

Metro Chicago

eWind

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

A 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

June 28, 2006

"You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people,
in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of the One who called you into marvelous light."
I Peter 2:9

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Idolatrous Mixing of Church and State

The following report is from the Baptist Joint Committee for Religious Liberty.



Despite claims to the contrary, the idolatrous mixing of church and state can happen in the United States, Walter B. Shurden said at the 16th annual Religious Liberty Council luncheon held Friday in Atlanta. The luncheon was held in conjunction with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's General Assembly, June 22-23.

"But we have a Constitution that makes things clear,' so it cannot happen here," Shurden said, repeating the mistaken claims of many. "We have a Bill of Rights and the First Amendment that makes things even clearer. Our national pluralism will not permit it to happen here."

"It can happen here," Shurden said, because of "religious right wing militancy," "sincere religious ideologues" and "ignorance of our history."

And because many Baptists have lost their way, the Baptist Joint Committee is essential to our life together, Shurden said.

At the meeting, Shurden was awarded the J. M. Dawson Religious Liberty Award, which was established on the 50th anniversary of the BJC in 1986. The award recognizes the contributions of individuals in the area of the free exercise of religion and church-state separation. Previous recipients include Jimmy Carter, Bill Moyers and Tony Campolo.

Shurden is the Callaway Professor of Christianity in the College of Liberal Arts at Mercer University. He is also the executive director of The Center for Baptist Studies at Mercer University and the author or editor of 15 books.

The Religious Liberty Council is the individual membership organization of the BJC, which is celebrating 70 years of securing religious liberty in the nation's capital.

For a full text of Shurden's address, please visit the Baptist Joint Committee's web site at www.bjconline.org.

Viewing an Important Film

This announcement is from Evelyn Perez-Almonte, formerly a member of the pastoral staff of North Shore Baptist Church, and now on the staff of the faith-based organization Esperanza, USA. Please use this announcement as a bulletin insert.

Esperanza, USA, the largest Latino faith-based organization in the United States, would like to extend an invitation to our Spanish-speaking pastors and lay leaders, as well as anyone who understands Spanish, to see the movie premier *NoTe Rindas*. The movie is a drama, not a documentary. The purpose of this movie is to educate and create awareness of the HIV/AIDS crisis among our churches and community groups. Discussion and feedback will take place after the movie. Rev. Hector Cortez, a former pastor of North Shore Baptist Church, and Esperanza's National Projects Vice-President, will be the host for the program.

Date: Thursday, August 10

Time: 6 p.m.

Place: Marriott Medical District Hotel,
625 Ashland Avenue, Chicago

(across from Rush Hospital and junction with I-290)
Cost: Free, including reception with hors d'oeuvres.
RSVP before July 15 to Evelyn Perez-Almonte, 312-731-3858 or eperez-almonte@nueva.org.

Ministers Council News

Due Friday *Nominations for Ralph Garfield Schell Presidential Award for Excellence in Ministry*

The Ministers Council welcomes nominations for the Ralph Garfield Schell Presidential Award for Excellence in Ministry. **Nominations are due by June 30.** Please mail or email a letter that includes your name and contact information, the name and contact information of the candidate, and a description of his or her ministry that makes clear the reasons you have made this nomination. The recipient of the honor will be chosen by Ministers Council President Alice Davis and will be announced at the Senate banquet on August 15.

Summer Gatherings

The Ministers Council of ABCMC will host gatherings of Professional Church Leaders (PCLs) and families in clusters by location of PCL residences. Phone President Doug Harris at North Shore Baptist Church, 773-728-4200, for more information.

Ministers Council Dues

Ministers Council dues may be paid by sending a check to the treasurer, Rev. Dr. Sara Day, 3013 Wolf Road, #324, Westchester, IL 60154.

Dues are:

- \$45 for individuals
- \$60 for clergy couples
- \$22.50 for seminarians

Retired clergy membership is free for retirees who were dues-paying members of the Ministers Council for 3 out of the last 5 years prior to retirement.

SUNDAY *Memorial Service for Paul LaDue*

by John Dawson

The family of the late Paul LaDue, former President and CEO of American Baptist Assembly, Green Lake WI, thanks the host of Chicago Baptists for their prayers and notes of condolence upon Paul's recent passing. The family invites all interested Chicago Baptists to a memorial for Paul to be held in Green Lake's Vesper Circle on Sunday, July 2, 2006 at 2 pm. The service will be conducted by Rev. Ronald Newsom, retired Vice President of Development at the Assembly.

A reception will follow immediately following the service, in the new Kraft Centre, to which all of Paul's friends are cordially invited. Further information can be obtained by calling Green Lake at 1-800-558-8898. Lucille LaDue will be in residence at Green Lake most of the summer and welcomes visitors and old friends.

NEXT WEEK *Gather -- Grow -- Get Up and Dance!*

by LeDayne McLeese Polaski

This summer (July 10-15, 2006), the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America will host **Becoming the Beloved Community**. Hundreds of folks from all around North America will gather at Oglethorpe University in Atlanta, Georgia for a week of networking and relationship-building -- retreat and renewal -- inspiration and challenge -- growth and learning -- recreation and fun. Why might you want to be one of them?

To worship at Ebenezer Baptist Church, a cornerstone of the Civil Rights Movement and a congregation that continues to live out the vision of Martin Luther King, Jr. for rights, freedom, and dignity for ALL.

To allow your children to gather in a glad community in which they will be loved, have fun, and be shaped as peacemakers -- including real world knowledge such as how to peacefully and effectively confront bullies in their schools.

To hear the inspiring preaching of J. Alfred Smith, widely acknowledged as one of the finest preachers of the day.

To hear encouraging stories of what other peacemakers (folks just like you) are doing in their own lives, families, churches, schools, neighborhoods -- and in the world. To share your own stories of peacemaking -- your successes and your challenges.

To honor, hear, and encourage U.S. Representative Barbara Lee, the lone U.S. congressperson to stand against the call to use "all necessary and appropriate force" -- a resolution that led to the ongoing disaster in Iraq.

To connect to the force of Love that enables and sustains peacemaking -- through morning meditation, evening Compline, and workshops connecting spirituality and the work for justice.

To hear "**Martin and Me, Confessions of a Born Again Whiteboy,**" a story series from George Williamson which moves from the Civil Rights Movement of the sixties -- to Iraq -- to the struggle for GLBT equality.

To allow the youth in your life to take part in a program of community-building using art, drama, history, action, and fun -- including specific information and support for being a Conscientious Objector to war.

To experience "**Play With Borders: Reflecting Israeli and Palestinian Voices,**" "**Theater for Social Change: A Playful Experience**" and other dramatic pieces with Rabbi Lynn Gottlieb and Hector Aristizabal.

To take part in a round table discussion of Hurricane Katrina and its aftermath -- including what happened and why -- what is happening now -- and how we as individuals and churches can respond effectively and faithfully.

To learn about "**King and the Theology of Nonviolence**" with Bob Hunter in the very places in which King's vision began.

To enjoy the great city of Atlanta -- from the Georgia Shakespeare Festival to the world's largest aquarium -- from the Carter Center to the King Center -- and everything in between.

To hear C.T. Vivian, close associate of Martin Luther King, Jr., deliver the key note address -- "**Becoming the Beloved Community: How Do We Live King's Vision NOW?**"

To experience music, Bible study, story-telling, drama, workshops, worship, and friendships that will inspire, change, and empower you for the work to which God has called YOU!

For more information or to register, visit www.bpfna.org.

Safeguard "Our Common Life," American Baptists Told

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS)—American Baptists were called to safeguard “the stewardship of our common life,” in an address by General Secretary A. Roy Medley to the denomination’s General Board meeting here this week. Medley spoke at a time of concern, when one region, the American Baptist Churches of the Pacific Southwest (now called Transformation Ministries), has decided to withdraw from the denomination, and local-church contributions to the fund that supports its national structure have been declining. He noted that “discord and controversy are not new to us,” but that American Baptists have surmounted many similar difficulties since the denomination’s founding in 1907 as the Northern Baptist Convention.

A March meeting of regional executive ministers, he said, displayed “a deep love for this family and a desire for God to continue to work through ABC in a powerful way.” All were agreed, he said, on the power of the focus statement that American Baptist churches should “nurture devoted disciples of Jesus Christ who live their lives in mission and ministry for the healing of the world through the love of God.”

Medley also pointed to agreement on the key ministry areas of radical discipleship, healthy missional churches, leadership, youth, church planting, stewardship, and mutual faithfulness. Baptists, he noted, have always faced “the issue of the proper balance between autonomy and interdependence, between the I and the we, which is under consideration in our discussions of organization. What ought to be evident to everyone is that neither pole of that continuum can be collapsed. Autonomy and interdependence must always be in play with one another for there to be authentic Baptist expression of the larger body of Christ.”

Speaking at the opening plenary session of the General Board’s five-day meeting, Medley told board members that “to you and to the elected leaders of the various partners in the denomination has been entrusted the stewardship of our common life. That is a precious trust.”

American Baptists Respond to Region’s Withdrawal

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS)—General Board members of American Baptist Churches USA (ABCUSA) approved Sunday, June 25, an addition to the denomination’s Standing Rules that will accommodate those churches of the former Pacific Southwest (PSW) region that may choose not to follow that region’s impending withdrawal from ABCUSA. The change allows churches in such a situation to maintain “covenanting relationship” with ABCUSA for up to 24 months during a transition to another region or membership in a new organization affiliated with the national body.

The PSW region’s board of directors voted May 11 to leave ABCUSA because of a long-standing disagreement focused mainly on implementation of the national body’s stance on homosexuality. Its withdrawal is to become effective November 1, but the region has already changed its name to Transformation Ministries.

ABCUSA General Secretary A. Roy Medley told General Board members that discussions with the region’s leaders as recently as two weeks ago have been conducted “in a spirit of not wanting to do each other any harm, in seeking to bless one another even in separation.” National and regional officers are engaged in working out details of the separation, including such matters as disposition of property and status of pastors, he said. “We continue to work for clarity on issues

and resolution of them,” he said, noting that the American Baptist Churches of Los Angeles (ABCLA) has been helpful in providing “watch care and oversight” for churches that may remain American Baptist.

Associate General Secretary C. Jeff Woods said it is not yet known how many of the former PSW’s 272 churches may decide to keep their current national affiliation. Just over half of those churches took part in an April referendum that preceded the May vote by the directors to withdraw. Woods said a new Association of American Baptists in the Pacific Southwest (ABPSW) is contemplated, with an informational meeting this fall and a formal organizational meeting next spring.

When the PSW withdrawal was announced, Dr. Medley noted that “though the vote was not unanticipated, we had hoped and had made many efforts to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”

The ABCUSA General Board, in plenary session Sunday, passed its addition to the standing rules on second reading after a first reading Saturday. The change in effect approves an interpretation of the rules that will allow churches in the withdrawing region to remain linked to ABCUSA without regional approval or affiliation for as long as 24 months.

In another action, earlier in its five-day meeting, the General Board affirmed a short-term plan to address, over the next 24 months, the situation created by a continuing decline in giving by churches to the fund that supports the denomination’s national structure. The General Executive Council of ABCUSA is studying longer-term “adaptive changes” in structure and operations. One short-term change will be to go to one General Board meeting a year, instead of the present two, although a truncated meeting still will be held this November.

During the past week, board members heard reports on planning for its next biennial convention, June 29-July 2, in Washington, D.C., and for the denomination’s centennial, which also will be observed then. The biennial’s theme will be “Arise and Shine.”

The board also:

- Heard first readings of proposals to modify the way delegates are selected for the church’s biennial conventions, and to give chaplains and pastoral counselors “voice and vote” representation on the General Board.
- Passed Standing Rules changes reducing the size of General Board committees and reflecting the creation of the denomination’s new Mission Resource Development office.
- Received more than \$3,270 through its offering in its Sunday worship service to aid Baptist Children’s Services of Philadelphia.
- Set the 2009 Biennial convention for June 25-29, 2009, in Pasadena, Calif.

American Baptists Challenged to Focus On Youth

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS)—American Baptists were challenged at their General Board meeting Saturday to focus on youth ministry, because it is the place where “we can do something drastic for the glory of God.”

Olivia Hill Goodwin, a new board member and former student president at Marshall University in Huntington, W.Va., keynoted the session on youth and “best practices” for youth ministry. “Effective ministry is not about replicating an existing ministry,” she said. “It’s about living a life worth replicating.”

She described the campus ministry at Marshall University, and the importance of infusing students with the urgency of Christian life. “Are we asking students just to show up,” she said, “or are we asking them to change the world?” Goodwin noted that it’s been said Christianity is

always just one generation from extinction. “If we lack leadership in the future, it is because we’re not discipling it now,” she said. Youth is one of seven Key Ministry Areas adopted by the denomination for special emphasis. During Saturday’s session, board members shared their experiences in youth work.

The Rev. Walter H. Heyman, Jr., pastor of the New Walk Christian Church in Kent, Wash., said his church invites its youth to report each week to the congregation. He added that some of the youth have memorized scripture to a hip-hop beat. “We meet them where they are,” he said.

The Rev. Wallace Smith, associate pastor of the First Baptist Church of Indianapolis, said youth programs are of many kinds, “but every church is equipped just to love their kids.”

National Ministries Builds Support for Children in Poverty Action Plan

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS)—At a culminating event Saturday at the June meeting of the Board of National Ministries, several regions signaled their support for Future Search, a community-based action plan to forward the Children in Poverty Initiative of American Baptist Churches USA. The program, called Prosperous Communities, Prosperous Nation, which Future Search administers, teaches communities to bring all stakeholders together, those interested and able to effect change, to search out solutions to intractable social problems.

Six individual regions and a collective group of regions signed on to learn the Future Search method of bringing about community transformation. Individual regions include American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago, New York State, Greater Indianapolis, Rochester/Genesee, Maine, and the Philadelphia Baptist Association. The Mountain/Prairie group got on board with its coalition that includes American Baptist Churches of Nebraska, the Dakotas and the Rocky Mountains (Colorado, New Mexico, eastern Utah and Wyoming), along with the Central Region (Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas) and Mid-American Baptist Churches (Iowa and Minnesota).

“The Children in Poverty Initiative isn’t so much about being against poverty as it is about being for prosperous communities,” said Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III, executive director of National Ministries. Ten years from now, he said, “We want to be able to say that we made a true difference in the lives of children.”

Rev. Marilyn Turner, National Ministries’ Associate Executive Director, Program Ministries, sounded a call to action with her reflection on the plight of Rizpah in 2 Samuel 21:3-10. Rizpah was grief-stricken when King David handed over her children to be hung along with other sons of Saul, the price sought by outraged Gibeonites to avenge for Israel’s slaughter of their people. “Powerful people still make decisions that destroy children,” Turner observed. She invited all who were present to allow for the personal transformation necessary to become 21st century children of Rizpah, engaging in the war against the evils of poverty.

With Rizpah’s story as a backdrop, Nancy Polend, program director of Prosperous Communities, Prosperous Nation, presented the Future Search method. She explained that the whole-system action planning of this approach is based on tested principles that lead to far-reaching, constructive changes.

“During 13 years of use, this process has enabled cooperation and commitment in complex situations of high conflict and uncertainty,” said Polend. For National Ministries, the goal is to engage a whole system to create and carry out new strategies for reducing poverty. After local action plans gain momentum, a national Future Search, including selected local participants, could lead to commitments that change U.S. government policies.

“Future Search focuses on common ground, rather than problems. Differences are used as information to develop an action plan, instead of as problems to solve,” Polend said. With that in

mind, Wright-Riggins pointed out that American Baptists have the type of diversity Future Search relies on to be effective. "The challenge is: Do we really want to discover community?" he said.

National Ministries Appeals for Continuing Support of Katrina Recovery

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS) —In a presentation about denominational relief efforts following Hurricane Katrina, the Rev. Marilyn Turner, National Ministries' Associate Executive Director, Program Ministries, appealed to the General Board of American Baptist Churches USA for continuing gifts to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) for healing and recovery in the Gulf Coast region.

"We cannot forget about the devastation just because the media has gone home and the story is no longer front page news," Turner said on Thursday. "The suffering continues and, as disciples of God's abiding love, we American Baptists need to be in ministry for the long haul to those whose lives were ripped apart throughout Mississippi, Alabama, and Louisiana."

Katrina, the deadliest U.S. hurricane since the 1928 Okeechobee Hurricane, hit the Gulf region late in August 2005 and was responsible for the deaths of close to 2000 people and \$75 billion in damages.

Turner reminded board members that American Baptists' OGHS contributions for recovery from the killer storm totaled \$3.7 million. National Ministries has already committed \$2 million to relief efforts, but the need for housing, reconstruction, counseling, and healing are still overwhelming today, nine months later.

To date, the recovery efforts supported by National Ministries include:

- \$467,000 to ABC of Greater Indianapolis for 35 temporary housing units, five permanent housing units and heavily subsidized mortgages for the permanent units in Pass Christian, Miss.;
- \$500,000 to Habitat for Humanity project in Jackson County, Miss., for seven housing units and heavily subsidized no-interest mortgages;
- \$260,000 to the Church World Service Emergency Response Program for material and supplies, trauma counseling and relocation assistance for evacuees;
- \$135,000 to Growing Healthy Churches' congregations providing food, clothing, housing and employment to victims who evacuated to Northern California; and
- \$100,000 to churches, related organization and ABMen disaster trailer ministries.

Also, National Ministries is partnering with the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference in Chicago to host a series of Katrina National Justice Commissions that will hear and record hurricane survivors' stories and investigate immediate response efforts by government and private agencies. A goal of the commissions is to develop resources churches can use when called to respond to disasters, such as Hurricane Katrina.

At the first commission hearing in Washington, D.C., Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D., N.Y.) commended the commissions as the first of their kind to reveal survivors' suffering and develop long-term solutions to the problems still faced by the Gulf Coast region. Subsequent hearings will be held in New Orleans, La., and Houston, Texas.

Contributions to One Great Hour of Sharing are still critical to continue National Ministries' work transforming lives on the Gulf Coast. Support of the America for Christ Offering, which enables National Ministries' volunteerism and disaster response efforts, helps as well. Contributions that

will enable continuing American Baptist Gulf Coast recovery efforts can be made online at www.abc-usa.org/givenow.

American Baptists Urged to Look Beyond Crisis Aid

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS)—After a record-breaking year of aid to tsunami and hurricane victims, attention should turn to the vulnerability and need of those who might suffer in future disasters, the General Board of American Baptist Churches USA was told during its five-day meeting this past week.

Describing 2005-2006 as a period “when crises revealed the chronic,” World Relief Officer Lisa Rothenberger reported to the board that the church’s contributions to tsunami victims and those of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita now have topped \$6.3 million, an increase of nearly \$1 million since her last report in November. Most of this additional aid was for Katrina relief. The outpouring of aid showed that “the resources are there—people gave sacrificially,” Rothenberger said. “It’s interesting to ponder what could happen if that continued. That’s the challenge.”

“It was a year when the crises revealed the chronic needs of the world. Hurricane Katrina exposed to the world the poverty in which some Americans along the Gulf Coast had been living. The tsunami revealed the plight of those barely able to eke out a living along the coastlines of Indonesia, Thailand, India, and Sri Lanka. “Their exposure was defined by the poverty in which they had been living—a condition which is chronic.”

The denomination’s World Relief Committee, meeting during the General Board session, approved 20 projects presented by its national and international ministries boards. Eight are in the United States and 12 abroad. With projects approved earlier, American Baptists will be spending \$1,700,000 on a variety of requests in 2006.

In the United States, the newly approved projects include such things as helping the homeless in Washington, D.C. (\$15,000), aiding immigrant children and their families in the Norristown, Pa., area (\$30,000), and providing after-school education and recreation for children in Irving, Texas (\$7,000). Some programs were approved for additional money in subsequent years.

Projects overseas included helping finance a job skills program in Cambodia (\$15,000), build an irrigation system in the Democratic Republic of Congo (\$8,220), provide teaching and reading materials for deaf children in western China (\$14,850), and support job training in Bolivia (\$7,400).

One of the larger contributions was a total of \$65,000 over the next three years to assist hill tribes in Thailand. Also approved was \$10,000 a year for the next three years to support relief work among refugees in Thailand near the Burmese border. This is part of a much larger multi-national project to assist 150,000 Burmese, many of whom have been stranded in the refugee camps for years.

Commenting on American Baptist response to natural disasters, Rothenberger noted that nearly \$3.8 million had been given through this May for Katrina victims and more than \$2.5 million for tsunami survivors. Money is spent as projects are proposed and approved in the affected areas, she explained. To date, \$2.1 million of the Katrina aid has been spent or committed, and \$1.4 million of that which was given for tsunami relief.

“So much of what crises like Katrina and the tsunami do is to make visible the chronic problems that are already present,” Rothenberger said. “People living in substandard housing. People without access to health care, or employment, or transportation, or even safe drinking water. Can we see these people even before the next disaster strips away the veneer of normalcy?”

“Media coverage is so fragmented that we aren’t always able to see the chronic needs of the world. We have a sound-bite culture. But the resources are there to help—if people choose to address these needs.”

American Baptists Give \$150,000 in Aid to Darfur

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS)—American Baptist Churches USA has made a special allocation of \$150,000 to an international campaign for relief of suffering in the war-torn Sudan territory of Darfur.

The funds come from the church’s annual “One Great Hour of Sharing” mission campaign. The allocation request was presented by the American Baptist world relief officer, Lisa Rothenberger, and approved by its World Relief Committee, during a meeting of the denomination’s General Board this week.

The money will go toward an effort by world church agencies to raise \$14 million to assist Darfur residents, many of whom are homeless and destitute after being displaced within their country. The money will be funneled through the relief organizations Action by Christians Together and Caritas, which will relay it to Norwegian Church Aid, the main relief group working inside Darfur. Some two million people have been displaced in Darfur, and starvation and disease are rampant. Many have also been killed by marauding soldiers in what has been widely characterized as genocide.

The relief effort brings Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Greek Orthodox together to try to alleviate conditions in a country with a large Muslim population.

The special allocation was made possible because American Baptists, even as they were giving large amounts for tsunami and Katrina relief, were also increasing their giving of undesignated “One Great Hour of Sharing” funds, Rothenberger said. This allowed the denomination to respond to the critical situation in Darfur “where right now it’s a matter of keeping people alive.”

American Baptists wishing to support Darfur relief efforts can do so through their church’s monthly report of mission support, designating contributions “OGHS-Sudan-Darfur Relief.” For online contributions, go to the Give Now option available on either www.abc-usa.org or www.abcusamissions.org.

National Ministries Will Divest Investments with Ties to Sudan

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS) —At a meeting of the Finance Committee of the Board of National Ministries Friday, members voted unanimously to divest from investments in corporations with direct business interests in Sudan. Widespread human rights abuses and violations of humanitarian laws characterize current fighting in the country. The government has bombed civilian villages, hospitals, and relief sites, and there have been arbitrary arrests, detentions without trial, and violations of women and children, along with religious persecution, torture, and executions. Racial and religious minorities are the principal victims of these human rights violations. All told, more than two million people have been killed since 1983 as a result of what has become Africa’s longest-running civil war.

National Ministries’ action follows an alert from the congregation of Hyde Park Union Church in Chicago, urging portfolio investigation “with dispatch” to identify investments in companies doing business with the government of Sudan, followed by divestiture of those companies.

NM Treasurer Dr. Margaret Ann Cowden says, “Along with being a vehicle for funding mission, National Ministries’ Common Investment Fund also has always been important as mission in itself

through socially responsible investing. Finance Committee members were eager to use our funds to bear Christ's witness against these atrocities that are such an affront to the common humanity that unites us all."

Members of the Finance Committee of the Board of National Ministries approved divestiture "as soon as possible with due prudence to fiduciary responsibilities."

"The congregation of Hyde Park Union Church is extremely concerned about the current conflict in the Darfur region of the Sudan," wrote the Rev. Susan Johnson, senior minister, and Elizabeth Beazley, of the Missions & Social Concerns committee, in a letter to National Ministries in May. "We feel that Christian organizations should be at the forefront of examining and condemning this genocide."

An American Baptist Churches USA Resolution on Sudan details the war's roots and urges individual American Baptist action as well, including keeping the Sudanese people in prayer, donating funds to groups ministering to the people of Sudan, and engaging U.S. political leaders to work toward influencing the peace process in the war-torn country.

Changing Methods, Unchanging Mission

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS)—To pursue its unchanging mission, to glorify God in all the earth, by making disciples of Jesus Christ, International Ministries is constantly adapting its methods and strategies.

So said the Rev. Charles Jones, Acting Executive Director of International Ministries, in his address to the General Board of American Baptist Churches. Jones explained that in recent years the mission agency has made significant changes to its core operations: the way it *plans* for mission, *partners* for mission, *supports* missionaries, and the way it *celebrates* and *educates* for mission.

Jones spoke a word of encouragement to the members of the General Board, as they face the need to make adaptive changes to existing American Baptist ways of working together, reminding them that "on the other side of all the agonizing, the Lord of mission will be waiting for us, waiting for us to set aside every encumbrance and distraction, waiting for us to press on to the high calling to which we have been called, to glorify God in all the earth, by making disciples of Jesus Christ."

Surprised by God in Mission

by Stan Slade

When International Ministries launched work on its strategic plan for this decade, **Go Global**, one of its specific commitments was to renew and deepen "work with and for children, youth and women." That commitment has led International Ministries beyond what might normally have been expected in this area, into a surprising array of ministries to children, youth and women in prostitution.

At the meeting of its board of directors, staff presented International Ministries' latest video production, **Living Hope for People in Prostitution**. This brief video calls attention to the global scourge of prostitution provides a glimpse of the recent International Christian Conference on Prostitution (ICCP, co-sponsored by International Ministries) and documents the birth of a global network for mission collaboration in this area, the International Christian Alliance on Prostitution.

A dozen missionaries of International Ministries—and several leaders from international partner churches—came from around the world to attend ICCP and to help launch the network. Several

of the ministries represented by these partner leaders and missionaries have received attention in the media and in global forums, including the New Life Center in Chiang Mai, Thailand, the global consulting work of Lauran Bethell (recipient of the Baptist World Alliance Human Rights Award in 2005) and, most recently, the work of Annie Dieselberg and the Nightlight ministry in Bangkok (featured in recent stories on the Christian Broadcasting Network and the web version of *Sojourners* magazine).

Charles Jones, acting executive director of International Ministries, commented, "When we renewed our commitment to serve children, youth and women, we did not set out to tackle the global issue of prostitution. But God used our focus on ministry to and with the poor, marginalized and exploited, to lead International Ministries into serving people in prostitution. Truly, we have been surprised by God in mission."

To obtain a copy of the video *Living Hope for People in Prostitution*, call 1-800-222-3872, ext. 2196. For additional information on the International Christian Alliance on Prostitution, e-mail: contactICAP@gmail.com. For additional information on the International Christian Conference on Prostitution, visit: http://www.internationalministries.org/updates/News_2006/Living_Hope_May_9.htm.

International Ministries Appoints New Missionaries

by Stan Slade

Charles Jones, acting executive director of ABCUSA's International Ministries, announced the appointment of two new missionaries during board meetings conducted over this past weekend.

Speaking to the board of directors of International Ministries and to the members of the General Board of ABCUSA, Jones expressed his deep joy at the appointment of Scott and Tan Coats, who will serve among the minority peoples of the Mekong River region. Jones explained that the Coatses are being jointly appointed by International Ministries and by Mission to Unreached Peoples. Tan Coats is Thai, and Scott Coats is the son of retired missionaries Bob and Pat Coats, who rendered exemplary service for many years in northern Thailand. They are among the founders of Mekong Minorities Foundation, a ministry based in Chiang Rai, Thailand and devoted to holistic leadership development and capacity building.

Jones noted that the Coatses bring to three the number of new missionaries that have begun service with International Ministries thus far in 2006. He emphasized that staff are working with a number of candidates and look forward to expanding the number of missionaries serving through International Ministries as the new missionary support model (Missionary Support Networks, energized by Missionary Partnership Teams) begins to bear fruit.

For more information on the new missionary support model, contact Ruthie.Stevenson@abc-usa.org (or 1-800-222-3872, ext. 2210) or Jim.Bell@abc-usa.org (or 1-800-222-3872, ext. 2351). Missionary Partnership Networks and Teams were featured in the April 2006 issue of the *International Ministries Update* (available by calling 1-800-222-3872, ext. 2196). Visit www.internationalministries.org to download the Missionary Partnership Network brochure and/or read a brief article on this missionary support model (http://www.internationalministries.org/updates/IM_beg_new_Missy_era_Feb_06.html).

Jack Helms, Father of OGS Treasurer Cheryl Wade, Dies

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS)—Jack Lawrence Helms died Wednesday morning surrounded by family at his daughter's home in Hardy, VA. He was 83 years old and the father of Cheryl Wade, Associate General Secretary and Treasurer for the Office of the General Secretary, ABCUSA. Helms died of pneumonia complicated by advanced Parkinson's Disease.

"We pray that God will cover Cheryl and her family with love, compassion, and peace during this time of sorrow and grief." said Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley, ABCUSA General Secretary. "Our hearts and prayers are with them as they gather and remember the life and legacy of a loving husband and devoted father."

Funeral services will be held Thursday, June 22nd at 11 A.M. at the Rocky Mount United Methodist Church in Rocky Mount, VA (540-483-5338). The family has asked, if anyone wishes to send contributions, that they give to their own favorite charity or charities as the Helms supported numerous causes.

Helms is survived by his wife, Edith, to whom he was married for 63 years, and their four children, Cheryl, Judith, Lynn, and Larry. Anyone wishing to send sympathies to Cheryl and her family may do so at 200 W. Walnut Ln, Philadelphia, PA 19144.

Thomas Momose, Former General Board Member, Dies

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS)—K. Thomas Momose, former General Board member and loyal American Baptist, died June 19.

Momose served two terms on the General Board, from 1984–1991. He was also a member of the Board of National Ministries and served on the General Board Executive Committee. An active member of American Baptist Men, he often attended the men's retreat in Green Lake, Wisconsin. Momose is survived by his wife, Marilyn, a past president of American Baptist Women's Ministries (1985–1989). She served on the General Board in that capacity.

Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III, executive director of National Ministries, said, "We extend our sympathies to Mr. Momose's wife, Marilyn. Both Tom and Marilyn served our denominational family with distinction and honor. We are grateful for the leadership and service he offered National Ministries and American Baptist Men."

A memorial service will be held Friday, June 23, at 11 a.m., at the First Baptist Church of Reading. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be sent to First Baptist Church of Reading, 210 South 5th St, Reading, PA 19602. Condolences can be sent to: Marilyn Momose, 1375 Pershing Blvd. #804, Reading, PA 19607-1463.

Correction: Rev. Genaro Diesto,

American Baptist Pastor & Asian Ministries Worker, Dies

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS)—Rev. Dr. Genaro Diesto passed away on Monday, June 12, and not Tuesday, June 13, as was stated in a release last week. We apologize for this misunderstanding.

For further clarification regarding gifts, donations can be made to the Genaro Diesto Memorial Fund to establish a library in the Philippines for poor and underprivileged pastors of the Convention of Philippine Baptist Churches. Please make out your checks to American Baptist Churches of Los Angeles, designate "Genaro Diesto Memorial Fund" on the subject line and mail it to the American Baptist Churches of Los Angeles (ABCLA) at 3325 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 800, Los Angeles, CA 90015.

Thinking Theologically

Our Executive Minister Larry Greenfield pens a biweekly column for the electronic newsletter of Protestants for the Common Good. His recent column, "Restricted Affections End," is attached to this issue of *eWind*.

eWind Correction

Last week's *eWind* indicated that Robyn Henderson was a member of Lake Street Church. She is a member of the Community Church of Wilmette. We apologize for the error. We really DO know where she worships. Robyn is a recent graduate of Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary. She is a chaplain at Northwest Community Hospital in Arlington Heights.

Prayer Requests

See that none of you repays evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to all. Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you (I Thessalonians 5:15-18, NRSV).

Please join the staff of ABCMC in prayers of thanksgiving and blessing for James Jackson, who will conclude this week his interim tenure as office assistant. Jim, a member of Hyde Park Union Church, will soon relocate to Sioux Falls, SD.

Please hold the ABCUSA and ABCMC families in prayer.

Please remember Cheryl Wade and her family in prayer. Cheryl is ABCUSA's Associate General Secretary and treasurer. They are grieving the loss of Cheryl's father, Jack Helms, on June 21.

Let us all lift up prayers of thanksgiving for the leadership of Hyde Park Union Church and Pastor Susan Johnson for their leadership in challenging the Board of National Ministries in the direction of investing with justice.

Calendar

SUNDAY July 2—Memorial service for Paul LaDue, Green Lake Conference Center, Vesper Circle, 2 p.m.

July 7—Children in Poverty Initiative meeting, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., Hyde Park Union Church, 5600 S. Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago.

July 14-16—ABMen National Conference, Parchment Valley, WV.

July 18—Finance and Property Committee meeting, ABCMC office, 3 p.m.

July 27-29—The Center for Parish Development's Missional Church Conference, at the Cenacle in Chicago. Visit www.missionalchurch.org/pages/seminars for more information and registration.

July 29-August 2—American Baptist Campus Ministers Association gathering at Green Lake Conference Center. For more information, visit www.nationalministries.org.

August 10—6 p.m. premiere of film *No Te Rindas*, sponsored by Esperanza USA, Marriott Medical District Hotel, 625 Ashland Avenue, Chicago (across from Rush Hospital and junction

with I-290). Free, including reception with hors d'oeuvres. **RSVP before July 15** to Evelyn Perez-Almonte, 312-731-3858 or eperez-almonte@nueva.org.

August 22—Finance and Property Committee meeting, ABCMC office, 3 p.m.

August 26—Family Council meeting, 9 a.m.

November 10-11—Annual Meeting.

November 21—Finance and Property Committee meeting, ABCMC office, 3 p.m.

December 19—Finance and Property Committee meeting, ABCMC office, 3 p.m.

June 29-July 2—ABCUSA Biennial Meeting and Centennial Celebration in Washington, D.C. The biennial's theme will be "Arise and Shine."

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.