

*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

November 12, 2008



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## ABCMC NEWS

### *Thinking Theologically*

Every other week ABCMC’s Executive Minister Larry Greenfield writes a column for *The Common Good Network*, the enewsletter of Protestants for the Common Good. His most recent column appears at the end of this issue of *eWind*. If you would like to subscribe to *The Common Good Network*, please visit [www.thecommongood.org](http://www.thecommongood.org).

### *Kids Hope United in the News*

Kids Hope United will celebrate 60 years in Lake Villa on Wednesday, December 10, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on its Lake Villa campus, 215 N. Milwaukee Avenue. The celebration will include a short program at 6 p.m., as well as tours of the Lehmann Mansion and refreshments beginning at 4 p.m. All are invited. RSVP by December 5 to 847-245-6505.

Kids Hope United used to be the Central Baptist Children’s Home. As such, it maintained a close relationship with ABCMC congregations. It still has a close relationship, although it is no longer an orphanage. Kids Hope ministers with children and families in a number of ways. You can learn more about their ministries by attending the event on December 10, or by visiting their web site at [www.kidshopeunited.org](http://www.kidshopeunited.org).

To see the news article that appeared in the News Sun on November 22-23, please go to [http://www.suburbanchicagonews.com/newssun/news/1293402.5\\_1\\_WA22\\_KIDSHOPE\\_S1.article](http://www.suburbanchicagonews.com/newssun/news/1293402.5_1_WA22_KIDSHOPE_S1.article)

## ***Music Festival***

ALL METRO CHICAGO AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES  
ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL ABCMC  
CHRISTMAS/ADVENT SEASON MUSIC FESTIVAL

DATE: Saturday, December 13, 2008

TIME: 3:00 p.m.

PLACE: Irving Park Baptist Church  
4401 W. Irving Park Road  
Chicago



The purpose of this program is to celebrate the beginning of the Christmas/ Advent season through music and song. Each participating church is asked to send a musical component (ranging from a full choir to a smaller number of singers, including duets or soloists, as well as musicians and praise dancers) to participate in this glorious afternoon of musical praise for our Lord and Savior and the Christmas/Advent season. And as happened last year, this year's musical festival will begin with a mass sing-a-long (involving all in attendance) of many of everyone's favorite Christmas carols and will conclude with a mass (unrehearsed) singing of the "Hallelujah Chorus", involving all the participants in the program, as well as willing volunteers from the audience.

Regardless of whether or not your church decides to participate musically, members and friends of Chicago Metro ABC churches are encouraged to attend. Admission is **FREE**. There will be a Free-Will Offering to support ABCMC and its programs and missions.

So mark the date and time (Saturday, December 13 @ 3:30PM) on your calendar, encourage your church to participate, plan to attend, and warm up your voice for the singing of the "Hallelujah Chorus"!

Any church wishing to participate is asked to call Lowell Young, ABCMC's Mission Support Associate, at 773-804-1655 or 773-370-2003, or e-mail him at [younglowell@aol.com](mailto:younglowell@aol.com). Please contact Lowell, and share your plans for participating in the program, no later than Friday, December 5.

## ***Festival de Navidad***

TODAS LAS IGLESIAS AMERICANAS BAPTISTA DE METRO CHICAGO ABCMC  
ESTÁN INVITADAS A PARTICIPAR EN EL 2<sup>ND</sup> FESTIVAL DE NAVIDAD

Fecha: Sábado 13 de diciembre  
Hora: 3:00 p.m.  
Lugar: Irving Park Baptist Church  
4401 W. Irving Park Road  
Chicago



El propósito de este programa es celebrar Navidad y la estación de Advenimiento con música y cánticos. A cada Iglesia participante se le pide que traiga un componente musical, puede ser desde un coro, un cantante, dueto o un solo para participar en esta gloriosa tarde de alabanza a nuestro Dios y Salvador en esta Navidad época de Advenimiento. Así como hicimos el año pasado, empezaremos cantando los coros navideños favoritos, para concluir con un coro masivo del "Aleluya," en donde incluiremos a todos los participantes, voluntarios y la audiencia.

Ya sea que su Iglesia participe musicalmente o no, todas las Iglesias y amigos de ABCMC, están invitados. La admisión es GRATIS. Habrá una ofrenda voluntaria para ayudar a los programas y misiones de ABCMC.

¡Marque en su calendario el 13 de diciembre a las 3:30 p.m., participe, asista y entone su voz para cantar el "Coro Aleluya"!

La Iglesia que desee participar comuníquese con Lowell Young, ABCMC, al 773-804-1655 o 773-370 2003, por Internet [younglowell@aol.com](mailto:younglowell@aol.com). Favor de comunicarse con Lowell y compartir sus planes en el programa no mas tarde que el viernes el 5 de diciembre.

## **NEWS FROM ABCMC CONGREGATIONS**

### ***Christmas Bazaar and Luncheon***

On Saturday, December 6 the women of the Federated Church of Wauconda, 200 Barrington Road, Wauconda, will host their annual Christmas Bazaar and Luncheon at the church. There will be lots of great things to buy from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. A hot lunch will be available from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Bring your Christmas wish list, and come enjoy a delightful day in Wauconda.

### ***Ordination at North Shore***

*This invitation is from North Shore Baptist Church.*

Fellow Chicago Baptists are cordially invited to the ordination service of Holale Comlan Azondjagni on Sunday, Dec 7, 2008 at 4 p.m. at the North Shore Baptist Church, 5244 N. Lakewood Avenue, Chicago IL 60640, 773-728-4200. (Soon-to-be-Rev) Azondjagni graduated from Garrett Evangelical Seminary and shortly afterward received unanimous endorsement from ABCMC's Ordination Commission. He was organizer and leader of the "African Friends Fellowship" French-speaking group that met at North Shore for more than a year. He will depart soon after ordination to return home with wife Awenem Azondjagni for three weeks evangelizing in their native country of Togo.

North Shore members will also be celebrating only the second Sunday after the return of Pastors Douglas Harris and Carol McVetty following their three-month Sabbatical.

Further information is available on North Shore's website: [www.northshorebaptist.org](http://www.northshorebaptist.org)

### ***Christmas at First Baptist***

The LaGrange Christmas Walk on Saturday, December 6 will include an open house and concerts at the First Baptist Church of LaGrange. The open house will be from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. The concerts will be at 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. The concerts will feature the Chancel Handbell Choir; soloist Barbara Leader-Henning, and organist/pianist/music director Kevin C. Robbins.

Everyone is invited to come to this evening of celebration, and to meet the church's new ministers: Rev. Dennis Haggray, Senior Pastor, and Michael Strickland, Assistant Pastor. During the open house the pastors will be in the church building to introduce themselves and welcome attendees to the evening's event. Come, enjoy the music, and enjoy fellowship along with a cup of hot cider or cocoa.

### ***Birthday Party Fun***

It is not every day that one has the opportunity to attend a friend's 175<sup>th</sup> birthday party. Sunday evening, November 23, offered such an opportunity. Members and friends of the First Baptist Church of Chicago gathered at the ABC-related University of Chicago to reflect on and celebrate 175 years of ministry by the First Baptist Church of Chicago.

This congregation, the oldest Baptist church in the city of Chicago, was serving Jesus in this place before the establishment of Northern Baptist Theological Seminary or Judson University, before the founding of the University of Chicago, before the Civil War, and before the establishment of the Chicago Baptist Association (ABCMC). A slide show recalled much of the history of the church, and recent events as well.

The church's neighbor, Jesse Jackson, President of Rainbow/PUSH Coalition, was the speaker. He shared thoughts on the past and challenges for the future. Both the church and Jackson's organization look forward to laboring together in service to God and humanity.

## **COMMUNITY NEWS**

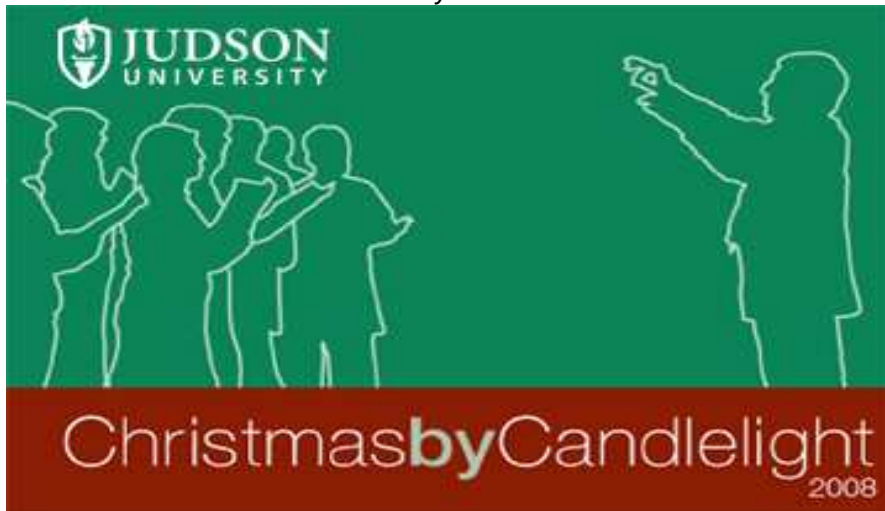
### ***Holiday Theater***



Just in time for the holidays, Provision Theater is presenting a world premiere. Truman Capote's *A Christmas Memory & The Thanksgiving Visitor*, adapted and directed by Tim Gregory, is playing November 5-December 21 at the Royal George Theatre, 1641 N. Halsted Street, Chicago. Performances are on Wednesdays at 1 p.m., Fridays and Saturdays at 8 p.m., and Sundays at 3 p.m. This is a sweet holiday show that touches the heart. For tickets, phone the box office at 312-988-9000.

## **Christmas at Judson University**

*This invitation is from ABC-related Judson University*



Celebrate the start of the holiday season with Judson University at our annual Christmas by Candlelight event on December 5 & 6, 2008, in the Lindner Campus Commons. The Christmas celebration will begin with a hearty holiday meal followed by Judson's Concert Choir performing John Rutter's *Gloria* under the direction of Dr. Dale Voelker. Special music will also feature Judson's Handbell Choir!

### **FESTIVITIES**

#### **Gift Bazaar**

12 p.m. through the Evening's Activities, Lindner Campus Commons, Upper Level

#### **Friends of Judson Annual Christmas Bake Sale**

5 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. - Lindner Campus Commons

**Doors Open at 5:30 p.m.**

**Dinner Served at 6 p.m.**

Lindner Campus Commons, Dining Hall

**Christmas Concert at 7:30 p.m.**

**in the Herrick Chapel**

Featuring the Judson University Concert Choir and Handbell Choir

**To place your reservation, visit [www.judsonu.edu/candlelight.aspx](http://www.judsonu.edu/candlelight.aspx)**

Please register by November 17, 2008.

Registrations are finalized when full payment is received.

If you have questions, please call Jaimee Bartha at 847.628.2514.

## **Judson University Breakfast: "Post Election Financial Perspectives"**

*This invitation is from ABC-related Judson University.*



Featured Speaker: Armond Dinverno, JD, CPA, CFP  
Principal and Co-President of Balasa Dinverno Foltz LLC

**December 4 | 7:30 a.m. to 9 a.m. |**

**Tickets: \$20 Community members;**

**RSVP by December 1 as space is limited**

847.628.2080; [advancement@JudsonU.edu](mailto:advancement@JudsonU.edu)

Join us for a breakfast networking event that will help you see your firm's financial future more clearly. The breakfast's featured presenter Armond A. Dinverno, JD, CPA, CFP, will forecast the outlook of the U.S. economy based on the president-elect's economic policies.

Dinverno, a principal and co-president of Balasa Dinverno Foltz LLC, a wealth management firm based in Itasca, Ill., has extensive experience in the income tax, estate planning, retirement planning, and investment management areas. For three consecutive years, *Robb Report Worth* magazine named Dinverno one of the "Best Financial Advisors" in America, *Mutual Funds* magazine included Dinverno in their list of "Top 100 Planners in the Country," and in *Medical Economics* magazine Dinverno was listed as one of "The 150 Best Financial Advisers for Doctors." He was recognized in the book by Stuart Welch, *J.K. Lasser's Estate Planning for Baby Boomers*, as a top professional advisor in the estate planning area, and received the TEC Organization Emerging Entrepreneur Member Achievement Recognition. In 2006, he was inducted into the Chicago Area Entrepreneurship Hall of Fame.

Dinverno has served as part of Charles Schwab & Co., Inc. Institutional Advisory Board, which meets with the organization's top management to discuss what initiatives the company should focus on for its clients. He also testified to President George W. Bush's Advisory Panel on Tax Reform about the impact of the tax laws on taxpayers' decisions and their behavior.

## **2009 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**

On Sunday, January 18, 2009 at 4 p.m., the Ecumenical Millennium Committee will host the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Chicagoland Ecumenical Prayer Service in the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The service will take place at St. Paul Chong Ha Sang Korean Catholic Mission, 675 Dursey Lane, Des Plaines. The preacher will be the Rt. Rev. Victor A. Scantlebury, Assistant Bishop, the Episcopal Diocese of Chicago. Participating presiding leaders who will participate in the service include ABCMC's Executive Minister Larry Greenfield. The service will be open to everyone. Please print and share the flier attached to this issue of *eWind*.

## **Christians in the Holy Land**

*This invitation is from United Christian Communities, Inc.*



### **United Christian Communities Inc.**

Suite 449  
305 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10165  
Tel: 1.800.869.4919  
[info@UnitedChristianCommunities.org](mailto:info@UnitedChristianCommunities.org)

*When was the last time you thought about the Christian Communities in the Holy Land?*

This Holiday season, won't you remember the ongoing flight of the Christian communities from the Holy Land? We aren't asking you for money. We are asking you to do a few simple things before it is too late. The Christian flight from the Holy Land is so severe that prominent voices are now expressing the fear that we may soon . . . very soon . . . witness the Holy Land devoid of Christians.

You can help by getting connected in at least some of the following ways:

- **Get informed** about the situation by visiting [www.UnitedChristianCommunities.org](http://www.UnitedChristianCommunities.org)
- **Keep informed** by signing up for our free newsletter at <http://www.unitedchristiancommunities.org/newslettersignup.htm>.
- **Participate in our blog** at [UnitedChristianCommunities.blogspot.com](http://UnitedChristianCommunities.blogspot.com)
- **Show your solidarity** with the Christian communities in the Holy Land by participating in the dedication of the Christian Forest on Mt. Tabor (you can find out more about this on our web site at <http://www.unitedchristiancommunities.org/>).
- **Help inform others:** forward this e-mail to your friends and your clergy
- **Ask your church** to contact us for suggestions on how they can help.
- **Visit the Holy Land** to reconnect with your religion and your heritage. Meet with local Christian charities to learn about their work. Have dinner with Christians living in the Holy Land. You can even build your trip around hiking, biking or birding in the Holy Land. For information, please email [info@unitedchristiancommunities.org](mailto:info@unitedchristiancommunities.org).

We are **United Christian Communities, Inc.**, a tax-exempt organization dedicated to helping to stem the flight of Christians from the Holy Land through building connections between Christians living outside the Holy Land and those living within it.

If you would like to learn more about the plight of the Christians in the Holy Land, please visit us at [www.UnitedChristianCommunities.org](http://www.UnitedChristianCommunities.org) . And while you are there, please visit [Feed Your Mind, Nourish Your Soul](#), our new on-line bookstore, for further readings on this and other topics relating to the Holy Land and the Christian communities living there.

Also, if you know of others who may be interested in receiving information from us, please contact us at [ReachingOut@UnitedChristianCommunities.org](mailto:ReachingOut@UnitedChristianCommunities.org)

## **ABCUSA NEWS**

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

### ***Missionary Survives Bomb Blast in India***

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 11/24/08)** — American Baptist International Ministries has learned from missionary Debbie Mulneix that a bomb blast went off about 30 feet outside the gate of the Convention of Baptist Churches of North East India (CBCNEI) compound in Guwahati, Assam on Thursday morning, Oct 30. Guwahati is the capital of the Assam state in Northeast India. Mulneix had just returned to the compound when the blast went off and was about 30 feet inside the gate at the time. She says she is fine and was not hurt by the blast.

"I sat down on my bed when I got back, and when I got up there was black soot on the bed," Mulneix said. "I realized the black stuff was on my back and was fallout from the blast. The dirt was off of me. I said, 'Thank you Lord!'"

According to media reports, between 14 and 18 bomb blasts were detonated throughout the Assam state, with 11 of the explosions in Guwahati, including one outside the compound of CBCNEI. Mulneix said the compound is near a police station. Although she is safe, at least 65 people died in the blasts, with 33 deaths occurring in Guwahati, including one man who fell dead at the gate of the compound, Mulneix said. Some buildings on the compound also were damaged.

Please go to [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south\\_asia/7699200.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/south_asia/7699200.stm) for related video from the BBC.

"There was a riot after the blast," said Mulneix. "It took the fire brigade almost two hours to get to this site. The rioters stormed the police station, right across the street from the compound, [and] set fire to a police vehicle and an ambulance. Then the police started shooting. I just tried to stay invisible."

Despite the closeness of the Baptist headquarters to the explosion, Mulneix said, Dr. Pau, general secretary of the CBCNEI does not think the blast was religiously motivated.

For nearly a year there has been violence in other parts of India, most notably, Orissa state, where the small Christian minority has seen pastors and laypeople killed, and homes and churches burned by those who want to persecute Christians.

There is a militant, separatist group in the Assam state that officials and others suspect is responsible for the explosions, but the group has denied responsibility.

As the liaison between churches of India/Nepal and the US/Puerto Rico, Mulneix helps churches understand each other's culture, needs and resources and to appropriately assist each other. She trains people for volunteer mission such as pastoral and management training, lay preacher training, women's and youth ministries, back yard Bible studies, first aid courses and computer training.

The political climate in India and Nepal puts Mulneix in settings of cutting edge ministry. It is extremely important that she and her International Ministries missionary colleagues are able to continue their work. Gifts to the [World Mission Offering](#) have the direct result of making that possible. Please pray for Debbie Mulneix. Please urge others to join you in giving generously to sustain and grow this ministry.

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.

## ***ABCUSA Board Pushes Forward Despite World Financial Crisis***

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 11/19/08)** — As the General Board of American Baptist Churches USA met November 14-15 in King of Prussia, PA, the world financial crisis was a topic of discussion and a focus of prayer. Yet the Board remained hopeful and optimistic of the bright future of the denomination's ministry amidst restructuring efforts and a sense of God's continued leading, as a group that has historically risen above such challenges with a focus on mission and ministry.

Contributing to the positive tone of the meeting was Sumner M. Grant, Executive Director of the Ministers and Missionaries Benefit Board (MMBB). He reported that members were sharing their personal concerns relating to the global financial crisis. He reassured the General Board that "MMBB is not in a panic mode. MMBB remains financially strong, is well diversified, and is well managed with a long term focus. Grant reported that "the organization has weathered many financial cycles of ups and downs, and just as it has before, it will pull through again during this challenging time and get through this cycle in triumph."

Leo Thorne, Associate General Secretary for Mission Resource Development, said, "Giving to total American Baptist Mission Support has been on the plus side for a number of months, with steady increases in Region Offerings, Specifics, Targeted Giving, and World Mission Offering. Though giving to United Mission is still moving downward, the rate of decline is slowing." He expressed thanks to the faithful contributors who "continue to support the mission and ministry of ABCUSA, even during these difficult financial times."

Thorne also gave an upbeat report on the Pasadena, CA, 2009 Biennial, calling it, "a biennial with a difference." Among the highlights of the biennial will be a Mission Summit Track (with a focus on "People on the Margin"), learning opportunities, dynamic speakers, mission experiences, a post-biennial trip to Mexico, inspiring worship, a strong focus on youth, a gathering for young clergy, and an ABC Multi-Cultural Family Fest on Saturday evening. He encouraged all the Board members to attend this important event when delegates will also vote on the proposed new structure for ABC.

The 2013 Biennial location—Hartford, CT—was also approved by the Board, as was a sabbatical for General Secretary A. Roy Medley, which will take place from September to November of 2009.

Other reports included a brief presentation by David N. Knipel, Esq., Legal Counsel, on the sale of the Mission Center property. He reported that the transaction is moving forward with the filing of additional documents to the New York charitable organization authorities for review, to accompany its previously submitted Petition.

ABCUSA President Mary Armacost Hulst reminded the group that "Christ is our Song Doctor, and we need to remember that fact when we have a tough time singing." She added, "It also may be that we haven't been singing the right song."

Medley reported on ABCUSA's important work in dialogue with Muslims, which is moving forward with a January 2009 consultation at Andover Newton Theological School. The theme will be "Love of Neighbor," one of two "common words" that both Muslim and Christian communities uphold as a shared value. He also described the current financial crisis facing the country as being "the worst since the Great

Depression". Quoting a Baptist scholar, he reminded the Board that ABCUSA is called to "treat the needs of the people as holy." He concluded with a strong word of encouragement to both the Board and the larger American Baptist family; "We can make our expectations very low, and stoop down to reach them. Or we can set our expectations high and reach for the stars."

## ***ABCUSA Sends Bylaw Changes to 2009 Biennial Delegates***

**VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 11/19/08)** — The General Board of American Baptist Churches USA met November 14-15 at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in King of Prussia, PA, and affirmed a continued denominational commitment to "serving as the hands and feet of Christ".

ABC President Mary Armacost Hulst reinforced that message by reminding the Board members that, "Christ has no hands and feet but yours."

The hearts of the Board members were revealed in the first hour of the first plenary session, as the meeting began with an offering received for the Millcreek Baptist Church of Philadelphia. Earlier this year, the church held a special program to encourage area residents to turn in unregistered guns in the hopes of reducing the number of deaths and violence in the local neighborhood. Those participating were offered coupons for groceries and other incentives. General Secretary A. Roy Medley encouraged the Board to give generously, saying, "We want to come alongside this congregation and its pastor and support them in their calling to be the hands and feet of Christ."

The collection totaled \$1,072 and included a contribution from the Office of the General Secretary. The Board then moved on to its main business for the session, as members were charged to hear, raise concerns about, and vote on, a second reading of revisions to the ABC Bylaws for recommendation to the 2009 biennial delegates, who will then vote on adoption of the Bylaws as revised.

The Bylaws are considered "living documents"; open to revision and clarification over the course of time. Hulst reminded the Board that the document has been three years in the making, and needs a yes or no vote to send it to the biennial. Hulst observed, "With the amazing pool of wisdom in the room, we can focus on our mission of being the hands and feet of Christ."

The most significant approved changes in the second reading include a member from each region serving on the Board of General Ministries; the Directors of the Board of General Ministries comprising the corporate members of the American Baptist Historical Society; and the term of office for the General Secretary consisting of four-year terms, with evaluations every two years.

If the Bylaws are approved, the delegates at each subsequent Biennial will re-elect At-Large Directors. Each region will nominate five people who represent the diversity of their region.

"The intent here," said Medley, "is to preserve and maintain ABC's gift of diversity and to mirror God's intent for the church."

Eleven other revisions were noted, while seven other talked-over revisions were not included. Some of the discussions and comments focused on the need to have the voice of the minority heard in public witness statements; the necessity to have a clear process put in place to minimize unintended interpretations; and the perception that the document seems too top down without sufficient emphasis on hearing the voice of the local congregation.

David N. Knipel, Esq., Legal Counsel, led the reading. Questions and requests for clarification were raised by members after the review, and their concerns were discussed. The Board then approved the proposed Bylaws as amended and forwarded the recommendation for adoption to the 2009 biennial delegates.

## HEALTH CARE NEWS

### ***Important Meeting about Health Care Legislation December 6***

*This invitation is from Jessica Palys, Federal Issues Organizer for Citizen Action/Illinois.*

Please join Citizen Action / Illinois and [Health Care for America Now](#) (HCAN) on December 6<sup>th</sup> as we bring together leaders from the 8<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> Congressional District to shape the direction for passing meaningful health care legislation in 2009.

Last October, President-elect Obama stated "Ensuring that Americans in Illinois and across the country have access to affordable, comprehensive healthcare coverage is one of my top priorities. I am proud to join **Health Care for America Now's** efforts to tackle the tough challenges we face in reforming our nation's healthcare system."

**On December 6<sup>th</sup>, we will host a meeting to discuss the agenda and strategy for health care legislation in Congress, layout the components of the Obama / HCAN health care plan, and determine the best strategy for passing federal legislation on health care in 2009.** We will meet at St. John UCC Church in Arlington Heights (308 North Evergreen Park), from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM (agenda below). Lunch will be provided if you RSVP. Please respond to Jessica Palys ([Jessica@citizenaction-il.org](mailto:Jessica@citizenaction-il.org)) or by calling 312-427-2114 x 206.

Our goal on December 6<sup>th</sup> is to make sure HCAN-IL can influence the Illinois Congressional delegation and the White House through a number of tools, including meeting with members of Congress, utilizing media to increase pressure on members, and increasing our ability to mobilize people to contact members.

HCAN has expanded to 42 states, signed-on 465 organizations as members, and signed on 150 members of the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress to the HCAN statement of principles. In Illinois, eight members of the Congressional delegation have signed on, including: President-Elect Obama, Senator Durbin, and Representatives Gutierrez, Jackson, Emanuel, Davis, Schakowsky, and Halvorson. We are currently contacting the remaining Illinois Congressional delegation to encourage their support of the Obama-HCAN principles.

## PEACE NEWS

### ***Northwest Suburban Meeting***

The Northwest Suburban Peace and Education Project will hold its monthly meeting on Wednesday, December 10 at 7 p.m. at the South Church, 501 S. Emerson Street, Mount Prospect. The meeting is open to all who are interested in helping high school students make career decisions for peace. For more information about the project, please visit [www.northwestsubpep.org](http://www.northwestsubpep.org).

### ***Baptists and Burma***

Burma is dear to the hearts of Baptists because of our mission history there. The first American Baptist international missionaries, Adoniram Judson and his wife Ann Hasseltine Judson, first brought the good news of Jesus to that nation. Christians in Burma trace their faith back to the ministry of these missionaries in the early nineteenth century.

Burma (now called Myanmar) is struggling under an oppressive regime that especially targets ethnic groups such as the Karen, with whom the Judsons had their greatest success. Baptists today are ministering with Karen and other refugees fleeing Burma for the United States. Read the November-

December 2008 issue of *Baptist Peacemaker* to learn about the work of the Baptist Peace Fellowship of North America is doing with Burmese refugees.

## ***Peace Vigils***

Suburban peace vigils will take place:

- Saturday, December 14, 3 p.m-4 p.m., at the intersection of Arlington Heights Road and Northwest Highway, Arlington Heights. Signs will be available, or bring your own.
- Saturday, December 21, 3-4 p.m., at the intersection of Hicks Road and Northwest Highway, Palatine. Signs will be available, or bring your own.

## **MINISTERS COUNCIL**

### ***Joe Kutter's Remarks to the General Board***

The GBEC generously invited Acting Executive Director, Joe Kutter to report on the work of the Ministers Council to the General Board. After expressing appreciation for the opportunity, he began his remarks as follows.

#### **Why take this job?**

This story comes from my own family experience but I believe that represents literally thousands of men and women who engage ministry in our ABC family. At the time, my dad was a pastor, the pastor of a small, small-town, nearly rural church. A leading family in the congregation had a son, about my age, who graduated from high school, went off to join the military and then returned home. One day, with both of his parents in the house, the son went into the bathroom and used a gun to take his own life. My parents immediately went to be with the parents who were both members of the church and friends. As my father sat with the family, prayed and talked together, my mother took a bucket of cleaning materials into the bathroom and cleaned it up. Together they entered into the family's sorrow and extended the ministry of Christ.

I tell that story, not because it is something that was or is unique to the experience of my parents but because it is not. Every day, thousands of women and men in congregations large, medium and small, enter into the sorrow of their people and extend the ministry of Christ. Most do it without notice and many do it without much pay. They just do it because they feel that God has called them into that ministry. Over the years, these men and women have become heroes to me, models of Christ, and the very incarnation of grace. And it is my privilege to serve them at this time in my life.

For the rest of the report link to <http://www.ministerscouncil.com/Remarks/RemarkstoGB1108.aspx>

### ***Minister Magazine to Be Published In January***

*Theme: Local leadership and the plan to restructure*

This newsletter comes on the heels of The General Board Meetings in which the decision was made final to move the plan to restructure the denomination forward to the biennial in Pasadena. In January we will electronically publish the next issue of Minister Magazine and its focus will be, "Will the proposed new structure have any impact on local ministerial leadership and if so, what will it be?"

## ***Pre-Biennial Pasadena, June 25 and 26, 2009 with Dr. Leonard Sweet***

The Ministers Council in partnership with Interim Ministries, Women in Ministry, and the Area Ministers Group will host Dr. Leonard Sweet at two pre-biennial events.

Thursday afternoon, June 25, Dr. Sweet will speak to the topic "What's A Guttenberg Groupie in a Google World Going to Do?" All Members of the Ministers Council, ministers in Interim Ministries, members of the Area Ministers Group, and those participating in the Women in Ministry group are invited to participate. The cost will be \$30.00 per person.

Friday morning, June 26, Dr. Sweet will address all who wish to attend at the Ministers Council meeting. His title is "The Metaphorics of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Seven Metaphors that Can Transform the World." An offering will be received to help offset the costs.

To learn more about Dr. Sweet, go to his home page, [www.leonardsweet.com](http://www.leonardsweet.com) or if you wish to go directly to a biographical sketch, go to [www.leonardsweet.com/biocy.asp](http://www.leonardsweet.com/biocy.asp). He is a leading interpreter of the present age to the church and a teacher of the gospel to the present age.

### ***The Leadership Adventure***

Ministers Council Senator, Margaret Marcuson writes about leadership issues. The article speaks directly to the issue of leadership in the midst of financial uncertainty. You will find it helpful. JK  
<http://www.margaretmarcuson.com/blog/>

### ***Sabbatical Grants***

#### *2009 National Clergy Renewal Program*

Lilly Endowment seeks to strengthen Christian congregations by providing opportunities for pastors to step away briefly from the persistent obligations of daily parish life and to engage in a period of renewal and reflection. Life-giving experiences – strengthening relationships, renewing a sense of call, meeting and serving the neighbor in a new way, finding joy are common themes of these renewal times.

In the clergy renewal program, the Endowment anticipates awarding as many as 120 grants of up to \$50,000 each directly to Christian congregations for the support of a renewal program for their pastor. Up to \$15,000 of the grant may be used for congregational expenses associated with the renewal program. The deadline for applying for the 2009 renewal grants is May 14, 2009. For more information and application information visit [www.lillyendowment.org](http://www.lillyendowment.org) and click on Religion.

### ***Judson Press***

Hot off the press! *Profiles in Black: Phat Facts for Teens* by pastor, professor, and prolific Judson Press author Marvin A. McMickle. In a teen-friendly format with rich illustrations, famous quotes, "Phat Facts" and the "411," *Profiles in Black* highlights the names and events that forged African American experience in the twenty-first century. This is a must-have for the church library and an important resource for Black History Month. Retail price: \$22.00. Web price: \$17.60. To order, visit [www.judsonpress.com](http://www.judsonpress.com) or call 800-458-3766.

## BOOK NOOK

### *Child Advocacy*

*Protestants for the Common Good cordially invites you to join us for:*

## A CONVERSATION ON CHILD ADVOCACY

*Featuring:*

Diane C. Olson and Laura Dean Friedrich  
at the publication of their book

### *Weaving a Just Future for Children: An Advocacy Guide*

*Saturday, December 6*

*First United Methodist Church at the Chicago Temple*

*James Parlor, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor*

*77 W. Washington Street, Chicago*

*2:30 p.m. Reception*

*3:15 p.m. Authors' Remarks*

*4:00 p.m. Book Signing*

*Light refreshments will be served.*

RSVPs appreciated. Please call Meghan Strell, 312.223.9544 x231

*Sponsored by Protestants for the Common Good  
and First United Methodist Church at the Chicago Temple*

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for world peace.

Please hold the people of India in prayer. Pray that the government will have the courage and wisdom to deal with the sectarian violence there.

Please pray for the people of war-torn Somalia.

Please pray for peace in Darfur, and for all the people there who are suffering from violence and starvation. Please pray as well for the aid workers who are endeavoring to help them.

## CALENDAR

**November 27**—Thanksgiving Day

**December 4**—Breakfast Program at Judson University, Elgin, 7:30-9 a.m. **RSVP by December 1** to 847.628.2080; [advancement@JudsonU.edu](mailto:advancement@JudsonU.edu)

**December 4**—AFSC Event, Irish American Heritage Center, 4626 North Knox Avenue, 6:30 p.m.-9:30 p.m.

**December 6**—Christmas Bazaar and Luncheon, Federated Church of Wauconda, 200 Barrington Road, Wauconda; 10 a.m.-3 p.m. bazaar, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. luncheon.

**December 6**—Presentation of new book, *Weaving a Just Future for Children* by Diane C. Olson and Laura Dean Friedrich, First United Methodist Church at the Chicago Temple, James Parlor, 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, 77 W. Washington Street, Chicago. 2:30 p.m. Reception; 3:15 p.m. Authors' Remarks; 4 p.m. Book signing.

**December 13**—2<sup>nd</sup> Annual ABCMC Christmas/Advent Season Music Festival, Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, 3 p.m. (Please note time change from original announcement.)

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

**January 18, 2009**—9<sup>th</sup> Annual Chicagoland Ecumenical Prayer Service for Christian Unity, St. Paul Chong Ha Sang Korean Catholic Mission, 675 Dursey Lane, Des Plaines, 4 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](mailto: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



Vol VII no. 25, November 21, 2008

## Thinking Theologically About the Common Good

*Reflections on theology, scripture, and public life  
from the Rev. Larry Greenfield.*

### "The 'To-Do' List"

Some folks, I know, don't need to write them down. They just keep the "to-do" list in their heads.

Not me.

First thing in the morning, I've got to write them down in the notebook I keep at arms reach throughout the day. Often I add to the list as the hours pass. And I put a checkmark with a line through it when the "to-do" item has been completed. (The absence of the line through the check means that I attempted to-do the task but, for one reason or another, didn't get it done.)

Of course, not everything needs to go on the list daily. A whole lot of things get done out of routine. I don't need, for example, to put "make pot of green tea with slices of fresh ginger root, cloves, and a stick of cinnamon" on the list since I do that out of habit. When I reflect on this for just a moment, I realize there are hundreds, probably thousands, of the things I do everyday without thought or an act of the will.

That's true, I would guess, for most people, even those whose job and schedule are pretty much the same day-in and day-out. But I suspect even those folks also have a mental or written list of "to-do" items from time to time.

My list usually is broken in to parts: Calls to make; People to see; Meetings to attend; Memos/Letters/E-mails to write; Articles to draft; and the catch-all category of Other.

The simple fact is that I wouldn't get the *essentials* of daily life done if I didn't develop, daily" that "to-do" list.

\* \* \* \* \*

Like many others, I suspect, the list that the writer of the Gospel of Matthew provides in the last section of the 25th chapter (the part that often gets sub-titled with phrases like "The Judgment of the Nations" or "The Sheep and the Goats") doesn't make it *ever* on my "to-do" list.

That's because, if I take that list seriously on a regular basis, I tend to think the imperatives only apply when I happen to come across someone who is hungry, thirsty, a stranger, naked (well, let's say "poorly clothed"), sick, or in prison.

The closest I come to one of these "types" on a regular basis is the man or woman on the street who begs for a contribution, and I've got that down to a routine as well by keeping some dollar bills in my pocket to feed the paper cups that are being extended to me. (Reading Tolstoy, by the way, caused me to make this particular provision.) But I don't put this on my daily "to-do" list.

I don't, that is, treat the items on the list from Matthew 25: 35 — 36 as things I must get done each day.

But why should I make that assumption?

There are hungry people, thirsty people, lost people, poorly clothed people, sick people, and people in prison and in other forms of bondage around me every day that I habitually don't see. They don't appear on my mental screen, but they are in my presence constantly. And even if they aren't "nearby," they are certainly present still in the contemporary world, albeit at more of a distance — a different neighborhood of the city, another part of the state and country, a different part of the world.

Are these people — what in the Matthew text are called "the least of these" — exempt from my care, if I claim to be a disciple of Jesus, just because I don't see them or hear them or come across them or allow them to enter my consciousness?

It's fair to assume, moreover, that there already are millions — and that there will be millions more — on that Matthean list, given the national and worldwide economic crisis.

Must I, therefore, get these growing numbers on my daily "to-do" list?

I'm pretty sure I do. Seriously, I think I must, especially these days.

\* \* \* \* \*

How could this possibly be manageable?

Well, what about putting at least a minimum number of acts of charity on one's daily "to-do" list and committing oneself to checking them off when they are completed?

And what about putting some act of advocacy on that daily "to do" list — advocacy on behalf of public policies that have to do with hunger and housing, or clean water and air, or immigration and poverty, or reforms in our criminal justice and health care systems?

Maybe just one act of charity — a contribution, a visit or call, a helping hand — and just one act of advocacy — a call or note to a public official, a letter to the editor, a donation of time or money to an advocacy organization.

\* \* \* \* \*

I know, I know, someone is going to raise the question of whether this isn't a re-introduction of "works-righteousness" into the Christian life, which is so contrary to the authentic scriptural theme of our being saved by God's grace. Fair enough.

But I think we can read that famous passage in the 25th chapter of Matthew about the sheep and the goats and the judgments of the nations as being directed *not* to everyone, but particularly to that group of disciples who know first-hand, directly, experientially the abundant and undeserved love of God in their own lives and feel compelled as a result of that divine love to put acts of charity and justice on their daily "to-do" list.

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77 W. Washington St., Suite 1124 • Chicago, IL 60602  
TEL: 312-223-9544 • FAX: 312-223-9540 • [cgn@thecommongood.org](mailto:cgn@thecommongood.org)  
[Contact Us](#)