Tambourines! Tambourines!
Tambourines to glory!

Song to sing!
Hands to clap!
Horn to blow!
Sweet guitar!
Organ!
Piano!
Tambourines!
Tambourines! Tambourines!
Tambourines to glory!



JOBE HUNTLEY (THE COMPOSER)
PHOTO BY GEORGE NORRIS.

SIDE II, Band 1: THANK GOD, I'VE
GOT THE BIBLE

Thank God, I've got the Bible in my hand!
Thank God, I've got the Bible in my hand!
Thank God, I've got the Bible!
Thank God, I've got the Bible!
Thank God, I've got the Bible in my hand!

My mother taught me how to read.
Thank God, mother taught me how to read.
Thank God, my mother taught me,
Thank God, my mother taught me,
Thank God, she taught me how to read.

Thank God, I read the Bible as a child!
Thank God, I read the Bible as a child!
Thank God, I read the Bible!
Thank God, I read the Bible!
Thank God, I read the Bible as a child!

Thank God, the Bible guides my life!
Thank God, I got the Bible as my guide!
Thank God, I got the Bible!
Thank God, I got the Bible!
Thank God, I got the Bible as my guide!

I know without my Bible I would be lost!
I know without my Bible I would be lost!
I know without the Bible,
I know without the Bible,
I know without the Bible I would be lost!

Thank God, I've got the Bible in my hand!
Thank God, I've got the Bible in my hand!
Thank God, I've got the Bible!
Thank God, I've got the Bible!
Thank God, I've got the Bible in my hand!

SIDE II, Band 2: DEVIL, TAKE YOURSELF AWAY

The devil had a playground
In my heart one day.
He set up his tents of sin
And invited me to play.
It was so nice and calm and cool
And I played just like a fool.
I almost lost my immortal soul
Till I got that devil told:

Devil, devil, take yourself away!
Yesterday I played with you
But I ain't gonna play today.
I've changed my playground,
I've changed my ways,
Changed my habits
And I've changed my days.
My feet are anchored on the gospel shore
And I ain't gonna play no more.

I turn and look behind me,
This is what I see:
A world full of sinners
Just like I used to be.
My heart is filled with pity, Lord,
And I feel the need to cry,
Come pitch your tents on the gospel shore
And let the world go by:

Devil, devil, let yourself get lost!
Yesterday, I played your game,
But today I'll be the boss.
I gave up balling
And I gave up sin,
Gave up whiskey
And I gave up gin.
My feet are anchored on the gospel shore
And I ain't gonna play no more.

Devil, devil, take yourself away!
Yesterday I played with you,
But I ain't gonna play today.
Sin, sin, sin,
Get behind me Satani
Sin, Mister Devil,
Is a thing I'm hatin'.
My feet are anchored on the gospel shore
And I ain't gonna play no more.

Devil, devil, let yourself get lost.
Yesterday I played your game,
But today I am the boss.
I played the numbers,
And I gambled, too,
Till I learned, Mister Devil,
I was pleasing you.
My feet are anchored on the gospel shore,
And I ain't gonna play no more.

SIDE II, Band 3: BACK TO THE FOLD

Back to the fold—
How safe, how warm I feel.
Back to the fold—
His love alone is real.
Farewell, farewell, dark world,
Farewell, dark world of sin.
I've come back to the fold
And my Lord has taken me in.

Back to the fold—
How precious are my God's ways.
Back to the fold—
So bright are all my days.
Farewell, farewell, dark world,
Farewell, dark world of sin.
I've come back to the fold
And my Lord has taken me in.

SIDE II, Band 4: AS I GO

I need some rock on which to stand,
Some ground that is not shifting sand,
And so I seek my Savior's hand
To guide me as I go through this world:

CHORUS:

As I go, as I go,
Oh, Jesus, walk by my side
As I go.
As I go, as I go,
Be my guide as I go
Through this world.

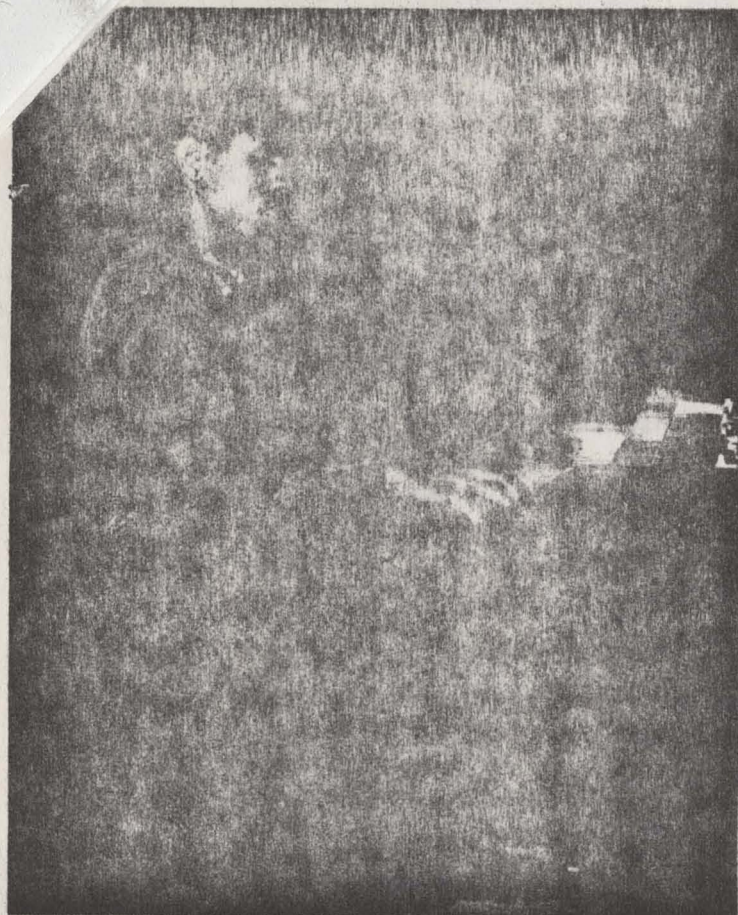
The novel "Tambourines To Glory" is published by the John Day Company, New York, 1958, copyrighted by Langston Hughes. The play of the same title is copyrighted by Langston Hughes, 1956. The songs individually are copyrighted by Langston Hughes and Jebe Huntley, 1950, 1951, 1952, 1954, 1956, 1958. Reproduction of these songs in any form for profit is prohibited except by written permission of the authors or their authorized representatives:

Harold Ober Associates
40 East 49 Street
New York 17, New York

PORTER AND COOK'S
"THE GOSPEL PLANE"
HEARD EVERY SUNDAY
MORNING ON W H B I
NEWARK , N.J.

HUGH E. PORTER, AT THE PIANO.
PORTER SINGERS.
PHOTO BY GEORGE NORRIS.





HAMPTON CARLTON, ORGANIST.
(PORTER SINGERS)
PHOTO BY GEORGE NORRIS.

JOBE HUNTLEY WITH PART OF THE CHORUS
(THE PORTER TRIO), ERNEST COOK.
PHOTO BY GEORGE NORRIS.

