

*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 11, 2005**

We pray that God will spark your creativity  
and renew your energy in ministry this week.

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### *Upcoming Events*

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

**May 12**--ABCMC Mission 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. **It's not too late to RSVP!**

**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 19-21**--Common Ground Evangelism and First Nation's Conference, Muskogee, OK.

**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 21**--Piano concert by Brad Robin, 7 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.

**May 29**--5th Sunday Unity Service, Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago.

**June 2, 9, 16**--"One, Body, Many Parts!" Brown Bag Lunch discussion of evangelism, Baptist style, noon-1:30 p.m. Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, will host this series of meetings.

**June 4, 11, 18, 25**--Enlivening Congregational Singing Seminar, North Shore Baptist Church 5244 N. Lakewood Avenue, Chicago, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. plus fifth session TBD. Contact Mark Bowman at [worshipalive@comcast.net](mailto:worshipalive@comcast.net) or 773-728-8274.

**June 9, 16, 23, 30**--Enlivening Congregational Singing Seminar, Cornerstone United Methodist Church, 171 N. Cuyler, Oak Park, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. plus fifth session TBD. Contact Mark Bowman at [worshipalive@comcast.net](mailto:worshipalive@comcast.net) or 773-728-8274.

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

**July 28-30**--Missional Church Conference, Cenacle Retreat Center, Chicago.

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

**August 6-11**--World Mission Conference, Green Lake, WI. More information and registration materials available at [www.internationalministries.org](http://www.internationalministries.org).

## *Family Council Meeting--Don't Miss It!*

Please join us 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. **Please come, even if you have not sent in your response to ABCMC. Our sisters and brothers at St. John Church-Baptist are preparing a delightful lunch, and there will be plenty of food for everyone.**

## *Summer Mission Project*

West Side Baptist Church in Topeka, KS has a group of Sr. and Jr. High you that will be in the Chicago are June 9 and 10. Janet Crow, their youth coordinator, is looking for some mission projects for them to do. These are hard-working you. 90% of them are boys. Do you have ideas for them? Do you know of projects around your church or community where these young folk might be helpful? If so, please contact Janet at 785-233-4241 or [office@wsbctopeka.org](mailto:office@wsbctopeka.org). If you arrange for a project for this group, please let the ABCMC office know. We'll cover it in a future edition of eWind.

## *Church Updates*

Iglesia Nueva Comunidad, formerly in Maywood, and Comunidad Cristiana Fuente de Vida, in Lombard, have become one congregation. The temporary name of the new church is Nueva Comunidad. Rev. Dr. Ausberty Guerra is pastor. The place of worship is 1 S 071 Luther, Lombard, IL 60148, originally the home of Comunidad Cristiana Fuente de Vida. The phone number is still 630-261-9244.

North River Community Church, 4904 N. Troy, Chicago, is now River of Living Water Christian Center, at the same address. Linda Requilez is pastor.

River of Life Church, formerly Grace Baptist Church in Downers Grove, is now at 1520 Avery, Wheaton. Rev. Dr. Jean Ford is pastor. The church is sharing space and ministry with the Second Baptist Church of Wheaton.

## *Transitions*

Pastor Evelyn Almonte resigned in February from her position on the staff of North Shore Baptist Church, where she has been minister to children and youth since 2000. She is now working with Esperanza USA, where she is facing new and exciting challenges. We wish her all the best in her new position. We are grateful that she is staying in Chicago where her husband, Rev. Dr. Omar Almonte is Hispanic pastor and minister of mission at North Shore Baptist Church.

Rev. Galo Viteri has resigned from the Iglesia El Divino Redentor, where he has been pastor since the church's founding in 1988. He and his wife will relocate to North Carolina at the end of May. We wish them much happiness in retirement. Galo has been a tremendous asset to ABCMC. We will miss him.

## *Graduations*

Rev. Emperatriz Guerra is now **Rev. Dr. Emperatriz Guerra**. She received her doctorate on May 7 from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. We congratulate her on her accomplishments.

Congratulations to Rev. Joanne Lindstrom, who is now **Rev. Dr. Joanne Lindstrom**. She received her doctorate on May 7 from McCormick Theological Seminary in Chicago. Joanne is on the faculty of McCormick, and on the staff of the First Baptist Church of Chicago.

We congratulate Stephanie Day Powell, a member of Grace Baptist Church, Chicago. She will receive her M.Div. from Chicago Theological Seminary this Saturday, May 14.

### *Help Wanted*

With the departure of Rev. Glenn Loafmann from the region, ABCMC is in need of a treasurer. According to the ABCMC Family Document, the treasurer works with the chair of the Finance and Property Committee, monitors ABCMC's finances, and provides written financial reports to the Family Cabinet and Family Council. We would prefer someone who would consider serving out the rest of Glenn's term, and then a second full term. Please contact Gloria Mayberry, ABCMC Nominating Committee chair, at 773-881-8722 to let her know of your interest, or to suggest someone who might become a fine treasurer for our region.

### *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. **Please respond by May 20. Everything is included in the packet, even the address to which to send the petition if your church adopts it.**

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](http://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](http://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*.

### *Seminary News*

Central Baptist Theological Seminary, Kansas City, KS has inaugurated its new president, Dr. Molly T. Marshall. She is the first woman president of a Baptist Seminary in the United States. Dr. Marshall has been with Central for the past ten years. She has served as Professor of Theology and Spiritual Formation, and most recently as Interim Dean.

This Saturday, May 14, Dr. Marshall will preside at the seminary's commencement ceremony. The featured commencement speaker will be Dr. Denton Lotz, General Secretary of the Baptist World Alliance. Thirteen seminarians will receive degrees at the ceremony. The seminary will also bestow honorary Doctor of Ministry degrees upon Denton Lotz, and upon Rev. Jim McCrossen, long time member of the Board of Directors at Central and recently Interim President for the institution.

Virginia Theological Seminary, an Episcopal seminary in Alexandria, VA, has received a Lilly Endowment grant to participate in a national initiative called "Making Connections." The project is an effort to focus attention and resources on efforts to expand and energize collaborations that will foster excellent clergy and engaged congregations. With this grant, the seminary will launch its Summer Collegium, a nine-day intensive residential program, ecumenical in scope, for clergy who are in mid-career and are serving small congregations (average Sunday attendance of 100 or fewer). Nearly half of all Episcopal congregations are in that attendance category, as are many American Baptist congregations. In its first five summers, the program will serve a total of 125 clergy and their spouses or partners, and will address the specific needs of clergy and clergy households committed to ministry with small churches. The program welcomes clergy of different denominations to apply. For further information, contact [SummerCollegium@vts.edu](mailto:SummerCollegium@vts.edu).

### *Going to Ghana?*

A group of ABCMC women in ministry met on April 23 to begin conversation about a trip to Ghana in 2006. Information will soon be going out to women in ministry by post and by email. If you are a woman in ministry and seriously considering the possibility of traveling with your sisters, please let Rev. Dr. Joanne Lindstrom know by May 20. Contact Joanne at 773-538-4378 or [kjoanne@ameritech.net](mailto:kjoanne@ameritech.net).

### *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](http://www.msr-crm.org).

### *Common Ground Evangelism and First Nation's Conference*

Bacone College Chapel, Muskogee, OK, will host a conference on ministries in Native American communities. The conference will address such questions as "Are drums and feathers OK in worship?" and "What is Common Ground Evangelism?" For more information, visit [www.whiteeagleministry.org](http://www.whiteeagleministry.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.

### *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 21 at 2 p.m.

### *5th Sunday Unity Service*

Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, will host its regular 5th Sunday Unity Service, on May 29, 2005 at 6:30 p.m. The guest speaker will be Rev. Soong In Moon, pastor of Hallelujah United Methodist Church. The reception following the service will offer a "Taste of Korea." Everyone is welcome to participate in this multi-cultural worship and fellowship experience.

### *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. at Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago. Contact co-planners Doug Harris ([dharris@northshorebaptist.org](mailto:dharris@northshorebaptist.org)) or Jacki Belile ([GBCFriends@aol.com](mailto:GBCFriends@aol.com)) for more information.

### *Enlivening Congregational Singing Seminar*

Mark Bowman, minister of music at the United Church of Rogers Park, Chicago, offers a series of five hands-on training sessions for church musicians, worship leaders and clergy. This program builds skills in leading and strengthening congregational singing. Each three-hour session includes presentations and discussion of topics such as the role of music in worship, skills for effective song leading, tips for introducing new songs and teaching groups to sing in harmony.

Two Chicago area churches will host Mark's seminar in June. North Shore Baptist Church, 5244 N. Lakewood Avenue, Chicago will have the seminar 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Saturdays June 4-25, plus a fifth session, date to be decided. Cornerstone United Methodist Church, 171 N. Cuyler, Oak Park will have the seminar 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Thursdays June 9-30, plus a fifth session, date to be decided.

The seminars are limited to 12 participants. The fee will be \$150 per person. For more information, contact Mark at [worshipalive@comcast.net](mailto:worshipalive@comcast.net) or 773-728-8274.

### *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](http://www.abc-usa.org).

Are you planning to attend Biennial, and interested in sharing a room, transportation, etc.? Give the ABCMC office a call at 773-695-9791. We may be able to help you find someone from ABCMC with whom to share expenses.

### *At Biennial-*

#### *Wonderful Preaching*

The Ministers Council of the ABCUSA will again offer a preaching pavilion. This will be among the many activities from which those attending Biennial may choose. Preachers in the pavilion will be some of the finest, most inspiring interpreters of God's word in the ABC. A list of those preachers and their topics is attached.

### *At Biennial-*

#### *ABCMC Reception*

Please let the ABCMC office know at 773-695-9791 or [abcmchi@aol.com](mailto: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.

### *Christian Bodybuilding in a World Torn Apart*

July 28-30 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 Peculiar 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](http://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.

## *Mission U- -Mission You!*

International Ministries invites you to attend Mission University, a 6-day program of drama and mission stories, worship and music, missiology, daily electives, Xtra credit with Xtreme teams and much more! God calls us into mission both to reach the world and to change our own lives. This year's World Mission Conference will be all about the life-changing learning that happens as we follow Christ by going global. The conference will be August 6-11 at Green Lake. It will include activities for adults, youth and children. You may call 800-558-8898 today to reserve your room. For more information and registration materials, visit [www.internationalministries.org](http://www.internationalministries.org).

## *Biblical Drama*

If you visit [www.bibleactor.com](http://www.bibleactor.com), you will learn about the ministry of Mac McConnell. Mac is a Floridian with a one-man biblical drama ministry spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ internationally. He writes and performs his own plays for his full-time ministry. He began as a biblical actor in 1989 when he was asked to understudy the narrator role for the Emmy award-winning Fort Lauderdale Christmas Pageant. Suddenly thrust in front of an audience of 3,000 with the spotlight blaring, he saw how the dynamics of God's Word in Christian drama made the Bible burst to life as if it were happening at that moment. That was a revelation to Mac, and completely changed the way he read and applied the Bible. He eventually sold his art and framing business and devoted himself full-time to drama ministry. If you would like to have Mac perform at an event, please contact him at 954-680-9095 or [onewaydrama@cs.com](mailto:onewaydrama@cs.com).

## *News from the Gaza Strip*

ABCUSA's International Ministries pursues a multi-faceted approach to bear witness to Jesus Christ in the Middle East. IM works through several creative partnerships that offer hope in Christ to people throughout the region, including one of its most turbulent spots, the Gaza Strip.

The Gaza Strip is one of the world's most densely populated areas, with 1.4 million people—some 900,000 of whom live in 12 different camps as refugees from the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. Gaza City has some 400,000 citizens. In their midst, the Gaza Baptist Church reaches out to some of the neediest people in this place of terrible poverty, violence, and unemployment. The church and its partner, Christian Mission to Gaza (CMG), engage in a variety of evangelical ministries that bring God's love to a long-suffering people while meeting basic human needs.

Hanna Massad has been the church's pastor since 1987. Born in Gaza City, he came to the U.S. in 1991, graduated from Fuller Theological Seminary and returned to Gaza in 1999. While a student, he served as an American Baptist pastor and served the First Baptist Church of Azusa, California. He also founded Christian Mission to Gaza, which provides food and medical care to needy Christians and Muslims in Gaza City and in the nearby Beit Lahia refugee camp.

A creative outreach of the Gaza Baptist Church is its Culture and Light Library. The library was established in 1968 and serves nearly 1,000 people every month. The oldest and largest public library in the Gaza Strip, it contains some 17,000 volumes, including Christian books. As the only Christian public library in the whole territory, Massad explains that it both strengthens the Christian community and provides an important service to the people of Gaza.

Recently, the library had to abandon its old location. With the help of several partners, including IM and Baptist World Aid (a ministry of the Baptist World Alliance), the church bought land and began to build a multipurpose facility for both the library and other community service ministries.

Plans include a medical clinic specializing in early breast cancer detection, guest quarters for volunteers to serve at the clinic and teach English at the library—and a space for worship until a sanctuary is built later. Massad notes that there is only one other such specialized clinic in all of the Gaza Strip. “This is the first phase of our dream,” he says, adding that the library and clinic will officially open in the next few months. He expresses thanks to God for the partnership and financial support of International Ministries.

### *Prayer Requests*

Please pray for all who are suffering with mental illness, and for those who care for them.

Please pray for Edgar Santiago, whose mother passed away on Mother's Day, May 8. Edgar is the ABCMC Family Council representative from Central Spanish Baptist Church, Chicago.

Please hold in prayer the women of Haiti who are struggling to support their families and themselves in the aftermath of the devastating storms of this past summer and fall.

Please include in your prayers congregations who are in transition while discovering and developing new ways of serving Jesus.

Please pray for people in the Middle East, where life is often turbulent and dangerous. Pray for missionaries, pastors and others who are working to bring the spirit of justice and community to that part of the world.

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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](mailto:abcmchi@aol.com). We will email the newsletter each Wednesday.  
If you spot a typographical error in *eWind*, please let us know at the ABCMC office, 773-695-9791 or [abcmchi@aol.com](mailto:abcmchi@aol.com).