

# *The Bulletin*

A PUBLICATION OF THE  
CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR BAPTIST FREEDOMS



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*The Bulletin is published three times a year by the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms, formerly the Atlantic Baptist Fellowship. It is meant to be an informative magazine about Baptist concerns and news of the Church in the world.*

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## *From the Editor*

BY SCOTT KINDRED-BARNES

¶ One of the striking features of Jud Levy's tenure as editor of the old A.B.F. Bulletin was his ability to connect historical theology to the issues of his own day. Jud was never one to impose his thoughts on others, and yet he had a firm belief that Christians do well to stand on the shoulders of those who came before us. Indeed, we can learn from the successes and mistakes of Christians of bygone ages. I thought of Dr. Levy's many Bulletin contributions recently when a long-time member of the CABF asked me about my own research in Reformation history and theology. He asked: "Are there practical lessons to be learned from the Reformation for modern Christians?" I believe there are indeed plenty of lessons for us moderns to learn, both historically and theologically, from the Reformation period. It was an era of unprecedented dissemination of information made possible by the technological shift of the printing press. It was a time haunted by the reality of religious wars, and the growing instability of long accepted political authorities. The Reformation era was a chaotic time for those who lived through it. But an important proviso needs to be kept in mind by anyone drawing parallels too easily between the Reformation era and our own: namely, we need to remember the importance of context.

We might even say 'context is everything!' What I mean is that we do the church a disservice if we apply the ideas of any reformer (Luther, Calvin, Zwingli or even Smyth and Helwys) to our present situation without reference to our context and theirs. To do so is to blur the distance between the centuries that separate us. For instance, students of the sixteenth century often speak about the five *solae* of the Reformation. *Sola scriptura* (by scripture alone), *sola fide* (by faith alone), *sola gratia* (by grace alone), *solus Christus* (by Christ alone), and *solī Deo gloria* (glory to God alone). I once had someone ask me if having five *solae* is contradictory since 'alone' seems to preclude more than one. This is where context means so much. Contextually each *solae* addresses an important issue of reform.

Take, for example, *sola scriptura*. Contrary to what is often proclaimed by some, the authority of Scripture alone does not mean tradition has no place in the Church. Quite the opposite, the reformer's teaching by scripture alone was not meant to eliminate other sources of theology and resources. Rather, it meant that the reformers sought to make the Church accountable to the authority and teachings of scripture. The selling of Indulgences was a clear abuse of what the scriptures taught. Hence, by teaching *sola scriptura*, the reformers sought to offer liberty from the burdensome extra-biblical teachings that had emerged in the Church of the late medieval period. With this context in mind, the Reformation teaching by scripture alone was essentially saying that the bible is sufficient for its intended purpose, the salvation of souls.

Is all this talk of the Reformation irrelevant to our 21<sup>st</sup> century context? Is this just another form of debating how many angels can dance on the head of a pin? I hope not. Personally, I think there are plenty of times in ministry and church life where the teachings of the reformers have profound pastoral lessons applicable to our own day. We may not use the language of salvation in the same way as our spiritual ancestors did, but people still struggle to feel accepted by God and to find a place of belonging among God's people. Perhaps it's a result of human brokenness, or our psychological tendencies to want to please others, that can lead us to feelings of unworthiness or the notion of having to earn God's love. In our day when so much is changing, and rapidly, to know that God accepts our offerings, bumps and bruises and all, and that we do not earn God's love and favor, but receive it by grace alone, freely and unearned, is good news not just in the sixteenth century but in any era.

The theme for this edition is *Christ Amidst the Chaos*. It includes a feature article by Aaron Kenny, and summaries of the talks given as part of the CABF Cross Canada Conference held at First Baptist, Halifax at the end of October 2024. There is also my review of Jesse A. Zink's latest book.

*The Rev. Dr. Scott Kindred-Barnes is the Senior Minister of Wolfville Baptist Church in Nova Scotia. Before moving back to Wolfville in 2018, Scott served as the Minister of First Baptist Church, Ottawa for seven years.*

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# *Voices in the Chaos: When Christian Bombs Are Falling*

BY AARON KENNY

¶ Just days after the Israeli and Hezbollah ceasefire took effect on November 28, 2024, Israeli forces began firing again. They resumed bombing villages in southern Lebanon as more than a million civilians returned to their homes to rebuild after Israel's initial attacks, which had started on October 1, 2024. Observing the devastation in Canada, it's easy to forget that these bombs were built and provided by Christian-majority nations.<sup>1</sup> It is said that truth is not only violated by falsehoods, it may be equally outraged by silence. In the chaos, God often breaks silences through the voice of a prophet. I want to introduce two contemporary voices within the Arab Church: Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb. and Dr. Martin Accad.

Renowned Hebrew Bible scholar Walter Brueggemann describes the modern prophetic voice as one that urges the Church to “speak truth to a society that continues to thrive on illusions.” For a Church that has resigned itself to the inevitability of chaos and violence in the world, both of these Christian leaders aim to shatter this illusion and break a terrible silence.

Mitri Raheb is a Palestinian Lutheran minister born and residing in Bethlehem. Like much of the Arab Christian community, Raheb expresses concern about the way Western Christians have been captivated by Christian Zionism. He argues that “Christian Zionism should be defined as a Christian lobby that supports the Jewish settler colonialism of Palestinian land by using biblical/theological constructs within a metanarrative.”<sup>2</sup> Living through aggressive and violent encroachment upon his community, Raheb has suffered firsthand the consequences of such an illusion. He calls us to see Christian Zionism for what it is.

*The settler colonial nature of the State of Israel is obvious, and the reality on the ground is crystal clear. The situation is not ‘complicated’ as some claim in order to blur the issue. International law is decisive on this issue, as the many UN resolutions testify. Yet, biblical passages and terms such as ‘divine rights,’ ‘land promise,’ ‘Judea,’ and ‘chosen people’ are constantly repeated to bestow the colonization of Palestine with biblical legitimacy and thus political legality. This terminology is used in church circles, popular events, as well at the highest political levels like the UN Security Council.*

For any Canadian Baptists who feel confused or uncertain about the situation in the Middle East, I would encourage you to read Raheb’s powerful book *Decolonizing Palestine: The Land, the People, the Bible*. Raheb’s experience and analysis agree with Brueggemann’s conviction that “...[T]here is a huge difference between the ancient Israel of the biblical text and the contemporary state of Israel. While defenders of the state of Israel insist upon the identity of the two, many more critical observers see there is a defining difference between a covenant people and a state that relies on military power without reference to covenantal restraints.”<sup>3</sup> Raheb pleads for the Church of the West to reject false narratives that demonize Palestinian people and forget that Jesus was a Palestinian Jew.

Dr. Martin Accad was born and still lives in the Muslim-majority neighbourhood of West Beirut, Lebanon. Beirut is a vibrant, multicultural hub where various religious and ethnic groups co-existed, primarily Christians and Muslims. But this coexistence has often been tested. Many Canadians will remember watching it unravel with the outbreak of the Lebanese Civil War in April of 1975. During those years, Accad remembers Muslim and Christian friends gathering in his West Beirut home to pray and seek shelter as Christian bombs fell on their neighbourhood. While many fled Lebanon during this conflict, Accad’s family remained and served within the Arab Baptist Community.

There are still “Christian bombs” falling on Beirut. Accad remains in his birth country, training Christian leaders throughout the Middle East and North Africa to faithfully follow Jesus in demonstrating love and compassion to their neighbours. He was

recently appointed president of the Near East School of Theology in Beirut. I have had the privilege of knowing him through his involvement with the Arab Baptist Theological Seminary (ABTS) and their collaboration with Canadian Baptist Ministries. Accad has spent decades fostering interfaith dialogue in the Middle East, founding the Institute of Middle East Studies at ABTS.

I recently contacted Accad, who expressed the difficulties of managing risk and trying to keep his family safe amid the escalating violence of Israeli attacks. While the days may feel normal, the nights are filled with the sound of explosions. As he recently shared, “There are now 1.4 million displaced people, and so much Insecurity and instability... We are looking for the new normal.”<sup>4</sup> In his latest interview with Regent College, Accad discussed how accusations of antisemitism are often used as a “silencing mechanism” against those who criticize Israel’s military actions.

*“We should not accept this. I want to be very clear, Christian Zionism is a heresy, Zionism a political ideology. Christian Zionism, is a warped theology. You cannot have a state that guarantees the freedom and liberty of all living in it if you give the state a religious identity. There should be no Jewish Israeli State, or Islamic State, or Christian State. That is a big problem.”*

I encourage you to listen to the voices of Raheb and Accad, and others like them — voices in the chaos urging us to follow Jesus through tumultuous times. What might it look like for the Canadian Church to stand in solidarity with our Israeli and Arab brethren? Accad highlights that in the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus mentions one of the few conditions that can make someone a child of God: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

In a world where Christian bombs are falling, we are to be people who work for peace. May we remember that the Christian belief in peace goes beyond the absence of war; it is rooted in the rich and powerful Hebrew idea of Shalom. For Arab Christians, this hope in the transforming power of Jesus’ love sustains them in the chaos

of conflict and war. We are called to guard our hearts and embody Christ, trusting that even our small efforts might contribute to God's greater plan for true reconciliation and peace.

*The Rev. Dr. Aaron Kenny is the Senior Minister of Bridgewater Baptist Church in Nova Scotia. Before accepting the call to Bridgewater in 2019 Aaron worked with Canadian Baptist Ministries (CBM) since 2006 where he and his wife, Erica, directed the diverse partnerships, programs, and staff of CBM throughout Africa.*

#### NOTES

1. Not only does the United States provide 69 percent of Israeli armament, it is the world's biggest arms dealer. The Stockholm International Peace Institute published that between 2019 and 2023 41.7 percent of all international arms sales were exported by the USA. Second on the list was France, at 10.9%.

2. Raheb, Mitri, *Decolonizing Palestine: The Land, the People, the Bible* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2023).

3. Brueggemann, Walter, *Chosen? Reading the Bible amid the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2015), ix-x.

4. I recommend listening to a recent interview with Martin Accad and Regent College recorded on October 28, 2024, weeks after the Israeli invasion of Southern Lebanon. <https://podcast.regent-college.edu/1627978/episodes/15991835-lebanon-israel-and-the-path-to-reconciliation-with-dr-martin-accad>



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# *Where Chaos Meets Christ*

BY BARRY MORRISON

We call this place sanctuary, a room full of grace.  
Here God welcomes all the stuff of our lives –  
joy and sorrow, hopes and dreams, injury and pardon,  
gratitude and grief, faith and unbelief,  
chaos, confusion, and more.

The liturgy – the way we plan and engage in worship –  
invites us to express it all to a loving God.

¶ Having trouble feeling thankful? Says the liturgy, “Here is a song, a verse of Scripture, or a prayer that may help.” Weighed down with worry or grief? Says the liturgy, “Here’s a way to sing it out, or a verse to remind us of the solace that may be found when we ‘cast our burdens on the Lord.’”

Here we learn that we are never alone.

Here, we pour out our hearts with the Psalmist: “Where can I go from Your Presence? Even the darkness is not dark to You ... for darkness is as light to You.”

Here, the Lord Jesus speaks to us a word of comfort or challenge or encouragement. We feel his healing touch as he tends to our wounds and calms our fears. We stand at the foot of the cross where “sorrow and love flow mingled down.” We join the women at empty tomb and, wonder of wonders, we recognize the Risen One in the breaking of bread.

Such life-encompassing liturgy undergirds our growth in spiritual maturity and, by God’s grace, sends us into the world to carry the light of Christ, into whose image we are being transformed.

*The Rev. Dr. Barry Morrison has served Baptist congregations in four Canadian provinces—Saskatchewan, Quebec, Ontario and Nova Scotia. Barry was also appointed to the faculty of Acadia Divinity College in 1999 where he served as the John N. Gladstone Professor of Preaching and Worship, before returning to pastoral ministry at Wolfville Baptist Church in 2004. Barry retired in 2017.*

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## *Christ and Chaos: Personal Reflections*

BY KELLY AND PAUL CARLINE

¶ The two calming-the-sea events (Mark 4 and Matthew 14) show Christ over, in, and of chaos.

We are commanded into chaos and even attracted by it. It is the raw material of his creative reign.

Though it can overwhelm us and distort our image of Jesus (making him uncaring and ghostly and us cynical), chaos does get us praying. Calming comes when the chaos becomes personal, when we become the problem, when the mustard-seed growth of the kingdom begins in us.

Ignatian spirituality invites us to first find the rule of Christ within us. We teach infants (with games like peekaboo) the delights of object permanence – something is still there when we can't see it. Our Lord similarly matures and trains us, surprising us with his presence in our chaos.

Suffering argues against an all-loving, all-powerful God. The wedge it drives between us and our Lord is best removed by seeing his suffering.

The Mark 4 story parallels the story of Jonah, except very noticeably Jesus isn't thrown overboard. However, he would soon enter the chaos of the grave, making the sign of Jonah his identi-

fier. Like Jonah, he says, “pick me up and throw me in” – “let me be responsible for your storms.”

More relentless than our chaos must be our remembering (“Do this till I come”). Tasting, over and over, his chaotic, suffering love in prayer, people, Scripture, stories and liturgy leads us into the calm of his rule.

*Paul and Kelly Carline live in Hampton, New Brunswick. Kelly works with mothers experiencing substance abuse disorders and is also a spiritual director with the CBAC. Paul is a pastor with Bloomfield Baptist Church and also works in his brother’s general store. For many years, Paul and Kelly had the privilege of working overseas (under CBM) with refugees and here in Canada with newcomers.*

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## *An Examination of the 21st-Century Chaos*

BY DAVID DEANE

¶ This presentation examined 21st-century chaos, specifically “surveillance capitalism,” through the lens of Paul’s writings in Romans (7, 8, and 12). Shoshana Zuboff defines surveillance capitalism as a system where online spaces exacerbate anxiety, driving consumption for stress relief. This system profits from our discomfort, strategically placing ads for things that will alleviate our stress during website loading. This creates a cycle where shopping (e.g., Amazon) becomes a dopamine source, falsely promising relief from system-generated stress. Modern capitalism thrives on fueling desires for products that promise “salvation” from technology-induced cortisol.

A central question is how to escape this cycle of desire, anxiety, and consumption. Research shows the dopamine rush from planning and anticipating purchases fades upon receipt, prompting a

return to consumption, mirroring other addictions like those related to food, alcohol, and sex.

Paul, in Romans 7, argues that salvation requires inner transformation, not just external changes. The problem resides in our desires and their resulting actions. In Romans 8, he offers a solution: the presence of the Holy Spirit initiates a transformative process, changing our desires and freeing us from their control, specifically the type of desire exploited by surveillance capitalism. Finally, Romans 12 details how this process connects us with God and others, liberating us from this modern form of capitalism and offering the kind of ontological transformation requires to push back against its clutches.

*Dr David Deane is Associate Professor of Theology at Atlantic School of Theology. His books include Nietzsche and Theology and the recently published The Tyranny of the Banal.*

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## *Faithful, Creative, Hopeful*

Jesse A. Zink, *Faithful, Creative, Hopeful: Fifteen Theses for Christians in a Crisis-Shaped World*. New York, NY: Church Publishing, 2024.

REVIEWED BY SCOTT KINDRED-BARNES.

¶ The Rev. Dr. Jesse Zink is Principal of Montreal Diocesan Theological College and Canon Theologian in the Diocese of Montreal. In these roles, he teaches at McGill University and in the Montreal School of Theology consortium, while also relating broadly to churches in Canada and the United States. As the title of this book indicates, the author has produced fifteen theses to help Christians respond and navigate the context of polycrisis. First coined in the 1970s, polycrisis refers to the simultaneous occurrence of several crisis-level events—including pandemic, war, inflation, democratic decay, climate change, and more. Polycrisis has gained consider-

able popularity in recent times among analysts who have tried to describe and explain our tumultuous era. Dr. Zink is to be commended for writing an engaging and theologically reflective book that addresses a plethora of relevant topics related to polycrisis. While any book that focuses upon our crisis-shaped world might sound distressing, this book is not a downer. On the contrary, it is both hopeful and encouraging and especially relevant to those looking to respond meaningfully to our troubled context.

In addition to the Introduction and Conclusion, the book is broken into four main sections: The first section is titled *APOCALYPTIC CLARITY*, which Zink defines in terms of the majestic vision of a world being transformed by God, perhaps most explicitly stated in Revelation 21: “See, I am making all things new.” The second section, *RESISTANT ETHOS*, focuses on the kind of Christ-centered growth, maturity, attention, posture, catholicity and witness that stands over and against the distractions that prevent wholeness. This section demonstrates how the so-called ‘appetite for more’ is currently dominating our thinking and loyalty, albeit in unfulfilling, complicated and problematic ways.

The third section, *RESISTANT PRACTICE*, challenges the Church to embrace a thankful theology, where our doxological focus is lived out through our mutual need for others, God’s creation and above all, God.

The final section titled *RENEWED CHURCH*, is equally helpful in calling for an ecumenical witness of responsibility and solidarity in the face of a mistrusting world.

Each section contains anywhere between three and five theses. And each thesis has its own chapter. I have listed the breakdown below.

Under the first section, titled *APOCALYPTIC CLARITY*, there are three theses:

*Thesis One.* A crisis-shaped world requires apocalyptic clarity

*Thesis Two.* Economic structures are the greatest obstacle to Christian witness

*Thesis Three.* Christian formation is not failing. It’s being defeated.

Under the second section, titled **RESISTANT ETHOS**, there are five theses:

*Thesis Four.* Christians offer attentiveness to a distracted people

*Thesis Five.* Enough is a response to a world of more

*Thesis Six.* The catholicity of the Christian community is its response to a globally-connected world

*Thesis Seven.* In an angry world, the Christian answer is mercy

*Thesis Eight.* Christian witness is rooted in hope—even if we don't want it to be

Under the third section, titled **RESISTANT PRACTICE**, there are four theses:

*Thesis Nine.* Place matters: Christian witness begins in particular and specific locales

*Thesis Ten.* In a time of widespread migration, Christians must embrace their identity as wanderers as well

*Thesis Eleven.* Public, shared places resist the dominance of the market. Building them up is part of Christian ministry

*Thesis Twelve.* Food is at the center of the church and must be at the center of Christian witness

Under the fourth and concluding section, titled **RENEWED CHURCH**, there are three theses:

*Thesis Thirteen.* In a mistrusting world, the church is called to be a community of responsibility and solidarity

*Thesis Fourteen.* The church's future is an ecumenical one—but a very specific kind of ecumenism

*Thesis Fifteen.* The Eucharist sets the agenda for the church.

Each thesis/chapter is engaging. While I do not have space to summarize them all, here is a quotation taken from Thesis Ten since it is indicative of the kind of thoughtful and relevant content presented in every chapter:

*Widespread human migration will repeatedly confront all of us with the question of hospitality and the nature of the guest-host relationship. At a time of strained resources and fraught global relationships, the inequalities in the guest-host relationship, themselves a reflection*

*of inequalities in our global world, are coming under more pressure. To minister in this migratory world, Christians will need a robust understanding of what our faith has to say about hospitality.*

As I read the book, I asked myself repeatedly how Baptist churches might incorporate or even tweak the fifteen theses into our own diverse contexts, since much of what Dr. Zink lays out fits well with many of the cherished traditions of the Baptist witness. Jesse Zink is an ordained Episcopalian/Anglican, yet he is unashamedly ecumenical in his approach, and his catholicity shines through on every page. As a Baptist I might have added a section on the prophetic role of preaching in both resistant practice and in church renewal. Regardless, the book would make an excellent small group study. I can also see it working as a preaching resource for pastors looking to engage in meaningful ways with any or all of the topics explored by the author. I highly recommend this book!

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## CANADIAN ASSOCIATION FOR BAPTIST FREEDOMS

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# *CABF Cross Canada Conference, Vancouver, BC*

Hosted by The Church at Southpoint  
and Grandview Church

FROM SUNDAY OCTOBER 26  
TO WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 29, 2025

Welcome one and welcome all! CABF Clergy, Ministers, Pastors, Chaplains, Leaders, Members and friends of CABF. We're excited to have you join us for our 3rd Annual CABF Cross-Canada Gathering!

The goal has been quite simple ... to gather, learn, encourage and bless one another as we continue our journey of being and building up the Canadian Association for Baptist Freedoms community across the country.

More details will emerge on the CABF website in the coming weeks, but for now, **SAVE THE DATE!**

As you are making your initial plans, we encourage you to arrive in time to join us for the Sunday Night Gathering and Meal starting at 4:30 pm on October 26. The Conference will conclude after the noon hour lunch on Wednesday, October 29.

With joy and anticipation,

THE 2025 PLANNING COMMITTEE

*Reverends Anne Baxter Smith, Monica McKinley, Ryan Sato  
Arla Johnson, John Perkin and CABF Treasurer David Allen*