

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 16, 2009

Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,
who, though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited,
but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.
Philippians 2:5-7

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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.

Bearing False Witness

This reflection is by ABCMC's communication coordinator, Lynne Kelley.

Where are all these wild tales we're hearing about health care reform coming from? They are the products of a creative public relations firm that has been hired by America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), the lobbying arm of the health insurance industry.

According to Source Watch, a project of the center for Media and Democracy, "**Democracy Data & Communications, LLC (DDC)**, founded in 1996, is a public affairs firm offering strategic planning and technology. It specializes in "helping clients strengthen their voices in the policymaking process by transforming organizations' human and economic assets into powerful political resources."

This organization is known for its "stealth campaigns" and "astroturfing." Astroturfing is a term for any kind of campaign seeking to create the impression of being spontaneous "grassroots" behavior (hence the reference to the artificial grass, AstroTurf) when the campaign is really backed by an industry or other group seeking its own gain.

The tales that are being told about health care reform are no more truth than AstroTurf is living sod.

Businesses like Democracy Data & Communications are paid well by wealthy corporations (and others) to make up and spread falsehoods. They get away with it because lying is not illegal. It's just immoral.

People are being paid to make phone calls, and communicate in other ways, all kinds of untruths with which they are trying to frighten us and shape our opinions. We need to be aware that these people are being paid handsomely by health insurance companies to mislead the American people.

Every time the media suggest that health care reform will be defeated, the price of stock in health insurance companies goes up. Investors in health insurance companies want to see that. Apparently making money is more important to them than the well-being of their fellow citizens?

Is this the position of followers of Jesus? Jesus said, "No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth" (Matthew 6:24). The apostle Paul wrote, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect."

Bill Moyers Journal

On July 10 the television show *Bill Moyers Journal* featured an interview with former insurance executive Wendell Potter, about a month after Potter had testified before Congress regarding fallacies perpetuated by the insurance industry. Moyers' interview with Potter was an eye-opening one. Potter told of his experience as an insurance industry insider at CYGNA, and how a trip back to his home state of West Virginia opened his eyes to the truth of the absolute necessity to reform our nation's health insurance industry. If you missed this interview on CBS, please take the time to view it here:

<http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/07102009/profile.html>

Going Green in ABCMC

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

Green Gram: A striking example of global warming underway is seen in our oceans. Coral reefs worldwide are "bleaching out," meaning they are losing their cellular organisms which help make up their colorful structures; this is due to elevated temperatures in concert with high light levels. Also, their calcified structures are threatened by ocean acidification due to dissolved atmospheric CO₂ into seawater. Increased CO₂ is coming mainly from man-made processes at this time in history. Oceans are responsible for much of Earth's oxygen production and photosynthesis. Their continued well-being is critical to our well-being. Learn more about global warming and help out.

Vitalizing Congregational Ministries

You've read and heard about it. Now it's time to register. A seminar on vitalizing congregational ministries with Dr. Jeff Woods, ABCUSA's Associate General Secretary for Regional Ministries, will take place on Saturday, October 3 at North shore Baptist Church, 5244 N. Lakewood Avenue (southwest corner of Berwyn and Lakewood), Chicago.

Please complete the registration form that is attached with this issue of *eWind* and email it to office@abcmc.org or fax to 773-804 or mail to American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago, 7035 W. Grand Avenue, Suite 102, Chicago, IL 60707 Registration is due by 2 p.m. on Wednesday, September 30.

PDF from Stewardship Seminar Available

Friends in ABCMC:

Those of us attending the Stewardship Seminar on "Stewardship in Hard Times" with Steve Clapp last Saturday in Yorkville received an extensive document on the theme. It actually served as a resource for the seminar, but with even more information and suggestions that was covered in the seminar.

We've now received permission to share this document with all of our churches and ministries as a PDF, which is attached to this edition of *e-Wind*, and will be on our abcmc.org website as well.

I urge you to take advantage of it. "You" in that previous sentence applies, of course, to everyone; but it applies especially to those who are heading up stewardship campaigns, to finance committees, and to clergy in our churches.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Larry

NEWS FROM ABCMC CONGREGATIONS

Peace Day Event September 19-20 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

Don Zeigler Meets with Russian Leaders as Part of Recent Summit

*This article is from **The Spire**, the newsletter of the Lake Street Church of Evanston.*

Don Zeigler, a member of the Lake Street Church of Evanston, recently returned from Moscow. He reports: "I served on a delegation to the U.S.-Russia Civil Society Summit in Moscow on July 6 and 7. The meeting coincided with the U.S.-Russian Presidential Summit between presidents Barack Obama and Dmitry Medvedev.

"While both governments have signaled interest in improving their relations, discourse between key sectors of civil society can help put bilateral relations on a more solid footing. The Civil Society Summit attempted to foster engagement by gathering nongovernmental experts to exchange views and experiences on challenges confronting our nations. The gathering of about 75 invited experts and practitioners from both countries to develop recommendations for collaboration on six (somewhat controversial) themes: press and new media, community development, the environment, human rights and the rule of law, youth and education, and public health.

"I was on the public health working group which focused on population health, prevention, non-communicable diseases, and management of chronic disease. I was there to propose and advocate for alcohol and tobacco control measures and the incorporation of evidence-based clinical practices.

"Life expectancy for Russian men is 59 years versus 75 for U.S. men. Cardiovascular disease and stroke are the main killers. There are high rates of smoking (even 60% among physicians!) and alcohol kills 600,000 Russians per year.

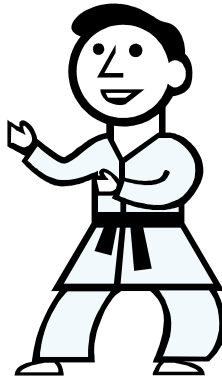
"Our six groups presented recommendations to Medvedev's representative and Obama at our meeting. Obama praised our efforts during his speech to our Summit. As follow up, we have presented plans for projects of long-term interaction and mutual engagement to solve problems confronting both societies. We hope to meet again in the U.S. in six months. Funding is being sought from both governments and private foundations. I hope to be a part of this exciting and challenging process."

Tae Kwon Do for Seniors



**Tae Kwon Do for Seniors
(50 years of age & above)
Morgan Park Baptist Church
11024 South Bell Avenue
Chicago, IL 60643
773-445-9443
Gymnasium**

**Tuesday mornings, from 9:00 until 10:15 am
First Session: Tuesday, September 29
Class size is limited: Minimum of 10 & Maximum of 24**



The instructor will be Rev. Dr. Thomas Aldworth, pastor of Morgan Park Baptist Church. Dr. Aldworth is a certified third-degree black belt (WTF & USTU) and has taught Tae Kwon Do for almost 20 years. He was a Louisiana State Champion in sparring.

There will be no fee for those attending the previous Sunday service at Morgan Park Baptist Church, otherwise the fee is \$15 per class. There will be a one-time fee for uniform & pads. The first class on September 29 is free and open to everyone.

Festival of the Arts – Body, Mind, and Spirit

*This article is from **The Spire**, the newsletter of the Lake Street Church of Evanston.*

Lake Street Church's newly formed Arts Council is holding the first ever Festival of Arts at Lake Street Church on Saturday, September 26, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, September 27, Noon to 3 p.m. You may join LSC visual and performing artists as they share their talents. Established, emerging, and inspired LSC artists will offer their creative gifts as a celebration of community. You may want to purchase art or simply appreciate the beauty of it. Following the Sunday worship service, teachers from the LSC-sponsored Yoga Tree will give a Yoga asana demonstration in MacLeish Hall including an explanation of Yoga philosophy.

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: Oct. 16, Nov. 20, Dec. 18, Jan. 15, Feb. 19, Mar. 19, Apr. 16, May 21 and Jun. 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.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Theology Pub

Tommy Nevins Pub, 1450 Sherman Avenue, Evanston, will be the location for a Theology Pub on Tuesday, September 22 from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

Join hostess Nadia Bolz-Weber, the “sarcastic Lutheran” and author of *Salvation on the Small Screen?* *24 Hours of Christian Television* and *Signs of Emergence: A Vision for Church That Is Always Organic/Networked/Decentralized/Bottom-Up/Communal/Flexible/Always Evolving*.

Bolz-Weber is the mission developer at House for All Sinners and Saints, a group of folks figuring out how to be a liturgical, Christo-centric, social justice oriented, queer inclusive, incarnational, contemplative, irreverent, in an ancient-future church with a progressive but deeply rooted theological imagination.

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.

Mission and Ministry in the Great Emergence

This information is from Seabury-Western Seminary, 2122 Sheridan Road, Evanston.

September 21-25, 2009

What's next for you and your faith community?

One week. Four options for participation. Hundreds of answers.

- **GAIN** deeper understanding. Explore how the Great Emergence impacts communities of faith.
- **GROW** your ability to lead. Discover renewal in the face of crisis.
- **ENVISION** an exciting future. Create a faithful, creative path for your congregation.

This week is an exciting new collaboration between Seabury's *Bread for the Journey* continuing education opportunity and our DMin in Congregational Development program. Come with your curiosity and passion. Choose between the 3-day or the full week of seminars, peer groups, worship and exploration. [Click here to go to the full schedule.](#)

Join. Collaborate.

The week-long program features:

New keynote lectures by Phyllis Tickle

Phyllis Tickle explores what the Great Emergence means for us, examining the primary cultural shifts and the many implications for Christians provoked by these dramatic changes necessitated by living in a post-christendom, nonhierarchical, technological world.

Seminar Work

This is where the rubber meets the road. In facilitated small group sessions, participants engage how these significant societal changes necessitate new ways of carrying out mission and ministry. How do we help our communities recognize these shifts, navigate the wide variety of responses to them and finally begin to see some faithful, creative and life giving responses to these new realities?

- **MISSION IN A POST-CHRISTENDOM WORLD:** What does it mean to be teaching and preaching in a post-Christendom world hungering for belonging above believing? How does this impact our theology of atonement, forgiveness, the role of scripture and the exclusivity of Christian claims?

- **ORGANIZATION IN A NON-HIERARCHICAL WORLD:** What does society's shift from hierarchy to network theory mean for our understanding of authority, scripture, and the institutional church? What does the emerging church push for non-hierarchical structures mean for vestries, "total ministry" models and bridging generations with vastly different worldviews?

- **COMMUNITY IN TECHNOLOGICAL WORLD:** In a world unsure about what it means to be human, how can we do ministry? How do we foster community and communion with each other and God alongside the ever-evolving

technological innovations, social networking tools and the constant flow of information flooding our lives?

- **WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE:** What do you, as faith leaders at this marvelous and complex time in history, need?

What next steps flow from what we've surfaced during the week, and how do we build on what we've learned to share with others?

Seminar leaders: John Denson, Susan Harlow, Terry Martin and Winnie Varghese.

Adaptive Leadership Workshop

It is an extraordinary time to be leaders in a time of unprecedented change and complexity. Many of us struggle to make

sense of our own vocation and ministry while seeking to lead communities into an adaptive change process to meet unimagined future realities. How do we balance our prophetic call while overcoming our own resistance, fear and uncertainty so we can rise to the challenge of leading through death into resurrection with courage, wisdom and hope? How do we 'lead from the future as it emerges' as C. Otto Scharmer describes in his profound book on the social technology of presencing entitled *Theory U?* Nurya Love Parish, Workshop Leader

Theology Pub with Nadia Bolz-Weber

Join hostess Nadia Bolz-Weber, the "sarcastic Lutheran" and author of *Salvation on the Small Screen? 24 Hours of Christian*

Television and Signs of Emergence: A Vision for Church That Is Always Organic/Networked/Decentralized/Bottom-Up/

Communal/Flexible/Always Evolving. Bolz-Weber is the mission developer at House for All Sinners and Saints, a group of folks figuring out how to be a liturgical, Christo-centric, social justice oriented, queer inclusive, incarnational, contemplative, irreverent, in an ancient-future church with a progressive but deeply rooted theological imagination. Visit her blog at sarcasticlutheran.com

Ideation Session

What shape should theological education and Christian formation take to respond to the needs of the church and the world? Come for a creative discussion. Share your ideas and generate new ones with your colleagues.

Emersion Experience

We are in the process of crafting an excellent off-campus adventure. We'll rev your imagination and spirit with an experience

to engage your heart, mind and will. Stay tuned to find out more.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Prior to this learning event, all participants are **required** to read *The Great Emergence* and to attend a lecture by Dr. Tickle OR view her lectures on video. Type "Phyllis Tickle - part 1" into youtube.com.

Next: Choose your option

Option 1 3 days

bread for the journey package

Monday, September 21 - Wednesday, September 23

Cost: \$250

BFJ is an annual continuing education event at Seabury offering a thought-provoking learning experience and fellowship with other church leaders.

Highlights: 2 new keynote lectures with Phyllis, Adaptive Leadership Workshop, Theology Pub with Nadia Bolz-Weber, and seminar on Mission in a post-Christendom World.

Option 2 5 days

continuing education non-credit package

Monday, September 21 - Friday, September 25

Cost: \$500

For curious people seeking continuing education and enrichment

Highlights: participate in all learning experiences throughout the whole week.

Option 3 5 days

D.Min. course for credit package

Monday, September 21 - Friday, September 25

Cost: \$1,400

D.Min in Congregational Development degree students

Highlights: all the BFJ program with 3 additional seminars, an emersion experience, group papers and sharing your learnings with the larger church.

Option 4

create your own package

Phyllis Tickle Keynote Lectures \$20 per day

Monday Night Ideation Session \$15

Nadia Bolz-Weber Theology Pub No charge. Participants pay for their own food and drink.

Online options are also available. Please click here for more information.

Space is limited. Sign up early to be sure you can attend!

Incentive : Reduced rates when you choose option 1 or 2 and bring one or more registered participants.

Next: Register

Go to http://www.seabury.edu/registration_form_missionministry.asp to register. You will have the option to pay with a credit card or paypal via the 'donate to Seabury' link on our website, or to mail in a payment. Please forgive any workarounds you may encounter. We're in flux as we transition to a new website for Seabury.

Mission & Ministry Program schedule

Academic course/weeklong enrichment are in blue. Shared events with "Bread for the Journey" program are in black.

"Bread for the Journey" program begins with Noonday Prayer on Monday and concludes with lunch on Wednesday.

Monday, September 21

9:00 am - noon Academic Course Orientation; Case Study presentation

(Box lunches will be available for class members)

9:00 - 11:00 am Registration

12:00 pm Noonday Prayer (*Bread for the Journey* program begins)

1:00 - 1:30 pm Welcome and Announcements

1:30 - 4:30 pm Keynote by Phyllis Tickle

5:15 - 6:00 pm Festal Evensong: Conferral of the degree Doctor of Divinity, *honoris causa* upon the Rt.

Rev. Joseph Garang Atem, Bishop of the Diocese of Renk in the Episcopal Church of Sudan

6:00 - 7:00 pm Reception

7:00 - 8:30 pm Ideation Session and Dinner

Tuesday, September 22

8:15 - 8:45 am Morning Prayer

8:45 - 11:00 am Keynote by Phyllis Tickle continued

11:30 - 1:30 pm Lunch

1:30 - 4:00 pm Workshop: Leading through Crisis into renewal

4:45 - 5:45 pm Discussion with the "Sarcastic Lutheran," Nadia Bolz-Weber

6:00 - 8:30 pm Theology pub with Nadia Bolz-Weber

8:30 pm Compline

Wednesday, September 23

8:15 - 8:45 am Morning Prayer

8:45 - 11:00 am Seminar 1: Mission in a post-Christendom World

11:30 - 12:30 pm Eucharist

12:30 - 1:30 pm Lunch (*Bread for the Journey* program ends)

2:30 - 6:30 pm Academic Course Immersion Field trip

6:00 pm Optional Event: Leave Evanston for Prayer Service at Trinity United Church of Christ, south side of Chicago

TBD Tentmakers meeting with Phyllis Tickle – for clergy who are called to ministry within the marketplace and wider community, as well as within the Church, and who earn a significant portion of their income beyond the institutional church. Contact Davis Fisher at davisfishr@aol.com to register for this event.

Thursday, September 24

8:15 - 8:45 am Morning Prayer

8:45 am - noon Seminar 2: Organization in a Non-Hierarchical World

12:15 - 1:15 pm Lunch

1:30 - 5:00 pm Seminar 3: Community in a Technological World
5:15 - 5:45 pm Evening Prayer
7:00 pm Free Evening

Friday, September 25

9:00 - noon Closing Seminar: Where do we go from here?
12:00 - 1:00 pm Closing Eucharist

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>

September 21 is International Day of Prayer for Peace

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 9/11/09)—On Monday, September 21, or the Sunday preceding it, churches and communities throughout the world are invited to join together in prayer and observance for the International Day of Prayer for Peace. For 2009, the World Council of Churches (WCC) has chosen a theme focusing on the Caribbean and an idea of "One Love: Building a Peaceful Caribbean."

The annual International Day of Prayer for Peace, proposed in 2004, invites people from across the world as well as across religious divides to observe or pray for peace on September 21. The day runs concurrently with the International Day of Peace, a United Nations' initiative that "is meant to demonstrate the power of prayer and other spiritual practices in promoting peace and preventing violent conflict."

American Baptist Churches are encouraged to participate in or host an ecumenical prayer for peace event in their local community. Churches can find prayers, song lyrics and other resources in English, Spanish, French and German [here](http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/events/ev/se/article/1634/international-day-of-pray.html) (<http://www.oikoumene.org/en/news/events/ev/se/article/1634/international-day-of-pray.html>).

Odyssey Networks invites American Baptists to sign-up to join in Prayer for Peace for one minute on September 21. To register your participation, please visit their website at www.odysseynetworks.org. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God." Matthew 5:9 (NIV)

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

On Facebook

Are you on Facebook? So is the Ministers Council! Check out [American Baptist Ministers Council](#) on Facebook and receive the latest 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
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

How Corporate PR Works to Kill Health Care Reform

This article by Wendell Potter is from <http://www.prwatch.org/node/8552>

September 14th I addressed a gathering at the Center for American Progress in Washington, DC and delivered these remarks:

It is easy to think of efforts to influence lawmakers as the exclusive domain of K Street lobbyists. Much has been said and written about the millions of dollars the special interests are spending on lobbying activities and the hundreds of lobbyists who are at work as we speak trying to shape health care reform legislation. Very little by comparison has been written about the millions of dollars that special interests are spending on PR activities to accomplish the same goal and that are vital to successful lobbying efforts.

One of the reasons I left my job at CIGNA, where I headed corporate communications and was part of the

Legal & Public Affairs division, was because I did not want to be involved in yet another PR and lobbying campaign to kill or gut reform. I finally came to question the ethics of what I had done and been a part of for nearly two decades to influence decision-making and bill writing on Capitol Hill.

When I testified before the Senate Commerce Committee in late June, I told the senators how the industry has conducted duplicitous and well-financed PR and lobbying campaigns every time Congress has tried to reform our health care system, and how its current behind-scenes-efforts may well shape reform in a way that benefits Wall Street far more than average Americans. I noted that, just as they did 15 years ago when the insurance industry led the effort to kill the Clinton reform plan, it is using skills and front groups to spread lies and disinformation to scare Americans away from the very reform that would benefit them most. The industry, despite its public assurances to be good-faith partners with the President and Congress, has been at work for years laying the groundwork for devious and often sinister campaigns to manipulate public opinion.

The industry goes to great lengths to keep its involvement in these campaigns hidden from public view. I know from having served on numerous trade group committees and industry-funded front groups, however, that industry leaders are always full partners in developing strategies to derail any reform that might interfere with insurers' ability to increase profits. My involvement in these groups goes back to the early '90s when insurers joined with other special interests to finance the activities of the Healthcare Leadership Council, which led a coordinated effort to scare Americans and members of Congress away from the Clinton plan.

A few years after that victory, the insurers formed a front group called the Health Benefits Coalition to kill efforts to pass a Patients Bill of Rights. While it was billed as a broad-based business coalition that was led by the National Federation of Independent Business and included the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, the Health Benefits Coalition in reality got the lion's share of its funding and guidance from the big insurance companies and their trade associations.

Like most front groups, the Health Benefits Coalition was set up and run out of one of Washington's biggest PR firms. The PR firm provided all the staff work for the Coalition while an executive with the NFIB, which has long been a close ally of the insurance industry, served as a front man.

One of the key strategies of the Health Benefits Coalition as it was gearing up for battle in late 1998 was to stir up support among conservative talk radio and other media. Among the tactics the PR firm implemented for the Coalition was to form alliances with important conservative groups, such as the Christian Coalition and the Family Research Council, to get them to send letters to Congress or appear at HBC press conferences. The Health Benefits Coalition also launched an advertising campaign in conservative media outlets. The message was that President Clinton owed a debt to the liberal base of the "Democrat" Party and would try to pay back that debt by advancing the type of big government agenda on health care that he failed to get in 1994. The tactics worked. Industry allies in Congress made sure the Patients' Bill of Rights would not become law.

The insurance industry has funded several other front groups since then whenever the industry was under attack. It formed the Coalition for Affordable Quality Healthcare to try to improve the image of managed care in response to a constant stream of negative stories that appeared in the media in the late '90s and the first years of this decade. It funded another group with a different name about the same time when lawyers began filing class action lawsuits on behalf of doctors and patients. Like the Health Benefits Coalition, this one, called America's Health Insurers, was created by and run out of a powerful Washington-based PR firm.

The insurance industry called on that same firm again in 2007 to help blunt the impact of Michael Moore's movie, Sicko. The PR firm created and staffed a front group called Health Care America specifically to discredit Moore and to demonize the health care systems featured in the movie. The media contact for Health Care America was a vice president at the firm who had served previously in PR roles at the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and in the Bush administration.

The PR firm also activated conservative allies and enlisted the support of conservative talk show hosts, writers and editorial page editors to warn against a “government-takeover” of the U.S. care system. That is a term the industry uses often to scare people away from any additional involvement of the government in health care. Health Care America also placed ads in newspapers. One such ad, which appeared in Capitol Hill newspapers, carried this message, “In America, you wait in line to see a movie. In government-run health care systems, you wait to see a doctor.”

The PR firm’s work on behalf of the industry included feeding talking points to conservatives in the media and in Congress and placing columns and op-eds written for the industry’s friends in conservative and free-market think tanks like the American Enterprise Institute, Heritage, CATO, the Manhattan Institute and the Galen Institute.

With this history, you can rest assured that the insurance industry is up to the same dirty tricks, using the same devious PR practices it has used for many years, to kill reform this year, or even better, to shape it so that it benefits insurance companies and their Wall Street investors far more than average Americans.

The creation and funding of front groups and the use of shells on Capitol Hill and in the media are not the only tactics PR people use to support and enhance lobbying efforts. Other activities include, of course, the implementation of grassroots and grass-tops campaigns. But a much more subtle tactic is to provide supposedly accurate and objective information to “educate” members of Congress and their staffs.

Business Week recently described how health insurers, United Health Group in particular, have been hard at work behind the scenes providing a treasure trove of data to key senators. If lawmakers believe the information and date the insurers are feeding them is comprehensive and objective, they are mistaken. Corporate representatives, especially the PR people who work with the media and who write talking points, are masters at the selective use of data and disclosing only the information their employers want to be disclosed.

What does this all mean for our country and our democracy?

During my 20 years in corporate communications and public affairs, I participated in the steady growth and influence of largely invisible persuasion -- and at a time when newsrooms are shrinking and investigative journalism seems to be vanishing. The number of PR people long ago surpassed the number of working journalists in this country. And that ratio of PR people to reporters will continue to grow. The clear winners as this shift occurs are big, rich corporations and other special interests. The losers are average Americans, most of whom are completely unaware how their thoughts and actions are being manipulated to achieve corporate goals on Capitol Hill.

Wendell Potter is the Senior Fellow on Health Care for the Center for Media and Democracy in Madison, Wisconsin.

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>.

Health Care Sabbath

The Illinois Campaign for Better Health Care invites all ABCMC congregations to participate in this year’s Health Care Sabbath on October 18. We can join congregations across the state in focusing on justice and health care disparity during the Health Care Sabbath. Resources for the event are available for free download from <http://www.cbhconline.org/issues/hcj/sabbath.html>

PEACE NEWS

Baptist Peace Fellowship Sunday

September 21 is the International Day of Prayer for Peace, and BPFNA is encouraging our Partner Congregations to embrace this Sunday, September 20, or a Sunday of your choosing as **Baptist Peace Fellowship Sunday**, dedicated to support of BPFNA and peacemaking.

You may want to style this week's worship according to a peace theme, including peace-oriented prayers, litanies and sermons. We have some bulletin inserts with prayers and responsive litanies, available at www.bpfna.org/inserts. If a member of your congregation has attended the BPFNA Summer Conference "Peace Camp", you could ask him or her to talk to the congregation about the experience and encourage additional participation from the congregation.

We also encourage you to receive a special BPFNA offering in worship or elsewhere to support the work we're doing together. You may choose to dedicate part or the entirety of the "loose plate" or a special offering to BPFNA. During the offering, you could also encourage members to sign a pledge of peacemaking, such as... *I pledge to be a peacemaker in my every day life, and solve my conflicts non-violently*. Congregants might wish to draft a letter to be sent to a political leader detailing a personal commitment to peace work and renunciation of violence in the world.

Finally, we would greatly appreciate your encouraging congregants to become individual members of BPFNA with a gift of \$40 or more. They will receive our quarterly journal, *Baptist Peacemaker*, and be part of this important work for peace and justice. [Click here](#) to get a bulletin insert inviting congregants to join BPFNA.

Thank you in advance for observing a "Baptist Peace Fellowship Sunday" in your church. If you need offering envelopes, posters or other customized materials to promote BPFNA in your church, please send me an email. [Click here](#) for more information about observing the International Day of Prayer for Peace.

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 14, 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.

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 ABC missionaries David and Joyce Reed who are working with Mexican Baptist Convention of Southern Baja, where new churches are being started and young people are being led to Jesus.

Please pray for ABC global consultant in theological education Stan Slade. He joins American Baptist missionaries and partners around the world to strengthen their work of preparing church leaders, specifically in theological formation and reflection, both formal and informal.

Please hold in prayer the First Baptist Church of Berwyn in their time of transition following the passing of their pastor. Please pray also for David Weasley, a recent graduate of Chicago Theological Seminary. David is temporarily filling the slot of pastor at the church.

Please pray for ABCUSA General Secretary Roy Medley, who is on sabbatical September 1-December 31. May God bless him with renewal and refreshment of mind, body and spirit.

CALENDAR

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

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 19—Peace Walk, rally, gathering; the South Church, 501 S. Emerson Street, Mt. Prospect. Celebration to follow at the church.

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 4—Lynne Kelley preaching at Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, 11 a.m.

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.

October 11— ABCMC Sunday with Larry Greenfield preaching, Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago, 11 a.m.

October 18—Health Care Sabbath.

October 18—ABCMC Sunday with Larry Greenfield preaching, Montrose Baptist Church, 4411 N. Melvina, Chicago.

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.

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