

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

May 5, 2005

May you feel God's presence in a special way this week.

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Upcoming Events

May 6--"Mothers in Prison, Children in Crisis" rally, noon, Thompson Center (Randolph and Clark Streets), to promote community-based sentencing alternatives for women and children. For more information, phone Joanne or Betty at Chicago Legal Advocacy for Incarcerated Mothers, 312-675-0911.

May 7--Cook County Jail Ministry Dinner and Spring 2005 Fund-Raiser, First Baptist Church of Oak Park, 280 Ontario Street, Oak Park, 6 p.m.

May 11--American Baptist Personnel Service will host a seminarians dinner at 6 p.m. at North Shore Baptist Church, 5244 N. Lakeview Avenue, Chicago.

May 12--ABC MC Ghana Partnership Committee meeting at McCormick Theological Seminary, 11 a.m.

May 14--ABCMC Family Council meeting, Saint John Church-Baptist, 4821-35 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago. Registration and refreshments at 8:30 a.m., with worship, business meeting, lunch and conversation to follow. RSVP to 773-695-9791.

May 18-19--Clergy Self Care and Spiritual Development conference, Rickman Center, Jefferson City, MO.

May 19--ABCMC Ordination Commission meeting, 9:30 a.m., at ABCMC office, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Suite 240, Chicago.

May 19--ABCMC Property and Finance Committee meeting, 3 p.m., at ABCMC office, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Suite 240, Chicago.

May 20-21--Women's Conference, Garfield Park Baptist Church, 4100 W. Jackson Boulevard, Chicago. Featured speakers: Donna Partow, Dr. Jeannie R. Turner. Register at 773-638-7866. Cost is \$35.

May 21--Memorial Service for Elmer Johnson, 2 p.m. at Morgan Park Baptist Church, 11024 S. Bell Avenue, Chicago.

May 22--ABCMC's Interim Executive Minister Rev. Dr. Larry Greenfield will preach at North Shore Baptist Church, 5244 N. Lakewood Avenue, Chicago, at 10 a.m., 11 a.m., and 12:45 p.m. services.

June 2, 9, 16--"One, Body, Many Parts!" Brown Bag Lunch discussion of evangelism, baptist style, noon-1:30 p.m. Location to be announced.

July 1-3--ABCUSA Biennial Meeting, Denver, CO.

August 1-6--30th Annual Gathering of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America, Linfield College, McMinnville, OR.

Family Council Meeting- -Don't Miss It!

Phone in your reservations now for the Family Council of the American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago on Saturday, May 14 at Saint John Church-Baptist, 4821-35 S. Michigan Avenue, Chicago. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. In our 9 a.m. worship service, **ABCMC's Interim Executive Minister, Rev. Dr. Larry Greenfield, will preach** on Acts 2:1-21 and I Cor.12:1-13. His sermon will be "Drinking of One Spirit." The business meeting will follow after worship. Lunch will be served at noon. The suggested donation for lunch is \$5. Please plan to stay for lunch. The lunch program will include a time of conversation with Larry Greenfield. RSVP to abcmchi@aol.com or phone 773-695-9791 or FAX 773-695-9793 no later than **May 9**.

Urgent Mailing to Congregational Pastors and Moderators

Pastors and Moderators, please watch the mail for a packet coming from the American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago. It contains important and time-sensitive material, including a petition to the General Board of the ABCUSA.

The General Board will be looking at making some significant changes to the standing rules that guide the operations of the denomination, its regions, and its congregations. Some of the changes being proposed would compromise the autonomy of ABC congregations, and would establish an American Baptist creed related to human sexuality.

Leaders of the ABCMC are asking that your church consider endorsing a petition that will protect the autonomy of local congregations. The petition needs the endorsement of at least 200 congregations. Please read the materials prayerfully. We hope that your congregation will choose to participate constructively in this part of American Baptist life.

Don't Forget to Write Back!

ABCUSA is working on a project to consolidate several databases into one. The denomination is also developing procedures for sharing information within the denomination. Denominational leaders have developed a survey, and are asking that every American Baptist complete and return it. ABCMC has mailed paper copies of the survey to lay and clergy leaders in this region, along with a request that leaders encourage every American Baptist to complete and return the form. The survey is also available on the denominational web site, www.abc-usa.org. Pull out those pencils, crank up those computers, and let's share our thoughts to help with ABCUSA data!

Ministers Council Response Form

On August 24, 2004 the Ministers Council Senate approved a process to enable Ministers Council Senators to listen fully to the concerns of their constituents regarding the issue of homosexuality. One piece of this process is that every member of Ministers Council and every American Baptist engaged in professional ministerial leadership is invited to respond in writing (500 words or less) on the matter. This information will be reviewed by the facilitation team, and a full range of responses will be summarized at Senate 2005.

The following guidelines are offered as a framework for response:

1. Reflect on this issue of homosexuality in light of Christ's greatest commandments to love God and neighbor.
2. Under what circumstances do you believe you can be faithful to God and remain in fellowship with others who hold strong convictions opposite your own, regarding homosexuality?

Forms are available from www.ministerscouncil.org. The ABCMC office also has forms. Please mail your completed response form to the address on the form. Responses *must be received by July 3, 2005*.

Cook County Jail Ministry Dinner

On the evening of Saturday, May 7, the Cook County Jail Ministry will hold a dinner at the First Baptist Church of Oak Park, 820 Ontario Street, Oak Park. Cost is \$15 per adult, \$5 per child, or \$100 per table. All tickets are purchased at the door. Fellowship will be 6-6:30. Dinner and program will be 6:30-8:30. A free-will offering for the jail ministry will be received.

Clergy Self Care and Spiritual Development

A two-day event for clergy at the Rickman Center in Jefferson City, MO will help answer the question, "How are you managing a balance of your ministry (work) and your own life (mental, physical and spiritual)?" It will take place Wednesday-Thursday, May 18-19. The event will focus on models and strategies of self care such as time management, setting personal priorities and planning for regular Sabbath times; and models and strategies of spiritual development that will help you discover or re-enforce the appropriate methods and processes for your own temperament and preferred style. Terry Foland, a Disciple minister who is a recently retired consultant of the Alban Institute, will be the facilitator. The cost of the event is \$200, including meals and housing. For more information and registration, please contact Krystal Jacobs, 573-635-1187, or visit www.msr-crm.org.

Women's Conference

"Fit, for the Master's Use" will be the theme of the women's conference at Garfield Park Baptist Church May 20-21. The guest speaker will be Donna Partow, popular Christian author. The special lunch speaker will be Dr. Jeannie R. Turner of Northwestern Memorial Hospital. All women are cordially invited to attend.

Please register as soon as possible because of space limitations. You may register with the attached form, or by phoning the church at 773-638-7866 to register. The cost of the conference is \$35 per person, or \$30 per person for groups of ten or more from the same church.

One Body, Many Parts!

Celebrate God's work of evangelism *Baptist-style*. Are you interested in colleagues' understandings of Good News or the strategies and lessons others have found helpful in sharing their Good News? Interested clergy and lay leaders are invited to this 3-part brown bag lunch discussion to explore the shape of evangelism among local churches in Metro Chicago. Each week two or three local pastors will make brief presentations on their own approach, lessons and questions. Ample time for discussion and prayer will be provided. Join others in celebrating the distinct local church expressions of evangelism in Metro Chicago's American Baptist family, and bring your questions and resources to share. Thursdays, June 2, 9 and 16, noon to 1:30 p.m. Location to be announced. Contact co-planners Doug Harris (dharris@northshorebaptist.org) or Jacki Belille (GBCFriends@aol.com) for more information.

ABCUSA Biennial Meeting

The American Baptist Churches in the USA will gather for their Biennial Convention in Denver, Colorado July 1-3, 2005. The theme will be "Lift Up Your Eyes (Ps. 121)." Much information appears in the Winter 2005 and Spring 2005 issues of *American Baptist in Mission*. You can also find information about the event and registration on the denominational web site, www.abc-usa.org.

At Biennial-

ABCMC Reception

Please let the ABCMC office know at 773-695-9791 or abcmchi@aol.com if you are going to Biennial. ABCMC will host a reception at Biennial on the evening of Saturday, July 2 following the worship service. If you are going to Biennial, please let us know also whether you will attend the reception.

At Biennial-

Ministers Council of the ABCUSA

The Ministers Council web site has just been updated with Biennial information. To learn more please click on this link: <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/Biennial/Biennial2005.aspx> for details.

Memorial Service for Elmer Johnson

Morgan Park Baptist Church, 11204 S. Bell Avenue, Chicago, will celebrate and remember the life of beloved member Elmer Johnson, who died on April 10. The memorial service will be on Saturday, May 22 at 2 p.m.

Death of Mel Lorentzen

Rev. Dr. Melvin Lorentzen passed away on January 15, 2005 at the age of 79. Son of an American Baptist pastor, Dr. Lorentzen was ordained at age 29 by North Shore Baptist Church.

He served as interim pastor of Albany Park Baptist Church. He later was pastor of the First Baptist Church of Park Ridge. He taught English at Wheaton College for some 30 years before becoming associate director of the Billy Graham Center at Wheaton College. His sister Effie Lorentzen Adderson wrote to ABCMC, "Mel is now at home with our Lord... I have to believe that even in Heaven, Mel will miss the American Baptists of Chicago!"

Christian Bodybuilding in a World Torn Apart

The Center for Parish Development will present a two-day conference on building up the body of Christ in today's world. Dr. Rodney Clapp, author of *a Peculia People: the Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society* and a number of other books, will be the featured speaker. Please visit www.missionalchurch.org/seminars/convo05/main.html for more information and to register. Since space is limited, please register soon. Costs are listed on the web site.

Prayer Requests

Please pray for ABCMC's New Church Start Committee and co-chairs Rev. David Sagar and Rev. Dr. Craig Jenkins.

Please hold in prayer the pastoral search committees at the Community Church of Barrington, The Community Church of Wilmette and Moraine Valley Community Church.

The Metro Chicago *eWind* is an electronic communication intended for the people of the American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago. The events publicized herein do not necessary 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.