

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

September 9, 2009

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ABCMC NEWS

World Mission Offering

It's time for ABC's annual World Mission Offering. Based on Philippians 2:5-7, the theme for this year's offering is "Surprised by Walking in Different Shoes." The offering helps to pay for American Baptist missions of many kinds throughout the world. It helps us to share God's Good News with people in places where most of us will never go in person. But we can be there in hearts through our gifts to the World Mission Offering.

Every ABC church has received a tool kit about the offering. Please make use of these resources and share from your heart.

Thinking Theologically

Every other week a column by ABCMC's Executive Minister Larry Greenfield appears in *The Common Good Network*, which is the enewsletter of Protestants for the Common Good. Larry's latest column appears at the end of this issue of *eWind*. This column, "Favoritism," is one you won't want to miss. Please take a few minutes to read and contemplate it.

Going Green in ABCMC

Thank you to Rudy Gartner of Morgan Park Baptist Church for this article.

Green Gram: During my trip to Canada recently, I noticed that many less drivers with their cars and trucks were on the road, both in Michigan driving up and in Canada itself. This is very likely due to the present recession and, in Canada, to the high price of gas as well (equivalent to around \$3.60 per gallon). I can draw two positive things from this: there is less traffic and there is less burning of greenhouse gases. Also, there is less demand for gasoline. It's inevitable, though, that demand for gas and desire for driving will accelerate again at some point. This is good for the auto and oil industries, related jobs, etc., but not so good for controlling global warming. What can we do to help? Well, several things. Most importantly, we can try and moderate our impulse to drive everywhere, all the time. Consider walking to the store when near, or taking a bus or train (free for seniors in Chicagoland). Walking is also good for your health. Taking public transport helps support it. Keep your car maintained which helps it to burn more clean. Every bit, every person helps. Thanks.

Vitalizing Congregational Ministries, Oct. 3, North Shore Baptist Church

Dear ABCMC friends:

I hope you are reserving Saturday, October 3, for our day with Dr. Jeff Woods, on the topic of VITALIZING CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES.

As I've mentioned before, a number of us who serve as clergy in ABCMC had a very stimulating day with Jeff earlier in the year and agreed that we needed to have him back with us this fall -- this time with both clergy and lay leadership.

The VITALIZING CONGREGATIONAL MINISTRIES event will be held at North Shore Baptist Church.

I thought you might be interested in an interview that Jeff did for Duke Divinity School, which is linked here <http://faithandleadership.com/multimedia/c-jeff-woods-going-the-well>

. Below is his bio for your information.

Larry Greenfield

Biographical Sketch for Dr. C. Jeff Woods

In his current role as Associate General Secretary for the American Baptist Churches, USA, Dr. Woods is responsible for encouraging the health and vitality of the 33 regional judicatories coast to coast throughout the United States. Other denominational positions include serving as the Executive Minister of the Ohio Region and four pastorates within the ABC Region of Indiana.

Dr. Woods earned his Ph.D. from Indiana University in 1987 majoring in both higher education administration and educational inquiry methodology. He also holds a M.Div. from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary and a B.S. from Purdue University in Management and Statistics. Scholarships and fellowships allowed his entire education to be tuition free. Over the years, he has furthered his education with additional courses and holds certifications for a number of psychological and organizational assessment tools including the MBTI, PMAI, OTCI, EQ-360, and components of the Leadership Architect.

Also an author, his formal publications include six books and over thirty articles in various religious, academic, and business journals. *On the Move: Adding Strength, Speed, and Balance to your Congregation* will be published in the coming year by Chalice Press. Within the Academy, he has lectured and taught a wide range of courses on leadership and organizational development at Universities

and Seminaries and is currently teaching leadership and research design in the Doctor of Ministry program at the Methodist Theological School of Ohio as an Affiliated Associate Professor of Congregational Studies.

As a speaker, consultant, and resource person to congregations, regions, judicatories, and nonprofits, he has worked with groups in nearly every state and province in North America. He has received research grants and worked on a variety of study groups and think tanks, including his recent service on the Pulpit and Pew Project, a Lilly Foundation sponsored research project, exploring the status of clergy in North America.

He and his wife, Kandy, have two children, Brandon and Kelsey, and reside in Newark, Ohio.

NEWS FROM ABCMC CONGREGATIONS

120th Anniversary Celebration



Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, is celebrating their 120th anniversary this year. The special day of celebration will be Sunday, September 13. The congregation and pastor Alice Greene invite the ABCMC family to celebrate with them on that special day.

The guest preacher in the 11 a.m. worship service will be former pastor Michael Harvey. The service will also include music and thanksgiving to God for the blessings of the church's many years of ministry.

Following the service there will be a 1 p.m. luncheon at LaVilla Banquets, 3638 N. Pulaski Road, Chicago. Luncheon tickets will be \$35 for adults and \$15 for children 12 and under.

Peace Day Event September 19 in Mount Prospect

On September 19, the South Church will host a community-wide afternoon Peace Walk and an evening Peace Day Celebration to commemorate International Day of Peace. The General Assembly of the United Nations passed a resolution in 2001 naming September 21 as International Day of Peace ("Peace Day").

"On this International Day, let us promise to make peace not just a priority, but a passion. Let us pledge to do more, wherever we are in whatever way we can, to make every day a day of peace," said U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki-moon.

Civic, community and religious groups will **walk together from the South Church to the Mount Prospect Village Hall. On the village green, there will be a short ceremony to reflect on the importance of global and personal peace.** Speakers will include Mt. Prospect Mayor Irvana Wilks, and other civic and community leaders. Following the ceremony, the walk will continue back to The South Church for a Peace Day Celebration. The route is handicapped-accessible.

The activities for the evening Peace Day Celebration include a tree planting, peace-related crafts, games, food and live music by Voodoo Cadillac and Friends. The walk and the evening activities are open to the public.

"I'm hoping that many people in our community come together for this Peace Walk and Celebration. There is power in numbers. This weekend we invite our neighbors to participate with the global community in honoring the International Day of Peace. It is my hope that as we walk, we will contemplate the many ways we are called to create a world where true peace becomes possible. May our walk for

peace be a first step toward working for justice and equality," says Reverend Rick Kesler in his open invitation to all individuals and organizations in the community.

Additionally, the South Church welcomes all to join an interfaith community worship service on Sunday, September 20th at 10:30 a.m.

Event Details:

2:00 Walk will begin from The South Church, 501 S. Emerson St.

3:00 Ceremony at Mount Prospect Village Hall

4:00 Peace Day Celebration at The South Church, 501 S. Emerson St.

Crafts, games, tree planting, food and live music

Jazz Vespers at Woodside Church

All are invited to participate in Jazz Vespers, held the third Friday of every month—September through June—beginning at 6:00 p.m.—except for the first service on September 18, which will begin at 7:30 p.m.

This monthly event is designed to be spiritually uplifting with some of the area's best jazz musicians adding their musical interpretation to a selection of readings—classic to contemporary—creating a unique experience.

Jazz Vespers is presented in a coffee house setting at Woodside Church, located at 1509 East Court Street in Flint, right next to Mott Community College. A light dinner and refreshments will be served.

Kick-off Event: September 18

On Friday, September 18, Jazz Vespers will be held in conjunction with Woodside's "Concert for a Cause" concert series, designed to explore a variety of issues and concerns.

For this special event, Dr. Hadeer Abo El Nagah will speak to the evening's topic: Global Interfaith Relations. Dr. Nagah is a Fulbright Scholar, teacher, author and lecturer who focuses on a number of important topics:

- Understanding the Culture of Islam: Understanding Islam as a religion, culture and the major issues facing Islamic societies
- Gender equalities
- Peace vs. War
- Women in struggle
- Colonization
- Identity vs. Globalization

"This event—which is actually a combination of our Concerts for a Cause series and our monthly Jazz Vespers service—starts a little later than the usual 6:00," explained Woodside's pastor, Rev. Dr. Deborah Kohler. "This was decided out of respect for our Muslim friends who will be observing Ramadan."

Followers of the Muslim faith will break the fast at sunset, which will be 7:30 p.m. Please note that a special room will be available for prayers just prior to the beginning of the event.

Following dinner, Dr. Nagah will speak to the issues surrounding global interfaith relations—especially as they relate to the quest for world peace. The event will continue with a concert with music that centers on themes of peace, faith and understanding.

Mark Your Calendars for the Entire Season

In addition to the event on September 18, please mark your calendars for all of the Jazz Vespers services:

- October 16
- November 20
- December 18
- January 15
- February 19
- March 19

- April 16
- May 21
- June 18

Reservations are requested, to help Woodside prepare the supper; please call the church at 810-767-4911. Visit www.woodsidechurch.net for more information—which will be updated regularly.

Hadeer Abo El Nagah PhD

Associate Professor of English literature, Second time Fulbright awardee. A graduate of Al Azhar University in Cairo, one of the world's most ancient and prestigious universities. Abo El Nagah, is currently teaching at Taibah University KSA. Taught at Misr international University in Cairo, State University of New York, University of Ottawa and a visiting professor to Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada.

Inspired with her life mission in bridging the cultures of the East and West, Abo El Nagah authored a series of 10 books introducing Islam to the English readers and translated a large number of books. She is an invited speaker to numerous conferences in North America and the Arab world discussing the relation between Islam and the West. Abo El Nagah is frequently interviewed by media and a regular contributor to a large number of newspapers and magazines. Her Research interests focus on post colonial and ethnic literature, women literature and the representation of Islam in English writings. She blogs on *New York Times Union* on Muslim women in America.

Family Conference

“Life is good. A healthy marriage makes it better.” This will be the theme of a family conference on September 19 at Waukegan High School. Guest speakers will be Judge Gloria Hatchett and Carlos Cuauhtemoc Sanchez. To register, please call 877-41BRIDGE. For more information, please call First Baptist Church member Barbara Waller at 847-244-3192.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Walter Wink to Give Public Lecture at Chicago Theological Seminary



On Thursday, September 24, at 7 p.m., Chicago Theological Seminary, 5757 S. University Avenue, Chicago, will host Walter Wink, a noted author, theologian and Bible scholar for a lecture and book signing with the theme “Non Violence for the Violent.” Wink will address the question, “Is there a way between absolute pacifism and just war theory, a position committed to non-violence that is able to address the thorny issues of armed aggression, terrorism and civil strife responsibly?” In this presentation we will attempt to find a nonviolent path for people who are opposed to war and the mindless addiction to violence in our society, yet who are unsure of their capacity to respond with love in every situation.

Tickets will be sold at the door only. The cost will be \$20 for adults and \$10 for students. Space is limited, and tickets will be available on a first come first served basis.

Some of the books the speaker has written will be available for purchase and signing. These three books are *Engaging the Powers*, *Jesus and Nonviolence* and *Powers that Be*. Don't miss this opportunity to hear an outstanding speaker who is a gifted interpreter of scripture.

Religion and Violence

2009 McCormick Days will take place at McCormick Theological Seminary, 5460 S. University Avenue, Chicago, on the grounds of the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago. The dates are October 29-30. McCormick Days are not only a reunion for Alumni, but also an excellent opportunity for continuing education for all of us. Featuring excellent speakers such as Rita Nakashima Brock, Thomas Mockaitis and Daniel Little, the conference will explore contemporary impact of Christianity on world-wide violence—as well as the impact of world-violence on contemporary Christianity. To register online with a credit card, and for more information, please go to www.mccormick.edu/mcdays.

ABCUSA NEWS

Other articles from the American Baptist News Service are available at <http://www.abc-usa.org/Resources/AmericanBaptistNewsService/tabid/79/Default.aspx>

Judson Press Seeks “Friends” for Seminarian Fund

This article is from Judson Press, www.judsonpress.com

VALLEY FORGE, PA (2/27/09)—In 2009, Judson Press celebrates its 185th year of Christian publishing. The centerpiece of this anniversary celebration is the “Friends of Judson” campaign that seeks to raise \$185,000 for an ongoing program that will provide the gift of a Baptist personal resource library to graduating American Baptist seminarians. “As our ministry partners support ‘Friends of Judson’ with spirits of Christian generosity, Judson Press can enhance its efforts to provide Christ-centered resources for leaders working to transform our churches and communities,” explains Laura Alden, publisher.

Each of four different levels of support—\$18.00, \$85.00, \$185.00 and \$1,850.00—comes with thank you gifts and recognition:

Contribute \$18 and receive a “Friends of Judson” pen as well as a “Friend” listing on the Judson Press website.

Contribute \$85 and receive the pen and listing, plus a one-year subscription to *The Secret Place*, Judson’s daily devotional publication

Contribute \$185 and receive a two-year subscription to *The Secret Place*, along with its accompanying journal, and 10% off all online orders for a year in addition to a pen and website listing.

Contribute \$1,850 and receive all of the above—plus a free copy of each of Judson’s 2009 releases. To become a Friend of Judson, contributors can visit www.FriendsofJudson.org, or call Judson Press at 800-458-3766.

In addition to launching “Friends of Judson,” Judson Press is celebrating this 185th anniversary with a \$185 book collection of Baptist essentials (valued at \$225). The collection can be ordered on Judson’s website at www.judsonpress.com, or by calling 800-458-3766.

For more information about the “Friends of Judson” program, Judson Press’ history, or its vision for the future, contact Publisher Laura Alden, Editor Rebecca Irwin-Diehl or Marketing Director Kim Shimer at 800-458-3766.

2009 Black Church Conference

“Power Connection: A Call to Greater Works” will be the theme of this year’s American Baptist Black Church Conference. The conference will take place at the Holiday Inn Chicago Matteson, 500 Holiday Plaza Drive, Chicago November 3-7. The Third Baptist Church of Chicago will be the host church, and ABCMC along with the American Baptist Churches of Wisconsin, will be the host regions.

A pre-conference event will be a Ministers Summit November 2-3. The Ministers Summit is designed to provide dialogue, networking and resource sharing for those ministering in the African-American Community.

Speakers for the Black Church Conference will include ABCMC's own Brenda Little, Alan Ragland, Marshall Hatch, Carol Jamieson Brown, Alice Greene and Francine Stark. ABCMC's own John Sundquist and Rick Barlow will represent the American Baptist Foundation to talk about estate planning.

The conference will end with a Super Saturday Extravaganza including a Hip Hop Intergenerational Summit. This will be a great event, and a good investment of a pastor's time.

For registration and more information, please visit www.ABCPowerConnection.org.

MINISTERS COUNCIL NEWS

Uh-oh, Did I Pay My Dues?

ABCMC Ministers Council treasurer Sara Day is receiving dues for 2009 membership through September 30. Dues received after that date will be for 2010.

If you have not yet paid your 2009 Ministers Council dues, please send your check to
Rev. Dr. Sara E. Day, CFP®
The Ministers & Missionaries Benefit Board
2205 S. Wolf Rd. #281
Hillside, IL 60162

If you have any questions, please phone Sara at 800.531.1940.

Together in the Lord Conference

Come to Orlando January 4-7, 2010 for the *Ministry Renewal Conference!* The conference will be held at the Wyndham Resort and Conference Center, 8001 International Drive, Orlando, FL 32819. It will be presented by American Baptist Churches, USA -

For registration and conference schedule visit this link -
<http://www.ministerscouncil.org/Together%20in%20the%20Lord/TITLinfopage.aspx>

HEALTH CARE NEWS

Clarifications

Tonight many of us will tune in by television, radio or computer at 7 p.m. central time to hear President Obama's address to Congress and the nation about proposals for health care reform. Many Americans have expressed confusion—or even misunderstandings—about what health care reform means. We hope that the President's address will answer many questions, and perhaps explain things that many of us don't quite understand.

One thing that many folks find confusing is the proposal for "a public option" in health insurance. Here is a link to a video with a clear, simple explanation:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dBi8A_HutII&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Efacebook%2Ecom%2FHome%2Ephp%3F&feature=player_embedded#t=159 Robert Reich, the speaker in the video, is a scholar in economics and social policy.

You may also find it helpful to read an explanation from a faith perspective before (or possibly after) listening to the President's speech. Take a look at this helpful article about the public health insurance option that Congress and the President are considering:

<http://www.faithfulreform.org/storage/frhc/documents/vision/visionstate%26reformproposals.publicoption.09.08.09.hr3200.pdf>

Another article explores legislative proposals, especially HR 3200, from a faith perspective. This is a bill that is before the House of Representatives. The bill addresses some of the reforms that American Baptists and other pro-reform groups and individuals would like to see. You can find it on line at <http://www.faithfulreform.org/storage/frhc/documents/vision/visionstate%26reformproposals.09.01.09.hr3200.pdf>

We hope these articles will help us all understand better what the President and Congress are considering, and enable us to contact them and express our opinions intelligently.

Health Care Reform: A Moral Imperative

The Faith Caucus of the Illinois Campaign for Better Health Care will host a prayer breakfast and issue briefing on Tuesday, September 13 from 9:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Sisters of St. Joseph, The Well, 1515 W. Ogden, LaGrange Park. The Faith Caucus is a statewide, interfaith coalition of faith leaders and organizations that work together to raise awareness of the moral imperative for health care justice. To register or obtain more information about the prayer breakfast, please call Laura Leone at 312-913-9449.

Tell the Senate to Get It Done

This article is from Health Care for America Now.

Teddy Roosevelt first proposed health care for all in the early 1900s. FDR fought for it in the 1930s. LBJ won Medicare and Medicaid in the 1960s but wasn't able to provide coverage for everyone. Bill Clinton tried in the early 1990s. And since Barack Obama was inaugurated in January, Congress has been heatedly debating health care reform.

We've been talking about this issue for over 100 years. Enough talk. *It's time to get something done!*

[Click here to call your Senators and tell them enough politicking, it's time to get real health reform done.](#)

We've already made *historic* progress. Three committees in the House have passed strong health reform bills and referred them to the floor. And the late Senator Kennedy's committee has passed a strong bill as well.

Still, some in the Senate are **waffling** and asking for *more* time. **Give them a call** and tell them to support Kennedy's HELP bill that will lower our costs, improve our coverage, and give us the choice of a **public health insurance option** to keep the insurance industry honest.

[This week, the Senate is back in DC. Click here to call your Senators right now, when your call can make the most impact!](#)

We've waited long enough. We can get real reform done this year. Call your Senators today and ***make them do it!***

Health Care Justice Walk, Run, Roll

We are all invited to participate in or sponsor participants in the October 3 Health Care Justice Walk, Run, Roll. This event is part of the AIDS Foundation Walk. This fun-filled event will be held in Grant Park. You can sign up at <http://afc.aidschicago.org/netcommunity/cbhc>.

PEACE NEWS

Have Fun at Suburban Event for Peaceful Youth

Do you know what a zine is? We didn't until recently. The Northwest Suburban Peace and Education Project (NWSPEP) says this is the dictionary definition:

Dictionary: zine 'zine (zēn)

- 1. An inexpensively produced, self-published, underground publication.**
- 2. "Give Peace a Chance" A DIY project to reach and encourage interaction with students.**

The organization has learned that zines are all the rage with high school and college students. Those are just the folks the group wants to reach. Volunteers from this group work with suburban high schools to encourage young people to consider careers in peace-making and social change. So NWSPEP is producing its own zine. The problem is, that takes some money. So they need our help.

The group is having a fund raising event in Rolling Meadows on Saturday, September 12. The weather should be great. There will be food and drink and music and fun beginning at 4 p.m. The charge for the event (which will include burgers and veggie-burgers and all the usual sides plus desserts) will be \$20 for adults or \$10 for students—but don't worry if you don't have such riches in your wallet: come anyway, because no one will be turned away.

More information about the event is on the fliers attached with the last issue of *eWind*. There is a half-sheet flier just right for trimming down and using as a bulletin insert; the full-sheet flier is perfect for printing and posting—or even mailing.

For more information about this group, please visit their web site at www.nwsbpep.org RSVP to this invitation to the event at nwsbpep@comcast.net The Northwest Suburban Peace and Education Project is a 501(c)(3) educational organization, and donations are tax deductible. If you can't make it to the cook-out fund raiser, you can still contribute to the cause. Learn how by emailing nwsbpep@comcast.net

What We Need to Know

What We Need to Know: two remarkable Muslim woman speak of faith, peace and hope in today's world

Wednesday, October 14th, 5:15-5:45 Reception; 5:45-7:00 Program
"Let's Talk About It" series St. James Cathedral, 65 East Huron Street, Chicago
RSVP to ron.fox@seabury.edu

Come hear two remarkable Muslim women share their stories and speak together about how we create the space for dialogue, for sharing our own traditions and learning about each others traditions.

Ms. Manar Fawakhry, a Muslim from Mazra'a in northern Israel, is Program Director of Face to Face/Faith to Faith at Auburn Seminary in New York City. In the program, 50 participants at a time, ages 16-18, from communities in the US, the Middle East, Northern Ireland, and South Africa are brought to a facility in upstate New York staffed by young adult counselors, religious leaders, educators, and trained facilitators. The curriculum consists of multi-faith education, dialogue, and communication skills-building workshops, and experiential learning activities that foster interfaith understanding, including arts projects, visits from

musicians, storytellers, and off-site excursions.

Dr. Ingrid Mattson a Canadian convert to Islam who was elected in 2006 to lead the Islamic Society of North America, told the Chicago Tribune at that time that women should participate fully in Muslim life, whether that means sitting next to men during mosque lectures, but not at prayers, or contributing to the rules that govern religious observance." I want to make sure women are fully engaged," Mattson told the Tribune. "They should sit on boards and in mosques in space equal to men so they can participate in discussions." She is Professor of Islamic Studies and Director of Islamic Chaplaincy at the MacDonald Center for Islamic Studies and Christian-Muslim Relations at Hartford Seminary in Hartford, CT.

This program is sponsored by Seabury, Bexley, EPF, Cathedral, Peace and Justice Commission/Chicago EPF.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for world peace.

Please pray and take action for real reform of the health care system in the United States.

Please pray for the Baja Baptist Convention in Mexico, and for Teresa Miranda, the first missionary that the convention has supported on its own.

Please pray for ABC missionaries Patti and Tim Long serving in Mexico.

Please pray for all families and individuals dealing with breast cancer.

Please pray for all pastoral search committees, and all pastors seeking a call to a position in ministry.

Please hold in prayer ABC global consultant Luran Bethell, working to improve the lives and safety of women around the world.

Please pray for Judy Sutterlin (ABC missionary to China) and her family upon the home going of her father.

Please pray for Maxine Stark, who lives in the St. Louis area and is struggling with health problems. She is the mother of Bruce Stark and mother-in-law of Francine Stark of Morgan Park Baptist Church.

Please pray for Irving Park Baptist Church, celebrating their 120th anniversary this coming weekend.

CALENDAR

NOW—Please take action—phone calls, emails, letters to the editor—for health care reform.

September 6—ABCMC Sunday with Larry Greenfield preaching, Emmanuel Baptist Church, 8301 S. Damen Avenue, Chicago, 11 a.m.

September 9-11—Theological Conversation with Jurgen Moltmann, First Presbyterian Church, 219 Maple Avenue, Libertyville. Please visit <http://moltmannconversation.com> for information and registration.

September 12—ABCMC Stewardship Seminar, 10 a.m.

September 12—Memorial service for Eugene Nyman, 407 South Grove Avenue in Barrington, 4 p.m.

September 12—Northwest Suburban Peace and Education Project bar-b-que fund-raiser, 4 p.m. until...

September 13—Celebration of 120 years of ministry, Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park

Road, Chicago, with Mike Harvey preaching, 11 a.m. Luncheon follows at La Villa Banquets, 3638 N. Pulaski Road, Chicago, 1 p.m.

September 15—Kids Hope United 19th Annual Golf Outing, Bonnie Brook Golf Course, Waukegan.

September 15—Interfaith prayer breakfast and issue briefing, Sisters of St. Joseph, The Well, 1515 W. Ogden Road, LaGrange Park, 9:30 a.m.

September 17-20—Soldier's Heart retreat, Racine, Wisconsin. To learn more about Soldier's Heart, please visit www.soldiersheart.net

September 18—Kick-off of "4 Concerts for a Cause, Woodside Church, 1509 E. Court Street, Flint, Michigan. This event will explore "Global Interfaith Relations" and begins with a dinner, 7:30 p.m.

September 21—International Day of Prayer for Peace.

September 24—CTS Advent Lectionary Workshop, Covenant United Church of Christ, 1130 E. 154th Street, South Holland, IL, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Advance registration \$40 until September 10; \$45 thereafter.

September 24—Lecture and book signing by Walter Wink, Grand Taylor Chapel, Chicago Theological Seminary, 5757 S. University Avenue, Chicago, 7 p.m.

October 3—ABCMC gathering with Jeff Woods on vitalizing congregational ministries. Save the date! More information to come.

October 4—ABCMC Sunday with Larry Greenfield preaching, Woodside Church, 1409 E. Court Street, Flint, Michigan.

October 7—Student Life Luncheon featuring Hadeer Abo El Nagah and Deborah Kohler, PrahL College Center (PCC) at Mott Community College located at 1401 East Court St., Flint, Michigan, 11 a.m.-2 p.m.

October 11—Hadeer Abo El Nagah preaches at Woodside Church, 1409 E. Court Street, Flint, Michigan.

November 3-7—2009 Black Church Conference, Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center, 500 Holiday Plaza Drive, Matteson, Illinois.

November 8-9—Hidden Treasures: Spiritual Wisdom Through the Voices of Women in Judaism, Christianity and Islam, Catholic Theological Union, 5416 S. Cornell, Chicago. For more information and registration, please call the Bernardin Center at Catholic Theological Union, 773-371-5432, or visit www.ctu.edu

November 14—ABCMC Annual Meeting

December 12—ABCMC's 3rd annual Advent and Christmas Music Festival, Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, 3 p.m.

POSITION OPENING

Youth Program Assistant



The Youth Program Assistant (YPA) at Lake Street Church provides organizational and programmatic support to our Middle School & High School Youth Programs. This includes coordinating communication with youth participants and their families; maintaining event calendars; sharing information with volunteers; and encouraging youth participation.

Required skills include:

- strong communication skills, utilizing a variety of media;
- experience coordinating, planning and organizing events;
- attention to detail;
- experience and enthusiasm for working with youth.

Salary is \$18 - \$20/hour, commensurate with prior experience and qualifications. Weekly workload varies from 4-8 hours, based on scheduled activities; monthly schedule will range from 20-25 hours.

Applicants must submit a cover letter, resume, and three references to Rev. Ann-Louise Haak. Materials may be submitted electronically (alhaak@lakestreet.org) or in hard copy (Lake Street Church, 607 Lake Street, Evanston, IL 60201). For more information about our congregation, please visit www.lakestreet.org.

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



Vol VIII no. 18, September 4, 2009

Thinking Theologically About the Common Good

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

"Favoritism"

I was a little concerned that the twenty-four Lutherans in the U.S. Congress (four in the Senate, twenty in the House; fifteen Democrats, nine Republicans) wouldn't get the message when they attend church this coming Sunday.

That's because, remembering how Luther questioned the "gospel-ness" of the Letter of James, there might be the possibility that Lutherans would refrain from using the "strawy" epistle in their lectionary cycle.

But it turns out I have nothing to fear.

I learned from old friend and colleague, Martin E. Marty, that, for Lutherans, "James has been in our lections before we had lectionaries."

So maybe I should be more concerned about my own denominational family (Baptist), especially those who attend churches where preachers don't use the lectionary and, therefore, most likely will miss the terribly relevant lesson from the second chapter of James.

(By the way, there are 64 Baptists in Congress — eight in the Senate with only one Democrat among them; 58 in the House, evenly split among Republicans and Democrats).

My co-Baptists in Congress would be faced with a challenging question right off the bat:

My sisters and brothers, do you with your acts of favoritism really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ?

OK, that may not appear, at first glance, to be an appropriate question for any elected official in a democracy that honors the separation of church and state. But when the author elaborates on the question, it becomes relevant both religiously and politically:

If a person with gold rings and in fine clothes comes into your assembly, and if a poor person in dirty clothes comes in, and you take notice of the one wearing the fine clothes and say, "Have a seat here, please," while to the one who is poor you say, "Stand there," or "Sit under my footstool," have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil thoughts?

Religiously it's important, of course, because, as James explains, by showing favoritism to the wealthy and dising poor persons the Christian would be honoring those who are the oppressors of others and dishonoring the very persons God has chosen to favor with a richness of faith that makes them heirs of God's promised dominion.

In short, if by your actions you contradict what God has so centrally revealed to all of us then you obviously "don't really believe in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ."

Politically something very similar operates. If you favor those with wealth — e.g., those who provide you with large campaign contributions in order to influence your

political decisions on matters like health care reform, or tax policy, or environmental issues — and pay only lip service to those who can't make even medium size campaign contributions, or can't afford health insurance, or suffer from degraded soil, air, and water, then you've violated the very foundation of our democratic polity, something as fundamental as the principle of the equality of all people.

In short, to paraphrase James, if by your actions in your vocation as a politician you contradict what all of us understand to be so central to our democracy, then you obviously really don't believe in this glorious experiment of government by "we the people."

James tells his readers that they will do well if they, in their actions, "fulfill the royal law according to the scriptures, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"

But then he warns: "If you show partiality you commit sin and are convicted by the law as transgressors."

Something like that counsel surely applies politically to our senators and representatives, whether they be Lutherans, or Baptists, or in one of the "other" categories of faith and non-faith: you will do well if, in your actions, you fulfill the self-evident truth that all of us are created equal — that favoritism is a sin, a transgression against the abiding law that binds us together as a nation.

Wherever they are religiously or politically, they need to get the message.

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