

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 18, 2005

We give God thanks for the ways in which current technologies help us to stay in touch and engage in ministries.

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Upcoming Events

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 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 or 773-728-8274.

June 8--Prayer service for Ghana partnership, 7 p.m., FBC of Chicago, 935 E. 50th Street, Chicago.

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 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.

Summer Mission Project

West Side Baptist Church in Topeka, KS has a group of Sr. and Jr. High youth that will be in the Chicago area June 9 and 10. Janet Crow, their youth coordinator, is looking for some mission projects for them to do. These are hard-working youth. 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. 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*.

Youth Advocacy Project Freedom Summer

Community Renewal Society is offering the young people of your congregation the chance to seek peace and promote justice. The Youth Advocacy Project (YAP), sponsoring Freedom Summer, is an intergenerational, interracial and interfaith fellowship fighting for civil and human rights while reforming the criminal and juvenile justice systems.

Participants in Freedom Summer will meet people who fought for civil rights, and visit the places where those struggles took place. They will also have the opportunity to participate in demonstrations, poetry and writing contests, and a three day youth organizing seminar.

Encourage your youth to become truth messengers and learn how to take action against hate to make the world a better place.

Those involved in the project will be taking a stand against hate. It will be a journey to stop the more than 50,000 hate crimes that occur each year. These crimes against humanity are crushing American values and destroying our youth. 62% of all hate crimes are committed by people under age 25, and 34% of the victims are children.

To kick off Freedom Summer and the demise of hatred CRS will hold an anti-racism conference on Saturday, June 18. The conference will be 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, June 18 at the Logan Square YMCA, 1834 N. Lawndale, Chicago. The conference will include the viewing of a video on hate crimes, and a discussion of the video.

All are invited! RSVP to Julie Barki or Don Washington at 312-427-4830 by June 10.

Position Open

The Chicago Interfaith Committee for the Homeless (ICH) is searching for an interim executive director to begin immediately. The ED is responsible for overall leadership and day to day activities of the ICH. The ED is expected to work collegially with an excellent staff and be experienced in grant oversight. Knowledge of homeless service provisions would be helpful. Interim can be a candidate for the permanent position. Send resume and questions to revjustice@hotmail.com.

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.

Death in the ABC Family

Elva L. Stokes Riggins, mother of the Rev. Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III, executive director of ABCUSA's National Ministries, died on May 10 after a lengthy illness.

Mrs. Riggins, born in 1921 in Muskogee, OK, received a bachelor's degree in education. She was one of a handful of pioneering Black teachers to integrate an all-white school district in Los Angeles.

Funeral services were held on Monday, May 16 in Los Angeles. Cards and other remembrances may be sent to Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III and his family at 158 Stine Drive, Collegetown, PA 19426.

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*.

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.

Fifth Sunday Unity Service

Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, will host its regular Fifth 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-cultured 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) or Jacki Belile (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 or 773-728-8274.

Prayer Service for Mission Partnership

A service of prayer and worship co-sponsored by First Baptist Church of Chicago, Third Baptist Church of Chicago, New Mount Zion Missionary Baptist Church in Evanston and the ABCMC Mission Partnership Committee will be held Wednesday, June 8, 2005 at 7:00 p.m. at the First Baptist Church of Chicago. The Ghanaian Baptist Fellowship will lead us in praise. There will follow a service of worship and prayer in support of our ministry partners, the Ghana Baptist Convention, as Reverend Alan Ragland, Reverend Taurus Scurlock and Reverend Joanne Lindstrom prepare to travel to Ghana as resource persons for Ghana Baptist Conventions annual Youth Convention. EVERYONE who is able is encouraged to come and join us in this time of prayer.

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.

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-

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-

One of Our Own

Rev. Dr. Alice J. B. Davis, pastor of Irving Park Baptist Church, Chicago, will be among the speakers in the Minister's Council's Preaching Pavilion at Biennial. Dr. Davis is an At-Large Senator to the Executive Committee of the Ministers Council. She is a proud new grandmother of Kayin Burnette Davis, born to her son and daughter-in-law Bakori and Adrienne Davis on February 21, 2005.

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 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. Call 800-558-8898 today to reserve your room. For more information, visit www.internationalministries.org.

Biblical Drama

If you visit 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 biblicalactor@cs.com.

Accessible Faith Grants

The Retirement Research Foundation's Accessible Faith Grant Program will have one more funding cycle in 2005. The deadline for receiving applications is August 1. The Accessible Faith Program enables houses of worship in Cook, Lake or DuPage counties to make accessibility improvements to their facilities. The full description of the program, application form, and tips for completing the application are available on the Foundation's web site (www.rrf.org), or by contacting the Retirement Research Foundation, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Suite 430, Chicago, IL 60631. The phone number is 773-714-8080.

Prayer Requests

Please pray for Rev. Dr. Aidsand Wright-Riggins and family as they mourn the death of his mother, Elva L. Stokes Riggins.

The following notice came to us after the last eWind had been distributed. Its message and request remain important, even if our joining hands in prayer this coming Sunday is a week late. We think the God who answers prayer will understand!

Wendy Bernhard has been working in Africa for nearly 22 years. She urges all members of ABCUSA International Ministries' prayer network to join in the Global Day of Prayer on May 15. This is a prayer initiative that began in Africa several years ago and has now "gone global"!

This year, Africa invites Christians around the world to unite their hands in the Global Day of Prayer on Pentecost Sunday, May 15. The Global Day of Prayer web site can be found at www.globaldayorprayer.com.

Book Nook

Sound the Trumpet Again: More Messages to Empower African American Men, edited by Darryl D. Sims, published by Judson Press. Eighteen powerful messages get to the real issues plaguing African American men. From finding a good role model to overcoming negative stereotypes, these essays by prominent pastors across the country seek to develop spiritually and emotionally healthy black men. Contributors include Charles G. Adams, Johnny Ray Youngblood, J. Alfred Smith Sr., Frank A. Thomas, Jamal-Harrison Bryant, Jeremiah A. Wright Jr. and others.

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 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.

If you spot a typographical error in eWind, please let us know at the ABCMC office, 773-695-9791 or abcmchi@aol.com.

