

## Health Department's Village HeartBEAT Program Hosts Members of the World Council of Churches

**R**epresentatives from the World Council of Churches (WCC) will be in Charlotte for a visit with Village HeartBEAT clergy and staff from the Mecklenburg County Health Department's Office of Community Engagement. During their visit members will participate in a three-day workshop to discuss and develop a framework for a model health-promoting program for churches.

The visiting delegation represents Switzerland, Jamaica, Tonga and Canada. Members will be in Charlotte from July 17-19. A reception will be held on Thursday, July 19, 5 -7 p.m. at the Dorothy D. Waddy Pavilion (3132 Manchester Dr., Charlotte).

Among the visitors is Dr. Mwai Makoka, Program Executive of Health and Healing for the WCC. Dr. Makoka has coordinated this strategic planning opportunity for



cross-cultural collaboration with Community Engagement and a representative from the World Health Organization (WHO).

An assessment conducted by the WCC identified Community Engagement's Village HeartBEAT initiative as one of three congregation-based health programs in the U.S. that are engaging communities to combat non-communicable diseases. The program is also a contender in the Aetna Foundation's Healthiest Cities & Counties Challenge. Participants in this week's discussion will use the best practices of Village

HeartBEAT and other programs as a starting point through which a model program can be created for other countries.

The World Council of Churches is an international organization of 348 churches that represent more than half a billion people around the world. The WCC also works closely with national and regional church councils. Since its establishment in 1948, the WCC has supported the work of all churches on health globally, and has collaborated with the WHO, which was also established in the same year.

