

Metro Chicago

eWind

*Suddenly there was...a strong wind blowing, and...
they were all filled with the Holy Spirit... (Acts 2: 2-3, TEV)*

Weekly Electronic Newsletter of the American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago
A patchwork of varied news and announcements
from our churches, communities, denomination and other organizations,
covering a wide variety of interests reflecting the diversity of our region

March 30, 2005

We pray that this week will be a time of rest, refreshment and new life for you. Be blessed in this season of Easter.

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Upcoming Events

April 7—Nueva Vida Prayer Partners meeting, ABCMC, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Suite 240, 7 p.m. RSVP 773-695-9791 by March 30.

April 7—American Baptists concerned about issues of Church and State may wish to attend a Church-State Policy Address by Rev. Barry Lind of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, Temple Shalom, 3480 N. Lake Shore Drive, Chicago, 7:30 p.m. Phone 773-525-3502.

April 11-12—Alpha Conference, Calvary Church, 9 S 200 State Route 59, Naperville. Information and registration at www.alphausa.org.

April 12—Workshop for Clergy and Friends of Protestants for the Common Good, “Biblical Interpretations Behind the Politics of the Christian Right” by Margaret Mitchell of the University of Chicago Divinity School, First United Church of Oak Park, 848 Lake Street, Oak Park, 8:45-11:00 a.m. Phone 312-787-6232 to register.

April 16—ABC MC Ministers Council meeting, “Jerusalem Council,” First Baptist Church, 401 S. Fifth Avenue, Maywood, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. RSVP to 773-783-9774 for lunch.

April 16—Church World Service’s educational conference, “Just Eating: Putting Justice on the Table,” Union Church of Hinsdale, 137 S. Garfield Street, Hinsdale, 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Register by phone (888-297-2767), fax (630-990-8277) or email (arisden@churchworldservice).

April 16—“Good Company” coffee house, 7 p.m., Grace Baptist Church, 5253 N. Kenmore Avenue, Chicago. Phone 773-334-9003 for more information.

April 17-23—ABCUSA National Volunteer Week.

April 23—Church Legal Check-Up Seminar, Christ Community Church, 1151 E. 170th Street, South Holland, IL. Phone ABCMC, 773-695-9791, for more information.

April 23—Women in Ministry brunch at the home of Joanne Lindstrom, 10 a.m.-noon. This meeting will be for the purpose of discussing a proposed trip to Ghana for women in ministry in 2006. RSVP to 773-538-4378 or kjoanne@ameritech.net.

America for Christ Offering

America for Christ gifts support mission in this country—one of the most challenging mission fields in the world—and extend the witness of American Baptist congregations for Jesus Christ in the United States and Puerto Rico. Please consider prayerfully how you and your congregation will participate in this annual offering. Your gifts will enable missionaries to reach out and minister with people who have many different kinds of needs. The fields are white with harvest. Please support these missions generously.

Ministers Council

The Ministers Council of the American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago will meet on Saturday, April 16. This meeting will be for the purpose of considering proposed changes to the national by-laws. All Ministers Council members are urged to attend this meeting at the First Baptist Church of Maywood, 401 S. Fifth Avenue, Maywood. Please arrive promptly. The meeting will be from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Lunch will be served. Please contact Ministers Council President Rev. Kathy Taylor (773-783-9774 or ferkat92@sbcglobal.net) by April 13 to make lunch reservations.

Bible and Politics: A Workshop for Clergy

Ministers, please save the morning of Tuesday, April 12 for a special program. Professor Margaret Mitchell of the University of Chicago Divinity School will be the speaker for a special breakfast and program hosted for clergy by Protestants for the Common Good at the First United Church of Oak Park, 848 Lake Street, Oak Park. Prof. Mitchell will address the subject “Biblical Interpretations behind the Politics of the Christian Right.” She is a dynamic speaker, an engaging teacher, and a scholar who is quickly being recognized as one of the leaders in the field of New Testament. Two pastors will respond to her presentation by sharing their ideas of practical consequences of this topic for their congregations. Clergy may make reservations by phoning Nancy Brandt at 312-787-6232.

Fun Evening

Grace Baptist Church will host its quarterly “Good Company” coffee house on Saturday, April 16 at 7 p.m. This is an “open microphone event.” All performers are welcome. “Good Company” has featured folk singers, poets, poetry readers, actors, gospel singers, and even puppets. Admission is free. Coffee and other refreshments will be available for a small charge. Phone the church at 773-334-9003 for more information.

National Volunteer Week

ABCUSA has named April 17-23 “National Volunteer Week.” Every ABC congregation has received a packet of information about volunteerism and opportunities for volunteer ministries in the United States and abroad. Pastors have this printed information to share with congregation members. You may also obtain information from www.abc-usa.org, where you may click on buttons for National Ministries and International Ministries. Learn what ABCUSA is doing to change people’s lives. Learn how you and your church can join this work in Christ’s name.

Youth Opportunities

CBS Channel 2, WBBM, broadcasts a *very early* Sunday morning program, *Different Drummers*, promoted as “Chicago’s only weekly spotlight on contemporary values, interests and artistic talents of teens and young adults.” This program is produced in cooperation with Greater Chicago Broadcast Ministries. It is aired every Sunday at 5 a.m.

Broadcast topics in the next few weeks will be of particular interest to young people and those who minister with them.

April 3: Episcopal Youth and Sudan

April 10: Urban Youth Ministry

April 17: Going to College without Losing Your Values

April 24: Hearing God’s Call: Becoming a Minister

If your youth group (between the ages of 12 to 23) is interested in participating in the CBS studio audience at WBBM, 630 N. McClurg Court in Chicago, please have your Youth Leader contact Eric Diekhaus at 312-988-9001 or gcbm@ameritech.net

Prayer Requests

Rev. Louis Nelson, retired minister of World Mission Support in the American Baptist Churches of Indiana, had a heart attack on the evening of March 22. He went home from the hospital on the evening of March 25. Please keep him and his wife June in prayer. If you wish to send a message to him his address is 5300 W. 96th Street, Indianapolis, IN 46268, or LENelson14@aol.com.

Please continue to pray for boldness and wisdom for Christians in Myanmar, and for the promised true freedom of religious expression to become a reality for everyone. Pray for God to send revival and unity for the existing churches there.

Please hold in prayer the Centenary Baptist World Congress of the Baptist World Alliance in Birmingham, England this July. Rev. John Sundquist (Congress Chairperson) asks Baptists to bathe the congress in prayer and dedicate every Wednesday as a day of prayer for the Congress.

ABCMC's Family Cabinet needs our prayers as they work to find interim executive leadership. Please ask God to give them wisdom as they engage in the search process.

Rev. Chuck Armstrong, Associate Executive Director for ABCUSA National Ministries, is recuperating well following surgery to remove a tumor on the left side of his brain. Cards and well-wishes may be sent to 640 American Avenue, E-514, King of Prussia, PA 19406. Prayers for a speedy recovery are most appreciated.

Transitions

Rev. James Wiegner has been named Development Officer for ABCUSA International Ministries, effective July 1, 2005. He has been a missionary with International Ministries since 1991, first in Mexico and then in Costa Rica. In both countries, he assisted local conventions, churches and associations to create and expand economic development activities, including credit unions, cooperative and micro enterprise projects. He has played a key role in mission education and fundraising among U.S. churches. He has found creative and life-changing ways to enable American Baptists to have hands-on mission experiences with the international partners with whom he has served.

Rev. Dr. Sarah Hallstrand has accepted the call to be the Interim Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of Greater Indianapolis. She was for many years the Midwest representative for the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board. Following her retirement from MMBB, she has served as consultant or interim executive with a number of regions in the denomination.

Rev. Dr. David Carrico began his service as the Executive Minister for the West Virginia Baptist Convention February 1, 2005. Prior to coming to that position, he was senior pastor of the First Baptist church of Beckley, WV for fifteen years. He ministered previously in several other ABC churches in the state. His installation as Executive Minister will be at Wilcox Chapel, Alderson-Broadbudd College, at 3 p.m. on Sunday, April 24, 2005.

Rev. Dennis Norris has announced his retirement as Executive Minister of the Cleveland Baptist Association, effective August 1, 2005. He has ministered in that position since 1990. Prior to becoming Executive Minister in Cleveland, he ministered in ABC congregations in Rhode Island, New Jersey and Cleveland. With his retirement he concludes 39 years of ministry with American Baptists.

Rev. Dr. Clayton Woodbury is retiring as Executive Minister of the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware on March 31. He has ministered in that position for eight years. During that time he has blessed many with his leadership in various settings. In addition to his executive leadership, his work with retreats and youth groups in the region has been noteworthy.

Church Growth and Transformation

Are you planning to attend the Alpha conference in Naperville? Are you interested in the Alpha approach to sharing the Gospel? While supplies last, a selection of Alpha resources will be available from Judson Press at 25% off their original price. Order early for the best selection at www.judsonpress.com.

International Ministries

The Spirit of God moved powerfully among the churches, and American Baptists responded with great passion. They used the World Mission Offering, the new Targeted Giving vehicle and other channels to produce the equivalent of a 33% increase in the 2004 World Mission Offering. IM gives thanks to God—and to American Baptists—that they can continue their current level of ministry, and a missionary recall will not be necessary in 2005. Let's prayerfully plan to maintain and increase our support for IM in the 2005 World Mission Offering.

Church World Service

Anna Blythe Lappé, a nationally recognized author and public speaker, will be the keynote speaker on "Just Eating: Putting Justice on the Table," Saturday, April 16, at Union Church of Hinsdale, 137 S. Garfield Street, Hinsdale. This all-day program of Church World Service will include information and reflections about food as a justice issue. Lunch will be served. The cost is \$20 per person OR \$15 each for 3 or more people from the same church or organization OR \$10 for students or persons with low income. CROP WALKERS attend free. More information is attached to this email.

The *Metro Chicago Wind* is an electronic communication intended for the people of the American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago. The events publicized herein do not necessarily express the opinions of the American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago. We welcome your news, prayer requests and comments. Please email your communications to abcmchi@aol.com. We will email the newsletter each Wednesday.