

# CAPITAL BAPTIST NEWSBRIEFS

■ A News Summary ■ Edited by Jeffrey Haggray

District of Columbia Baptist Convention

September 2008

## In this issue ...

- Positions Available ..... 2
- Worrying About Finances ..... 2
- Playground Brings Hope to Rural Miss. County ..... 2
- International Digest ..... 4
- Faith Leaders Ask DNC, RNC to Showcase Anti-poverty Plans ..... 5
- American Baptist Leaders Organize First-ever Burmese Baptist Meeting ..... 5
- Beijing Coerces Churches Not to Meet ... 5
- Hamas Leader 's Son, Now a Christian, Says Only Gospel Can Transform Mideast .... 6
- College of Prayer DC ..... 8
- DCBC Ministers Fellowship ..... 8
- DCBC Annual Meeting ..... 8



**NCAMO 2008**

**Goal — \$100,000**



**Stepping Outside of the Box**

**I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?**

**Isaiah 43:19**

*Congregations Cooperating in Missions*

## Vignettes of DCBC People, Churches, etc.

### Correction

Recently, *NewsBriefs* reported that Stephen Price is the new pastor at **Broadneck BC**. This was in error. Stephen is Broadneck's Interim Pastor. Broadneck is currently receiving resumes for a new pastor.

### Mark your calendars for the DCBC's Annual Youth Rally!

*Join us for non-stop fun, exciting games, Christian fellowship and delicious food!*

*When:* Saturday, October 25, 2008

*Where:* First Baptist Church of the City of Washington DC,  
1328 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington DC 20036

*Contact:* Starlette McNeill at 202.265.1526 or via email at [info@dcbaptist.org](mailto:info@dcbaptist.org).

**Have you elected your delegates for the DC Baptist Convention Annual Meeting, October 27-28, 2008?** The meeting is quickly approaching. Please identify delegates for this important event. Questions? Contact: DCBC at 202.265.1526 or via email at [info@dcbaptist.org](mailto:info@dcbaptist.org).



**Participants in Clerk Training Workshop**  
(See story on p. 8)

The **Preservation Task Force** was appointed by the DCBC President Helen Mays-Jackson and has had two meetings. It will be mailing recommendations to the Executive Board and Executive Committee soon. The Task Force members: Helen Mays-Jackson, Mark Tottsey, Jerry Williamson, Latresa McLawhorn, Lisa McGurdy, Lashanor Doolittle, Debra Lopez, Jeffrey Haggray, Joe Smith, Connie Stinson and Mel Doxie.

**Calvary Baptist Church** is preparing for a mission trip to El Salvador in 2009.

**FBC Wheaton** sent a mission team to New Orleans to work with Habitat for Humanity in June, to Brazil in July, and is continuing to pray about another mission trip to Serbia, which was scheduled for August but was postponed until 2009 due to the unrest in the area.

## Positions Available

**Broadneck Baptist Church** in Annapolis, Md. is seeking a pastor who will join a diverse, involved laity as we listen to God's Spirit within and live out God's Spirit in community. Please see [www.broadneckbaptistchurch.org](http://www.broadneckbaptistchurch.org) for our profile and more information. Resumes or inquiries may be sent to our e-mail at [broadneckbaptistPSC@gmail.com](mailto:broadneckbaptistPSC@gmail.com) or mailed to the church address, 1257 Hilltop Drive, Annapolis, MD 21409. Phone inquiries may be made to Margie Kelbel 410.269.6819.

**FBC of the City of Washington DC** seeks an interim pastor to lead and inspire our congregation as we search for a full-time senior pastor. Excellent preaching skills is our top priority. We prefer full-time candidates who are locally available for Sunday and Wednesday services and related pastoral duties.

*About FBC DC:* We are an urban church, founded in 1802, with a multinational and multiracial congregation. While we are committed to historic Baptist principles of individual freedom, congregational autonomy, and religious liberty, our tradition of hospitality has brought us members from many Christian denominations and resulted in an increasingly ecumenical perspective. For more information, please visit our website: [www.firstbaptistdc.org](http://www.firstbaptistdc.org).

FBC will accept applications through September 15, 2008. Please send (1) a cover letter that includes a statement of interest, information about availability, and salary requirements; (2) a resume; (3) three references, and (4) a sermon on cassette or CD. Respond by mail to Interim Pastor Search, 1328 16<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Washington DC 20036. Email questions to Jean Weber, Administrative Assistant, at [jweber@firstbaptistdc.org](mailto:jweber@firstbaptistdc.org)

**FBC Hyattsville MD** is seeking a pastor. The applicant must be an ordained minister and possess an M. Div from an accredited theological seminary. To request an application package, please contact: Pastoral Search Committee, c/o Kent York, 4228 Oglethorpe St., Hyattsville, Maryland 20781 or [kenteyork716@yahoo.com](mailto:kenteyork716@yahoo.com).

**Hillandale Baptist Church** is seeking a full time pastor. Please send resumes or inquiries to Attn: Pastor Search Committee at Hillandale Baptist Church, 2601 Powder Mill Road, Adelphi MD 20783. Telephone: 301.434.6033. Fax: 301.434.5430. Email: [hbc1952@aol.com](mailto:hbc1952@aol.com).

## Minister or Director of Music

A **DC church** is seeking a full time Minister or Director of Worship, Music and the Arts. The applicant shall possess a degree in choral music or music education or have a minimum of three (3) years experience directing and managing a music program in a comparable setting or a combination of the education and experience listed above. Send resumes to John Covington, PO Box 6822, Washington DC 20020. Salary commensurate with experience.

## Part-time Music Director

Seeking part time choir director for **Village Baptist Church**, Bowie, Maryland. One rehearsal, one worship service per week, leading a 12-15 voice choir. Duties, salary and vacation negotiable based on experience. See <http://villagebaptistbowie.org> for details, or contact the church office at 301.249.6448.

# News from Baptist News Services

## Worrying About Finances

*Judy Woodward Bates*

DORA, Ala. (BP)—Bob Dylan sang it many years ago, and it's still true today: "The times, they are a-changin'." In barely two years, gas prices have more than doubled. Costs for diesel fuel have surpassed gasoline, and the result is a snowball effect that is sending our incomes into a downward spiral of lower and lower spending power. What's a believer to do?

Trust God. Or as He Himself told us, *[D]on't worry about your life, what you will eat; or about the body, what you will wear.... Can any of you add a cubit to his height by worrying? If then you're not able to do even a little thing, why worry about the rest?* (Luke 12:22b, 25-26).

Really, why do we worry? We can't control the weather; God does. We can't control the seasons; God does. When it comes right down to it, there are a very limited number of things over which we have any control whatsoever, and even in those areas, our first and foremost priority as believers in Christ Jesus is still the same mandate: Trust God.

Proverbs 3:5 reminds us: *Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own understanding.* Does that mean that we're to plod through these tough times with no financial plan of action because we're simply to "trust in the Lord"? Of course not. The teaching of Proverbs 3:5 continues in Verse 6: *Think about Him in all your ways, and He will guide you on the right paths.*

Folks, the only person who needs a guide is someone who's going somewhere! I don't know about you, but I plan to get

on with my life and His Commission despite the downturn in the economy and despite any other setbacks that may come my way.

In the early 1980s my husband, Larry, found himself without a job. For two years we had no steady income. And it was during those two years that my penny-pinching savvy was honed like never before; so I can truthfully say that I'd not be where or who I am today were it not for the lessons learned during that tough stretch.

But not only did we learn a lot of new "survival" skills, we learned how awesome our Heavenly Father was and is at providing for our needs. Time and again, we received just what we needed just when we needed it. Of course, we did our part to bring in an income. In addition to selling real estate, I cleaned houses, did yard work, a little substitute teaching, and countless other odd jobs, all while trying to remain as much of a stay-at-home mom as possible. Larry found a couple of long-term temporary jobs and joined me in a lot of the odd job opportunities.

Yet sometimes it still wasn't enough. I recall that on more than one occasion, we prayed fervently for a way to earn enough money to buy groceries. Once, I was still in mid-prayer when the doorbell rang and a couple from our church stood smiling in the doorway. "We hope you won't be offended," our friend, Cheryl said, "but Daniel works for a grocery wholesaler and the company let us have all of the damaged goods in this week's shipment."

Offended? I was elated! We quickly emptied their burgeoning pickup, stacking the less-than-perfect cans and boxes into our empty pantry and together thanking the Lord for His amazing love and perfect timing.

Once, on my birthday, another friend, Helen, phoned. "I didn't know what to get you for your birthday, so I bought you groceries. I hope you don't mind." I can still remember lifting that truly heavenly turkey breast out of the grocery bag and weeping with happiness.

Then there was the time we found a refund check in our mailbox. Our insurance company had discovered that we'd been charged too high a rate for the whole past year.

People of God, tough times are no reason to worry. They're a time to get excited about the new and miraculous ways you're going to see the Lord take care of you. Do your part to be a responsible manager of His blessings: Continue to tithe, cut back unnecessary spending, and make whatever other changes may be needed to reduce your regular expenses. But most of all, trust Him, and joyfully expect your Heavenly Father to take good care of you, His precious son or daughter.

Judy Woodward Bates is a freelance writer, author, speaker and creator of Bargainomics, a Bible-based time and money management philosophy, and the author of the new book, *Blessedly Budgeted Women's Events*. Visit her website at [www.bargainomics.com](http://www.bargainomics.com).

## Playground Brings Hope to Rural Miss. County

by Carla Wynn Davis

ATLANTA (ABP) — It was a beautiful moment for the people of Goodman, Miss., and the teenagers from First Baptist Church in Greenwood, S.C. After days of building, the teens completed a new playground in Goodman— where children once had to play in the street.

On a Tuesday evening this summer, the teens and children walked hand-in-hand toward the playground, with the children's excitement building as the slides, swings and playhouse came closer into view. "When we got within 50 feet of it, the children started running," said the church's youth minister Blake Kendrick. "It was a thrill to watch them play on it for the first time."

But the smiling, climbing, running and playing wasn't all that caught Caroline Burch's eye. It was one local man who stood at the end of the slide to make sure the children didn't go too fast or hurt themselves.

It was the other adults from Goodman's Walden Memorial United Methodist Church who gathered to watch the children. It was the laughter, the conversation — the community — that made Burch grateful to be in Goodman in that moment. "Our playground helped make that happen, but the best part is, even without the playground, the little church would have been that way — community in the most sincere sense of the word," said Burch, 18.

Burch was one of 16 teenagers who traveled to Goodman to serve with the Methodist Church. Walden Memorial's pastor, Martha Williams, suggested the youth could make a difference by building a playground. "There was nothing in the community for these children to do. There was no gathering place," said Steve Street, CBF of Mississippi's coordinator, who connected the South Carolina church with Williams' ministry in Holmes County.

Ranked statistically as one of the nation's poorest counties, Holmes County is a focal area of Together for Hope, the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship's rural-poverty initiative focused on 20 of the poorest counties in the United States.

Together for Hope's goal is to work alongside local people and at the direction of local leadership who know the community best. Under the theme *Let the children come to me* (Mark 10:14), the middle- and high-school students explored the importance of children in Christ's eyes. They also learned about socio-economic issues, racial reconciliation and hospitality.

"The [Walden] church welcomed us and really taught us a great lesson in Christian hospitality," Kendrick said. "They were really open to being in conversation and dialogue with us." As a finishing touch on the playground, the youth group nailed together two extra pieces of wood, and to the top of the playhouse they added a cross — a reminder of the reason for all their efforts. "The children of Goodman,

Mississippi...will continue to grow in that church and become community leaders,” said Caleb Hopkins, 17. “Our work made it easier for kids in Goodman to come to Christ.”

On the last day, Kendrick knew the youth had made a difference for local children, but he didn’t know how much it had meant to the church until Williams issued an invitation. She invited the youth to return and for Kendrick to preach when the church moves into its new building. “It was a profound thing for her to say,” Kendrick said. “Wherever I am, I want to be part of that service.”

## **INTERNATIONAL DIGEST: Venezuela’s Chavez Pushes Through 26 Decrees**

by Mark Kelly

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP)—Venezuela President Hugo Chavez has used special legislative powers granted him by lawmakers to push through a package of laws similar to his “21st-century socialism” proposals voters rejected in December. He made the move on the last day before those special powers were to expire.

The decrees include a provision that allows the government to control “the import, export, distribution, exchange or sale” of certain foods or agricultural products and “take over distribution activities when considered necessary,” according to the Associated Press. They also increase state control over commerce and services. Businesses violating the rules can be fined or forced to close indefinitely.

Chavez also decreed the formation of a new branch of the military—neighborhood militias made up of civilian volunteers. The plan for a new “National Bolivarian Militia” resembles Cuba’s Committees for the Defense of the Revolution, which recruit citizens to spy on their neighbors for “counterrevolutionary” activities.

Business groups said they were not consulted before the decrees were issued and warned private investment and private enterprise would suffer. “We ask the president: Why does he fear democracy?” business leader Jose Manuel Gonzalez said at a news conference. “We are sure that this is nothing more than imposing the reform project that was rejected in December.”

**TENSIONS RISE BETWEEN ORTHODOX CHURCHES**—Tension over Ukraine’s increasing independence from Russia has spilled over into relations between those countries’ branches of the Orthodox Church.

On July 26, Ukraine’s president, Viktor Yushchenko, asked Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, spiritual leader of the

world’s 250 million Orthodox Christians, to bless the creation of an independent Ukrainian church, according to a report by the *Associated Press*. Bartholomew made a three-day visit to Kiev to celebrate the 1,020th anniversary of Christianity’s arrival in the region.

Relations with Russia already were tense over Ukraine’s bid to join the NATO alliance and its demands that the Russian navy leave Sevastopol, a Ukrainian port on the Black Sea. Russia has made it clear that it controls natural gas deliveries Ukraine badly needs, the AP reported. Yushchenko, who claims pro-Russian opponents tried to poison him, snubbed the Russian Orthodox patriarch during the ceremony.

Many Ukrainians resented the domination held over them by the Russian empire and the Soviet Union, but many Russians feel Ukraine is part of Russia. The position of the Orthodox Church as the state church in both countries complicates matters, and Moscow’s patriarch has declared one of two breakaway churches in Ukraine to be a heretical schism.

Bartholomew stopped short of supporting or rejecting the independence movement, saying only that divisions in the church would have “problematic consequences for Ukraine’s future,” the AP report said.

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 08/11/08) — Connected: *Christian Parenting in an Age of IM & MySpace* by Peggy Kendall has been recognized with an iParenting Media Award. The iParenting Media Awards recognize products in twenty categories from high-tech toys, safety gear and educational software to books, audio CDs and DVDs. To be considered for an iParenting Media Award, products are thoroughly reviewed and evaluated by a variety of sources, including experts and families.

VALLEY FORGE, PA (ABNS 08/13/08) — American Baptists are urged to respond with prayer to the conflict between Russia and Georgia. While a ceasefire agreement was made, there are widespread reports of continued violence occurring around the eastern side of Gori, a key town in central Georgia, and in the neighboring province of South Ossetia. International Ministries is sending a \$7,500 emergency grant from One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) funds to help the Georgian Baptists in their work with refugees and people who are displaced within Georgia because of the conflict.

## **Faith Leaders Ask DNC, RNC to Showcase Anti-poverty Plans**

ABP staff WASHINGTON (ABP) — Prominent faith leaders are calling on the United States' two major political parties to use their upcoming presidential-nominating conventions as platforms for showcasing how they would deal with poverty.

In a recent letter to presumptive Republican nominee John McCain and likely Democratic contender Barack Obama, Catholic, Jewish, Muslim and Protestant leaders requested that both use prime-time speaking slots at the conventions to outline their respective plans for combating poverty.

“As people of faith, we believe that it is immoral to ignore our nation’s most vulnerable populations,” the leaders wrote. They pointed out that more than 37 million Americans, including almost 13 million children, currently live below the federally defined poverty level. Millions more, they noted, are one crisis away from joining the ranks of the desperately poor.

“As Americans, we believe enduring poverty undermines our country’s economic strength and prosperity,” the leaders said, pointing out that alleviating poverty requires national effort. Faith leaders pledged to work together in the lead-up to the general election to “build the political and public will to combat poverty in the United States.”

The letter’s signers included David Beckmann, president of Bread for the World; Michael Kinnamon, general secretary of the National Council of Churches; Richard Cizik, vice president for government affairs at the National Association of Evangelicals; Jim Wallis, Sojourners chief executive officer; Larry Snyder, president of Catholic Charities USA; Steve Gutow, Jewish Council for Public Affairs executive director; David Saperstein, director and counsel of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism; Sayyid Syeed, Islamic Society of America secretary general; and Eboo Patel, executive director of Interfaith Youth Core.

## **American Baptist Leaders Organize First-ever Burmese Baptist Meeting**

*by ABP staff*

VALLEY FORGE, Pa. (ABP) — In October, the American Baptist Churches USA will convene the first-ever national conference for Burmese Baptist leaders serving in the United States. More than 30 pastors and lay leaders are expected to attend the Oct. 21-22 event, to be held at Chin Baptist Church in Dallas. American Baptist Personnel

Services and ABC Asian Ministries — two divisions within ABC’s home-missions agency, ABC National Ministries — will sponsor the conference.

The event will help newly resettled pastors and lay leaders in local churches become familiar with American Baptist processes for attaining professional standing, ordination, and theological and continuing education.

Burma — also known as Myanmar, the name given to it by the military junta that has ruled the Southeast Asian nation since 1962 — was one of the first nations that Baptist missionaries targeted in the early 19th century. It has long been home to significant numbers of Baptists and other Christians, particularly from its many ethnic minority groups. However, worldwide human-rights organizations and the U.S. State Department consider the Myanmar regime one of the world’s worst violators of religious freedom and other human rights.

Many Burmese Christian refugees have escaped to camps in neighboring countries as a result of the oppression. In recent years, many of those have immigrated to the United States.

The Burmese Baptist conference will provide an opportunity for networking and fellowship for Baptists from the Karen, Chin, Kachin and other Burmese minority groups. Many of them and their congregations have come to America from refugee camps in Thailand and Malaysia.

Following the Burmese event, the American Baptist Asian Pastors Conference and Asian Caucus Convocation will convene at Chin Baptist Church Oct. 22-24.

## **Beijing Coerces Churches Not to Meet**

*by Staff*

WASHINGTON (BP)—The Chinese government has forced pastors of unregistered churches to pledge there will be no worship services at their congregations’ meeting sites during a three-month period surrounding the Summer Olympics, a human rights group reported Aug. 13.

The pastors also were required to promise they would not organize or attend any religious gatherings that were not approved by the Communist regime, according to China Aid Association, an American-based organization that monitors religious persecution in the world’s most populous country.

The report provided additional evidence of ongoing religious repression in China, reinforcing critics’ claims that the regime has not lived up to its commitment to improve its human rights record when Beijing was named in 2001 as the

host city for this year's Olympic Games. Unregistered congregations, which are not approved by the government, are among the religious groups under pressure from the Chinese regime.

China Aid Association reported on Beijing's latest strong-arm tactic and provided an English translation of the document pastors were coerced to sign.

The form included a statement committing each signer to "refrain from organizing and joining illegal gatherings and refrain from receiving donations, sermons and preaching from" foreign religious entities. It also said "activities at the gathering sites will be shut down for three months (July 15–October 15)."

A China Aid staff member said the report revealed Beijing is "extremely two-faced."

"I think it displays the blatant hypocrisy of the Chinese government, who is telling the world on one hand that they're tolerating religious freedom while at the same time they are severely persecuting house church Christians," Daniel Burton told *Baptist Press*. "All the house church wants to do is worship in freedom without fear of being persecuted."

China Aid estimates from 60 million to 80 million Christians are part of the unregistered church.

The report of China's newest coercive act against unregistered churches came only three days after President Bush called on the Chinese people to welcome religious faith. After attending an Aug. 10 service at a registered church in Beijing, Bush made a brief public statement in which he said, "[N]o state, man or woman should fear the influence of loving religion." Later, he promoted religious freedom in a meeting with Chinese President Hu Jintao.

White House officials said the Chinese regime denied Bush's request to attend worship with an unregistered church, according to *The Washington Times*.

The coercion of the pastors continued Beijing's year-long crackdown on Christians in unregistered churches, as well as other religious adherents.

The U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom has reported nearly 700 Protestant leaders have been arrested in the last year.

The Chinese government expelled more than 100 foreign missionaries between April and June 2007, China Aid reported last year. Citing sources within the government and at five mission agencies in its report, China Aid said the effort was part of a campaign to prevent foreign Christians

from doing evangelistic work before the Olympics. Most of those expelled were citizens of the United States, South Korea, Australia, Canada, Singapore and Israel, according to the report.

The expulsion was the largest of missionaries since the Communist regime sent away all foreign religious workers in 1954, China Aid reported.

The U.S. State Department has designated China as one of eight "countries of particular concern," a category reserved for the world's most severe violators of religious freedom. In addition to house church Christians, the Chinese government especially suppresses Roman Catholics in unregistered churches, as well as Tibetan Buddhists, Uighur Muslims and the Falun Gong, a meditation sect.

Compiled by Tom Strode, Washington bureau chief for *Baptist Press*.

## **Hamis Leader's Son, Now a Christian, Says Only Gospel Can Transform Mideast**

*by Mark Kelly, Assistant Editor, Baptist Press*

LA JOLLA, Calif. (BP)—When a volunteer from the United Kingdom met a young Middle Eastern man in Jerusalem's old city and invited him to a Bible study, he had no idea he was talking to the son of a key figure in the Hamas terrorist organization.

And while the volunteer surely hoped Masab Yousef would hear the Gospel and accept Christ, he had no clue how that invitation — and Yousef's decision for Christ four years later — would eventually reverberate throughout the Middle East and perhaps even the world.

"These guys were just going out and asking people to come for the Bible study," Yousef told *Baptist Press*. "I didn't even understand his English. He was talking to me by signals and I understood the invitation from his signals."

But in 2000, Yousef, who now prefers to be known as "Joseph," was an open-minded 22-year-old Muslim, clean-shaven and dressed in jeans instead of the traditional garb of Palestinian Arabs. Despite his preference for Western ways, Joseph was the eldest son of Hassan Yousef, a prominent lawmaker in the Palestinian parliament, and as such the heir-apparent to his father's position of influence in Palestinian circles.

That simple, almost anonymous invitation to visit a Bible study eventually transformed Joseph's life, and now he is sending shock waves throughout the Middle East as he

publicly declares his faith in Christ. He may be the best-known Muslim to ever publicly announce his decision to follow Jesus.

“Sometimes we don’t know the importance when we go out to invite people to come to Bible study,” Joseph said. “Sometimes we think this is wasting time. This guy had no idea who I was.”

“They studied the Bible with me and figured out who I was only five months later,” Joseph added. “They got to know me and even got to know my father. He invited them to our house and they had no idea that he was one of the top leaders of the Hamas organization.”

Joseph said he agreed to attend the Bible study because he was curious.

“I didn’t have enough knowledge about Christianity. I was open-minded,” he said. “I never had in my mind in that moment that I would go this far, to become a believer. I had studied history and thought this would be a good chance to study, to meet new international people and see what they are saying. It was definitely not about Christianity.”

Joseph’s story is a powerful reminder that followers of Jesus Christ should share the Gospel freely and never miss an opportunity to invite a stranger to church, said Matt Smith, the pastor of Barabbas Road Church in La Jolla, Calif., which is hosting Joseph as he announces his faith in Christ to the world.

“He was invited to a Bible study — to me this is profound,” Smith said. “Some guy [who] didn’t know who Joseph was. This guy was just a normal Christian. He wasn’t an apologist. He wasn’t a specialist. He was just a normal Christian who invited someone to a Bible study.”

“In the Bible study, they didn’t try to argue,” Smith added. “They just shared the love of Christ, and he went home and read his Bible. This is such a testimony to all us Christians that we need to present everyone with the simple Gospel. This is a call for everyone to stand out.”

Smith, 29, leads a young congregation in one of the most affluent and highly educated cities in the United States. Smith said the church, which launched in February 2008 and now draws about 75 people to weekend services, knows that the truth of the Gospel and the power of loving service to others can penetrate even the hardest, most skeptical heart.

“When he was exposed to the Word of God, the Holy Spirit

did a work on him and look what happened,” Smith said.

Joseph came to the United States because his decision to follow Jesus meant losing his life in Ramallah on the West Bank. As the son of a senior Hamas leader, he has been unable to find work in America and depends on the generosity of Barabbas Road members to get by.

“Just to stop and think for a minute about announcing your Christianity; you feel sick immediately because it’s crazy,” Joseph said. “You’re not just saying goodbye to a religion, to a tradition. You are saying goodbye to a culture, to a civilization, if you can call it that. Even the process of taking your skin off your bones might be easier than saying goodbye to your mother and to everybody, especially when you are a well-known figure in your society and everybody has high expectations that one day in the future you will be one of the leaders.”

“Suddenly you are starting from scratch and canceling everything you have in society,” Joseph explained. “But when it started, I was ready for any circumstances. I thought about the worst conditions that could happen as consequences after my announcement. But — and I tell you this is a miracle, this is how God works — you carry the cross and rely on Him completely and He takes care of everything.”

“This may be the first case that a well-known Muslim just goes to the public and says, ‘I am a Christian,’” Joseph said. “Many Muslim sheiks, many Muslim imams may be converted to Christianity but they keep that a secret. They didn’t announce it because it is very embarrassing for them and for their families. They were afraid for their lives.”

“But I decided to declare Jesus in front of the world, so He declares me in front of the Father,” Joseph said. “That was the main reason. I am going to be just worshiping God in a very special way by doing this.”

“When Jesus says ‘carry your cross and follow me,’ it wasn’t to put a cross on your shirt and keep walking the street.”

The power that transformed his heart and gives him the courage to publicly declare his faith in Jesus is the only hope for an end to the violence that plagues the Middle East, Joseph said.

“I have met politicians. I have met presidents and prime ministers. I have met all the leaders of that region,” Joseph said. “None of them have a magical solution for this issue. They are leading people but they don’t know where they are

going.”

“Even if they have a way out of this endless circle of violence between the two nations, none of them have the courage to do it,” he added. “Both sides have many parties and every party has its own agenda. There are no strong leaders in that region who can make brave decisions.”

The real path to peace in the Middle East, Joseph said, is the same path — the only path — a human heart can follow to find deep, lasting peace.

“Jesus is not going to give them a political solution, but He has changed me and He can change those people to a better people. He can teach them how to forgive, how to love,” Joseph said. “Everybody on both sides is hurt — not only Israelis, not only Palestinians. If we can teach them how to forgive and move on and love their enemies, for the next two generations, we can build a new leadership for both sides to be able to live together. Now, as it is, there is no hope for them but Jesus. It’s that simple.”

### DCBC Holds Clerk Training Workshops

DCBC held two training workshops for church clerks, secretaries and others who are entrusted with maintaining church records. The workshops were held on Aug. 28 and 30 at the Baptist Building. More than a dozen people attended representing nine member churches. The training covered such topics as the duties of the church clerk; keeping accurate records and documenting the history of the church; how to prepare the annual church report and record and process records; and, how long to keep records on file.

### College of Prayer DC

The College of Prayer DC, fresh from its God-inspired module on “The Prayer Saturated Church,” is reveling in what God is doing in the lives of the individuals and the churches participating in this on-going training for pastors and prayer leaders. Some 30 people representing more than

a dozen Washington area churches took part in the July 3–August 2 session at the National Baptist Memorial Church in Washington DC. They were inspired and energized by the teaching of author and national prayer leader Cheryl Sacks on the priority, principles and power of prayer.

Sacks is the author of *The Prayer Saturated Church*, a handbook for local church prayer leaders that is igniting prayer in churches nationwide, and *Prayer Saturated Kids...* equipping and empowering children in prayer. Over three-days of instruction, worship and intercession, she shared her experiences in the persistence of prayer and guided the participants in how to help their churches become houses of prayer.

She also encouraged prayer leaders to develop a prayer shield

for their pastors to protect them from the attacks of the enemy. Sacks urges churches to become more strategic about prayer. “Just as you wouldn’t build a house without a blueprint, so you wouldn’t build a house of prayer without a plan,” she said.

Moving forward, the next College of Prayer will be held November 13 to 15 at the National Baptist Memorial Church at 15<sup>th</sup> Street and Columbia Road NW.

Professor Ron Walborn and his wife Wanda Walborn, both of Nyack College in New York, will offer teaching on Divine Healing. Come expecting God to move in a mighty way. For more information and registration, contact [copregistrar@comcast.net](mailto:copregistrar@comcast.net).

### DCBC Ministers Fellowship on Sept. 23

The DCBC Ministers Fellowship will have an Open Clergy Discussion on diverse topics including: Ordination, Credentialing, Ministry Opportunities, Property Trusts Interim Ministry, ABC Ministers Council, and other topics. Executive Director/Minister Jeffrey Haggray will open with a devotional. This event will take place **Tuesday, Sept. 23, 2008 from noon-1:30 p.m. at the Baptist Building. The cost is \$7 for lunch. To R.S.V.P. or for more information, call 202.265.1526 or email: [info@dcbaptist.org](mailto:info@dcbaptist.org).**



**DCBC Annual Meeting**  
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1328 Sixteenth Street NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
**parking is limited — so plan ahead**  
car pool, use Metro rail or bus  
bring church van or bus  
some parking available at DC Baptist Building