

Metro Chicago

eWind

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

Weekly Electronic Newsletter of the American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago
A patchwork of varied news and announcements
from our churches, communities, denomination and other organizations,
covering a wide variety of interests reflecting the diversity of our region

August 27, 2008

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
1 John 1:9

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ABCMC NEWS

Jamieson Alexander Michael Brown



We welcome to the world and to the ABCMC family Mr. Jamieson Alexander Michael Brown, born to Jasmyne Brown on Thursday, August 21. He arrived weighing 6 pounds, 13 ounces, and was 19 ½ inches long. We are pleased to report that not only mother but also grandfather Jesse and grandmother Carol are feeling well, blessed and joyful.

Andrew Kmetko

Andrew Kmetko, a retired ABCMC pastor, died Tuesday, August 19 at the age of 91.

A native of Akron, Ohio, Andrew was ordained January 25, 1946 by Grace Baptist Church in that city. He was pastor of American Baptist congregations in Ohio (Cleveland) and Pennsylvania before coming to Chicago.

In Chicago he was pastor of New Covenant Baptist Church from October of 1959 through November of 1965. According to Al Firak, a member of Montrose Baptist Church, “New Covenant was originally the Immanuel Slovak Baptist Church, founded by Slovak immigrants. The congregation changed the name of the church *circa* 1947.” (Al grew up in this church, an American Baptist congregation that closed its doors some years ago.) Andrew was affiliated with the Czechoslovak Baptist Convention, in addition to the ABC.

Andrew became pastor of Montrose Baptist Church in January of 1968. He served there 9 ½ years until his retirement.

Throughout his time in ministry in Chicago, Andrew was known for his skills as a preacher, and as a pastoral leader. Following his retirement, Andrew was an active member of the First Baptist Church of Park Ridge for a number of years.

Among Andrew’s survivors is his wife, Alice Kmetko. Wed on October 18, 1937, Andrew and Alice were married for over 70 years.

A memorial service to commemorate Andrew Kmetko’s life and ministry will be held on Sunday, October 12 at the First Baptist Church of Park Ridge, 1266 N. Northwest Highway, Park Ridge, at 3 p.m.

David Scholer

We received word of the passing of David Scholer following a long and faith-filled struggle with cancer since 2002. He died on the morning of August 22. At the time of his death he was professor of New Testament at Fuller Theological Seminary, where he had taught since 1994. Prior to teaching at Fuller, David was on the faculty of North Park Theological Seminary in Chicago. A well-respected American Baptist scholar, David had friends, former students and admirers throughout the denomination.

According to the Fuller Theological Seminary web site, "Scholer's two volumes *Nag Hammadi Bibliography 1948-1969* (1971) and *Nag Hammadi Bibliography 1970-1994* (1997) represent his long-term commitment to gnostic studies; he recently edited *Social Distinctives of the Christians in the First Century: Pivotal Essays by E.A. Judge* (Hendrickson Publishers, 2008) as well. Also a specialist on women in ministry, he teaches "Women, the Bible and the Church" and is the author of numerous articles on women and ministry in the New Testament. He has in recent years received formal citations of appreciation for his work in this area from the American Baptist Women in Ministry, the Women's Concerns Committee at Fuller Seminary, and the Evangelical and Ecumenical Women's Caucus. Scholer has over 37 years of seminary teaching and academic administrative experience. He is an ordained minister in the American Baptist Churches and served as a pastor for two years and an interim pastor for three years."

David was well-known in American Baptist circles as author of *A Biblical Basis for Equal Partnership: Women and Men in the Ministry of the Church*, an essay supportive of women in ministry. It was published as a brochure and widely circulated in the denomination. It is still considered a pivotal statement about the Bible on women in ministry.

David and his wife Jeannette celebrated their 48th wedding anniversary on Saturday, August 16.

There will be visiting hours in the chapel of First Baptist Church of Pasadena (75 N. Marengo) on Thursday evening, August 28 6-9 p.m., and again on Saturday, August 30, 11 a.m.-1 p.m. David's funeral will be held in the sanctuary of First Baptist Church at 2 p.m. on Saturday, August 30. Memorial gifts may be made to the David M. Scholer Scholarship Fund at Fuller Theological Seminary, 135 N. Oakland Avenue, Pasadena, CA 91182.

Christian Financial Stewardship in Difficult Economic Times

TO: Clergy and Lay Leaders of ABCMC

FROM: Larry Greenfield, Executive Minister

RE: Stewardship Seminar

I hope you are making plans to attend our Third Annual ABCMC Stewardship Seminar on Saturday morning, September 20, at Third Baptist Church.

There's an announcement about this Stewardship Seminar in this edition of e-Wind, and again you can download an attachment of the poster for posting in your church.

Our theme this year is extremely relevant: **CHRISTIAN FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP IN DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES**. I don't think there is any doubt about the conditions we face in our economy, whether we are individuals, families, churches, or church-related organizations. The question we have to face is how do we continue to sustain our ministries in these circumstances.

I am pleased that we have such terrific leaders in the field of stewardship to help us address that question. Let me introduce two of them to you briefly:

Lawrence E. Wilson III is the Executive Vice President of the American Baptist Foundation of our denomination. With a degree in economics from Drew University and an MBA from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, and a successful career in marketing and public relations in some of the country's largest corporations and significant cultural and educational institutions, he brings an unusual set of gifts to our seminar this year. Besides that, he is a person of vision for our ABCUSA ministries.

Larry Robinson is one of our own in Metro Chicago. He has a deep dedication to the church and its ministries. And in recent years, drawing on his experience at Second Baptist Churches of Wheaton and other congregations, he has developed an amazing set of resources for churches who are committed to Christian stewardship, which are now being used across the country and around the world. Entitled "More Than A Gift," the program Larry has developed is based on a rich array of biblical teachings that are made applicable to everyday life of faith.

I hope you and members of your congregation will be sure to take advantage of this timely and important opportunity.

Thinking Theologically

ABCMC's Executive Minister, Larry Greenfield, pens a fortnightly column for Protestants for the Common Good. His most recent column, "A Laboring God," appears at the end of this edition of eWind.

Junta de los Pastores Hispánicos

Los pastores Hispánicos de ABCMC tendrán junta en la Iglesia Bautista Central, 2417 N. Campbell, Chicago. Ellos se reunirán a las 9 de la mañana el 13 de septiembre.

Kids Hope United Annual Dinner



Get to know Kids Hope better. Save the date: November 12, 2008, for the Kids Hope United Annual Dinner. There will be dinner, program and keynote speaker. The event is at 6 p.m. at the law firm of Drinker Biddle, 191 North Wacker Drive, Suite 3700, Chicago (in the Loop). There is no charge for this event. More details will follow. Contact Kristy Cechini at 847-245-6505 for more information or if you are interested in attending.

Stewardship Seminar

CHRISTIAN FINANCIAL STEWARDSHIP
in
DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES

Third Annual Stewardship Seminar
American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago

Saturday, September 20, 2008
9:00 a.m. – Noon

Heritage Plaza Center
1500 W. 95th Street
Chicago, IL 60643

How can the ministries of Christ's church *not* suffer when members of congregations are themselves hurting financially in tough economic times?

Attend the Third Annual Stewardship Seminar of the American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago to be equipped for:

Church Budgeting in Lean Years
The Annual Stewardship Campaign
Stewardship Education for the Whole Year
Benefiting by Becoming Congregationally Green
Gift Planning and Planned Giving
Giving to Those Who Need Our Help
Preaching and Teaching Stewardship

A free seminar designed for church leaders who accept the challenge of securing resources to support the opportunities for ministries and missions of congregations.

Make reservations by calling (773-804-1655), faxing (773-804-1656), or e-mailing (office@abcmc.org) the ABCMC office.

(Free parking at Third Baptist Church, 1551 W. 95th, east end of the parking lot.)

A flier is attached with this issue of *eWind*. Please print, distribute and display the flier. Above all, please come to the event.

NEWS FROM ABCMC CONGREGATIONS

Interim Sabbatical Pastor

North Shore Baptist Church, 5244 N. Lakewood Avenue, Chicago, has welcomed David W. Andersen from Toledo, Ohio to serve as interim sabbatical pastor while Carol McVetty and Doug Harris are on sabbatical. David has served American Baptist congregations in Michigan, West Virginia and Ohio. We gladly welcome him to ABCMC.

Special Musical Guest

Gospel recording artist Dr. C. Charles Clency will be leading worship at the First Baptist Church of Waukegan along with a gospel choir composed of singers from the church on Sunday, August 31. Dr. Clency is professor of music at the College of Lake County (CLC) and leads the 60 voice CLC gospel choir. He holds degrees in music from Northeastern Illinois University, Indiana University, and the University of Miami.

A gifted organist, pianist, and conductor, Clency was accompanist-arranger for the gospel singer Mahalia Jackson. He later produced six recording albums with his own 60-singer Voices of Melody, which gained national renown for their choral diversity and excellence. You will not want to miss this event!

The church is at 401 N. Genesee Street in Waukegan. The worship service will be at 10 a.m.

Revival at Community Church of Wilmette

The Community Church of Wilmette invites us to be revived in God's justice and mercy at a three-day revival, September 5-7. On Friday evening, September 5, at 7:30 p.m., ABCMC's Executive Minister Larry Greenfield will be the preacher. On Saturday evening, following a pot-luck supper at 6 p.m., Alice Greene, pastor of Irving Park Baptist Church, will be the guest preacher. On Sunday morning, the church's pastor Tripp Hudgins will be the preacher at the 10:30 a.m. service.

Homecoming Sunday at Morgan Park

Homecoming Sunday at Morgan Park Baptist Church will be September 7. The day will begin at 9:30 a.m. with Sunday School for all ages. The worship service will be at 11 a.m. After worship, everyone is invited to stay for a fried chicken dinner. Please make dinner reservations by calling the church office at 773-445-9443. The church is at 11024 S. Bell Avenue, Chicago.

Rally Day in Flint

Woodside Church, 1509 E. Court Street, Flint, Michigan will begin their fall programs with Rally Day. This event will take place at the church on Sunday, September 7. The day will have a luau theme, complete with a pig roast and outdoor fellowship. All are welcome.

Rally Day in Mount Prospect

The South Church, 501 S. Emerson Street, Mount Prospect, will have Rally Day on September 7. Sunday School will resume that day.

Rally Day at North Shore

September 7 will be Rally Day at North Shore Baptist Church, 5244 N. Lakewood Avenue, Chicago. Members are invited to gather in Howell Hall during Fellowship Time to register for the new program year.

Annual Homecoming Celebration

Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, will host their Annual Homecoming Celebration on Sunday, September 14. Festivities will begin with breakfast at 9 a.m. Jim Byrne will be the chef. The worship service will follow at 11 a.m. All are welcome. Please contact the church at 773-286-6800 to make breakfast reservations.

Dr. Hatch's 15th Anniversary



New Mount Pilgrim Baptist Church will celebrate the 15th anniversary of the Rev. Dr. Marshall E. Hatch, Sr. as their pastor. Marshall Hatch is the 2008 recipient of ABCMC's Esther Davis Award in Ministries of Social Justice. The celebration will take place September 9-16. On Sunday, September 14, the church will have a special anniversary Sunday service. ABCMC's Executive Minister Larry Greenfield will be the guest preacher. The service will begin at 11 a.m. Congratulations to congregation and pastor!

Back to School Bash



On Sunday, September 14, Morgan Park Baptist Church, 11024 S. Bell Avenue, Chicago, will say to the neighborhood, "Hey! We're here!" All around the church grounds that day from 1 to 3 p.m. the church will host a "Back to School Bash" with music, ice cream, information about the church, and carnival type games with school supplies as prizes. All are welcome.

South Church to Install Pastor

The South Church, 501 S. Emerson Street, Mount Prospect, will install Rick Kesler as pastor on Sunday September 21 at their regular worship service time, 10:30 a.m.

Blessing of the Animals



At 3:30 on the afternoon of Sunday, September 28, the Federated Church of Wauconda will hold a brief worship service in the back yard of the parsonage, and thank God for their animal companions. Each pet will be introduced and blessed with prayer. Water and treats for cats and dogs will be served.

175th Anniversary Year Celebrations

This invitation is from the First Baptist Church of Chicago.

The First Baptist Church of Chicago will be celebrating its 175th Anniversary during 2008. Please join as we celebrate.

Our Anniversary Sunday, October 12 at 11 a.m. Dr. Michael Thomas, the Director of the Doctor of Ministry Program at Northern Baptist Theological Seminary will be our guest speaker. On that Sunday afternoon at 4 p.m. our guest speaker will be Rev. Reginald Bachus, Pastor of the historic Friendship Baptist Church of Chicago.

Dr. Roy Medley, the General Secretary of ABCUSA, will be our guest speaker on December 14 at 11 a.m.

Morgan Park to Install New Pastor

Thomas Aldworth will be installed as pastor of Morgan Park Baptist Church, 11024 S. Bell Avenue, Chicago on Sunday, October 26. The service will take place at the church at 3 p.m.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Sojourners Resource for Voters

Due to overwhelming interest and demand, Sojourners has updated and re-issued "**Vote All Your Values**" voter issues guide for the 2008 election.

This is a non-partisan resource that endorses no candidates. It simply raises issues that we as Christians may choose to consider as we prepare to exercise our right to vote.

[Download your FREE copy of the 2008 issues guide today.](#)

(The URL is http://www.soj.net/index.cfm?action=action.VOP&item=VOP_download_form) The document is a PDF file that you may want to print and share. You might use it to prompt conversation with others.

As part of Sojourners' "Vote Out Poverty" campaign this election season, the guide helps Christians examine seven core biblical themes before heading to the ballot box in November. During the last election, nearly half a million copies of the guide were distributed across the country, to expand the Christian voter dialogue to issues like poverty, the environment, and a comprehensive foreign policy.

Northern Baptist Theological Seminary Welcomes New President

The Northern Seminary Board of Trustees has prayerfully and unanimously selected the Reverend Dr. Alistair Brown to lead the school in its next chapter of theological education. Dr. Brown will begin his leadership responsibilities in mid-September.

For the past 12 years, Dr. Brown served as General Director of the Baptist Missionary Society (BMS) at its World Mission headquarters in Didcot, Oxfordshire, UK. He also served for more than ten years as senior pastor at a large, center-city church in Aberdeen, UK. Dr. Brown earned a Ph.D at the University of Edinburgh.

Dr. Brown will lead the seminary through several changes, including the relocation of its main campus to Elgin, IL adjacent to Judson University. Here are the specifics related to the move:

- Courses will continue to be held at the Lombard campus for the 2008-2009 academic year.
- Beginning with the 2009-2010 academic year, courses will be offered at the Elgin campus.
- Once the campus moves, there will be continued learning opportunities in Lombard as well as Rockford, Lawndale, Elgin, and online.
- New education sites will be launched in the Chicago area.
- Online and distance learning courses will be expanded.

"Change is neither easy nor simple," says Dr. Brown. "There's always uncertainty, usually some fear, occasionally wrong directions, but eventually – with God's help – new ways which bring health, vitality, relevance and impact. All of that is ahead for Northern."

For more information, visit www.seminary.edu

Summit for Criminal Justice Reform

Community Renewal survey data that indicates a solid majority of Illinois voters believe the best criminal justice policies are those that seek to reduce and prevent crime through education and rehabilitation, such as job training and treatment for substance abuse.

Conducted by political scientist Tari Renner, Ph.D., for Community Renewal, the survey mirrors results of

recent national surveys that indicate overwhelming public support for rehabilitation and other options for prisoners both during and after release from prison.

In October there will be a faith summit for criminal justice reform in Illinois. The Community Renewal Society urges you to attend.

The purpose of the Faith Summit is to more fully engage Illinois' religious community in a strong show of support for significant reform of our criminal justice system.

At the event we will:

- Unveil a statement of shared values as a blue-print for ongoing criminal justice reform
- Demonstrate broad and deep support and a growing constituency for change
- Secure commitments from policy-makers and leaders to advance specific criminal justice reforms

TAKE ACTION!

Call for a Criminal Justice System Based on Restoration, Rehabilitation, and Healing!
Sign the Statement of People of Faith on the Transformation of the Illinois Criminal Justice System.
People of faith in Illinois are calling for a justice system rooted in the principles of restoration, rehabilitation, and healing. Your voice is needed. On October 5th, Illinois faith communities and the Community Renewal Society will convene the first ever Faith Summit for Criminal Justice Reform to lay out a new vision for our broken criminal justice system. Take action now to call for our state to turn away from vengeance and take a stand for restoration, rehabilitation, and healing:

- 1) Sign the statement
- 2) Register to attend the Faith Summit
- 3) Spread the Word

HERE IS THE BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE SUMMIT:

Faith Summit for Criminal Justice Reform
Sunday, October 5th, 2008
Resource Fair – 1:30 to 2:45 p.m.
Summit Event – 3 to 4:30P p.m.
The Forum, University of Illinois at Chicago
725 W. Roosevelt Road
Chicago, IL 60608

Ample parking located two blocks west of the UIC Forum at 1135 S. Morgan St., Lot 5.

Charting Self

Charting Self, a monthly series grounded in Bowen Family Systems Theory and focusing on the *Beliefs Chart*, will be held at First Presbyterian Church in La Grange beginning in September. Sessions will continue through May. Registrations are limited to 15.

Through the construction of their own *Beliefs Chart*, participants will explore how emotional process may have influenced the shaping of their beliefs. Upon completion of the series, participants will also be able to use the ***Charting Self*** curriculum in their own teaching.

For a fuller description of the series, please see the attached brochure, or click [here](http://www.beliefschart.org/Charting%20Self%20CFC%20Series%20Brochure.pdf) (<http://www.beliefschart.org/Charting%20Self%20CFC%20Series%20Brochure.pdf>) to open and print a registration brochure.

ABCUSA NEWS

For additional articles from the American Baptist News Service, please visit <http://www.abc-usa.org/howweare/newsservice.aspx>.

Please Correct the Error

ABC churches and pastors recently received the World Mission Offering materials. We have received word that there is an unfortunate typographical error in a telephone number in two places in these materials. The incorrect phone number is one that neither International Ministries nor your church wants to be associated with.

To help correct the problem, National Ministries asks that you do the following:

1. Use a dark marker to scratch off the number on the inside left front pocket of the folder. The correct number is 1-800-222-3872, ext. 2208.
2. Use a dark marker to scratch off the phone number on the pew envelopes. Or you may discard the pew envelopes you received and order new ones by calling 1-800-4JUDSON.

ABCUSA Celebrates Anniversary of Founding Role in World Council of Churches

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 08/23/08) — Six decades have passed since the founding Assembly of the World Council of Churches (WCC) in Amsterdam, the Netherlands...an event that included the participation of American Baptist Churches USA, then the Northern Baptist Convention. On August 23, 1948, the WCC was officially voted into existence, with delegates declaring, "We intend to stay together." American Baptists have been involved participants in the life of the World Council of Churches throughout its history.

The General Secretary for the National Council of Churches (WCC partner organization), Rev. Dr. Michael Kinnamon, said U.S. church fellowships played an important role in the founding of the WCC and continue to share its history. Years before the WCC was officially formed, American denominational bodies helped keep the spirit of the WCC alive. In September 1939, the church groups of Europe ran for cover when their countries went to war against one another. It took years for the dust to settle. During the Second World War, most of the records of the "World Council of Churches in Formation" were held in the United States for safe-keeping, by what later became the U.S. Conference for the WCC.

"The U.S. [denominations] have the unusual distinction of being a component part that predates its parent body," Kinnamon said. "From the very beginning, the U.S. churches made it clear they believed we were all together as members of Christ's universal Church."

Said ABCUSA General Secretary Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley, "American Baptists are proud of our role in founding the World Council of Churches and the strides it has taken in Christian unity, mission and witness."

IM Missionaries to Help Recruit Others to Serve Around the World

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 08/24/08) — Missionaries Iris and Mario Morales, who have served in Bolivia for the past seven years, now will also work with American Baptist International Ministries in the recruitment of new missionaries. Starting Sept. 1, Iris and Mario will serve on part-time special assignment as recruitment associates while continuing their mission work related to Bolivia.

"We believe God is calling us to expand our efforts in global mission with the appointment of new missionaries," said Reid Trulson, executive director of International Ministries. "The ministry that Iris and Mario enter as recruitment associates will greatly expand our capacity to help missionary candidates

discern God's call upon their lives." International Ministries currently serves missionaries and partners in 76 countries.

Iris and Mario currently reside in Arizona for medical reasons and will base their recruitment efforts from this U.S. location. They also continue to work with the Bolivian Baptist Union and the House of Hope and make periodic visits to Bolivia. The House of Hope is a multi-faceted ministry in Cochabamba serving needs of women, children, pastors and families. Cochabamba is a major city in the central Western area of Bolivia, which also is in the central Western part of the continent of South America.

"Our partners deeply respect education and would embrace additional missionaries serving as resources for theological education and various forms of training and leader development," commented Iris and Mario. "The needs in Bolivia can also be found in many other parts of the world. We are eager as recruitment associates to help potential missionary candidates to discern their call to missionary vocations and to match their skills with the needs identified by our partners throughout Latin America, Africa, Asia, Europe and the Middle East."

Individuals wishing to explore the possibility of long-term international missionary service are invited to contact Iris and Mario Morales by e-mail imrecruitment@abc-usa.org or by calling the International Ministries at 1-800-222-3872 ext. 2304. Learn more about mission opportunities with International Ministries at www.internationalministries.org/read/3831.

American Baptist International Ministries, organized in 1814, is the oldest Baptist mission agency formed in North America. We serve more than 2,500 short-term and long-term missionaries annually, bringing U.S. and Puerto Rico churches together with partners in 76 countries in cutting-edge ministries that tell the good news of Jesus Christ while meeting human needs.

HEALTH CARE NEWS

Health Care Speak-Out September 17

The Commonwealth Fund recently released a study reporting more than two in five adults report problems paying medical bills in 2007. 61% of these individuals were insured. As our health care crisis deepens its impact on individuals and families, we need to come together to create an American solution that protects both the health and financial well-being of everyone. Come be a part of our grassroots movement for Healthcare for America NOW! at a Health Care Speak-Out on September 17th. The event will take place at the Waukegan Public Library, 126 N. County Street, Waukegan at 6 p.m. A flier is attached with this issue of *eWind*. Please print it out and share it, and come to the event in Waukegan.

PEACE NEWS

Northwest Suburban Meeting

The Northwest Suburban Peace and Education Project will hold its monthly meeting on Wednesday, September 10. The meeting will take place at the South Church, 501 S. Emerson Street, Mount Prospect, at 7 p.m. At this meeting the group will finalize fall plans for District 214 high schools. All are invited to attend.

MINISTERS COUNCIL NEWS

Ministers Council Senate Marks Leadership Transition, Schell Award Recipient

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 08/25/08) — The 2008 Ministers Council Senate meeting, held at the Green Lake Conference Center, Green Lake, WI, was called to order on Saturday, August 16 by Dr. Alice Greene, President, and Pastor of Irving Park Baptist Church in Chicago, Illinois. The theme of the meeting was Re-Membering Your Future, with scriptural emphasis on the journeys of Abraham and Ruth. The focus was on building collegial relationships among clergy, with stress on mutual support and professional development. Next steps include strengthening of constituent Councils and fundraising to undergird the organization's mission in the future.

Founded in 1935, the Ministers Council is the professional association of pastoral leaders in the ABC, "the only group solely committed to the well-being of the clergy person," or as stated in 1944, "the only organization within the setup of our denomination which exists for ministers and missionaries, seeking only to help Baptist ministers to be good ministers of Jesus Christ."

The Ministers Council encourages and resources Together in Ministry collegial covenant groups funded by nearly three million dollars in grants from the Lilly Endowment Institute. Information on group formation and funding is available at: www.ministerscouncil.com/TogetherInMinistry. Applications for 2009 funding are due on October 31, 2008.

The Ministers Council is a member-owned organization comprised of constituent Councils of dues-paying members. The Councils elect representatives who meet together annually as a Senate to conduct business and to choose a national executive committee, which meets twice annually and conducts the business of the Senate in between sessions. The Senate is comprised of five working committees: membership and constituency; spiritual and personal wholeness; professional effectiveness; denominational relationships; and communications. Through service on one of those committees, each Senator plays a vital role in the mission of the Ministers Council.

The Senate focused on the three-part Ministers Council strategy with scope and frequency variables to enhance the relational web:

- Face-to-face collegial covenant groups that meet monthly
- Strong constituent Councils with exciting programs
- Biennial pattern of national conferences
 - 2004 Strong in the Lord conference
 - 2006 Wait on the Lord conference
 - 2008 New Covenant Baptists event and Fanning the Flame conference participation
 - 2010 Rejoice in the Lord

On Sunday afternoon, Rev. Dr. A. Roy Medley, General Secretary of ABCUSA, and Rev. Dr. Jeff Woods, Associate General Secretary for Regional Ministries of ABCUSA, presented a draft proposal for the reorganization of the denominational structure that will be up for a vote at the 2009 Biennial in Pasadena, for implementation in January of 2010.

The recipient of the Ralph Garfield Schell Presidential Award was announced at the meeting. The 2008 recipient is Dr. William Thurmond, Senior Pastor, Park Windsor Baptist Church, Los Angeles, CA, where he has served since 1990. Dr. Thurmond is also a member of the Pastor's Advisory Committee to the Mayor, Inglewood, CA and has served the American Baptist Theological Center, Pasadena, CA since 1990. He is a member of the African-American Korean-American Christian Alliance.

The Ralph Garfield Schell Presidential Award recipient is announced annually at the closing banquet of the American Baptist Ministers Council Senate August meeting. It is presented to a pastoral leader who

has been extraordinarily faithful in carrying out the principles of the Ministers Council Code of Ethics, as well as having been unusually effective in ministry. Dr. Thurmond has served in several positions of leadership in the American Baptist Churches USA, and has been on the staff of both American Baptist Churches of LA and American Baptist Churches of the Pacific Southwest.

The meeting also marked the retirement of Dr. Kate Harvey, Executive Director of the Ministers Council, after 13 years of leadership. Prior to assuming the leadership of the Ministers Council, Dr. Harvey served as minister of the First Baptist Church in America, Providence, RI, and as the Vice President of the American Baptist Churches USA. Her tenure as Executive Director has included development of Together in Ministry collegial covenant groups funded by securing and administration of several financial grants, including nearly three million from the Lilly Endowment Institute. She has also organized the 2004-2005 Jerusalem Council meetings. Dr. Harvey was highly commended by both Senate and denominational leaders for her effectiveness as Executive Director.

Commenting on her departure, Dr. Medley said, "Kate's dedicated service and commitment to the Ministers Council have been invaluable. Her capable leadership has grown the Ministers Council in both depth and scope, and she will be missed. We wish Kate God's richest blessings in her retirement."

Dr. Joseph R. Kutter, past President of the Ministers Council, has been appointed Acting Executive Director effective September 1, 2008. Dr. Kutter has most recently been the Senior Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Topeka, KS. Prior to that he served as Senior Pastor of First Baptist Church of Royal Oak, MI.

Ministers Council Dues

Dues for 2008 must be paid no later than September 30. If you still need to pay your membership dues, please send \$45 to Sara Day, ABCMC's Ministers Council treasurer, at
Rev. Dr. Sara E. Day, CFP®
The Ministers & Missionaries Benefit Board
2205 S. Wolf Rd. #281
Hillside, IL 60162
(This is a new address.)

If you have any questions about dues, please contact Sara by email at sara.day@mmbb.org or by phone at 800.531.1940.

ABCMC Ministers Council September Meeting

The Ministers Council of ABCMC will have an afternoon meeting at Lake Street Church, 607 Lake Street, Evanston, on September 25, 4:30-6:00 p.m. The program for the meeting will include discussing with Bob Thompson, pastor of Lake Street Church, his recently published book, *A Voluptuous God*.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for World peace.

Please hold in prayer the family and friends of David Scholer as they celebrate his life and grieve his death.

Please hold in prayer the family and friends of Andrew Kmetko as they celebrate his life and grieve his death.

Please remember in prayer Doug Harris and Carol McVetty, pastors at North Shore Baptist Church, who are embarking this week on a three-month sabbatical.

Please pray for the growing ministry of ABC missionary Roberta Stephens in bringing volunteers to minister in Japan. Roberta lives in Tokyo, where she works with the Japan Baptist Union.

Please pray for John and Tomoko Armagost, ABC missionaries who work with Japan Baptist Union churches in western Japan. Please also remember in prayer their children.

Please pray for everyone—teachers and students and others—returning to school this season.

CALENDAR

August 30—Funeral for David Scholer, First Baptist Church of Pasadena 75 N. Marengo, Pasadena, California, 2 p.m.

September 4-7--Many Stories One Voice Conference, New Orleans. Please visit web site, www.manystoriesonevoice.org.

September 5—Larry Greenfield preaches at revival service, Community Church of Wilmette, 1020 Forest Avenue, Wilmette, 7:30 p.m.

September 6—North Shore Baptist Church, 5244 N. Lakewood Avenue, Chicago, participates in LBRC Annual Yard Sale, 8 a.m.-2 p.m.

September 6—Alice Greene preaches at revival service, Community Church of Wilmette, 1020 Forest Avenue, Wilmette, following pot-luck supper at 6 p.m.

September 7—Homecoming Sunday, Morgan Park Baptist Church, 11024 S. Bell Avenue, Chicago, 9:30 a.m. Sunday School, 11 a.m. worship, 12:15 p.m. fried chicken dinner.

September 7—Rally Day at South Church in Mount Prospect and Woodside Church in Flint Michigan.

September 7—Tripp Hudgins preaches at revival and communion service, Community Church of Wilmette, 1020 Forest Avenue, Wilmette, 10:30 a.m.

September 10—Northwest Suburban Peace and Education Project meeting, South Church, 501 S. Emerson Street, Mount Prospect, 7 p.m.

13 de septiembre--Junta de los pastores hispánicos, Iglesia Bautista Central, 2417 N. Campbell, Chicago, 9 a.m.

September 14—Homecoming Celebration, Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, 9 a.m. breakfast, 11 a.m. worship service.

September 14—Celebration of the 15th anniversary of Marshall Hatch as pastor of New Mount Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church; Larry Greenfield preaches at New Mount Pilgrim Missionary Baptist Church, 5301 W. Washington Boulevard, Chicago, 11 a.m.

September 14—Back to School Bash, Morgan Park Baptist Church, 11024 S. Bell Avenue, Chicago, 1 p.m.-3 p.m.

September 16--Finance and Property Committee meeting, Wunderlich Securities office, 200 W. Madison, Suite 2950, Chicago, 3 p.m.

September 20—Third Annual ABCMC Stewardship Seminar, Third Baptist Church of Chicago, Heritage Plaza Center, 1500 W. 95th Street, Chicago, 9 a.m.-Noon.

September 21—Installation of Rick Kesler as pastor of the South Church, 501 S. Emerson Street, Mount Prospect, 10:30 a.m.

September 21--ABCMC Sunday, Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago; Larry Greenfield preaching, 11 a.m.

September 25--Ministers Council meeting, Lake Street Church, 607 Lake Street, Evanston, 4:30-6 p.m.

September 28—ABCMC Sunday at the First Baptist Church of Park Forest, 80 N. Orchard, Park Forest; Larry Greenfield preaches, 11 a.m.

October 5—Faith Summit for Criminal Justice Reform: Resource Fair – 1:30-2:45 p.m.; Summit Event – 3-4:30 p.m.; The Forum, University of Illinois at Chicago, 725 W. Roosevelt Road, Chicago.

October 12—Memorial service for Andrew Kmetko, First Baptist Church of Park Ridge, 1266 N. Northwest Highway, Park Ridge, 3 p.m.

October 12—ABCMC Sunday at the First Baptist Church of Berwyn, 6916 W. 34th Street, Berwyn; Larry Greenfield preaches.

October 17-19--Health Care Sabbath. Please contact Eric Quamme (equamme@ilmaternal.org) for more information.

October 21--Finance and Property Committee meeting, Wunderlich Securities office, 200 W. Madison, Suite 2950, Chicago, 3 p.m.

October 21-22—Conference of Baptist Leaders from Burma, October 21-22, at the Chin Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas.

October 26—Installation of Thomas Aldworth as pastor of Morgan Park Baptist Church, 11025 S. Bell Avenue, Chicago, 3 p.m.

November 1—Workshop with Ken Medema, Rockford. For more information, please contact Mark Vincent by e-mail: marklv@DesignForMinistry.com or marklv@DesignForBusinessIntl.com or phone: 877-771-3330 or 888-463-9995.

November 7-8--ABCMC Annual Meeting.

November 12—Kids Hope United Annual Dinner, law firm of Drinker Biddle, 191 North Wacker Drive, Suite 3700, Chicago (in the Loop), 6 p.m.

November 18--Finance and Property Committee meeting, Wunderlich Securities office, 200 W. Madison, Suite 2950, Chicago, 3 p.m.

December 20--Finance and Property Committee meeting, Wunderlich Securities office, 200 W. Madison, Suite 2950, Chicago, 3 p.m.

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 email the newsletter each Wednesday. We welcome your news, prayer requests and comments. Please email your communications to the editor, Lynne Kelley, at lynne@abcmc.org. If you spot a typographical error or other mistake in *eWind*, please let us know at the ABCMC office, 773-804-1655. The ABCMC office is at 7035 W. Grand Avenue, Suite 102, Chicago, Illinois 60707

THINKING THEOLOGICALLY ABOUT THE COMMON GOOD

August 28, 2008

“*A Laboring God*”

My guess is that a lot of folks think that God did a lot of laboring on the first six days – whatever length one surmises those days were – of creation, rested on the seventh, and then, for all practical purposes, retired.

Retired, that is, for good.

It doesn't occur to us that the logic of the creation narrative in the first chapter of Genesis and in the Exodus account of the Fourth Commandment (observing the Sabbath and keeping it holy) is that on the *eighth* day God, like the human beings God created, went back to work.

But as the Deuteronomic account of those Ten Commandments makes clear when focusing on the fourth imperative (observing the Sabbath and keeping it holy), God's work wasn't just creating. God was also in the on-going business of taking care of God's people.

(Unlike the Exodus text in which everyone observes the Sabbath because God rested on the seventh day, in Deuteronomy the exclusive justification for both master and slave resting on the Sabbath is God's liberating the Israelites from Egypt: “Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the Sabbath day.” Deut. 5: 15)

The same is repeatedly the case in the Psalms, in which the work and works of God are the cause of praise and adoration, of loyalty and faithfulness, of thanksgiving rededication.

Psalm 105, for example, begins by giving thanks to God and calls on the faithful to make known God's *deeds* among all the peoples, then invokes singing and praise to tell of God's “*wondrous works*,” and finally implores the people to “remember the *wonderful works* God has done, God's miracles, and the judgments God uttered.” The remainder of this 45-versed Psalm is an extended recital of particular deeds and works of God for God's people.

It would be a mistake, however, to think that just because the Psalmist has stated this all in the past tense, we are to assume that God has stopped working. The God receiving thanks and praise is the God who continues to labor for God's people.

And it is this laboring God who invites those who offer thanks and praise to be laborers – co-laborers with God – in the divine cause.

So we who are created in God's image and likeness honor God not just when we rest with God on the Sabbath, but as well when we labor with God for the kind of world God intends: a liberated world, a reconciled creation, a beloved community.

In fact, a case could be made on the basis of how Jesus re-interprets the Sabbath in the New Testament that the Sabbath itself is a day to prepare ourselves for exactly that divine work of liberation, reconciliation, and love.

If “liturgy” is, in its derivation, “the work of the people” on behalf of a public good, then Sabbath worship, for the followers of Jesus, has precisely that imperative of joining with a laboring God for the work of God – laboring with God for the righteous kingdom or the inclusive community of love.

* * * * *

Labor Day surely has its strictly civic meanings that any Christian can and should honor and appreciate. Because democracy at its core depends on the work of “we the people” in every sphere of our common life, we should pay our respects to *all* who labor.

We might also legitimately entertain the notion that, in our democracy, any obstacle, any hurdle, and hindrance to work should be treated as itself anti-democratic, whether it be personal laziness and sloth, or economic theories that tolerate or even depend on some degree of unemployment, or public and corporate policies that bar persons from employment because of a previous criminal record, even when they have served their sentences and worked to prepare themselves for re-entry into the world of work.

But Labor Day ought to have additional – really, a more fundamental – meaning for the Christian.

It should be a religious holiday as well as a civic one – a holy day to honor a laboring God, and a holy day to rededicate ourselves to laboring with that laboring God on behalf of the community of justice and love that God is still at work creating.