

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.

June 20, 2007

Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.
Matthew 11:28

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ABCMC NEWS

Email for ABCMC Staff and Office

We are phasing out the email address abcmchi@aol.com as the general email box for ABCMC.
Beginning immediately, please send emails to ABCMC staff members individually. Staff email
addresses are as follows:

Larry Greenfield, Executive Minister
Tony Rake, Office Assistant
Jesse Smith, Bookkeeper
Lynne Kelley, Communication Coordinator
Lowell Young, Mission Support Associate

larry@abcmc.org
tony@abcmc.org
BookkeeperJesse@aol.com
lynne@abcmc.org
lowell@abcmc.org

If you're not sure which staff member to contact, you may use the general office email address, office@abcmc.org.

Please note that the bookkeeper's email address is at aol.com. Email to other staff members goes to abcmc.org.

Co-operating Church Annual Report - - Due June 30th!

Your church should recently have received from Valley Forge the 2006 Cooperating Church Annual Report form. This annual survey of all American Baptist churches is a very important tool for the ministries of both our denomination and our region, and we strongly encourage every church to complete and return the form. The due date is June 30th.

Your church's completed report should be mailed or faxed to Valley Forge. The address and fax number are included on the form, and a return envelope should have been included with the mailing you received.

If you don't want to or cannot readily provide some of the information requested on the form, just skip those sections. We would much rather have you submit a report with partial information than no report at all.

The report also can be completed on-line; directions for that option are included on the paper form you received. If you have questions, feel free to contact Lynne Kelley at the ABC-MC office, 773-695-9791, or T.J. Litwiler, ABC-MC Treasurer, at 312-252-1508. Many thanks for your help on this important process.

Are You Going to Biennial?

The ABCMC office has the names of only 15 individuals planning to attend Biennial, including our reception there. We are pretty sure more folks than that are going. If you are going to Biennial, and have not let the ABCMC office know, please contact Lynne Kelley at the ABCMC office, 773-695-9791 or lynne@abcmc.org, to let us know of your plans.

COMMUNITY NEWS

TOMORROW! *Community Renewal Future Summit*

You are invited to attend the Community Renewal Future Summit about engaging young leaders on Thursday, June 21, 1:30 - 5:30 p.m. at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, 5807 S. Woodlawn Avenue. Tickets: \$15 General / \$7 student, senior and low-income admission

The Community Renewal Society Future Summit is a set of intergenerational conversations that focus on the critical role that younger leaders can, must and do play in shaping the region's

future. As an attendee, you are eligible to include literature about your organization on one of our Resource Tables. This is a great way to spread the word about your organization's ongoing campaigns and initiatives and upcoming events.

Once you register, reply to your confirmation email with the subject line "Resource Table." A member of our staff will follow up with you.

SATURDAY! *Crisis in the Gaza Strip: Working Under Fire*

The American Friends Service Committee, Arab-American Action Network and NIMN/Jewish Voice for Peace-Chicago invite you to attend an emergency breakfast and fundraiser, "Crisis in the Gaza Strip: Working Under Fire." This will be a discussion, update and emergency fundraiser featuring Dr. Mona El-Farra on Saturday, June 23, 9:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. at Grace Place, 637 S. Dearborn, Chicago

On this her first visit to the US, Dr. El-Farra will be speaking about women, children and human rights in the occupied Gaza Strip and showing photos and video clips from her life and work in Gaza. She will also be raising much-needed funds for her work with families in Gaza. Donations can be made to the Middle East Children's Alliance (MECA), a US registered non-profit organization.

Dr. Mona El-Farra is a physician, human rights activist, and mother in the occupied Gaza Strip. She is the Director of Gaza Projects for the Berkeley-based Middle East Children's Alliance, coordinating humanitarian aid distribution and support for community projects helping children and youth. Dr. El-Farra is also the Vice President of the Palestinian Red Crescent Society of the Gaza Strip and a member of the Union of Health Work Committees. Her popular blog, "From Gaza, with Love," has attracted the attention of activists, academics, and journalists around the world, landing her interviews on Democracy Now! and BBC and articles in the Boston Globe, LA Times, Le Monde Diplomatique, the Guardian and a forthcoming book by Noam Chomsky.

Links and info on the four children's centers MECA supports through Dr. El-Farra:

Afaq Jadida Center in Nuseirat Refugee Camp

<http://www.mecaforpeace.org/article.php?id=114>

Al Assria Children's Library in Jabalia Refugee Camp

<http://www.mecaforpeace.org/article.php?id=84>

Lo Batalna Nahlam in Khan Younis

<http://www.mecaforpeace.org/article.php?id=115>

Rachel Corrie Center in Rafah

<http://www.mecaforpeace.org/article.php?id=83>

For more information, contact Miryam Rashid at 312-427-2533 x18 or email mrashid@afsc.org

ABCUSA NEWS

Christians in the Gaza Strip

American Baptists are joining Christian brothers and sisters who are praying for the small group of Christian Baptists in the Gaza Strip of Palestine, who are enduring persecution during the recent escalation of factional violence between the political parties Hamas and Fatah.

Rev. Hanna Massad, pastor of the Gaza Baptist Church, contacted several American partners, including International Ministries (IM), on June 15, to say he, his family and the Baptist Christians

in Gaza were safe, despite violence, which has led to Hamas' virtually taking over Gaza, an area of more than 1.2 million people, most of whom live in refugee camps.

Hamas, well-known for its militant wing, is a political group in the Palestinian territory. Hamas won a majority of seats in parliamentary elections in January 2006 over the Fatah party. Since that time factional violence and fighting has escalated in Gaza and the West Bank.

"In the last few days, the Palestinian Authority Police took our church building as a watching point," Rev. Massad wrote in an email. He said the church attempted to deny the police request to take the building, but the forces broke in. Massad later discovered that a computer and other technical equipment, valued at about \$4,000, had been taken.

Rev. Massad also said he had to stop an evening worship service on June 10, due to shooting nearby. The apartment of another member of the church was bombed. The person was slightly injured, Massad said, but the family is alright.

Despite everything, Rev. Massad said, "We continue to experience the power of God's presence, his peace and love at this time."

"My prayers and the prayers of hundreds of thousands of American Baptists are with Massad and the Gaza Christian community at this time," said Rev. Charles Jones, IM's area director for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. "We are hopeful that our prayers and our advocacy will cause peace to be a reality in this troubled region, and for the Palestinians to overcome this present factional strife, which impedes the cause of reconciliation."

Rev. Massad has been pastor of the Gaza Baptist Church since 1987. In 1991, he came to the US to study at Fuller Theological Seminary in Pasadena, CA. While at Fuller, he was ordained as an American Baptist pastor, and served at First Baptist Church of Azusa, CA. He returned to Gaza in 1999.

Prayers Requested for Community of Delavan, Wisconsin after Multiple Murders

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 06/13/07) -- American Baptists send their prayers and condolences to the people of Delavan, Wis., and to the extended family of six people who so tragically died following an apparent murder/suicide last weekend. One toddler survived and newspaper reports say that the child's condition has been upgraded.

"The pastor of First Baptist Church in Delavan, the Rev. Michael Ida, is the police chaplain in this small, rural community some 40 miles from Milwaukee," said The Rev. Dr. Arlo Reichter, ABC of Wisconsin's executive minister, who requested prayer for the extended family and community members.

"Mike Ida was called to the scene about 11 p.m. on Saturday and was up all night with police and family members. He went home and changed his clothes and preached the Sunday morning service before returning to his volunteer duty as police chaplain," Reichter said, adding that Ida's work of support and counseling will continue with the police and families for some time.

The house where the shooting took place is across a park from the First Baptist Church. None of the people or families involved in the shooting was related to the congregation or its members, Reichter said.

First Baptist Church is the oldest church in Delavan. ABC of Wisconsin was formed during an association meeting hosted by the church in 1844. The church sponsors a number of outreach ministries in the community.

Joint Press Conference Scheduled for June 29 at ABCUSA Biennial/Centennial

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 06/12/07) -- A major joint press conference is set for 4 p.m., Friday, June 29, in Room 209-A of the Washington, DC Convention Center. This is the day of overlap scheduling by the American Baptist Churches, USA and the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship. The press conference will focus on "A New Era of Baptist Cooperation." While reporters may ask whatever they choose, a few topics of interest might be:

- The historic shared worship service that evening sponsored by ABC and CBF.
- The growing partnership between ABC and CBF, including dually appointed missionaries and church starts.
- The centennial celebration of ABC, founded in Washington, D.C., in 1907, as the Northern Baptist Convention.
- The growing role of the North American Baptist Fellowship as a regional body of the worldwide Baptist World Alliance.
- The New Baptist Covenant Celebration, initiated by President Jimmy Carter and Mercer University President Bill Underwood, that sponsors hope will draw more than 20,000 diverse Baptists to Atlanta in 2008.
- The upcoming consolidation of Baptist archives at Mercer University's Atlanta campus and the relocation of two major Baptist historical societies.
- Baptists and race relations, religious liberty, etc.

Participants will include:

- Dr. David Emmanuel Goatley, Executive Secretary-Treasurer, Lott Carey Baptist Foreign Mission Convention
- Rev. Dr. Sumner M. Grant, Executive Director, Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board
- Rev. Dr. Roy Medley, General Secretary, American Baptist Churches USA
- Rev. Dr. Tyrone S. Pitts, General Secretary, Progressive National Baptist Convention
- Rev. Dr. Reid Trulson, Executive Director, International Ministries, American Baptist Churches USA
- Dr. William D. Underwood, President, Mercer University
- Dr. Deborah Van Broekhoven, Executive Director, American Baptist Historical Society
- Rev. Dr. Daniel Vestal, Coordinator, Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
- Rev. Dr. Aidsand F. Wright-Riggins III, Executive Director, National Ministries, American Baptist Churches USA

American Baptists Mourn the Death of Ruth Graham

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 06/15/07) -- American Baptists' thoughts and prayers go out for the Graham family following the death of Ruth Graham yesterday. She was 87. Mrs. Graham died at 5:05 p.m. at her home at Little Piney Cove, surrounded by her husband and all five of their children, said a statement released by Larry Ross, Billy Graham's spokesman.

"She was a remarkable witness to our faith in Christ," said the Rev. Dr. Roy Medley, General Secretary of American Baptist Churches USA. "She will be missed not only by her family, but by so many of us who saw in her a model of Christian grace and integrity. We rejoice in the sure reward that is hers – even as we extend our deepest Christian sympathy to Dr. Graham." A public memorial service is scheduled for 2 p.m. Saturday at the Montreat Conference Center. A private interment service will be held the next day in Charlotte.

Arise & Shine Biennial

Information about ABCUSA's Biennial/Centennial on June 29-July 2, 2007, in Washington, DC is available at the ABCUSA web site. Information about pre-biennial and post-biennial events is also there. Online registration is easy and quick, and can be done at www.abc-usa.org.

Biennial/Centennial Hotels Are Sold Out

If you plan to attend Biennial, but have not yet made arrangements for lodging, consider staying in the convenient (and sometimes cheaper) suburbs. If you want to attend the Biennial/Centennial in Washington DC, June 29- July 2, but don't want to drive downtown, consider hotels in the suburbs – especially those close to the Metro. Unlike downtown hotels, many suburban hotels include free parking and breakfast.

Ministers Council

September Meeting in Metro Chicago

The Ministers Council of ABCMC will meet on Thursday, September 27 at North Shore Baptist Church, 5244 N. Lakewood Avenue, Chicago. The meeting, scheduled to take place from noon to 2 p.m., will feature guest speaker Douglas Sharp. Douglas, a professor of theology at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, is the author of *No Partiality: The Idolatry of Race and the New Humanity*. Racism will be his topic at the Ministers Council meeting.

If you would like to purchase a copy of his book, it is available from www.amazon.com, BUT you can get it from him for less. He has copies of the book that he sells for \$14 plus \$3.49 for shipping. His price is considerably less than what people pay on Amazon - \$23. Please contact Douglas at drs217@yahoo.com. A discussion guide is available at www.nopartiality.net.

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.

Prayer Requests

Please pray for world peace.

Gary Grogan, former Executive Minister of ABC of Mid-America, has lymphoma in his stomach

and will be starting 16 weeks of chemotherapy very soon. Please keep Gary in your prayers.

Please pray for all persons living in the Gaza Strip in Palestine.

Please pray for the people of Delavan, Wisconsin in the aftermath of violence there.

Calendar

TOMORROW! June 21—Community Renewal Future Summit about engaging young leader, 1:30 - 5:30 p.m., University of Chicago Graduate School of Business, 5807 S. Woodlawn Avenue. Tickets: \$15 General / \$7 student, senior and low-income admission

SATURDAY! June 23—Presentation on life in the Gaza Strip, “Crisis in the Gaza Strip: Working Under Fire,” Grace Place, 637 S. Dearborn, Chicago, 9:30-11:30 a.m.

SATURDAY! June 23—Chicago Rush Fellowship Day, Allstate Arena, Rosemont. Fellowship Hour, 4 p.m. Game, 7 p.m. For more information and reservations, contact David Hodge, 773.243.3460 or dhodge@chicagorush.com.

June 24—Lynne Kelley preaches at Irving Park Baptist Church

June 27-28—“[Seeing the Children—Transforming the Church](#)” pre-Biennial event, Howard University Divinity School, Washington, DC.

June 29—Religious Liberty Council Luncheon, 12:15 p.m. to 1:45 p.m., in the Independence Ballroom A of the Grand Hyatt Washington, DC. Tickets are \$40. To register and pay online, visit the [online registration page](#). To register by phone, contact Phallan Davis at (202) 544-4226 or pdavis@BJCOnline.org.

June 29—Deadline for applying for The Retirement Research Foundation’s Accessible Faith Grant Program. Please see www.rrf.org for more information.

June 29—“[Ministry in Such a Time as This: Adaptive Change for Faithful and Effective Leadership](#)” pre-Biennial event, 9 a.m.-noon, Washington Convention Center, Washington, DC. This event is sponsored by the Ministers Council, the Campus Ministry Association, and International Ministries. Visit www.abc-usa.org to register.

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

July 17—Finance and Property Committee meeting, 3 p.m., ABCMC office.

July 21—Family Cabinet meeting, ABCMC office, 9:30 a.m.

July 21-28—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.

August 6-10—Mediation Skills Training Institute. For more information and registration, please visit www.LMPeaceCenter.org.

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

August 21-23—Here I Stand: Leading Change Through Self-Differentiation. For more

information and registration, please visit www.LMPeaceCenter.org.

September 15—ABCMC Stewardship Seminar

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

September 21—International Day of Prayer for Peace

September 21-22—Lombard Mennonite Peace Center's *Healthy Congregations* Workshop, Christ Community Mennonite Church, Schaumburg. For more information and registration, please visit www.LMPeaceCenter.org.

September 22—Family Cabinet meeting, ABCMC office, 9:30 a.m.

October 16—Finance and Property Committee meeting, 3 p.m., ABCMC office.

October 20—Family Cabinet meeting, ABCMC office, 9:30 a.m.

November 10—ABCMC Annual Meeting

November 20—Finance and Property Committee meeting, 3 p.m., ABCMC office.

December 15—Family Cabinet meeting, ABCMC office, 9:30 a.m.

December 17—Finance and Property Committee meeting, 3 p.m., ABCMC office.

January 30-February 1, 2008—New Baptist Covenant Celebration, Atlanta, Georgia. Please visit www.newbaptistcovenant.org for more information.

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

June 21, 2008—ABCMC's Third Annual Disciples' Dinner, Lindner Conference Center, Lombard. Aidsand Wright-Riggins, Executive Director of ABCUSA's National Ministries, will be our keynote speaker.

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 lynne@abcmc.org. 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 lynne@abcmc.org.