

# 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  
covering a wide variety of interests reflecting the diversity of our region.

November 22, 2006



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### *Rev. Dr. Edgar T. Thornton*

Dr. Edgar T. Thornton, Pastor Emeritus of Original Providence Baptist Church in Chicago, has died. Dr. Thornton served Original Providence for 38 years. He had been living in Iowa since he retired in 1994. His Homegoing Celebration is to be held in Iowa on Wed. Nov. 29, 2006 please call Original Providence Baptist Church for more information (773) 378-5678. Please pray for his family and the Original Providence Church family.

### *Interfaith Worker Justice and Thanksgiving*

This Thanksgiving, Interfaith Worker Justice offers [prayers from Jewish, Muslim and Christian traditions](#) for your upcoming holiday gathering. It is their hope that these prayers will be a powerful resource as you gather around the table this holiday. We pray in particular for the low-wage and minimum-wage workers, who work 40 hours a week year round yet remain in poverty.

### *Peace Vigil in Arlington Heights*

On Saturday, November 25 there will be a peace vigil from 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. at Dunton Park, at the corner of Arlington Heights Road and Northwest Highway in Arlington Heights. Bring a lawn chair and a candle in a container for a silent vigil to reflect on and pray for world peace. The event will be hosted by: Families for Peace, The Viatorian Community, Sisters of the Living Word and The Women's Resource Center

### *Health Care in Illinois*

The Campaign for Better Health Care (CBHC) wants us to be aware of opportunities over the holiday weekend to learn more about health care discussions in Illinois.

On Sunday, November 26th at 5 p.m. CAN-TV Channel 19 will air the *Adequate Health Care Task Force Panel Discussion at CBHC Annual Meeting*. The program will be rebroadcast on Monday, November 27 at noon.

Click here to see the [CBHC WINTER NEWSLETTER NOW ONLINE!!](#) Keep up to date on the movement for health care justice in Illinois.

This will be of particular interest to the ABCMC family, with our concern about health care for children and families in poverty.

### *Religion and State*

Why does a nativity scene on public property violate the First Amendment, when a display of the Ten Commandments does not? Come to a lecture "Away with the Manger? Religion in the

Public Square” to clear up the confusion. The speaker will be Kathryn Page Camp, author of *In God We Trust: How the Supreme Court's First Amendment Decisions Affect Organized Religion*.

Understand how the Supreme Court poses two practical questions to decide a First Amendment violation. First, how are the religious elements incorporated into the display? Second, what is the government's motive? Learn about actual Supreme Court cases that put these questions to the test and how they merge seamlessly with the legal principles used by the courts.

The lecture will be given on Thursday, November 30, 6-7:30 p.m., at the McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum, 445 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago. Admission will be free of charge, but reservations are recommended. To reserve your seat, please phone 312-222-3026.

## *World AIDS Day 2006*

World AIDS day is December 1. Church World Service encourages all Christians to join in an observance of the day. Information and resources are available at [http://www.churchworldservice.org/Educ\\_Advo/hiv/AIDSday06.html](http://www.churchworldservice.org/Educ_Advo/hiv/AIDSday06.html).

### *Seasonal Concerts*



#### *Christmas at First Baptist*

In conjunction with the Village of La Grange's "Hometown Christmas Walk," the First Baptist Church, 21 N. Catherine, La Grange, will offer a Christmas concert on Saturday, December 2. The church will offer an open house 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. Identical concerts will be presented at 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

The concert will feature the Chancel Handbell Choir, and The Quartet. Kevin Robbins, the church's Organist and Director of Music, will play the pipe organ.

There will be no charge for admission. All are welcome.

#### *Christmas Concert in Edgewater*

On Sunday, December 3, the Christian Science church at 5308 N. Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, will host a concert of seasonal music. Among those singing will be the Ensemble from Grace Baptist Church, with soloist Mark Parks, and the Inspiration children's choir directed by Beth Palmer. Free parking will be available in the lot just north of the church. For more information, please phone the church at (773) 561-2834.

#### *New Hope Christmas Concert*

Get ready for the holidays with some great music! A concert will take place at 3 p.m. on Sunday, December 3 at New Hope United Methodist Church, 7115 W. Hood (corner of Hood and Nickerson). The concert will feature The New Hope Kids, Dave Rush and Jeff Hunter (on vibraphone and marimba), Symphonic Winds Brass Band, Circle of Friends, and other

performers. Doors will open at 2:30 p.m. for the 3 p.m. concert. For information or tickets, call 773-775-1215 or visit [www.newhopechicago.org](http://www.newhopechicago.org). Tickets will cost \$10/adult, or \$5/child 13-17 years old. Children 12 and under are free.

### *North Shore Second Sunday Series*

North Shore Baptist Church, 5244 N. Lakewood Avenue, Chicago. Will offer a "Second Sunday Series" of free concerts in their sanctuary during each of the next several months. Each concert will be at 2 p.m. The Christmas concert will be on Sunday, December 10. The Chancel Choir will perform Saint Saëns' "Christmas Oratorio." The afternoon's program will include cookies, cocoa, and a carol sing, too!

### *Judson Press Online*

Judson Press has a brand new web site at [www.judsonpress.com](http://www.judsonpress.com). The new Judson Press web site offers 20% off books published by Judson Press. Also available are curriculum samples, church bulletins, offering envelopes, and much more. Take \$5 off any new online order of \$10 or more (exclusive of shipping and handling). Simply enter the promotion code WEBPC at checkout and your savings will automatically be deducted from your total.

### *Last Chance to Register—Special Rates for NBS Alumni*

Join church and ministry leaders, theologians and laity for the inaugural conference on "A Call to an Ancient Evangelical Future"--a challenge issued for evangelicals to rediscover their common mission and be energized by the Holy Spirit for ministry! At this historic conference December 7-9, sponsored by Northern Seminary, Baker Books, the Institute for Worship Studies, InterVarsity Press and *Christianity Today* magazine, you can explore the contemporary church's role in life, spirituality and worship.

Special speakers include: Brian McLaren, author of *A New Kind of Christian* and one of this century's leaders in contemporary ministry; Martin E. Marty, the well respected religious historian at the University of Chicago and author of *When Faiths Collide*; Aaron Flores, pastor and co-founder of Union ministry (Irvine, CA) and emergent church planter; Frederica Mathewes-Green, speaker, writer & author of seven books on ministry and life including *First Fruits of Prayer: A Forty-Day Journey through the Canon of St. Andrew*; Lauren Winner, speaker and author of *Mudhouse Sabbath*.

"The Call to an Ancient Evangelical Future" conference will be held at Northern Seminary (Lombard, IL) at the Lindner Conference Center. *Special rates for Northern Baptist Theological Seminary students, staff and faculty at over 50% off the regular registration fee!* Special rates for alumni as well! For cost and registration information go to: [www.growcenter.org](http://www.growcenter.org).

### *Kids Hope United to Honor Jimmie Smith*

This invitation is from Kids Hope United (formerly Central Baptist Children's Home and Family Services).

Join us for a celebration of Jimmie H. Smith, recognizing his 30 years of dedicated service to Kids Hope United. Jimmie is retiring from the Executive Director position—but the agency hopes to continue harnessing his expertise and energy for many years to come! Bring memories about Jimmie to share during an afternoon of food, fun and fellowship with friends. The celebration will

take place Friday, December 8, 3-5 p.m. at Bridgeport Child Development Center, 3053 S. Normal Avenue, Chicago.

## *The Gift of You*

Everyone is invited to come on Saturday, December 9 to "The Gift of You," an advent mini retreat sponsored by Grace Baptist Church and hosted by Community Church of Wilmette, 9:30 am-4:00pm, at 1020 Forest Ave. in Wilmette. On this day supporting individual discernment, we'll explore personally the spiritual gifts of expressing, enabling, equipping, and encouraging. In what arena is God inviting you to celebrate and dedicate your call more fully for 2007? Suggested donation: \$12 (includes lunch and materials). Please register by December 6 to [pastor@gracebaptistchicago.com](mailto:pastor@gracebaptistchicago.com) or 773-334-9003.

## *From a Missionary in Thailand*

Annie Dieselberg, and IM missionary in Thailand, writes concerning the ministry of NightLight, an outreach to women in Bangkok who are being trafficked into prostitution:

### **Praises:**

- We continue to receive women coming in for alternative employment.
- One of our newest women has accepted Christ and joined the class preparing for baptism.
- Jewelry orders have really picked up with Christmas coming soon. We are grateful for all of you who are supporting NL in this way.
- A grant has been provided anonymously to provide for additional work space and a shelter for one year.
- We've had a lot of visitors this past month and we are thankful for the interest and support shown by so many.
- We are thankful for the additional help of Rebecca and Izin. God is bringing together an international team. We now have volunteers from UK, India, U.S.A., Thailand, Philippines, and Nigeria.
- Russian-speaking women from the Doulos ship were able to join NL's outreach team one night to pray and minister to the trafficked women on the street. The women were very touched and encouraged by their presence and concern.

### **Prayers:**

- Pray for the spiritual guidance and growth of the women coming.
- Maddy, Punny, Gete felt obligated to return to work in the bars to cover debts incurred by family members. Maddy and Gete would like to return to NL but feel embarrassed.
- Nettie went back to the streets after discovering her husband had another girlfriend. She comes in to visit but struggles with the deep rooted image of being a prostitute and fear that she cannot ever change.
- A Ugandan woman, Sarah, was tricked into prostitution here. She sold everything she had in Uganda and borrowed money to come for the promise of a good job. We offered her help and a way out but she is afraid to return home with nothing but shame. Pray she will have the courage to walk through the difficulty of returning home and not give in to the seduction of money through prostitution.
- Pray for guidance in choosing a second work site. We had one that seemed right but the owners backed out because they didn't want to make a legal contract and pay taxes. If this is the correct site then pray with us that they will feel convicted to change their minds and make a legal contract. If not, pray we will find the correct location.

May God bless all of you as He works through you in your daily lives!  
(Please note names have been changed to protect the identity of the women.)

## *Ministers Council News*

### *Ministers Council Unveils New Ethics Resource*

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 11/09/06)—The Ministers Council presents a new resource for collegial discussion on the Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders. The Learning Guide may be downloaded from <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/WhoWeAre/CodeofEthicsLearningGuide.aspx>.

The Ministers Council first developed the Covenant and Code of Ethics for Ministerial Leaders in 1937 and has revised it periodically to maintain a high standard for professional ministers. The new Learning Guide provides a way for those concerned with ministerial ethics to wrestle with the specific application of standards to real-life situations. The Learning Guide invites individuals, alone or with a group of pastoral colleagues or lay leaders, to study the Biblical foundation for each ethical statement and consider how he or she might apply the standard. The hope is that ministers using the Learning Guide will internalize the code and recognize areas in which they need to "raise the bar." Those hiring, firing, and evaluating ministers will benefit from the Learning Guide, as well, by having a clear understanding of expectations of ministers in areas such as self-care, counseling procedures, confidentiality, and transition behaviors.

Writers are members of the Professional Effectiveness Committee of the Ministers Council. Michael Harvey, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Conference Ministers, and Dee Dee Turlington, Senior Minister of the First Baptist Church of Westfield, New Jersey, have served as editors.

Michael Harvey described the development of the resource by saying, "The structure of this Learning Piece is simple: A statement on each section of the Code of Ethics from one of the members of the Professional Effectiveness Committee is followed by questions to stimulate thinking together by colleagues. The statements are to give you some of the thinking of the people who have been deliberating about the Code of Ethics at the national Ministers Council Senate for several years. These writers are about as diverse as could be gathered in a committee of American Baptist pastors. Though they had disagreements, they were of the same mind in regard to the final revision of the Code of Ethics. You can see their differences in the statements."

Dee Dee Turlington added, "Simply editing this material was a learning experience for me. I realized there are situations where my simple 'one size fits all' understanding of an ethical principle didn't fit after all, as when rural folks offer products to their pastor because that's the only way they can say 'thank you.' And many of the pieces reminded me of things I know but ignore, like the importance of keeping Sabbath. I am glad this resource is available to me and my colleagues."

### *Reid Trulson Executive Director of International Ministries*

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 11/16/06) The American Baptist Board of International Ministries (IM) voted unanimously to call Rev. Dr. Reid S. Trulson as the mission society's next executive director. The action of the IM board came following a unanimous recommendation of Reid by the general board of American Baptist Churches in the USA. Reid assumes his new role December 1, 2006.

ABC general secretary, Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley, informed IM's board of the recommendation. In an enthusiastic endorsement, Roy shared that during visits to the churches of Europe and the Middle East he had learned firsthand, "Trulson is loved and respected by church leaders throughout the region he has served," Medley said. "He will provide strong leadership to our international mission."

The president of the IM board, Rev. Ray Schooler, celebrated the decision, saying, "Reid has a tremendous heart for mission. He has a great historical perspective, a steady hand and a dynamic vision. Since the [first announcement of the nomination](#) by the search committee, we have received overwhelming affirmation of this choice from missionaries, staff, board members and many others."

In response to the vote, Reid expressed deep admiration and gratitude for the faithful service of Rev. Charles Jones, who led International Ministries as acting executive director for the previous two and a half years. He announced Jones would continue serving with IM by returning to direct engagement with international partners and missionaries as IM's area director for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa.

Reid also thanked the board for their confidence and support, recognizing that "this moment is not about me or about any one of us, but about what the Lord will do in and through International Ministries to bring glory to God." He then led a time of prayer for the members of the board. The board members then responded in kind, laying hands on Reid as Roy led them in a time of prayer for God's work in and through IM's new executive director.

Additional information on Reid Trulson can be found on the [IM website](#) and in the December issue of the *IM Update*. Click [here](#) to request a free subscription.

### *Board Hears Plans for American Baptist Biennial/Centennial; Other News*

ORLANDO, FL (ABNS 11/17/06)—A four-day program of worship, music, and special events next June, marking the 100th birthday of American Baptist Churches, was described to the denomination's General Board at its meeting in Orlando, Florida.

The celebration will coincide with ABCUSA's 2007 biennial meeting, June 29-July 2, in Washington, D.C., where the denomination was founded as the Northern Baptist Convention in 1907. The theme of the celebration will be "[Arise & Shine](#)."

Dr. Leo S. Thorne, associate general secretary for Mission Resource Development for ABCUSA, described a program that will begin on a Friday night with joint worship among American Baptists and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship, as well as the Progressive National Baptist Convention and the Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention.

Saturday will feature the official birthday celebration, with morning worship and Bible study led by Tony Campolo, and an historic group photograph taken at the same place outside Calvary Baptist Church where a similar photo was taken in 1907. Saturday will also feature a noon luncheon with Wallace Charles Smith as speaker, and evening concerts, including "The Messiah" performed by the Shiloh Baptist Church choir. Other special worship events are planned for Sunday and Monday, as well as a Youth/Young Adult Festival on Monday afternoon and an evening gathering with Lauran Bethell as speaker.

Robert Roberts, Centennial co-chair, described a program of "Centennial Champions," a title to be conferred on churches and individuals who donate \$1,000 or more toward the expenses of the celebration. Roberts said \$12,000 has been donated so far toward a goal of \$100,000.

"We need once again to celebrate," he told the board members. "It's a time when we need to jump in sheer joy and ecstasy to praise our God." The response was two immediate donations of \$1000 each.

The General Board will hold its 2007 meeting just before the biennial meeting and Centennial celebration, on June 24-28, also in Washington.

At its second plenary session, the board also was told that the American Baptist Historical Society has accepted an offer from Mercer University in Atlanta, GA to be the society's new home. ABHS President Trinette V. McCray said the society will move its archives and operations over the next two to three years from its present homes in the denomination's Mission Center at Valley Forge, PA and the Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School in Rochester, NY.

In other actions, board members:

\*Passed a proposal for a by-law change, asking that the 2007 biennial meeting to allow more than 900 chaplains and pastoral counselors to have "voice and vote" representation on the General Board by adding an additional representative.

\*Approved a resolution to the 2007 biennial that sets the number of representatives at 107 to 109 by 2008 and total General Board membership at 107 to 108 by 2009.

\*Approved a revised by-law proposal setting how biennial delegates from Flexible Regions would be selected.

### *National Ministries Adopts Children in Poverty Resolution*

ORLANDO, FL. (ABNS 11/20/06)—At its semiannual meeting, the Board of National Ministries unanimously adopted a resolution reminding American Baptists to heed the call of Jesus Christ "to bring good news to the poor" (Isaiah 61:1-2), especially the "little children."

The harsh reality that one-quarter to one-fifth of children in the United States today live in poverty is "a moral outrage," according to the resolution, which lists actions American Baptists can take to help those trapped in economic and social realities that block living abundant lives:

- Recognize that some children are deprived of full advantage to grow in the wisdom and stature God intends;
- Break down stereotypes that classify poverty by race or national origin;
- Reach out to those who are economically vulnerable;
- Promote national policies that overcome inequitable wealth and income distribution;
- Learn from one another in local church and regional ministries; and
- Pray for the Children in Poverty vision.

In other business, Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III, executive director of National Ministries, recognized the Rev. Francine Stark, outgoing board president, for exemplary leadership, citing especially her passion and commitment in taking up the mantle of the Children in Poverty initiative in her region and church, Third Baptist Church, Chicago, Ill., where she serves as associate minister.

In a two-day retreat that followed the meeting, board members considered transformation in cultural, community and organizational contexts. Dr. David Laubach, National Ministries' associate executive director, Program Ministries, opened the retreat, sharing reflections from his book, "12 Steps to Congregational Transformation," recently published by Judson Press. Dr. Leonard Sweet—the E. Stanley Jones Professor of Evangelism at Drew University in Madison, N.J., and author of more than 30 books—spoke about transformation and culture, arguing that Christianity is entering its "first perfect storm."

"God has chosen you to pilot the church through this time," he told board members, challenging them to consider how they will faithfully render their ministries through the bad weather, caused in part by a tsunami of digital electronic culture and a hurricane of post-Christendom (today's increasingly anti-Christian culture).

Sweet offered five strategies for piloting the church through this storm:

1. “Go deeper, not shallower,” he counseled, since the harbor is the most dangerous place in a storm. “Hear me, church, you cannot be a safe harbor,” he said; consider, instead, “what it means to lift anchor and go out into the deep where the people are dying.”

2. Steer into the storm. There’s no escape from a category five storm, but Christ leads from the future, pulling the church forward because He has already weathered the storm.

3. Get rid of extra cargo; it just weighs down the voyage.

4. Lash yourself to the mast of the master—the scripture or the person of Christ—and you won’t go overboard when the boat is lurching.

5. Enjoy the ride of your life, because with Jesus, what harm can come, Sweet asked, reminding board members that Jesus’ blessing is not that He will calm every storm, but that He is in the boat.

“Christianity is dying in the West, and it is dying on our watch,” Sweet said, but God is using the storm to push the reset button on Christianity, and lead us to the church of the future. Sweet adopted the acronym, “MRI,” to describe this new church.

To transform itself, the church needs to be missional: “Hello church, you need to get out there,” Sweet said, and consider what it means to “live out” the Gospel, rather than living in it, because disciples are made in “the process of Christians being out in the world.”

The church also needs to be relational. For Christians, truth is a person who calls us into a relationship, Sweet said, reminding board members that “Jesus’ understanding of justice is who you are standing with, not what you are standing for.”

Lastly, the church of the future needs to focus on incarnation, considering how it can reframe itself to meet the needs of members and the community in its own context. Every church will be different, because it will be a creation of its people.

To explore transformation in community settings, Nancy Polend, program director of Prosperous Communities, Prosperous Nation (PCPN), outlined the components of Future Search, a method of community-based action that brings stakeholders together to develop a vision for the future and a plan for getting there.

National Ministries has partnered with PCPN to forward the Children in Poverty initiative of American Baptist Churches USA, beginning with four-person leader teams in eight regions that will be trained in the Future Search method. These teams, in turn, will lead eight local Future Searches in developing poverty to prosperity plans, along with commitments to action that will enable community transformation creating brighter futures for children across the United States.

### *General Board Surpasses Goal for Children’s Services*

ORLANDO, FL (ABNS 11/20/06)—General Board members of American Baptist Churches USA have surpassed a goal set in June to contribute \$5,000 to the Adopt-a-Bed program of Baptist Children’s Services.

The board traditionally has made an offering at the final worship service of its meetings to support a cause with special relevance for American Baptists. In recent meetings, offerings went to aid victims of natural disasters and to build a house in an impoverished Brazilian community through the World Council of Churches. At its meeting last June, board members contributed more than \$3,500 toward Adopt-a-Bed; at its meeting here this week an additional \$2,222.06 was raised, surpassing the original goal.

The contribution pays the difference between government allocations and the actual cost of sheltering a child for a year at its Philadelphia area facilities.

At its last national biennial meeting, ABCUSA passed "A Declaration of Importance for American Baptists on the Issue of Children in Poverty."

"American Baptists believe that God has called us to minister in love to children," the resolution read, "and to make the issue of children in poverty a priority of prayer, advocacy, ministry, and stewardship."

The U.S. Census Bureau calculated in 2004 that of 35.9 million Americans living below the poverty line, 12.9 million are children. One way that American Baptists can help to impact this often overlooked portion of our society is by supporting organizations like [Baptist Children's Services](#) or, by supporting National Ministries' own [Children In Poverty](#) initiative which seeks to respond to this need through ministries of caring and prophetic justice.

### *Rev. Dorian Mendez-Vaz Joins National Ministries Staff in Children's Ministry Area*

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 11/20/06)—The Rev. Dorian Mendez-Vaz will join National Ministries on December 11 as national coordinator for Church and Community-based Children's Ministries.

Dorian brings to her new position experience in elementary education, as well as guidance and counseling in school and church settings. Adding to her depth are child and family psychological and behavioral counseling experience and work in teenage program development.

Her unique combination of organizational and people skills has put Dorian in positions of service that are geared to both administration and human resources. She worked as a research and planning consultant for the United Way of Chicago and directed the United Way of New York City campaign in its public schools. Additionally, she was a teacher, head of the lower school and director of admissions and placement at St. Phillip's Academy, Newark, N.J.

In her work at the Families and Work Institute, New York, N.Y., Dorian designed a training program and manual for a national initiative to promote male involvement in the lives of young children. She has also developed and directed a national fellowship program through Columbia University, New York, to advance minorities in early childhood and child health professions. Associate Executive Director for Program Ministries,

Rev. Marilyn Turner, says, "Dorian's extensive experience in ministry, public education, entrepreneurship, community outreach and service will bring significant value to our focus on ministry for leaders of children's ministries." Dorian will be responsible for coordinating the Children in Poverty initiative processes, projects and programs, and will forward media development related to the initiative. "Her passion for reaching the underserved and her unique understanding of family systems will be advantageous in our initiative to make a difference in the lives of children impacted by poverty," says Marilyn.

Dorian has served as a youth pastor, a minister for congregational care and pastoral counseling, and an associate minister for Women's Ministry and Bible Study at several churches. Most recently, she served Union Baptist Church, Montclair, N.J., as associate minister for "Within Her Reach," a seed ministry for girls and young women she developed to be used internationally.

Dorian says she sees God's hand at work in her appointment: "I have a passionate belief in the biblical proclamation that children are a heritage from God and an award from the Lord. Seeing to the wholeness of our children, particularly those who may be marginalized, is a Christ centered

expectancy, so I embrace the opportunity to be part of the American Baptist Churches USA Children in Poverty initiative through National Ministries.”

Ordained through American Baptist Churches USA, Dorian holds her master of divinity from Drew University Theological School and her master of education in psychological services from Springfield College. She also has a master’s in religious studies from the Chicago Theological Seminary.

### *The World in a Hotel Room:*

#### *Where Human Needs and the Church Meet at the Table*

ORLANDO, FL (ABNS 11/20/06)—The needs of school kids in Idaho, single mothers and their children in Argentina, and those raising the roof on a clinic in Angola can come together in unexpected places. Those have included, lately, some hotel conference rooms, in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania, and—this week—Orlando, Florida.

The American Baptist World Relief Committee has met in those two places this year, and this week’s session gave some insights into the work of those who administer more than \$2 million annually from the [One Great Hour of Sharing](#) offering of American Baptist Churches USA. Committee members, meeting just prior to the General Board, decide how to spend money given by church members scattered across the country. When a tsunami desolates Indian Ocean nations or when Hurricane Katrina blasts the Gulf Coast, congregational giving can far exceed the \$2 million annual average. The needs in those disaster areas continue, but the World Relief Committee was back this week to look at smaller, more chronic problems, like Argentine children living in poverty, need for medical clinics in Angola, construction of a learning center to expand social ministries in Azerbaijan, and support for literacy and literacy programs in Bangladesh, where too explicit a Christian connection is suspect in the eyes of authorities.

The committee was also looking at requests closer to home—like a minibus to carry Idaho children to a Baptist daycare center and pre-school, and a shelter for the homeless in Rhode Island. The requests come before a committee of six World Relief Committee members meeting around a hotel-room table. In a different context, they might be foundation executives reviewing grant requests. But these are pastors and lay leaders who come together twice a year to consider project requests, presented by staff of International and National Ministries on behalf of ABC regions and international and ecumenical partners.

This week, a theme runs through several of the requests—local people have gotten a project started, but need help to carry it to the next stage. The Azerbaijani Baptists want to finish their building and get it under a permanent roof. The Angolan clinic also needs a roof, and doors. A relief committee member, Roger Raikes, sums it up graphically. “I’m all for raising the roof,” he says. “You give more room to people, and all sorts of things can happen.”

The committee wrestles with difficult questions. The Argentine request sounds odd at first—for \$9,000 over the next two years to teach music to desperately poor children. But as the discussion proceeds, it’s obvious there’s a subtext. It’s about self-esteem and the desire of the single mothers “to help their children become better educated.” And, new International Ministries’ Executive Director, Reid Trulson, adds, “The mothers would also like to be viewed as respectable members of the community.”

The proposal passes after a comment from one committee member that learning music is related to learning mathematical skills, “so there’s a practical application.”

In the request from Bangladesh, the committee has to consider its own policy against extended multi-year commitments to the same group, a policy instituted to guard against indefinite funding

of “pet projects.” But in Bangladesh, a Muslim nation, being seen as an overtly Christian group is not the path to official favor. There are few such organizations to address a host of chronic needs. The group requesting aid is led by “a Muslim follower of Jesus” and has received funding for several projects in the past. It has a record of success—“We’re investing good money after good money,” the World Relief Officer, Lisa Rothenberger, says.

The committee approves funding for two more programs, under a section of its rules that allows such exceptions. It also asks the Bangladesh recipient to differentiate carefully its various efforts, to make clear the funds are going to support new initiatives in new communities. “Remember, we’re told to be wise as serpents and harmless as doves,” Reid Trulson, who serves as staff to the committee, says.

In her report to the committee, Rothenberger notes that 2006 was not a big disaster year, and that giving to the One Great Hour of Sharing has leveled off to a little below the 2004 pre-tsunami, pre-Katrina giving. She had hoped that the level of last year’s generosity would be maintained for more chronic but less attention-grabbing needs. “But it takes time for people to grab that vision—to recognize through their giving that support to meet chronic needs is just as important as serving emergency needs.” she says.

She also sounds a positive note—that relief can be a way of evangelizing for Christ through example. Her report includes a letter from a leader of Sri Lankan Baptists, telling how the contributions of American Baptists and others were used to build 77 homes for tsunami victims. At the end of the building project, the letter said, the Sri Lankan Baptists were urged to build a church in the new village.

That’s a lot better, Rothenberger says, than having people say, “Thanks for all the help and the new plumbing, but we hope you won’t be around much longer.” And this does happen in situations when emergency relief is undertaken by other organizations, not to demonstrate the love and compassion of Christ, but instead to force conversions of people in a time of peril. It’s the world in a hotel room, and the room where these stories are told is unadorned. But behind the discussants is an unseen cloud of witnesses—the poor, the dispossessed, and all those who struggle and sometimes succeed in building better lives for themselves and their children. And who sometimes also meet Christ on the way.

### *News Summary for General Board Nov '06 Meetings*

ORLANDO, FL (ABNS 11/21/06)—The General Board of American Baptist Churches USA ended a two-day meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 15, after approving a plan to put the denomination’s historic Mission Center in Valley Forge, PA, on the market and voting to install Dr. Reid S. Trulson as executive director of the Board of International Ministries.

Board members also heard a progress report and gave their feedback on “[Adaptive Change](#),” a process designed to better position the denomination for the future. This was another step in plans to bring about, by 2009, changes in practices, policies, and by-laws that will improve the functioning of ABCUSA.

The vote to [market the Valley Forge Mission Center](#) was nearly unanimous, with 72 “yes” votes and one abstention. It came after an explanation of a lengthy study process that recommended marketing the structure, built in 1962. Board members were told that “outside” tenants now occupy half or more of the center, and that only about a 2 percent return on investment is being realized. “We are not in the rental business, but the business of mission,” General Secretary A. Roy Medley told the board.

Sale of the Mission Center property would bring in much needed liquid assets which would go into an endowment fund. An offer to buy would still have to be approved by the board, and any

sale agreement would have to give ABCUSA and tenants three to five years to find other accommodations.

Roy reported to the board on his [October trip to Lebanon](#) as one of eight National Council of Churches delegates who met with political and religious leaders there. He urged renewed efforts to address the Palestinian issue, with sensitivity to Arab viewpoints.

In accepting his [selection as Executive Director of International Missions](#), Reid Trulson (who succeeds Acting Executive Director Charles Jones) called for more attention to the world's growing problem of slavery, to extending AIDS ministries, and to sharing the Gospel "with those who have least heard it." Trulson will take office Dec. 1.

The board received an [update on plans for next summer's Biennial/Centennial](#) in Washington, D.C., where the denomination was founded in 1907. Centennial Chair Robert Roberts urged churches and individuals to become "Centennial Champions" by contributing \$1,000 or more to defray expenses of the celebration. More than \$12,000 has already been given toward a goal of \$100,000.

At their Wednesday worship service, board members completed an effort begun in June to raise \$5,000 for the [Adopt-a-Bed](#) program of Baptist Children's Services in Philadelphia. The goal had been short by about \$1,500 and this week's collection brought in an additional \$2,222. The money will go to provide a year of accommodations for a child at the BCS center.

In other action, board members:

\*Heard Trinetta V. McCray, president of the American Baptist Historical Society, report that the society has accepted an offer from Mercer University in Atlanta to move ABHS operations and archives there from their present homes in Valley Forge, PA and Rochester, NY.

\*Were told that Lloyd D. Hamblin, Jr., has accepted an invitation to become acting treasurer and associate general secretary of finance for ABCUSA for at least three years, positions that will be vacated as of Dec. 31 by Cheryl Wade. James Ratliff has been named as budget review officer, a post Hamblin now holds. Wendy Rothenberger, director of Human Resources Development (HRD), is adding duties and becomes director of operations and HRD.

\*Passed resolutions supporting by-law changes that would allow chaplains and pastoral counselors a representative to be a voting board member, reduce the size of the board somewhat by 2009, and make changes in how delegates to biennial meetings from Flexible Stewardship are selected.

\*Adopted a 2007 ABCUSA operating budget with a "planned deficit" of about \$600,000, to be taken from reserves.

## *Community Volunteers Needed*

The City of Chicago is seeking volunteers to work in the last week of January, 2007 from 9 p.m. to 2 a.m. to participate in the 2007 count/survey of unsheltered homeless persons in public spaces. The results from the count/survey will be used for:

- Service planning
- Demonstrating the need for resources
- Raising public awareness about homelessness
- Identifying and measuring the needs of the homeless population in Chicago

Volunteers are expected to attend at least one training prior to the count; during the count they will canvass a designated area of the city in teams and count/survey unsheltered homeless people in the public space. Teams will consist of two or more people, at least one of whom will be an experienced outreach worker.

For more information, or to volunteer for the count, please contact Domonique Bell at 312-742-1552 or [domonique.bell@cityofchicago.org](mailto:domonique.bell@cityofchicago.org). Your support is appreciated for the 2007 Homeless Count and Chicago's Plan to End Homelessness.

### *2007 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity*

The Ecumenical Millennium Committee, of which ABCMC is a part, will sponsor their 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Ecumenical Prayer Service during the 2007 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The service will take place at 4 p.m. on Sunday, January 21 at Fourth Presbyterian Church, 126 E. Chestnut Street, Chicago. All are welcome.

### *Second Annual ABCMC Disciples' Dinner*

Save the date for the Second Annual ABCMC Disciples' Dinner on Saturday, April 21, 2007. Our late afternoon keynote speaker will be **Tony Campolo**, professor emeritus of sociology at Eastern College. More information will appear in future editions of *eWind*.

### *Looking to Summer 2007*

It's not too early to be planning your church's ministries with children this coming summer. Whether you anticipate having Vacation Bible School, Day Camp, or other programs, you can find helpful materials at [www.judsonpress.com](http://www.judsonpress.com).

### *Prayer Requests*

Please pray for world peace.

Please pray for Bob Webber and his family during his illness.

Please pray for Margaret Cowden as she moves toward retirement.

Please pray for Cheryl Wade as she leaves her ministry at the ABCUSA Mission Center to begin a new job.

Please pray for all those who are beginning new ministries on the national level with ABCUSA.

Please pray for those involved in the process of marketing and selling the Mission Center in Valley Forge.

Please hold in prayer children and families living in poverty.

Please pray for Original Providence Baptist Church, and for the family of Rev. Dr. Edgar T. Thornton, as they mourn his passing and celebrate his homegoing.

Please hold in prayer IM missionaries Annie and Jeff Dieselberg, and all who are involved in NightLife and other ministries around the world to help women escape prostitution.

Please lift up in prayer Rev. George Pomeroy, husband of Rev. Diane Pomeroy. Diane is pastor of Community Baptist Church in Warrenville. George was recently diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease, for which he is being treated.

## *Calendar*

**November 23**—Thanksgiving Day

**November 25**—Carter Page's 18<sup>th</sup> birthday

**November 25**—Peace vigil, 3 p.m. to 4 p.m., Dunton Park, corner of Arlington Heights Road and Northwest Highway, Arlington Heights.

**November 28**--Finance and Property Committee meeting, ABCMC office, 3 p.m. Admission will be free of charge, but reservations are recommended. To reserve your seat, please phone 312-222-3026.

**November 30**—"Away with the Manger? Religion in the Public Square," 6-7:30 p.m., McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum, 445 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago.

**December 2**—Christmas at First Baptist, 21 N. Catherine, La Grange. Open house, 5 p.m.-9 p.m. Concerts 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

**December 3**—Christmas Music Concert, Christian Science Church, 5308 N. Kenmore Avenue, Chicago, 3 p.m.

**December 3**—New Hope Christmas Concert, Hope United Methodist Church, 7115 W. Hood (corner of Hood and Nickerson), 3 p.m.

**December 7-9**--"The Call to an Ancient Evangelical Future" conference, Lindner Conference Center, NBTS, Lombard. For information and registration, visit [www.growcenter.org](http://www.growcenter.org).

**December 9**—"The Gift of You," Community Church of Wilmette, 1020 Forest Avenue, Wilmette, 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Mini retreat by Grace Baptist Church. Suggested donation: \$12 (includes lunch and materials). Please register by December 6 to [pastor@gracebaptistchicago.com](mailto:pastor@gracebaptistchicago.com) or 773-334-9003.

**December 10**--Saint Saëns' "Christmas Oratorio" by North Shore Baptist Church Chancel Choir, 2 p.m., North Shore Baptist Church, 5244 N. Lakewood Avenue, Chicago. Cookies, cocoa, and a carol sing, too!

**January 21, 2007**—7<sup>th</sup> Annual Ecumenical Prayer Service for the Week or Prayer for Christian Unity, 4 p.m., Fourth Presbyterian Church, 126 E. Chestnut Street, Chicago.

**February 16-17, 2007**—"Revive Us Again! Revival of our Spirit, Revival of our Baptist Principles," Andover Newton Theological School, Newton Centre, MA. This will be a gathering of progressive Baptists from around the country.

**April 19-21, 2007**—ABC Central Sectional Black Church Education Conference, Midwest Hotel and Conference Center, Columbus, Ohio.

**June 29, 2007**—"Ministry in Such a Time as This" pre-Biennial event, 9 a.m.-noon, Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC.

**June 29-July 2, 2007**—ABCUSA Biennial Meeting and Centennial Celebration in Washington, DC. The theme will be "Arise and Shine."

**July 21-28, 2007**—National Gathering for Girls, Green Lake Conference Center. The conference fee is \$485 per person, and includes conference registration fee, housing, and meals;

scholarships are available. Further information may be found on the American Baptist Women's Ministries' website at [www.abwministries.org](http://www.abwministries.org).

**February 21-23, 2008**—Gathering of Baptist Bodies from across the U.S. for a celebration of a new Baptist covenant, Dallas, TX.

**April 14-17, 2008**—National Workshop on Christian Unity

## *Position Openings*

### *American Baptist Foundation Executive Vice President*

The American Baptist Foundation has initiated a search to fill the position of Executive Vice President. They are currently seeking qualified candidates for this position. This is a full-time position located at the Mission Center in Valley Forge, Pennsylvania. **Applications will be accepted by the Office of Human Resource Development until February 15, 2007.** Details are attached to this issue of *eWind*.

### *National Ministries Staff Writer*

National Ministries is currently seeking a qualified candidate to serve as **Staff Writer**. This position is open immediately. Details are attached to this issue of *eWind*.

### *Area Minister*

The ABC of the Central Region is now accepting nominations for an Area Minister to serve their Southeast Area. The search committee is praying for someone who can be a pastor to pastors, is adept at conflict transformation, is able to identify and equip strong leaders, and can walk on water. If you have suggestions or names of individuals whom God might be leading in this direction, please contact Steve Van Ostran, Associate Executive Minister, American Baptist Churches Central Region, 5833 SW 29<sup>th</sup> Street, Topeka, KS 66614; telephone 785-272-7622.

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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 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](mailto:abcmchi@aol.com). We email the newsletter each Wednesday.

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