

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

January 7, 2010



“You whom I took from the ends of the earth, and called from its farthest corners,
saying to you, ‘You are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off’;
do not fear, for I am with you, do not be afraid, for I am your God;
I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my victorious right hand.”

Isaiah 41:9-10

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EPIPHANY NOTE FROM THE EXECUTIVE MINISTER

On this snowy day in Metro Chicago, I recall a brief essay Keith Cerk, pastor at First Baptist Waukegan, wrote in the church's December newsletter. It seems like a particularly good day to share it with you.
Larry

"Wintry Spirituality"
(Reprinted with permission from Rev. Keith Cerk)

My family and I spent five days vacationing in Puerto Rico during the kids' Thanksgiving break. What a beautiful, tropical island paradise: sun, sand, warm ocean surf, lush rainforests, towering mountains, temperatures in the 80s. However, when we returned to Chicago we were greeted by the 32 degree reality of our impinging harsh Midwestern winter. What a stark contrast!

No wonder so many who come here from warmer climes have such disdain for our winter, preferring to bask eternal in the warm verdancy of summer. Yet those of us who love these changing seasons know that each has its place in the growth cycle of living things.

When it comes to spirituality, we tend likewise to prefer the summery times when life is going well: God seems near...problems are just a fading memory...family, friends, work and church are all humming along just fine. Those of us who've been around for a few seasons know that winter will come soon. In wintry spirituality life seems bleak, raw, fierce in its attempt to shred us: our body fails...a loved one dies...sin surfaces in some glaring way...a job is lost...and God seems to be the one on vacation in Puerto Rico, leaving us here to struggle all alone!

The wise among us have always known that in wintry spiritual times God is doing God's deepest and best work. We seem to need wintry times. Discomfort heightens our awareness of that which is disordered in our lives. Often, only pain can make us willing to take necessary steps that shake us free of hindrances to find our hearts true desires in God. The end result is greater closeness with God and a joy which rises above any and all circumstances. If you are being tutored by a harsh spiritual winter, embrace its lessons and take heart. God is very present as we do wintry soul work. "This too shall pass" and summer is just around the corner.

ABCMC NEWS

Calendar of Upcoming ABCMC Meetings

- Family Cabinet Planning Retreat, Saturday, Jan. 16th, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., Lake Street Church, Evanston
- Finance & Property Committee, Tuesday, Jan. 19th, 3 p.m. at Wunderlich Securities, 200 West Madison St., Chicago, IL.
- 2010 Family Council Meetings: Feb. 6th, May 8th, Aug. 28th, Nov. 13th (Annual Planning Meeting)
- Minister's Council Retreat, Feb. 22nd and 23rd at The Cenacle Retreat and Conference Center, 513 Fullerton, Chicago.

Notice of the February Meeting of the ABCMC Family Council

The Family Council of the American Baptist Churches of Metro Chicago will meet on Saturday, February 6th, beginning at 9:00 a.m. and concluding with lunch, at the Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago. Please contact Veronica Johnson via email @ veronica@abcmc.org to register your attendance.

Metro Chicago Minister's Council Retreat

Dear Clergy Colleagues,

This is your invitation to join with your American Baptist sisters and brothers in ministry for an overnight retreat. We will be gathering from Monday, February 22nd starting at 10 a.m. to Tuesday, February 23rd ending by 3 p.m. at The Cenacle Retreat and Conference Center, 513 Fullerton, Chicago. The Rev. Dr. Joe Kutter, Acting Executive Director, ABC/USA Minister's Council will be our leader. Dr. Kutter will lead us through a process of learning called, "Communities of Practice." It is based on the idea that those of us who are doing ministry are best able to learn from one another.


Dr. Kutter will also share his learnings from other Minister's Councils. We will also be voting on the new officers for our Metro Chicago Minister's Council. Time is precious to us and so we will be sure to make this a time that will be worth it for you!

The only cost to you will be \$30.00; you can make your check out to the Minister's Council. Please reserve your spot by Thursday, January 21st by contacting Douglas Harris at 5244 N. Lakewood Ave., Chicago, IL 60640, 773-728-4200 and dharris@northshorebaptist.org. The national Minister's Council is covering most of the cost of the retreat through funds from a Lilly grant. You will have a single room, unless you want to room with someone else. There is parking for about thirty vehicles for free and some additional parking for \$6 close by. If you have any questions just give me a call.

I am looking forward to spending some time with all of you.

In Christ's Service,
Douglas Harris

Upcoming Changes to eWind

 *Metro Chicago* *eWind* *There is change in the air...* In the very near future you will notice significant changes to eWind. The primary change will be in format: eWind will be an e-newsletter that appears in your email. Upon opening the email, you will see the newsletter with links that will take you to additional content. (A pdf file of eWind will no longer be distributed. We are seeking ways to accommodate those without access to email.) We hope to make eWind more user friendly, with content that is relevant, timely, and useful for the ABCMC community. You will continue to see an ABCMC Calendar of Events, ABC regional and national news, announcements from ABC churches and institutions. You will also receive information and updates from task forces focusing on ABCMC priorities. Other ideas we are considering include a weekly devotional, sermons (submitted by ABCMC ministers), lectionary lessons, resources for Christian education, and other ministry materials.

If you have any suggestions for topics or resources to include in eWind, either weekly or occasionally, please submit your ideas to Veronica @ veronica@abcmc.org by January 18th.

Thinking Theologically

Check next week's *eWind* for Executive Minister Larry Greenfield's column, "*Thinking Theologically*."

Free Screening of Extraordinary Measures by CBS Films

ABCMC has been offered a number of free tickets for a screening of *Extraordinary Measures* by CBS Films. The screening will be held on Tuesday, January 19th at 7:00 p.m. at AMC River East Theaters, 322 East Illinois Street, Chicago. You can check out the movie trailer at <http://extraordinarymeasuresmovie.com/>

ABCMC is not endorsing this movie; we are simply making the free tickets available to those who are interested. If you are interested, contact Veronica @ veronica@abcmc.org.

NEWS FROM ABCMC CONGREGATIONS

Rev. Jacki Belile presenting "The Power of Forgiveness"



On Saturday January 16th at 4pm, Rev. Jacki Belile will be presenting "The Power of Forgiveness," a documentary film which explores the promises and challenges of experiencing forgiveness, and the relationship of forgiveness to emotional, spiritual, physical and social health. This event includes screening the documentary film plus an active discussion about forgiveness guided by Rev. Jacki.

This event will be held at **Thousand Waves Martial Arts & Self-Defense Center, NFP 1220 W. Belmont Ave, Chicago, IL 60657**, as part of a free public lecture and discussion series, Making Peace: Meditations on Activism. Refreshments will be provided. Donations are welcome.

Evanston Martin Luther King Day Celebration (Co-sponsored by Lake Street Church)

As part of the Evanston MLK Day celebration, a group of faith communities (including Beth Emet Synagogue, First Congregational Church of Evanston, First United Methodist Church of Evanston, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, Lake Street Church of Evanston and Second Baptist Church of Evanston) have joined together in planning an Evanston community-wide event for Martin Luther King Day 2010. The event, **A Community of One: Each One, Peace One-MLK Community Peace Pledge Day, will take place on January 18th**, with the following schedule:

11:00 a.m. -- Attend the Community Coffee hosted by First United Methodist Church of Evanston, 516 Church Street

11:40 a.m. -- March in Unity from First United Methodist Church of Evanston to Second Baptist Church of Evanston, 1717 Benson

12:00 Noon -- Attend the Annual Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Convocation at Second Baptist Church of Evanston, 1717 Benson. Dr. Drew Smith, Director of Church and the Black Experience program at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary will be the keynote speaker.

Individuals attending will be invited to make a pledge of Peace, Unity and Service in the spirit of Dr. King.

ABCUSA NEWS

Check back next week for news from ABCUSA.

PEACE NEWS

Families for Peace will hold its regular silent vigil on Saturday, January 9th, from 3 to 4 p.m. at the corner of Arlington Heights Road and Northwest Highway (northeast corner). Signs will be provided, or bring your own focused on peace. Families for Peace is sponsored by Sisters of the Living Word; The Viatorian Community; Social Action Committee of Palatine Countryside Universalist Church; Social Justice & Advocacy of Congregational United Church of Christ of Arlington Heights; Women's Resource Center and peace loving individuals.

The Northwest Suburban Peace and Education Project will hold its monthly meeting on Tuesday, January 12th at 7 p.m. at South Church, 501 S. Emerson Street, Mount Prospect. All who are interested in helping young people incorporate peace-making into their lives are welcome. For more information, please visit the web site, www.nwsubpep.org.

PRAYER REQUESTS

Please pray for world peace.

Please pray for our troops and our government.

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

Please pray for all persons facing job loss and job searches in the current economy.

Please pray for all children who are homeless and/or hungry.

Please pray for ABCMC staff and all ABCMC churches for effective Christian witness and service in 2010.



CALENDAR

January 16 - Family Cabinet Planning Retreat, 9 a.m. – 2 p.m., Lake Street Church, Evanston

January 16 – “The Power of Forgiveness” film and discussion with Rev. Jacki Belile at Thousand Waves Martial Arts & Self-Defense Center, 1220 W. Belmont Ave, Chicago, IL 60657, 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

January 18 - *A Community of One: Each One, Peace One-MLK Community Peace Pledge Day*, starting at 11:00 a.m. at First United Methodist Church of Evanston, 516 Church Street, Evanston.

January 21- Lenten Lectionary Workshop at First Congregational Church of Western Springs, 1106 Chestnut, Western Springs, IL 60558, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

January 19 - Finance & Property Committee, 3pm at Wunderlich Securities, 200 West Madison St., Chicago, IL.

February 6 - Family Council Meeting, 9 a.m. through lunch, Irving Park Baptist Church, 4401 W. Irving Park Road, Chicago.

February 22 and 23 – Minister's Council Retreat, The Cenacle Retreat and Conference Center, 513 Fullerton, Chicago.

March 1 - Deadline for entries for BJC's essay contest.

March 7 - Sing to Live Community Chorus concert, Anne and Howard Gottlieb Hall, 38 S. Prairie, Chicago, 4 p.m.

March 13 - Sing to Live Community Chorus concert, Chicago Music Institute, Nichols Concert Hall, 1490 Chicago Avenue, Evanston, 7:30 p.m.

April 18 - Kids Hope United Mad Hatters Tea Party, The Lehmann Mansion, 485 Milwaukee Avenue, Lake Villa, Illinois

May 15 - Sing to Live Community Chorus concert, Chicago Music Institute, Nichols Concert Hall, 1490 Chicago Avenue, Evanston, 7:30 p.m.

May 16 - Sing to Live Community Chorus concert, Pilgrim Congregational Church, 460 Lake Street, Oak Park, 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 Thursday. We welcome your news, prayer requests and comments. Please send them to office@abcmc.org. If you spot a typographical error or other mistake in *eWind*, please let us know via email at office@abcmc.org.